

The Catholic Record

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A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Before the RECORD again reaches its readers the year of our Lord 1916 will have taken its rank amongst the multitudinous host of the irrevocable Past. Will the ghosts of other years shrink from this blood-stained brother or will the red record of heroism it bears not rather give it an honored place amongst the years of great achievement? History, mayhap a long time hence, will write the impartial record and give A. D. 1916 its rightful place amongst the years of the past that cast their luminous lessons down the vista of ages yet to come.

A new year dawns, and with it comes the uncertain rays of the dawn of Peace on a war-scarred world. God grant that it be in reality the dawn of a peace for which a chastened world can be grateful.

To each and everyone of us the new year will bring its inevitable changes. Its joys and its sorrows, its sickness and health, its triumphs and its failures may be anticipated and discounted. The one important question for us is whether its end will find us a milestone farther on the right road. The ties that bind the RECORD and its readers are the common aspirations and efforts to make God's priceless gift of Catholic Faith the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day, guiding our footsteps—faltering though they be at times—along the road that leads to Life.

Honestly and humbly looking back over the mistakes and failures and sins of the year just past we may with high courage and firm hope enter into the precious heritage of another year of grace.

May 1917 deepen the pleasant relations of the CATHOLIC RECORD with its everwidening circle of loyal and warm-hearted friends and readers, and may it be to each and all, in every best sense of the word, a happy new year.

A HIGH PRIEST OF A MODERN RELIGION

It is the fashion just now to speak with contempt, even with scorn and loathing of German Kultur. Well, a very few short years ago such an attitude would be quite unanimously branded as reactionary, obscurantist, mad, and by the popinjay scientists who, dogmatizing, railed at dogma and revelled in the glorious freedom of modern thought. The crowd chorused applause as it does with equal discrimination and discernment now that the fashion has changed.

Against this same Kultur, against the same German spirit, against a tyranny more frightful than now obtains in Belgium, the Catholic Church waged unequal and heroic war in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Aye, waged war and won the victory, more or less complete, for the highest freedom, freedom of conscience, freedom of education. Kultur counted her allies and sympathisers by the million amongst those who are now struggling to free themselves and the world from the logical development of the Kultur which they then blindly worshipped. The inevitable evolution of principles once admired, revered, and to a greater or less extent adopted has led to the sanguinary Kulturkampf of today.

It must be a constant source of surprise to German scholars, hitherto the acknowledged masters of "Modern Thought," to witness the apostasy of their docile and reverent disciples. Ours is not an age when thinking is coextensive with the diffusion of

what is called education. It is not an age when underlying principles are recognized, or even sought. In many respects it is a childish age, an age governed by the unregulated desires of the immature and undisciplined child. Childish impatience with the restraints of authority; childish contempt for the lessons of experience; childish delight in the novel in education, in religion, in morals; childish dreams of an impossible future; childish unrest; childish fickleness. Indeed the most modern modernist is now behind the age; the real progressive is a Futurist. Education promises soon to be concerned not so much with the present generation of children as in providing the future with a weedless crop of eugenic babies.

True as the needle to the pole the Catholic Church, as the divinely appointed guardian of the eternal truths of revelation, stands for freedom of education. And there is ground for hope that the present war for freedom will go far to free the world of the worst of its tyrannies, the tyranny of the State in matters of mind and conscience. That is a usurpation of power that must be cast off if the world struggle is to issue in real victory. That we take it is one of the most valuable lessons of the War. In Germany we see the inevitable consequences of State-worship.

To this train of thought we were led by reading the pronouncements of a world-famous leader of modern thought. Ernst Haeckel is one of the high priests of the modern philosophy of life that would supplant the Christian religion. He is now eighty-two years old and has recently published a book, already translated into English, with the comprehensive title: "Eternity: World - War Thoughts on Life and Death, Religion and the Theory of Evolution."

"Standing," as he modestly says, "on the high watch-tower of pure reason and surveying the world in general," with that peculiar love of freedom which characterizes modern "free" thought, he thus delivers himself on Education:

"I should emphasize especially the necessity for school reform and the importance of establishing upon an improved basis the reciprocal relation between school, Church, and State. From my free-thinking, monistic point of view I regard the separation of school and Church and of State and Church as highly desirable. It was done long ago in Holland and the United States and recently in France, proving beneficial to all concerned."

So far we might find ourselves in some measure of agreement with the apostle of freedom of thought. In the present condition of things the Church absolutely free from the State is "highly desirable;" indeed, an essential condition of true freedom. But how far separation of Church and State in France recognizes this principle of freedom is quite another matter. The State in its own sphere free is also a proposition which, properly understood, we need not quarrel with. Why not go a step further and leave the school free while safeguarding the unquestioned interests of the State?

One reason this apostle of modern freedom gives himself in these words:

"I do not advocate the complete elimination of religious instruction. On the contrary, we are striving to have our monistic religion developed as the natural ethics for the moral upbringing of the young, especially since in its most important principles, human love and tolerance, it is in agreement with the essential practical moral teaching of Christianity. What we object to merely is the enforced teachings of the theoretical doctrines of the Christian faith to our youth as divine revelations. Nothing but mythological poetic inventions, they are in direct conflict with the results of modern science."

So "from his free-thinking monistic point of view" that is the "freedom" he would magnanimously concede in the domain where freedom counts the most to those who believe in Christian education. And that is about the measure of freedom that ideal of absolute State supremacy keeps growing apace, as it has undoubtedly grown in recent years.

What is the "monistic religion" of this high priest of modernism?

From the Encyclopedia Britannica:

"Not content with the study of evolution in its zoological aspects, Haeckel also applied it to some of the oldest problems of philosophy and religion."

"Every living cell has psychic properties, and the psychic life of multicellular organisms is the sum-total of the psychic functions of the cells of which they are composed. Moreover, just as the highest animals have

been evolved from the simplest forms of life, so the highest faculties of the human mind have been evolved from the soul of the brute-beasts, and more remotely from the simple cell-soul of the unicellular Protozoa. As a consequence of these views Haeckel was led to deny the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and the existence of a personal God."

This is perhaps sufficient to show how completely "our monistic religion" is "in its most important principles, in agreement with the essential practical moral teachings of Christianity!"

And this is the system of "natural ethics" which "we are striving" to impose in the "free" school "for the moral upbringing of the young."

We should like very much to point several morals; but for the moment one must suffice; others must wait. The Catholic Church is fighting the greatest battle for freedom in the whole history of the human race in standing firm as the impregnable Rock on which she is built for the rights of conscience, the rights of parents, the rights of the individual, against the most intolerable form of tyranny—State absolutism in education.

"SUFFER THE LITTLE ONES TO COME UNTO ME"

"And they brought to Him young children, that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked them that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and said to them: Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark x, 13, 14.)

Down to the end of time will this little incident in the life of our Lord speak to the trusting and believing hearts of innocent children of the special and tender love His Sacred Heart cherishes for the little ones.

We all now feel the deep conviction that His Vicar, Pius X., truly interpreted that love when he decided that children as soon as they came to the use of reason, and understand that miracle of divine love, are to be allowed to come to their Sacramental Lord. Few there are who have not felt that in very truth Jesus again rebuked His disciples saying: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not."

But Pius X. left on priests and parents a solemn responsibility in the matter. No precise rule as to age can apply to all cases. No exact and definite instruction is laid down. Parents as well as pastors share the responsibility of teaching the little children, and share also, the responsibility of judging in each particular case whether or not the child has sufficient understanding of what he is doing to approach the Holy Table.

From the preface to an unique little Catechism for Communion Classes, and intended especially for the use of parents, we quote:

Were nothing further required than to commit those lessons (of any one of the many First Communion Catechisms) to memory there is really no reason why children might not be admitted to the Sacraments as soon as they are capable of learning a few chapters by rote. But they are to understand certain important truths. And the Rt. Rev. Bishop Bellord insists "that learning by rote should be secondary, and an occasional aid only to the exercise of the intellect. When children have read a lesson once or twice, or have it read to them and are then questioned about it, it will be found that they quickly get into the way of attending to sense rather than to words, and of answering more intelligently and accurately than when they are limited to one cut-and-dried set of half-understood formulas."

Catechism should be the most interesting subject imaginable to children. When it is mere catechism limited to set question and set answer it is often the very opposite. The father or mother who feels constrained to teach the sweet story of Christ in that way is to be pitied. And yet the Catechism itself, together with an unholy tradition, almost imposes that stupid method.

What makes this little Catechism unique is that it is full of questions but without answers. So that the parent or untrained teacher is literally forced to explain intelligently the fundamental truths in simple language. There is then contact of the understanding mind of the parent with the budding intelligence of the child. There is not a doubt in the world that other questions will suggest themselves to both parent and child, and the teaching becomes something living, interesting, and beautiful. What labor of love could be more beautiful and interesting than that of the father or mother impressing on the imagination of their child the image of the loving

Christ, and on its awakening and wonderfully receptive intelligence the Truths which He came into this world to teach.

No one with experience will doubt the marvellous receptivity of innocent childhood's mind and heart.

One of the effects of original sin we all know and remember is darkness of the understanding. The beclouding effects of actual sin we are more apt to forget. The clean mind and pure heart of the innocent child are perhaps the best possible ground for the good seed of the word of God.

"St. Basil's Catechism for First Communion Classes" will help parents very materially to discharge intelligently a duty which no Catholic father or mother will dare to shirk, or even to pass on to teacher or priest. These have their place and their duty in the instruction of the child. But the father's and mother's place and the father's and mother's duty are inescapably their very own. No one can relieve them of responsibilities and duties imposed by God Himself.

This unique and original, and, we venture to think, effective aid to Catechism teaching bears the Imprimatur of the Archbishop of Toronto and is published by the Basilian Fathers. (\$3.00 per hundred.)

NEW YEAR EXEMPLARS

During the year there passed away, in the heyday of their young manhood, two of our citizens whose memory bids fair to remain green in the land that honored them and was honored by them. One was prominent in the field of athletics; the other in the intellectual arena. We refer to "Glad" Murphy and Professor Kylie—two sodesignate the latter: for it is as a scholar and not as a soldier that he will be remembered by those who knew him best. It is not to add anything to the universal chorus of praise that marked the passing of these two noble sons of Canada and of the Church that we thus single them out; but rather to point to them as exemplars for our young men at this season of noble resolves and fervent resolutions.

One lesson that their lives teach is that each one of us exercises a greater influence for good or evil upon his associates than he wots of. No doubt Glad Murphy, the hero of many a hockey and football contest, the honorable, manly player of the game, the clean-living and conscientious Catholic, little dreamed of the wonderful power of his example upon his intimates who knew him and upon the crowd that watched him. It was not until the fatal accident had laid him on his deathbed, that something of the magnitude of the silent apostolate of that one young man was made manifest by the unusual tokens of appreciation and affection of which he was the recipient.

The same was revealed, in even a more striking manner, in the case of Professor Kylie. Although not much in the public eye, being of a retiring disposition, his death called forth from every section of the community and of the press such a spontaneous and eloquent expression of personal esteem and admiration for his strength and beauty of his character, as has fallen to the lot of few of our citizens, even among those occupying the most exalted position. Nor was his influence confined to Canada alone. A fellow student, writing from "somewhere in France," said of him: "Edward meant more to me than anyone in Canada, and of the many who mourn him as a national loss I am within the happy and now bereaved circle to whom the loss was, first of all, personal. I know just a little of his devotion to his own people—the beauty and the fragrance of that side of his character. He was to me more than a companion. He shaped my ideals more than anyone else. He made a Canadian of me." Another of his fellow students of Oxford, writing from far off India, said of him: "I think he was just the best man I ever knew—the purest and the gentlest, with a mind like silver refined in fire. The good he did to Canada and Balliol was immense. Personally I only know two Canadians of my time who could hold their own at that extraordinary college and impress the whole and not a part of it—Kylie and Patterson—both dead by the mysterious providence of God. I hope a double portion of his spirit will fall on some Toronto men of the new generation. He made the Catholic ideal a lovely thing."

This closing sentence sums up very succinctly Edward Kylie's mission. He indeed made the Catholic ideal a lovely thing, and, in doing so, he conferred a boon upon society and set a mark for the young men who were to come after him. A sympathetic editorial reference in a Toronto paper was prefaced by this remark: "Why Edward Kylie should be taken away is a question none of us can answer." We think the answer to that question is contained in these sentences from the Book of Wisdom: "A venerable old age is not that of long time, nor counted by the number of years; but the understanding of a man is grey hairs, and a spotless life is old age. He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding or deceit beguile his soul. Being made perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time." He, no doubt, would have done much for Canada and the Church if he had lived to the allotted span, but his seemingly untimely death did far more; for it brought under the influence of his example many who otherwise might not have known of him, and it left to be treasured in his Alma Mater, a Catholic exemplar that will be a beacon light to future generations of its students.

He possessed two traits of character that we especially commend to the youth of our day. The first was his devotion to and reverence for his parents. In this age, when children are so prone to forget the debt that they owe to their fathers and mothers; so careless of manifesting their interest in them and love for them, it is indeed refreshing to see one so honored for his intellectual attainments showing, with childlike simplicity, such filial affection and devotion. Inaugurate when undergraduates have such an exalted esteem of their own wisdom that they would not deign to ask counsel of anyone, it is edifying to see one of the most learned of their professors seeking the advice of his parents on every important step in his career.

The other trait, which suggests a much-needed lesson for the young—and older—Catholic of our day, was his loyalty to truth. We remember well the first lecture that he delivered in his native town after his post-graduate course in England. The subject was "Memories of Oxford;" the audience was, for the most part, non-Catholic. A smaller man might have trimmed his sails to suit the wind, might have made a bid for popularity by glossing over the history of the Catholic foundation and the Catholic traditions of Oxford. Not so Edward Kylie. He had learned to love those traditions; he was enamored of the golden days when the sons of St. Francis and St. Dominic held forth in old St. Mary's; and he spoke of them with all the ardor of an enthusiast. Nor did he fear to state the truth, that the University's decline coincided with the decline of Catholicism in England; nor that its rebirth was brought about by that great movement, whose leading spirit was Cardinal Newman, and which again made Oxford a dominating element in the life of the nation. Often, since that day when we have seen Catholic public men hedging and trimming and soft-pedaling, through lack of moral courage, we have thought of Edward Kylie's loyalty to truth, which has made his memory all the more revered without as well as within the household of the Faith.

THE GLEANER.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

A RABBI in a Methodist pulpit expounding the tenets of Judaism! That is the latest novelty in Toronto in the way of preparation for Christmas. Why should it not be followed up by an exposition of the attractions of Buddhism by a Brahmin; a discourse on Islamism by a Sheikh; a delineation of the beautiful tenets of Mormonism, as exemplified in the life of Brigham Young; and a lecture on out-and-out atheism by a disciple of Ingersoll or Bradlaugh? Anything, so long as it is a novelty, goes in such circles these days.

ONE EFFECT of the growing scarcity of paper is the appearance of a newspaper, the Cowiitz County Advocate, published in the State of Washington, printed on shingles. The enterprising proprietor, finding that owing to the exorbitant price of paper the sheet could be got out more economically in this way, immediately adopted it, and, apparently, to good purpose, for this news-shingle has increased the circulation. And the proprietor and editor is a woman! After this, who dare not be a suffragette!

IN AN address at the Bible College, Toronto, the Rev. Dr. James M. Gray, of Chicago, is reported to have said:

"The blood-bought church and the children of the devil lead us in praise of our dear and glorious God. It is terrible," exclaimed Dr. Gray. "There are men and women who have been singing in the theatre on Saturday, and come into the church on Sunday and lead in the singing of the praise of God. May the power of God come down upon us and separate us from these kind."

DOES THE Reverend Doctor mean that the mere fact of the adoption of the dramatic profession as a means of livelihood entitles men and women to be called "children of the devil," and to be excluded from Christian churches? What a theme for the poet, Burns! If the above correctly reports this modern "Holy Willie," his words will bear no other meaning. Strange, is it not, that a professional student of the Bible should have overlooked the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, and have had no room in his thoughts for One who bore the reproach of being the "friend of publicans and sinners." "It is terrible," he might have exclaimed in His regard, as well then as now.

ANOTHER EXPONENT of sectarianism who has been airing his broad-mindedness in Canada of late, is the notorious "Bishop" Burt who, as head of the American Methodist outfit in Rome for many years, earned an international reputation for scurrility, dishonest proselytizing tactics, and insolent bearing towards the Head of the Catholic Church. He gave himself credit for having planted a Methodist mission at the very door of the Vatican, and he was one of those responsible for the unfortunate Roosevelt episode in Rome, for which the ex-president is said to still owe him a grudge.

THE "BISHOP," the reporters say, "denounced modern Romanism," and assured his hearers that "it had nothing to do with New Testament Christianity but was simply a combination of Judaism and paganism." Perhaps that is why one of the Methodist churches opened its pulpit to a rabbi as chronicled above. They wanted to pump him as to the inward workings of that "Romanism" with which, on Burt's showing, he should be familiar. But rabbis ordinarily have a higher sense of decency and more respect for the feelings of others than preachers of the Burt type are capable of. Besides, they know something of the ways of the proselytizer, their own people having suffered from like agencies, much nearer home than Italy. We cannot help wondering what Burt's auditors thought of his tirade at this time against the religion of the majority of Britain's Allies. There is evidently a great field in Canada for Lloyd George's apostolate.

THE MAIL and Empire had some very timely remarks a few days ago on just such incidents as this. "In the churches," it said, "selfishness, ambition and uncharitableness are not completely overcome by even the powerful sentiment of patriotism. . . . The man who has a sharp tongue, a gift for saying smart things or a propensity to disparage others ought to put a guard on his tongue in these days." This is a very wise and necessary aphorism, and as true regarding churches as individuals. Can the Methodist congregation that listened throughout to the scurrilous tirade of an imported soul stealer without protest be considered as exempt from such an admonition. There were no doubt among his auditors many who are making fortunes out of the War. It would be interesting to the general public to have their definition of either patriotism or decency.

WHEN THE complete history of the defence of Verdun comes to be written it will stand out as one of the most remarkable events in all history. At present we get only glimpses, but these are sufficient to fix it in the mind of everybody, whether friend or foe, as the high-water mark of human fortitude and endurance. It has forever exalted on a pinnacle the glory of French military genius and French arms. But one feature of the defence which is generally lost sight of is that Verdun, like Paris, was saved by the motor car. That, at least, is the verdict of a well-informed writer in the Scientific American, whose article on the subject has just been brought to our attention.

TO UNDERSTAND how motor trucks saved Verdun, and why it was like a miracle, one must first of all understand the position of the French at the famous old fortress. Relatively, it is prodigiously strong, but the fate of Liege, Namur and Mauberge had demonstrated the utter futility of forts to withstand the most modern artillery. To General Joffre and his staff, moreover, Verdun was the weakest point on the whole French line for the simple reason that being a salient it was open to fire from three sides, and, because of the lack of railway facilities, it was the hardest point to supply. How the latter difficulty was overcome must forever rank high among both the romances of War and the achievements of organization. The story has not, that we are aware, been told in the Canadian press, and we propose, therefore, to outline it next week for the benefit of our readers. Space forbids that we should do so now.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE PROSPECTS OF PEACE

Operations at the various battle fronts, such as they are, are so completely overshadowed by considerations from all sorts of viewpoints of the proposed peace negotiations that little space and no prominence is given by the press to actual war news.

The great facts stand out that Germany has proposed not peace terms but a peace parley; that, while indicating that drastic concessions must be made by Germany, the Allies have deliberately refrained from rejecting outright the German proposal. On top of this comes the American note whose influence can hardly fail to give the impetus needed to convert the parley into a conference. Secretary of State Lansing, forgetting the discretion imposed by his official position and not fully realizing the importance that would necessarily attach to anything he might say in such a tremendous crisis, made a statement which was interpreted as an intimation, even a threat, that the United States might, if peace negotiations failed, enter the War. On which side might depend on the definition of aims and purposes in response to the American Note. Though this extraordinary pronouncement was later retracted and explained, the fact of the statement remains; and there is a feeling that the Secretary of State's indiscretion reveals a contingent policy of the United States. Whether the maladroitness has helped the cause of peace or added to the complications of the situation is yet to be seen.

The financial barometer is notoriously sensitive, but the tumbling of securities in all parts of the world indicates the belief that the end of hostilities, if not in sight, is well within the range of possibility.

Such is the situation as we go to press (Dec. 22.)

There is a marked moderation of that bellicose disposition to brand as treasonable all hope or talk of peace. Many of our papers and public speakers still, apparently, feel it incumbent on them to point out the obvious, and to prove the self-evident; but there is a growing disposition even amongst them to recognize the statesmanship and intelligence of the men at the helm of the ship of State, and to trust the wisdom of those on the watch-towers whose vision has a wider sweep and whose judgment and patriotism are not less sound than ours.

Of course negotiations will not be entered into unless there is solid ground to hope that they may have a successful issue; and even then they may have to be broken off in face of irreconcilable disagreements that may develop. Peace is not yet in sight by any means; the war may have to go on to the bitter end.

We may hope and pray, however, that peace with reparation for the past and adequate security for the future may be secured on some basis less unworthy of Christian civilization than the savage triumph of brute force. That is civilization's counsel of despair.

An interesting light is thrown on the whole situation by Hastings Smith, M. P. In the British House of Commons Mr. Smith, dressed in his khaki uniform, supporting the idea of peace negotiations thus concluded:

"If it were put to a vote of the men at the front whether—provided we could obtain guarantees that our honorable obligations would be fulfilled—we should then make a serious effort to get the parties together, then I am certain such a proposition