

St. Dunstan's Red and White

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

VOL. XXXIV.

APRIL, 1943

No. 2

Staff

Editor-in-Chief..... Frank B. O'Neil, '43
Assistant Editor..... Frank P. Aylward, '44

Associate Editors

Chronicle..... Philip Steele, '45
Athletics..... Cletus Murphy, '45
Nonsense Avenue..... Allan Callaghan, '43
Joe J. MacDonald, '46

Contributing Editors

F. A. Brennan, '43
Marc Thibault, '43..... William MacGuigan, '46

Business Managers

Ronan Macdonald, '43
Owen Sharkey, '44..... Henry O'Shea, '45

Editorials

THE HOLY SEASON OF LENT

During the Holy season of Lent our thoughts are turned from the confusion and turmoil of a world gone mad to dwell for a time on our eternal destiny. Each and every one of us has reparation to make for sins committed for and failures to

comply with the commands of our Heavenly Father; and holy mother the Church, always solicitous for the welfare of her children, has wisely set this season aside as a special time of prayer, penance, and fasting in expiation of the wrongs committed. Her action is based on the example set by Christ and on His teaching that penance is necessary for salvation.

The length of the season, which is forty days, has a certain significance. Although during the first three centuries after the death of Our Lord there was no definite time set for acts of mortification, the practice of fasting was rigorously followed by all Christians. Then, for the sake of uniformity the Church decreed that forty days should be observed each year in remembrance of Our Lord's forty days' fast in the desert preparatory to His entering public life and in remembrance also of the forty years spent by the Jews in the desert before reaching the promised land. Just, then, as those two periods were preparations for something great to come, so the Church asks her children to prepare for the great anniversary of the death and resurrection of Our Lord.

In the early history of the Church fasting was the chief form of penance, but with the modern ways of living and present mad rush for existence it is not now possible for some to fast without serious injury to health, and so the Church, acting through her God-given authority, often gives dispensations from fasting and substitutes some other form of mortification. However, some form of penance is obligatory. Here again we see the wisdom of the Church, for, if the obligation did not exist, weak human nature would be likely to fail in the most important duty of man, making atonement for his sins.

The faithful Catholic does not look upon this as a forced burden. Rather, he is grateful to the Church for keeping before his mind the real purpose of his sojourn on this earth and for the means that she places at his disposal for the attaining of his end, and he gladly takes this opportunity to do penance for his sins and the sins of others, to offer sacrifices in recognition of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, and to develop his will against future temptations. And so he looks forward to Lent as a time when he may replenish his store of grace which will help him along the difficult road of life.

In the world today the need for penance is very pro-

nounced. In its seeking for pleasure and the material things of life modern paganism seems to be misleading men as to the real purpose of their existence, and people begin to scoff at the mention of penance. The present war with its resultant sufferings may be considered the just punishment of an angry God for the sins of the world, and it is only by returning to the Christian way of life, a turning to God in repentance, that we can hope to have a speedy and a lasting peace.

AID TO RUSSIA

In her winter campaign Russia has accomplished something which would seem impossible for a country that had suffered such defeat at the hands of the Nazis horde. True, she is surely and steadily regaining territory at terrible expense to the Germans. Even if we discount many of the stories concerning the vast number of soldiers and amount of equipment she has destroyed and captured, we must still admit that German losses could be nothing other than heavy and that German morale must be strained almost to the breaking point. Credit, then, must be given to the Russian people for the determination and tenacity with which they have held out in the face of overwhelming odds and turned the tide against the ruthless invader.

Something must be driving the Russians on. We cannot say, as many would have us believe, that they are fighting for democracy. They have never had democracy and it is a long time since the people were allowed to practise Christianity. Love of country may be the force or, perhaps, they see in Russian victory the possibility of a return to Christianity the roots of which have probably not been destroyed by Communism. For it is certain that, although economically their Communistic form of government may have done great things for the nation, it did play havoc with religion. It is safe to say that Communistic philosophy has not changed in Russia and that the people may be fighting for the principles contained therein which they have been taught to admire. There can be no doubt that, since they have been educated in Communism since 1918, they must be to a great extent convinced that theirs is a superior form of government, theirs a better mode of life, and that the whole world would be a

better place in which to live if all mankind were educated along the same lines. They may have lost sight of the fact so apparent to us that love of God comes ahead of love of state.

Another reason for their gallantry may be cited. There exists in each and everyone of us a desire to protect that which is ours, and in the minds of the Russians they have something worth protecting. These, then may be the motives for their resolute determination to defeat the Nazis.

Whatever does impel the Russians to fight so bravely, it is of little matter now. The fact remains that at present they are our allies and are doing great things. What we shall be able to do about rechristianizing those people is a post-war problem and should, of course, call for some consideration, but we cannot now, in the face of recent Russian successes, be unmindful of the great debt we owe the Russian people.

They have stayed the Germans until the other allies were in a position to take the field and now, when things are shaping up in our favour, they are ever increasing the pressure on the Germans. It does not take a great deal of imagining to picture our position today if Russia had not been there to bear the brunt of Hitler's attack, or if she had joined the Axis against us. There is a possibility that Britain might not have lasted long with all western Europe in the grasp of the German tyrant, and with the fall of Britain our own country would have been in a sorry plight. We could easily be going through what the Russians are withstanding today.

It is needless to review the sufferings which those people have undergone. What they must have suffered during the sieges of Stalingrad and Leningrad could never be portrayed by words, and we know that these are only two examples. City after city has been captured and recaptured, homes and families have been destroyed, and, on all that vast front, even the smallest villages and rural districts must have suffered horrible devastation. Cold, hunger, and death has been the lot of those gallant people while we in this country are enjoying comparative ease and comfort with few restrictions.

Russia needs our help badly. Besides the law of charity gratitude should impel us to help this nation in her present needs. We who have plenty can give a small share to an ally

which, although she may have nothing else in common with us, has, at least, a common enemy which she is helping in a very great measure to defeat. It is, then, our duty to give to Russia all the help that we possibly can, to make every sacrifice that we may be able to lessen the great burden of our ally, and to look forward to the day when, with God's help, her people will be free, within the country which they have so gallantly defended, to worship God and enjoy the freedom which we now enjoy because of their assistance.



Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,
For they breathe truth that breathe their words in
pain.

—*Shakespeare.*

Ground not upon dreams, you know they are ever
contrary.

—*Thos. Middleton.*

How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

—*Shakespeare.*

We inherit nothing truly,
But what our actions make us worthy of.

—*Anon.*