

7  
CANADIANS

TO ARMS!

7

BY  
MAJOR THE REV. DR. JOHN J. O'GORMAN, C.E.F.



1916  
Extension Print, 67 Bond St.  
Toronto :

HC901

P3

no. 0958

P\*\*\*



National Library  
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada

Imprimatur

✠ NEIL McNEIL,

Archiepiscopus

Torontinus

## THE DUTY

"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." (Mark xii: 17)

You cannot render unto God the things that are God's, unless you render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. You cannot serve God unless you serve your country.

In time of peace a citizen has three chief duties to fulfill, corresponding roughly to the judicial, executive and legislative powers of the State. He must obey all just laws, he must pay his taxes, and he must make an intelligent and conscientious use of his electoral franchise and a socially helpful use of his opportunities in life. In time of war these duties remain, and indeed a special effort should be made to eradicate Canada's national sin, organized graft in public life. War, however, imposes an additional duty on the citizen—the duty of protecting the sovereign rights of the state endangered by the enemy. Our duty is to fight for victory and pray for peace.

Canada is now at war. Patent as that fact is there are many who do not realize it, and apparently some few who deny it. The fact however is undeniable: Canada—that is the whole Canadian nation—is at war with the Turco-Teuton monarchies.

Before the present war broke out, various theories had been put forth by Canadian statesmen concerning Canada's attitude should England become engaged in a European war. Whatever may be thought of these theories in the abstract, one thing is incontrovertible; when the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland became involved in a war with Germany on August 4, 1914, the whole British Empire became involved in a war for its integrity and existence. If the Dominion of Canada did not wish in August, 1914, to join in the Great War, there was but one alternative, to secede from the British Empire, and obtain international recognition as a sovereign State. There is no Canadian citizen, however, who would have favoured secession from the Empire. For over one hundred and fifty years, Canada has formed part of the British Empire. During that century and a half, the attitude of the British Government to Canada has been that of a benefactor. An unprejudiced study of the relations between the Mother Country and Canada proves, that apart from the limitations and imperfections inherent in all human relationships, Britain has ever been the benefactor, and Canada the beneficiary. Whether you consider the relations of the Home Government towards the French-Canadian, towards the Catholic Church, or towards colonial autonomy, or study any other test case, the answer is the same. Britain has been our benefactor. If certain phases of her dealings with us have at times caused anxiety and annoyance, these troubles were but slight and passing and count for naught when we sum up the history of one hundred and fifty-four years. I know of no two nations in history which have so constantly retained their roles of Benefactor and Beneficiary as Britain and Canada from 1760 to 1914. Had Canada deserted Britain in her hour of trial in August, 1914, there would have been few examples in history of ingratitude so black. The Mother Country has lavished upon Canada, her son, both her care and her love, she has supported and protected him. Now that the parent was in danger, would the son like a selfish coward disown her and abandon her to her fate. No! A thousand times, no! When the guilty invasion of Belgium ushered the world into a new epoch in its history, Canada, not forgetful of the Fourth Commandment, proclaimed to the world that she would stand by the Mother Country. The Canadian Government pledged armed support to the Empire. Canada began, in gratitude and in justice, to pay her debt to her benefactor.

The day the war broke out, the theoretical discussion of Canada's relations to the Empire ceased. Canada—the whole Canadian nation—was, as an

integral part of the British Empire, at war. Since then Canada has been just as much at war as if the Germans were in Prince Edward Island, instead of in Belgium. Were it not for the British fleet, they would have long since conquered Prince Edward Island. The national interests of Canada are being to-day attacked and defended on the fields of Flanders. The duty of the men of Canada to defend their country by force of arms is just as real, just as pressing, just as imperative to-day, as it would be were German Zeppelins dropping bombs on Ottawa.

No apology is required for a sermon on Canada's duty in the present crisis. Canada's relationship to the Great War is so fundamental, so many-sided, so far-reaching, that there is no one man who has an adequate comprehension of everything it means. Hence it is a question which must be approached from very many sides, and studied earnestly and honestly by many minds. The moral and religious aspects of this question are a fit subject for pulpit treatment. There are some who would confine pulpit preaching to pious platitudes, who would permit us to teach the principles of Christianity and make such application of them as is found in classic sermon-books or in manuals of theology, but who prevent us endeavouring to apply these principles to the questions of the day. These people would minimize the function of the Christian religion. Religion is no mere academic theory or emotional excitant. It is the greatest force in this world. There is no question whose moral and religious aspects do not fall under the guidance of religion. Certainly purely political questions, which involve no moral principle, are not for the pulpit. But most of the problems which agitate society have a pronounced moral bearing, and the Christian teacher must face them and attempt to solve them.

The question as to along what lines the relations of Canada and Britain should develop is indeed one which is not for the pulpit. On the other hand, however, as Canada is officially and effectively participating in this war, it is within the province of a bishop or priest to urge the members of his flock to fulfill their war-duties. For one cannot be a good Christian if one is a bad citizen. He who is disloyal to his country is disloyal to the Church. He who is only partially patriotic is only partially religious; for patriotism is a virtue. At all times and in all places the Catholic Church has loyally and enthusiastically supported the legitimate authority of the State, and neither sneers nor slanders will cause her to change her conduct. She practices herself what she teaches to her children: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God, the things that are God's."—Mark XII:17.

That it is Canada's duty in the present crisis to fight with the Empire in defence of her national rights and liberties as a British self-governing Dominion is the teaching of every Catholic bishop. Thus, for example, the Archbishop of Montreal, in his Laval University address, defended and defined Canada's relation to the war as follows: (I summarize somewhat his remarks.)

"England did not wish for war. Her reason for entering it was to avenge Belgium and to safeguard justice, liberty, right and honour. Canada is not an independent State, nor is she neutral. She is an autonomous Dominion in the British Empire, and since Britain is at war, there result for us sacred obligations. While Canada is not attacked directly, she is attacked indirectly. She is menaced, and therefore must be defended. Were England defeated, Germany's first prey would be Canada. Hence we must do our utmost, for the fate of Canada is dependent upon the success of the British arms. The Bishops of Quebec, at the very beginning of the war in a joint Pastoral letter, taught that it was the duty of Canada to aid England."

In this Laval recruiting speech of Mgr. Bruchesi, there is no politics, but there is patriotism. Canada's duty to participate in this war is no longer debatable. It was decided a year and a half ago by the Canadian Parliament.

Now, when a State is at war, it has the authority to order all its able-bodied citizens to take up arms in its defence. The Parliament of Canada has this sovereign power. A State has, moreover, the authority to command its citizens to fight for her, not merely within her own territory but also, if necessary, on foreign fields. The Parliament of Canada has this power, and could, if the laws already in force be not sufficient, pass an Act this coming Session to put it into effect. Instead, however, of exercising its undoubted right of sending Canadian soldiers to Flanders by conscription, the Canadian Government has called upon its able-bodied citizens to enlist voluntarily for Overseas Service.

The further question yet remains. How is the general duty of the Canadian nation to participate in this war to be determined for and applied to the individual citizen? There are some, second to none in their loyalty and purity of purpose, who maintain that till the State calls its citizens to the colours by conscription, the duty of becoming a soldier is not sufficiently precise to oblige the individual; that while voluntary enlisting is desirable and patriotic and praiseworthy and meritorious, it is not, strictly speaking, a duty. This is a respectable opinion, one which may be safely defended and followed. However, it appears to me that while this theory meets ordinary requirements, it falls short in the present extraordinary circumstances of indicating the full duty of the citizen.

For it will be admitted that there is contained fundamentally, at least, in the natural law an obligation of defending one's country, when the latter is in dire need, and we are in a position to do so. When a country is defending herself, as Canada is to-day, by a just defensive war, and the peril, as is the present one, is grave, the citizen, who is in a position to do so, is bound by the natural law, that is by those obligations arising from the very nature of things, to fight for his country. Now when the Sovereign power is not in a position to call upon him by conscription to perform this duty, it is the duty of the citizen to act without waiting for official compulsion. Here is a case for the well-known principle: The safety of the State is the supreme law. This is all the more certain when, as in the present case, the Government urges him in every possible way, apart from compulsion, to perform this duty. An official call has gone forth for half a million men, that is, for all our available able-bodied unmarried men, and for such married men whose duties permit them to go. The Government has based its general call to the colours on the fundamental natural obligation binding the citizen, who is in a position to do so, to defend his country when the latter needs him. *Hence, I have maintained and do maintain, not as a defined article of faith, but as a reasoned and reasonable moral opinion, that by virtue of the natural law which imposes upon citizens, who are in a position to do so, the obligation of defending their country when the latter is fighting for her liberty and existence, and by virtue of the just action of our Government in calling for half a million men, which is practically the whole available manhood that our country can spare, the able-bodied Canadian citizen who is not detained by a more urgent duty is in conscience bound to enlist.*

Do not tell me that a law must have a sanction, and that there is no sanction to enforce the obligation of enlisting. It is true that he who is in a position to enlist, and refuses to do so, is not fined, is not imprisoned. But who will say that he is not punished? What greater punishment could there be than to be stigmatised as a shirker? That the common sense of the community calls the citizen who though able and free to enlist will not do so, a shirker, is to my mind an additional proof that there is a duty to enlist. There can be no shirker unless there be a duty which has been shirked. Since there are shirkers, it shows that the common sense of the community recognizes the duty of voluntary enlisting. No imprisonment can be a greater

punishment than that meted out to the shirker. For the shirker the whole world is a prison. No matter where he goes he will be known and treated as one who forfeited his own self. Were a Canadian shirker, after the war, to go even to Germany, he would be treated by the very Germans as a man who was no man.

If enlisting at present cannot be said to be a duty because we have no conscription law, then it would be merely a praiseworthy counsel of perfection, like going to be a missionary among the heathen Chinese. To work for the conversion of the Chinese people to the Christian faith is admirable, praiseworthy, meritorious and heroic. But it is not the duty of any Canadian citizen. No Canadian citizen is a shirker because he declines an invitation to go to China. Who will then say that when one's country is in dire peril, as Canada is to-day, no citizen has the obligation of enlisting as a soldier, because the Government, for excellent reasons, has not passed a conscription law? While it would be wrong to call a counsel a command, it is equally objectionable to hold that there are no obligations without formal laws. On this point let me quote the words of the late Cardinal Manning: "The notion of obligation has been so identified with laws, canons, vows and contracts, that if these cannot be shown to exist no obligation is supposed to exist. It is true that all laws, canons, vows and contracts lay obligations upon those who are subject to them. But all obligations are not by laws, nor by canons, nor by vows, nor by contracts. There are obligations distinct from and anterior to all these bonds. Faith, hope, charity, contrition, piety, all bind the soul by the most persuasive and constraining obligations. The law of liberty binds by love, gratitude and generosity. Compared with these it may be said that all bonds are as the letter that may kill to the spirit which gives life."<sup>9</sup>

The Bishop of Northampton has applied this doctrine to the duty of voluntary enlisting in a sermon he preached last April on, Our Heroic Dead. He said:

"The moral obligation of the individual citizen is equally imperative whether his country's call reaches him as a compulsory law or as a freeman's opportunity. The voluntary system does not mean liberty to give or withhold service. It is not a trap to catch the young, the thoughtless, the adventurous, the brave, and to screen the shirker, the money-grubber and the craven. If it worked in so ignoble a fashion it would break down in a month amidst the execration of mankind. Its success depends upon the universal recognition of a universal duty, to place our all at the disposal of our country—our manhood, our wealth, our industry, our talents, our health, our limbs, our life itself. It is the spontaneous mobilization of an entire people: the self-confidence of a race which knows that its slackers and shirkers will always be a negligible quantity. Thus, from the moral standpoint, the main difference between a voluntary and a compulsory system appears to be this: under conscription the legislator decides for each citizen what form of service he shall render; under the voluntary system the decision rests with the citizen himself. It leaves him to weigh before the tribunal of his conscience, whatever pleas withhold him from the post of danger: the plea of age, the plea of health, the plea of domestic ties, the plea of necessary employment in the public interest. Such a decision is always momentous even for the bravest. But for a true man and a true Christian it will never hang long in the balance. Unless the plea for exemption is clear and peremptory, he will find his place in the firing line." (Quoted in *The Month*, June, 1915.)

These words, be it remembered, were spoken in England some months before the Derby scheme went into force. What this Catholic Bishop said of England, a Catholic priest may say of Canada.

Hence, I conclude that the duty of enlisting, for the Canadian, especially

<sup>9</sup>Eternal Priesthood, p. 56.

for the unmarried Canadian, who is in a position to go, is a strict obligation, or is on the eve of becoming one. Let me mention a couple of principles which the Canadian must bear in mind while he is examining his conscience as regards his duty to his country. The fundamental principle is this: *the able-bodied Canadian of military age, who has not enlisted for Overseas Service, is in duty bound to do so unless a more urgent duty keeps him at home.* Exempted, however, from this duty are those Canadian citizens who were born in enemy countries, and of whom nothing more is asked than that they be peaceful, loyal citizens of this, their adopted country. Other able-bodied Canadians may be divided into two classes: the unmarried and the married. Canada has called for 500,000 soldiers. That means without the shadow of a doubt, that she requires every unmarried man, fit to be a soldier, to enlist, unless he is not free to do so, either because parents or others absolutely need him, or because unrelinquishable duties detain him, or because he has just reason to believe that he is rendering more service to Canada by remaining at his present occupation at home. As regards the married men of military age and fitness, if their wives and children can get along without them, their duty of enlisting, though less clear and less urgent than that of the unmarried, may nevertheless be a real one. It is for the individual conscientiously to decide his own case. Tens of thousands of married men have already left all to serve their country. Parents or wives, when advising those nearest and dearest to them about enlisting, are in conscience bound to act with the same impartiality as if they were deciding a stranger's case.

Let me sum up this argument as follows: The Canadian Government has undoubtedly a right to call as it did for half a million soldiers. This call obliges primarily the unmarried men. The total number of unmarried men, who are free to go, is less than half a million. Therefore, in my opinion, every able-bodied Canadian bachelor, who is not detained by a more urgent duty is in conscience bound to enlist. What the Bishop of Northampton said in England last April is equally true of Canada to-day. "The voluntary system," said this Catholic Bishop, in the sermon already referred to, "is no less obligatory in conscience than the system of conscription." For had even one man the right to shirk his duty, then half a million men had that same right. That the State in this world crisis be not at the mercy of the shirker, the Government intends to bind and has bound in conscience all able-bodied, unmarried men, not already fulfilling a more urgent duty, to enlist for the Canadian Expeditionary Force.

Another duty imposed upon him who is about to enlist is that he should offer his services for that particular department in the army for which he is best fitted. Thus, for example, for a priest or physician without necessity to enlist as a mere private, were to show an extraordinary lack of judgment. For the priest it would be, in addition, a violation of the laws of the Church. If the ministerial services of a particular priest or the professional services of a particular physician, be not required in the army, then it is his duty to fulfill these services at home. There are cases where it requires less courage to enlist than to remain at home, and be exposed to unjust suspicions and even taunts of thoughtless, self-constituted judges of their fellow-men. More than soldiers are required to win a war. What has been said of priests and physicians applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to other similar cases. Under conscription, the assigning to each individual of his task is done by the Government. Under voluntary enlistment, it must be done to a large extent by the individuals themselves. Voluntary enlistment undoubtedly imposes a much greater burden on the conscience of the individual. Let us beware of increasing the load, by rashly judging the motives of those who have not enlisted. If the day of general judgment must be anticipated, then let it be after the war.

## II..

## THE SACRIFICE

Enlisting for Overseas Service means a sacrifice. This very fact should be an additional motive to urge us on; for there is nothing so essentially Christian as sacrifice. Every man who is about to enlist should count the cost of the sacrifice and see whether he have wherewith to complete it. Not with the intention of sitting down and asking for caitiff terms of peace, but that he may begin by a complete renouncement of all that he hath. He will thus be prepared for any sacrifice he may be called upon to make once he is a soldier. The man who enlists must separate himself from his family and his friends. He inevitably risks his future business prospects. He must be ready for wet, cold, hunger, excessive fatigue and an iron discipline. He must be prepared to face courageously sickness, wounds and death. Now citizens of no faith at all have courageously begun and completed this sacrifice. Men whose past life had been anything but religious have transformed themselves by this sacrifice into heroes. Shall, then, the practising Christian hang back, when the prodigal son is enjoying the feast of sacrifice? It were a disgrace to Christianity if those who are considered as model Christians were to shirk the first real sacrifice they were ever called upon to make. Only he is obedient, who is obedient unto death. Only he loves his neighbour, who is willing when necessary to lay down his life for him. Without obedience and without love, there is no Christianity. "For the definition of Christianity is the imitation of Christ."

Now there are three degrees in the imitation of Christ. The first degree consists in loving sacrifices sufficiently to accept them willingly when duty imposes them on us, even though they demand all that we have and are. This degree is obligatory on all Christians. *If then it is your duty to enlist, embrace the sacrifice with all your heart and soul, or you are no Christian.*

The second degree consists in an entire indifference as regards pleasure or suffering, health or sickness, esteem or disdain, life or death, if the one or the other be equally conducive to a fulfillment of the will of God. When a man is so disposed, he does not wait till enlisting becomes for him a command. He does not wait till his country is tempted to use conscription to force him to do his duty. Even before the call to enlist can oblige him in conscience, he acts. As soon as he sees that he can conscientiously risk his life for his friends, he enlists. He takes as his own, the glorious motto of the Jewish Prince and High-Priest, Simon the Machabee: "Far be it from me to spare my life in all this time of trouble; for I am not better than my brethren." I Mach. XIII.: 5. Such men are heroes.

The third degree is the most perfect. These are they who, in order to imitate more perfectly their Saviour, prefer the privations and sufferings of the soldier to the riches and pleasures of home and friends, who prefer the sacrifice of their own limbs and lives to the sacrifice of the limbs and lives of their friends, and who only rejoice if worldlings call them fools for having abandoned all out of love of God and their neighbour. To this class belong those French Jesuits and other religious expelled from their own country by the yet existing tyrannous laws of the Third Republic, who have returned at once to France at the call to arms to be required to serve not as priests, whose mission it is to save the sinner and tend the sick and dying, but as soldiers whose duty it is to kill, and who, when the war is over, will, not improbably, with the very crosses of the Legion of Honour on their breasts, be hounded



once more out of their own country as if they were wolves. Such a soldier is a saint.

"This is he  
Whom every man in arms should wish to be."

Be not terrified at the cost of the sacrifice. Let our motto be that of Judas Machabeus: "They came against us with an insolvent multitude, and with pride, to destroy us, and our wives and our children and to pillage us. But we will fight for our lives and our laws." (1 Mach. III:20.) The man who would not fight for Canada, as she is to-day, would not defend a Garden of Eden. Let us do our share in winning this war, and then those of us who survive will be in a position to help in remodelling Canada after our ideals in the reconstruction period.

Let those who are prevented by a more urgent duty and those who are fearful stand back, but let the soldiers of Canada come forward: The Machabean leader, we read in Holy Writ, "appointed captains over the people, over thousands, and over hundreds, and over fifties, and over tens, and he said to them that were building houses or had betrothed wives or were planting vineyards, or were fearful that they should return every man to his house. And Judas said: "Gird yourselves and be valiant men and be ready against the morning, that you may fight with these nations that are assembled against us to destroy us. For it is better for us to die in battle than to see the evils of our nation. Nevertheless, as it shall be the will of heaven, so be it done." (1 Mach. III: 56-60.)

### III.

## THE ENEMY

But, mark you, while I say to every able-bodied man of military age, who is not bound by a more pressing duty—"You shall enlist"—I would impress it indelibly upon the conscience of every such man, that *our duty is to fight Germans, not to hate them*. Frequently since the beginning of the war, I have preached this truth from this pulpit. A Christian is never permitted to hate anyone. We must hate sin, but love the sinner. Let us hate the evil the enemy has done, but let us beware of degrading ourselves by hating the enemy. Let us pray for the conversion of the enemy, not for his annihilation. There is no conquest so complete as that which converts an enemy into a friend. Let Canada beware of adopting towards the Germans the attitude of the Pharisee towards the Publican. The Germans are neither neo-pagans nor barbarians. They are just as civilized and just as Christian as we are. I say so, because I know them. I enjoyed the hospitality of their country as a student for two years, and I have kept in touch with them ever since. Undoubtedly there is a powerful un-Christian Kultur in Germany, but it is combated by all the German Catholics and by an important body of the German Protestants. The main body of the German people is staunchly Christian. The great tragedy and the great danger of this present war lie precisely in this: The British Empire is fighting against one of the most cultivated and efficient of Christian nations. With Germany it is a case of "corruptio optimi pessima." When a good man goes wrong, he goes very wrong. Everything that is good in him is directed to the wrong end.

Germany was exposed to an extremely enticing temptation—the temptation to seize territory from those who were ill-able to defend it. Germany yielded to the temptation and invaded Belgium. The British Empire, containing one-quarter of the globe, was exposed to no such temptation. England's desire was to hold what she had; and, no matter by what means some

of those territories were won, no one will deny that her title to them now is a just one. Since the passing of the Irish Home Rule Bill, which is not a "scrap of paper," but an irrevocable Magna Charta, no British Dominion wishes to secede from the Empire. Germany was tempted in self-interest to wage an unjust war of aggression, and has done so. England's interest, on the contrary, lay in the fulfillment of her duty of defending the integrity and liberty of her Empire, and the national existence of friendly nations. England's interests compelled her to wage a just, defensive war, and she has done so. Hence, we are in the right; and Germany is in the wrong. Let us be content with that fundamental and all sufficient fact. Let us not weaken our case by assuming a pharisaical air of faultless and exclusive righteousness, or by attributing to our enemy all the vice of hell. For it is because 90 per cent. of the German people are convinced of the justice of their cause that that nation is waging war with a patriotism, courage and intelligence, that have never, perhaps, been excelled. Despite the policy of frightfulness, despite the unjust methods of submarine and Zeppelin warfare, which we justly condemn and detest, the Germans are an enemy worthy of our mettle. It will require incalculable effort, and alas, incalculable sacrifices, to defend the integrity of the British Empire from the men who have conquered Belgium, Courland, Poland, Lithuania, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. It is for that very reason, if we cherish British traditions, if we desire liberty and peace, we must put every man we can into the firing line.

It is indeed tragic for a Christian priest to ask Christian men to fight their fellow Christians, but the tragedy is not of my making. I would give a thousand lives, if I had them, to bring back peace to the world, but, humanly speaking, I know of no way of obtaining peace except by defeating the Germans. There can be no peace until the Germans leave Belgium or are put out of it. Far from being willing to leave Belgium, the Germans are ready to conquer half the world, if they can. Only last week I saw the *Koelnische Volkszeitung* of December 2, 1915. It is one of the leading papers of Germany. In that paper I read: "The longer the war lasts, the more Germany will get out of it. Therefore we want no premature peace." The paper points out with pardonable pride, and it seems to me who have no military knowledge, with truth, that Germany to-day is stronger than she was a year ago. With such a foe arrayed against us, it is idle to deceive ourselves as to the gravity of the situation. *The whole British Empire must mobilize its every force if we are to defend what is ours.* We do not seek to destroy or tear apart the German Empire, as some war-mad journalists would fain have us believe. Canada is to be consulted in drawing up the terms of peace; and Canada, which entered this war without the desire or intention of gaining an inch of territory, and which has already made heroic sacrifices to reestablish international justice, certainly Canada, and the whole British Empire which is animated by a similar spirit, will demand and obtain a just and honourable peace for all concerned, "based on understanding and not on hatred, to the end that peace shall endure."

Meanwhile we must protect ourselves. Those eligible Canadians who have not yet become soldiers, have not failed to do so for lack of courage to perform a patriotic duty. They wait because they do not yet see their duty. It is not patriotism our slackers lack, it is imagination. They are willing to defend Canada, were she attacked; and they will not defend Canada now when she is attacked. Their imagination cannot look through a telescope and see that Canada's first line of defence is in Flanders, and that it is being shelled daily. Were the Germans to land half a million men at Quebec, these slackers would swamp the recruiting offices. But it would be too late. If Canada's first line of defence in Flanders were definitely broken, her second line of defence on the shores of the St. Lawrence would be very insecure. But

these unimaginative slackers say: the Germans cannot break through the French and British lines on the West. It is difficult to be certain of this when we remember that during the past year, Germany with a small part of her forces was able to prevent the French and British armies from dislodging her from one inch of French and Belgian soil, while at the same time the main German and Austrian armies won back Galicia, conquered Courland, Lithuania, Poland, Serbia, Montenegro and Albania, and opened up communications with rich and far distant Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. I am not a pessimist, but I do not want to salute the spiked helmet in my own country. France cannot defeat Germany. The soldiers of the British Empire must. France at a terrible and irreparable loss has checked the German advance. We must drive it back. If ten thousand Canadian soldiers turned the scale last spring when the Germans were about to capture the rest of Belgium, and probably Calais, who will be bold enough to say that Canada's half million men will not be just what is required to break the western deadlock and save Hiberno-British and Latin civilization from being trampled under by Prussian Kultur? If Germany breaks through the Western lines and destroys the British and French armies, an attack on Canada would be an almost inevitable result. In that case the United States could not and would not defend us. It is idle to depend upon the British Navy as if its power were something preternatural or miraculous. It was made by men, and can be destroyed by men. A new type of submarine might render it obsolete any day. This is not probable but it is possible, and perhaps more improbable things have happened in this war. If the Germans can smash through the Allied Western Line, there is nothing impossible in their landing half a million men in Quebec. It would not be pleasant to have them repeat in Quebec the procession of 500,000 soldiers that they led through Brussels. Were they to get that far, I fear the most we could do would be to entrench west of the Great Lakes. I do not believe for a moment that all this will happen. It will not happen because the Germans will not break through our Western lines. But they will be prevented from doing it not by our talk, but by our soldiers. Men, if you would defend Canada, come to Flanders!

#### IV.

### THE CATHOLIC SOLDIER

Catholics of Canada, your Catholicity is now being tested by the white fire of sacrifice. Now is the time to act. When the war is over, it will be idle to relate what Catholic Canadians did in the War of 1812. The question will be: What did Catholic Canadians do in the War of 1914? A census will be taken of the shirkers of Canada. Every Catholic in that number will be a scandal to the Church. It will not suffice that we shall have done as well as our non-Catholic neighbours. We claim, and rightly so, to possess privileges not shared by them—an infallible guide in faith and morals, seven sacraments, the sacrifice of the Mass. People will judge of the value of these things by the quality of our conduct. Even those who hate us, even the professional traducers of the Catholic Church, will demand, and with justice, that we shall have done more than others. And if we fail—but no, that cannot be. We, the successors of men whose heroism in the face of barbarous warriors first sanctified the soil of Ontario, we, the French sons of Crusaders, and we, the Irish and Scottish sons of Penal Law martyrs, we Catholics who are the heirs of nineteen centuries of Christian heroism—we cannot fail. Therefore enlist.

The Catholic men of Canada must so act to-day, that in future generations their descendants may look back to their heroic sacrifices and exclaim:

"Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,  
But to be young was very heaven."

Surely for the soldier of Christ there is no truer heaven in this world than the glorious opportunity for a great sacrifice in a noble cause.

I am not looking at the soldier's life from the sentimental standpoint of the dreamer. I know its dangers, both physical and moral. I am aware that all soldiers are not saints, that all are not even moderately good Christians. But if you wish to keep company only with the good, "You must needs," as St. Paul says, "go out of this world." (I Cor. v: 10.) When Catholic soldiers are properly provided with Catholic chaplains, their religious interests are just as safe in the trenches of Flanders as in the streets of Ottawa. We all know, however, how the unreasonable delay of the British War Office in supplying Irish Catholic soldiers with a sufficient number of Catholic chaplains delayed in the early months of the war recruiting in Ireland very considerably. It would appear that the Catholic Canadian soldiers who were in France last year were not adequately supplied with Catholic chaplains. As soon, however, as the attention of our Minister of Militia was called to the fact, a number of additional Catholic chaplains were appointed. Catholics have very real and very specified needs in this regard. Just as it is necessary for Catholic soldiers to wash, and to be fed, and to be cared for when sick, so also it is necessary that they be given an opportunity of receiving the Sacraments of Penance, Holy Eucharist and Extreme Unction. *A regiment of the most splendid non-Catholic chaplains in the world could not thrive, housed or encled a single Catholic soldier.* Catholic soldiers, no matter where they are, need the Catholic chaplain, and no matter what the danger is, must have him. There is every reason to believe, however, that the Canadian Government is both willing and anxious to keep Catholic troops provided with a proper number of their own chaplains. As long as there be a sufficient number of Catholic chaplains, Catholics need not worry about the religious condition of their soldiers. Personally, should the Minister of Militia see fit to make use of my services, I would be willing to be chaplain to a body of Catholic soldiers from the Ottawa Valley or from any other part of Canada, and be ready to vouch to the parents, wives and relations of those men, that since they had made the sacrifice of becoming soldiers, they were all the better Christians.\*

When a man becomes a soldier from a conscientious desire to serve his country, Christ Himself vouches for him in these words: "Amen I say to you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." (Luke xviii: 29,30.) To the shirker, Christ says: "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it." To the true soldier Christ says: "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. xvi:25.)

If it is your duty to enlist, you are nevertheless free to choose your regiment; and the Catholic recruit is making a wise use of this liberty in choosing a regiment which has a Catholic chaplain. There is nothing bigoted nor narrow about such an advice. It is Catholic common sense, and do not be too thin-skinned to follow it, if you be in a position to do so. Catholics are found in every regiment which has been raised in Canada since the war began. In those raised outside of Quebec, Catholics have been usually in a minority, as they form a minority in the Canadian Provinces apart from Quebec. This is especially true of Ontario and the Western Provinces. For while Catholics form 29 per cent. of the population of Nova Scotia, 41 per cent. of the popu-

\*The writer has since been appointed chaplain, and is now overseas.

lation of New Brunswick, and 44 per cent. of the population of Prince Edward Island, in Ontario and the Western Provinces, the averages run only from 19 to 12 per cent. Hence, as there has been no attempt made thus far to group Catholics, they have been a minority in every regiment raised in Ontario and the West. As a result, very few of these regiments have Catholic chaplains. The Catholics in such regiments are indeed visited from time to time by a Catholic chaplain, but this is only moderately satisfactory. It appears to me that it would be a wise thing that in each division, one battalion, of those being recruited should have a Catholic chaplain, in order that the Catholics of the district might join, if they chose, that battalion and thus know that in enlisting they would be put to no religious inconvenience. These regiments would not be exclusively Catholic regiments but they would be regiments with a large number of Catholics attracted there by the presence of the Catholic chaplain. If a Catholic soldier has a right to a dentist and a barber, who will think him unreasonable, if he seek also a Catholic chaplain.

It was with a great deal of pleasure that the Catholics of this part of Canada learned of the authorization granted to Lt.-Col. H. I. Trihey to form an Irish Overseas unit at Montreal. I know of more than one person who is waiting impatiently for this battalion to begin recruiting, that he may volunteer. I am glad to be able to announce that on February 15, this Irish Canadian Battalion will begin recruiting. To the men of this parish † that are about to enlist, I would say, join the Irish Canadian Rangers. Irishmen have been found in every regiment that has left Canada, as they are found in every English and Scotch and Colonial regiment in the British Army. There is no reason why they, who add so much to the glory and fighting ability of other regiments, should not have the satisfaction of having several regiments of their own. The Irish Canadian Rangers, C. E. F., will be the first of these, and there is no doubt but that this battalion will acquire the same fame as the Dublin Fusiliers or the Connaught Rangers.

But it is for no mere earthly fame that we are fighting. It is for liberty, for justice, and hence for God. Are we not soldiers of Christ? Does not our regiment form one vast religious order? Men, who, like all religious, are obliged to forego the pleasures of family life. Men who like all religious are required to leave all. Men, who, like all religious, are required to obey from morning till night a severe rule. Men, who, unlike most religious, are called upon to expose, perhaps daily, their very lives in the performance of their duty! Why, these things form the very essence of the most heroic practice of Christianity. They are the very conditions which Christ laid down for his disciples.

"He who loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."—Math. X: 37. "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be my disciple."—Luke XIV:33. "Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul."—Math. X: 28. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, he shall save it. For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose or forfeit his own self."—Luke IX: 24, 25. These words are for him who is tempted to be shirker. On the other hand the Christian soldier no matter what may happen has his consolation in these words of Him for whom he fights: "Every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting."—Math. XIX: 29.)

†The parish here referred to is the Blessed Sacrament Church, Ottawa, where the writer is in time of peace parish priest, and where he delivered the present appeal in the form of three recruiting sermons in the month of January, 1916.

\*To-day we shall, in obedience to the royal proclamation, pray for peace, just as we have recited the Pope's prayer for peace every Sunday during the past year. This altar of the Blessed Sacrament, at which the votive Mass "For Wartime" is now being offered, is one of two hundred thousands of mass altars which cover the globe, where from the rising of the sun even unto the going down thereof, the clean oblation of the Lamb of God is offered for that peace which the world cannot give. We shall pray also, in humility and penance, for the success of the cause undertaken by our Empire and our Allies. We shall pray, as we have prayed publicly every Sunday, for those who have offered up their lives in this war. Finally we shall pray that each one of us may have the grace to see clearly whatever be his individual duty in the present crisis, and may have the courage to perform that duty, no matter at what cost. *If the price paid be death, the reward gained will be eternal life.* The Christian who is bound to suffer any evil, and even death itself, rather than commit a single mortal sin, will not find it extraordinary that he be now called upon to risk his life in fulfillment of his duty to his country. Has not Christ said? "He that loveth his life loseth it: and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." (John xii: 25.) And again: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John xv: 13.) Let the young man who sees it his duty to risk his life for his friends by enlisting in the Canadian Overseas force, hasten to perform that duty. The words which St. Columban used some thirteen hundred years ago to urge himself forward to the spiritual conquest of Germany suit admirably to-day as a motto for the Canadian recruit:

"Our perils are many, the war awaiting us is severe, and the enemy terrible; but the recompense is glorious, and the freedom of our will is manifest. Without an adversary there is no fight, without a fight there is no crown. Where there is a fight, *there* is courage, vigilance, ardor, endurance, fidelity, wisdom, prudence, firmness. Where there is no fight there is defeat. For if you take away liberty, you take away dignity." "Si tollis libertatem, tollis dignitatem."

The motto of every Canadian, whether it be his glorious privilege to risk his life for his friends or whether he be compelled by duty to remain at home and help his country in some other but equally necessary way, should be that given by that immortal soldier, saint and Roman martyr, the Apostle Paul: "Take thy part in suffering hardship, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." (II Tim. ii: 3.)

---

\*Sunday, January 2, 1916.