

The Catholic Record

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NEWS FROM IRELAND

That "no news is good news" is an old proverb expressing an obvious truth. Some years ago our columns were filled with news from Ireland; heartrending news it was for the most part though illumined by the reports of the heroic organized resistance of the youth of the nation to the infamies of the old regime in its Black and Tan stage.

Commenting on the results of these elections The Derry Journal said: "To those intimately acquainted with the working of Local Government in Ireland for, say, thirty or forty years, the results have an arresting significance."

The status of the Irish Free State is precisely that of Canada. It is expressly stated in the Anglo-Irish Treaty. They have their problems in Ireland as we have ours in Canada. They are as free as we to solve their own problems. Further political changes would help them as little as similar changes would help us.

So, though there was nothing of the startling or sensational about it, it was good news from Ireland to read in the report of a speech by President Cosgrave that "the standard size of the Irish egg and the correct percentage of water in first grade Irish butter are now realized to be matters of greater importance than the variant interpretations of political formulae."

The greatest of Irish problems is the achievement of national unity; the bringing together of North and South in cordial cooperation for the development of their common country. And this, too, is more largely an economic than a political problem. The anarchy of the Irregulars went far to justify the Partitionists of Ulster. The establishment of stable government insuring the protection of life and property, and the economic development of the Irish Free State, will go far to undo the mischief thus caused.

Upon a cynical view of the public mind and intelligence, there is a shade of truth in that, or seems to be; but it is, so far as it is true, an artificial condition; and political victories based on such methods are transitory, and are becoming more so.

Upemployment is one of the most serious elements in the Irish situation, but it seems to be not nearly so serious as it is in England nor in the six counties of the north of Ireland. At the end of August, the Minister of Finance for

Ulster asked the Belfast House of Commons to authorize an additional grant of 750,000 pounds sterling for the unemployment fund. Only last March, a similar sum was voted, and it was believed that it would be sufficient to finance the "doles"—that is, the allowances made to the unemployed. Altogether, over four million and a quarter pounds sterling have been advanced to the unemployment insurance fund—over one million pounds per year since the Belfast parliament came into existence.

Canada, too, may cherish the ideal of a completely independent Canada; may agitate and educate for the realization of that ideal. Fellow Canadians, who believe there is a greater future and a wider liberty for Canada within the sisterhood of nations that make up the British Empire, will concede to them the right to exercise their full influence in shaping the destiny of their native land.

Were we to elect our Governor General, and give him the style and title of President of Canada; were we to sever every tie that binds us to the mother-lands; in brief were Canada as independent and sovereign a State as it is possible to imagine in an age when, not the independence, but the interdependence of nations is forcing itself on the consciousness of the thinking world; were Canada an independent republic our national problems would remain—and would remain the same.

The Boundary question between North and South also furnishes news from Ireland from time to time in our cable despatches. We may have something to say about this later on. For the present we refer our readers to an article in another column entitled "Statesmanlike View of Irish Minister."

an opposing party; for the reaction will always more than outweigh the temporary success; and though it seems a long time to look ahead five years, five years is a short period in the life of a political party.

All political parties share the blame for the artificiality with which parties appeal to the electors and discuss before the public the political situation. But it is, we think, true that parties out of power are greater sinners in this matter than parties in power. We are talking now about the exaggeration and the recklessness which are commonly to be noted at election time and in the course of political campaigns.

But perhaps the most encouraging part of the genial and scholarly doctor's article is its concluding paragraph: "I met priests and laymen from the west; I talked with Dublin lawyers, physicians, merchants and workmen; I met university teachers and members of the religious orders—and I found no one who expressed any serious disaffection toward the present Government. Men, whom I knew had the best interests of Ireland at heart, assured me that they thought that the Government was doing wonderfully well with the extremely difficult task they had in hand."

There was a time when a large section of the people of the civilized world believed that the condition of the people could be made better and happier through radical changes in their political condition. These have been tried and have been found wanting. All over the world people now realize that such betterment depends not on political but economic conditions.

Sooner or later his methods react on himself. When a politician accustoms his public to exaggeration and alarm, he is preparing a pit into which he is sure to fall one day himself. We know that politicians are sometimes cynical; that they take the cynical view that if they tell the people the truth and no more than the truth they will not be believed; that the public like strong statements; do not care for half measures; are used to vigorous denunciation of one party by the other; and will take it that the politician who is moderate has no case.

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MEXICAN CATHOLIC WOMEN

ORGANIZE TO SAFEGUARD THE FAITH FOR THEIR CHILDREN

By Charles Phillips (Special Correspondent, N. C. W. C.)

Mexico City, Oct. 5.—The first International Congress of Latin-American Women was held recently in Mexico City. Its sessions took place in a building loaned for the purpose by the Mexican Government; the Government, in fact, manifested such an interest in the event that President Calles sent a personal representative to open the initial meeting and bring to it his formal indorsement. On the face of it this would appear to be a very significant piece of news, indicating, as one might suppose, marked progress and extensive organization among the women of the Latin-American countries, and especially among the women of Mexico, chosen, ostensibly, as hostesses for the Congress because of their leadership.

But this news is significant in quite another way; taken otherwise it is gravely misleading. The women of Latin-America are organized, in a certain measure; but they are far away yet from that degree of solidarity and international relationship which the calling of this Congress might be taken to denote. The real point is, not so much that an international gathering of Latin-American women was held, as that this Congress was indorsed, if not sponsored, by the Government of Mexico; was the guest of that Government in one of its public buildings freely given for the occasion; and was opened by a personal representative of the Mexican President. Why? Because the Congress, in spite of its name, was not really a representative gathering of Latin-American women at all, but a convention of Bolsheviki women, a mere mass meeting of the female malcontents, radicals, and fanatical would-be suffragist politicians of the Latin American countries, a group who had no more warrant to represent the women of Mexico or any other land in America than I have to speak for the Queen of the Hottentots.

CONGRESS WAS A SCANDAL

It is only a detail of the story, however interesting, that this Congress, scheduled to last three weeks, broke up in an Amazonian riot before its first week was finished. The delegates fought each other, even to tooth and nail, in quite the approved fashion set by their brothers of the Bolsheviki Mexican National Legislature, the only difference being that tongues and finger nails were used instead of guns. They shrieked tirades against the Pope, the Church, priest, religion; against everything that the women of Latin-America really stand for and reverence. In short, the Congress was a scandal that has brought the blush of shame to the cheeks of the women of Mexico and of every other country whose name was traduced by these rages. For the women of these countries are Catholic; they are not to be represented by a handful of unbalanced Balabanovs; and they can well be proud of the fact that they took no part in this farcical "Congress." If there was a Catholic woman in that gathering, she was silent (or silenced). So far as we learn no Catholic woman had a hand in it.

These are the external facts, with their obvious conclusion—that the Mexican Government headed by the Bolsheviki Calles, is turning every which way to propagate its Red Radical doctrines, aiming now in its latest move to win the interest and sympathy of women for its endeavors. The inner significance of the event, the truth that it brings home to the observer, is that the women of Mexico are staunchly Catholic; the backbone of the Church in Mexico; and that they, too, as we shall see, are organized, not so much in congresses and conventions as in actual constructive work for the social betterment and the preservation of the Faith of their native land.

I once asked an ex-governor of the State of Jalisco what would happen if that day the local authorities should start a general raid on Catholic churches and schools; would the people stand for it? "The women wouldn't," he promptly responded. And I knew that he spoke the truth, for already I had come to know of a dozen instances where, no matter what the timid, weak-kneed and time-serving male population did in the way of turning their backs to the face of trouble, the women had mustered their full strength and had defied the armed persecutors of the Faith. Often, too, with considerable good effect—as at Morelia, where they saved the beautiful old Church of San Jose from destruction at the hands of government troops sent to take it over in order to convert it into headquarters for the atheistical State Legislature; and at Morelia again, where they had driven the troops away from the orphan asylum and had saved the Sisters and their infant charges from being thrown out on the street.

WOMEN VALIANT DEFENDERS OF FAITH

But there is much more than this militant courage to the active Catholic life of the women of Mexico. As I have said, they are organized, and they are working tirelessly day and night, to safeguard the faith of their children—and, let it

be added, the faith of their husbands and their fathers, too! To accomplish this they have a number of national organizations, and these are unquestionably playing a leading part in combating the present persecution of the Church.

One of these organizations, the "Parents of Families," has an especial attraction for the American observer, it is so practical and it achieves such actual and immediate good, as well as laying solid foundations for the Faith. While not exclusively a woman's organization—for men, too, are parents in Mexico, though all too frequently they are not good Catholic parents—its work in the long run depends largely on the women, and it is the women who are doing most of that work.

PLEGDED TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION

This society is pledged especially to the cause of Christian education. The State schools of Mexico are frankly atheistic. The Catholic mothers of Mexico (perhaps a little more than the Catholic fathers) are determined that their children shall not lose their Faith in schools of this nature. So they have organized this "Parents of Families" society and through this organization they are supporting Catholic schools throughout the Republic; and they are doing this, let it be remembered, under the most severe handicaps and at the greatest sacrifice. "But how are those schools supported," I found myself asking time and again as I traveled the country over and visited them? "Who pays the rent for the buildings? Who pays the teachers?" "Almost invariably the answer was 'The Parents of Families.'" This society, with national headquarters here in Mexico City, is now organized in nearly every one of the twenty-eight States of the Union, carrying on this laudable work of supporting free Catholic schools; and besides this general support of elementary schools, it maintains one of the largest Catholic High Schools in the country. Great numbers of its members are very poor people, wage earners who can earn barely enough for an existence, but who nevertheless give out of their pitance regularly and freely to keep their children and their neighbors' children in Christian schools.

WORK OF WOMEN'S UNION

Among the organizations of Mexico exclusively for women the most important is the National Catholic Women's Union. This has now a membership running upward toward twenty thousand and is established in some twenty-three dioceses. It devotes itself to various works for the preservation of the Faith and the betterment of life among Mexican women. I have seen several of its activities in operation; night schools where poor girls are instructed in such trades as millinery and dressmaking; where business training is given, typewriting, stenography, bookkeeping; where fine sewing, embroidery, designing, are taught; and where, above all else, there are not only classes in rudimentary education but in catechism and Christian doctrine. The charts for Bible study used in this department would be a salutary thing to exhibit for the benefit of those American evangelical missionaries who spread daily the calumny that Mexican Catholics are kept in ignorance of the written Word of God. In Guadalajara, where I found more evidence of organized Catholic life than anywhere else in Mexico (and where, significantly, the persecution is the worst) the National Women's Union, besides its schools, operates a free clinic for children.

I could not help but be impressed by the types of women heading and conducting these works. Quiet and dignified and hard working, they are plainly not the sort to be intrigued into sensational and superficial social movements and sporadic "congresses."

Subsidiary to the National Catholic Women's Union is what is popularly called the "Vanguardias." This is distinctly a young women's society, practically a training ground for the older and larger organization. Wherever the Union is found, there the Vanguardias also are to be found, working among the girls and younger women and carrying on an activity not unlike that of the Y. W. C. A. in our own country, though of course much more limited.

POPULAR LIBRARIES OPERATED

Still another important women's organization here, one devoted more particularly to intellectual improvement, is that of "The Popular Libraries of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart." Its title reveals its aims; its chief endeavor is to combat the spread of atheistical literature and at the same time to supply clean mental entertainment for all who read. It operates libraries in almost every State of the Republic.

One of the strongest Catholic organizations in Mexico is the National Catholic Labor Confederation. This, naturally, includes many women workers; and these, more and more, are forming themselves into particular units which are not only a vital factor in the conservation of Catholic laborers' rights but are unquestionably an inspiration to the whole movement of organized Catholic labor in Mexico.

Besides these organizations of Mexican Catholic women devoted specifically to social betterment and the preservation of the Faith, there are of course innumerable sodalities

REUNION

DEAN THINKS THE ANGLICAN DELEGATES AT MALINES INCOMPETENT TO SPEAK

LONDON, Eng.—The Dean of Durham (Dr. Hensley Henson) declares that if the Anglican representatives at Malines are prepared to negotiate for reunion on the basis of the principles of the Council of Trent they are "totally incompetent to speak for the Church of England." His protest follows the publication here of a statement attributed to Abbe Portal to the effect that the parties engaged in the Malines conferences had reached an agreement on the principles of the Council of Trent.

Bishop Henson, in a letter to the Times, says: "If it be the case that the representatives of the Church of England are prepared to negotiate with the Church of Rome on the basis of the principles of the Council of Trent, and that they agree to reduce the whole issue between the Churches to the single question how far the admitted supremacy of the Pope extends, then I submit that they are totally incompetent to speak for the Church of England, and are giving a wholly false impression of the Anglican position to those with whom they are 'conversing.'"

The accuracy of the summary of Abbe Portal's remarks reported by the press here is open to question. The Abbe, speaking at a congress in Brussels on "Union of the Churches" and referring to the Malines discussions is reported to have said: "The Anglicans recognized that the rights of the Pope were superior to those of Bishops, but they affirmed that the rights of the latter were of a divine nature."

The Universe declares that the Abbe Portal could not have said anything so absurd, adding: "Every Catholic, as much as every Anglican, affirms that episcopal authority is of divine and not merely of ecclesiastical ordering."

POLITICAL ABUSE

By THE OBSERVER

No good ever comes of exaggeration. On occasion, it may seem to a politician that he is getting results by exaggerating and by using unlimited abuse against his opponents, but every politician lives long enough to see chickens of that sort come home to roost.

Sooner or later his methods react on himself. When a politician accustoms his public to exaggeration and alarm, he is preparing a pit into which he is sure to fall one day himself. We know that politicians are sometimes cynical; that they take the cynical view that if they tell the people the truth and no more than the truth they will not be believed; that the public like strong statements; do not care for half measures; are used to vigorous denunciation of one party by the other; and will take it that the politician who is moderate has no case.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN CONNECTION with the present stirring of missionary enterprise on this Continent, it is pleasant to note no slackening off, but rather increased zeal in older lands. In August last the National Council of the Work of the Propagation of the Faith issued its half-yearly report on the results of last year's collection in Italy and other countries. France, as it is well-known, is the birthplace of that great Society, and, notwithstanding the truculent attitude of its Government towards the Church, that country has ever maintained its proud place at the forefront of foreign missionary endeavor. That the movement is not confined to France, however, is evident from the following figures:

MILAN, the ancient See of St. Ambrose, which has a Catholic population of 2,500,000, comprised in 800 parishes, increased its contribution of 21,000 lire in 1918, to 230,000 in 1924. Vicenza, another Italian diocese, having 534,000 Catholics in 219 parishes, which in 1919 contributed 43,000 lire, increased that sum in 1924 to 450,000. Italy as a whole, with its Catholic population of 38,000,000, gave 2,000,000, which the National Council, by bringing the needs of the work more directly home to the people, hopes to double this year.

SPAIN, the real pioneer in foreign missions, and which has dotted the world place names from the Catholic calendar, gives promise of once more renewing her zeal in that direction. The contribution to the work of the Propagation of the Faith last year was 4,300,000