

St. Dunstan's Red and White

Subscription, 75 cents a year..... Payable in advance

VOL. XXIV.

APRIL, 1933

NO. 2

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Editorial

Easter

"And they found the stone rolled back from the sepulchre. And going in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus." (Luke 24:2-3). So does St. Luke succinctly describe the discovery of the Resurrection. Easter is the most glorious of the feasts which are celebrated by Mother Church for at that time the terrible Passion was over, the Crucifixion had been accomplished, the mission of the Messiah had been consummated, and the world had been redeemed from the darkness brought on by the sin of our first parents.

Every year Easter begins a new season with the melting of the wintry snows and with the introduction of merry spring. There is joy everywhere. The sorrows of Holy Week are past, and our priests preach from the altars with a note of exultation in their voices as they speak of the glorious Resurrection. We walk home from Mass with our heart lilting in our breast; and as we stare

around seeking some way to show and let loose our feeling of gladness we see the jocund birds strutting and chirping in the bushes. The era of darkness is past, and the light has begun to shine upon the earth.

Everybody and everything wears a sportive dress. The ladies have new bonnets, the men gayly colored ties, and people color even their Easter eggs. Surely we have every right to be happy for is it not a wonderful feast? The serious question is met by a mirthful reply until perforce we must smile in spite of depression; for what is a depression compared to the arising of the Saviour glorious and immortal?

After the Resurrection Christ gave a few of His chosen ones glimpses of His divine self. He dazzled the soldiers who were set to guard His sepulchre so that they fell down as if dead. From Easter Sunday until the Ascension he made the future of his Church secure by confirming as its head, Peter to whom, through an unbroken line, our present pontiff Pius XI is the successor. This feast, then, should be celebrated with reverence and joy for the resurrection was a sign of the downfall of the intrigues of Satan, and that our faith is not vain.

Communism

Although communism and socialism have been upheld by some for a good many years now, it was not until this period of depression came along that the defenders of these became so riotous in trying to force their false doctrines upon others. When the financial world collapsed in 1929 the communists raised a great hue and cry of "Down with the existing social order." As a remedy for depression they claim that private ownership of property should be abolished, and that each man should work so many hours a day and be entitled to a certain portion to be paid over by the government of the produced goods to maintain himself.

There are many off-shoots of communism as anarchism, terrorism, nihilism, and many others; but they all agree that property belongs to the state and to no individual. The communists thus deny the right of property which is obviously a natural right. Catholic philosophy teaches that, in the first place, communism is utterly inapt and absolutely useless for when a workman does

not get a salary which is in proportion to his ability, honesty, and sobriety, he will not be encouraged to give his best, but will skulk along with the least effort, and the whole system of production will suffer and finally give away.

Man has the right of property without which he could not effectually conserve his life which conservation is his natural right. Without the right of property he would not have the right of using those things which he needs now, nor could he lay up for future use that of which he will have need to maintain life. Also man has a natural right to a human or imperfect happiness here on earth which consists in a natural evolution and progression of his faculties, and without the stimulus of property over which he may gain the right of possession there will be no evolution or perfecting of the sciences and arts. So denying man the right of possessing property we deny him happiness also, for the automaton of the communists' idea will be a cloddish imitation of a man. As an effect is always attributed to a cause, so the activity of a man is attributed to him as an effect is to a cause. So we may see, if a man perfects something the perfection of that object is inseparable from the object itself, and since the activity or the perfecting is attributed to the man so the object must be attributed to him also. Communism denies to the individual this right of possessing an object or thing, and so proves itself intrinsically unjust for it takes from man a natural right.

Finally communism is subversive of the social order. The doctrine of communism would produce the greatest evils if put into practice, for it would result in a despoiling and robbing of the private goods of the people, in a hard and odious servitude for the people, in mutual discord and bickerings, laziness and sloth for there would be no goal as the reward for hard work, and in dragging everyone down to the level of the lowest dregs of humanity.

Can doctrines which are inapt, subversive, and so cryingly unjust carry weight with men who use their reason? The communists claim they are using reason. Yes! They use it as did the French revolutionaries during the reign of terror when they exalted a poor wretch of a woman as the Goddess of Reason. Witness the lamentable failure of communism in Russia today where there is no God, where in a rich country people are starving, where people live no better than the beasts of the forest,

surely not so well as domesticated beasts. Yet these men talk of reason! The social order cannot be upset by a few men some of whom wish to try out a few pet ideas and by others who wish to reap a golden harvest, not to help the poor. The social order can be benefitted better by cultivating a feeling of fellowship between the capitalists and laborers, and not by rapaciousness on the part of the former or strikes and sullenness on the part of the latter. Do not put false hopes in the soap-box for if he amounted to anything he would not be where he is. Lawlessness never gained true freedom or happiness.

War-debts

During the four years of conflict from 1914-18 the allied nations in their endeavour to uphold the rights of civilization against the encroachments of German militarism not only suffered severe losses in life and property but were compelled to borrow huge sums of money to carry on their enterprise. The result is that to-day, more than fourteen years after Armistice, their economic and financial life is still labouring under that burden. Germany, who, on the other hand, had centered her forces and wealth in the futile effort to bring about the realization of her dream of world supremacy, was, at the close of the war, reduced to a state of practical bankruptcy.

The greatest debtor among the allied nations was Great Britain, and her chief creditor was the United States. Between those two nations there arose the question of payment of war-debts which has been an important subject of legislation for a number of years.

Shortly after the war Congress appointed the World War Foreign Debt Commission to arrange with the Allies the payment of their debt of ten billion, two hundred and forty million dollars. The act passed in 1922 to create the commission instructed it to collect the debt within twenty-five years, with interest at four and one-half per cent. This proposal was not agreed to by Great Britain, who claimed that the time was too short and the rate of interest too high; consequently, it was arranged that her debt of four billion dollars would be spread over a period of sixty-two years with varying rates of interest. Similar agreements were made with other countries, so that the original amount owed the United States was

funded for a total of principal and interest for twenty-two billion dollars.

Up to January 1, 1932, the United States government had received in total payment two billion, six hundred million dollars, of which Great Britain paid seventy-six per cent. Germany had asked new concessions regarding her reparations of thirty-two billion dollars, and this found sympathy among the Allies pending similar agreement on the part of the United States. About this time there arose in the United States opposition to the acceptance of debt payments, since there was a very noticeable decline in exports to Europe, while the United States was becoming flooded with foreign goods. The decline in exports to Europe from the United States since 1929 has amounted to four times the sum paid in instalments on the war-debt, or, in other words, the United States since the depression is losing annually one hundred dollars through decline in trade for every dollar owed her in war-debt payments. These conditions, combined with the demands of cancellation on the part of Great Britain and the insistence of other nations on their inability to meet obligations has since become a question of world importance.

Great Britain would not benefit directly by the cancellation of war-debts, for she would lose twice as much as the United States, but she sees that such a proposition is the only plausible step towards retrieving international financial relationships. Moreover she is asking of the United States what she herself did after the Napoleonic Wars, when in view of bettering her commercial situation she cancelled the debts of other European nations, which policy led to one of her most successful periods of prosperity. This proposal of cancellation, though meeting with some favour among economists in the United States, is strongly opposed by members of Congress, who do not wish to impose heavier taxation upon American people.

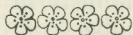
However, if the European countries should completely ignore the insistent demands of Congress for payment of debts, what would be the consequences? War would be the only solution, and the United States, knowing from experience that war would make conditions even worse, will not enter upon such a line of action. She realizes that it would be far more profitable to herself and to the world at large to reach agreements by legislation.

Many proposals have been advanced for the settlement of this important question, none of which has proved practical. It has been proposed, for example, that Great Britain concede to the United States that part of Canada south of the St. Lawrence River, or that the West Indies be given to the United States, both of which arrangements are open to criticism.

In the first case, Canada, although a part of the British Empire, is an independent and self governing colony, and it is not within the rights of Great Britain to determine that any part should be allotted to the United States in payment of a debt for which Canada was not responsible. With regard to the West Indies proposition, the rights of the inhabitants must be taken into consideration. Were it merely a question of the transference of land the situation would have a different aspect, but Great Britain would be doing a grave injustice to the natives of these island, were she to ask them to submit to the rule of a foreign nation.

Thus it would seem that the war-debts, though legally and morally due, must either be cancelled in their entirety or substantially reduced. Their economic absurdity demands an immediate settlement, for merely on account of the resultant decline of prices, the burden of the debts has been increased by fifty per cent during the present depression.

War-debts will be one of the chief problems confronting the delegates of the World Economic Conference who meet in a few months time. It is the hope of all that the measures which they introduce will prove feasible and will successfully end the stagnation in trade which has greatly hindered the progress of civilization during the past number of years.



I have not permitted myself, gentlemen, to conclude that I am the best man in the country, but I am reminded in this connection of an old Dutch farmer who remarked that it was not best to swap horses while crossing a stream.—*Abraham Lincoln*.

To be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering.

—*Milton*