

lessly blasphemous in their denunciation and repudiation of Almighty God, are applauded for their outspoken frankness. The problem of evil is obtruded on the public's and the individual's attention at every turn, and a morbid emphasis is laid on life's suffering and sorrow. Unfortunately nothing is proved, no explanation is offered; only false deductions are drawn. If men think of God at all, they declare Him cruel.

We have good reason to believe that our Catholics have in no way been tainted by this blasphemous unbelief, and yet there is need of watchfulness. Each one must look to himself lest he too give lodgment in the hidden depths of his inmost thoughts to evil questioning of the wisdom and benignity of the Lord God of all. Life's pain is not an unsolved and insolvable mystery, at least to us. Others may peer into the darkness and find no answer, but it is not so with the Church's children. We have the solution of revealed truth. We accept and believe the doctrine of original sin. Poverty and desolation, the wasting of tissue and the breaking of hearts, crime and death and war, all have their explanation in the transgression of God's law by the father of the human race. In these days, therefore, of growing and distressing doubt, Catholics would do well to search their hearts and minds and ask themselves how firm is their grasp on this fundamental dogma of the faith.

Catholic Chaplains in England's Armies

The British forces on the Continent had but twelve Catholic chaplains until recent agitation succeeded in inducing the War Office to add seven more. However, there are only eleven in actual service, and their disposition is in the hands of a Protestant minister who has assigned them to the hospitals, so that there is not one English-speaking chaplain in the immediate neighborhood of the firing line. There are a number of regiments that consist almost exclusively of Irish Catholics, and are usually posted where death is imminent and spiritual aid is urgent; and there are few regiments in which Catholics are not numerous. Not one of these has a Catholic chaplain, and there is no such thing as a chaplain marching with his regiment, for he has no regiment, being only appointed to a division when appointed at all. In view of the fact that there are now at least 93,000 Catholics on the fighting line, the attention of the Government was called in Parliament to the insufficiency of Catholic chaplains. Colonel Tennant replied that the regulations permitted no increase, and "The French priests will do what is necessary." It was pointed out that the implied confidence in the linguistic accomplishments of the Irish soldier was unwarranted; but the War Office stood firm. Mr. Asquith was expected to promise concessions in his Dublin recruiting speech, but he promised nothing.

The *Irish Catholic*, which has been running two lengthy editorials, one insisting that Irishmen shall enlist,

and the other that they can have no spiritual aid if they do, has also been telegraphing the War Office, urging the necessity of appointing Irish chaplains to Irish regiments, if they expect recruiting to thrive. The editor has got no satisfaction, the only reason assigned for not appointing field chaplains, being that "only a limited number of non-combatants can accompany the army in the field owing to demands on transports, etc." Meanwhile every French regiment has its *aumônier militaire*, not paid but provided with transportation to the front and permitted to serve, in addition to the priests in the ranks; and Germany's Catholic soldiers have their *Feld Kaplan*, with official rank and appointment. In fact, as is stated in the very loyal *Irish Catholic*, "Of all the belligerents England alone makes utterly inadequate provision for the eternal destiny of her soldiers in the field"; and a Catholic officer writes:

A few days ago a whole brigade of French troops went down on their knees and received absolution from the priest before going into action. The French Government is infidel. The British Government is esteemed most highly Christian. Yet under the former the Catholic soldier may secure his salvation in battle and under the latter he may not.

The provision for Catholic chaplains in the Navy is still more scanty. The cruisers recently sunk had a large number of Catholic sailors but no Catholic chaplain. We presume that the pressure of Catholic opinion and the urgency of recruiting bodies for the army, will secure that this shocking neglect of their souls shall be remedied. It is an Irish and British, not an American question; but inasmuch as American sympathy has been sought for, it is pertinent to observe that this will not be stimulated among Catholics by the continued refusal of the War Office to make spiritual provision for its Catholic soldiers in the ranks of death.

I Want to Know

It is not one State alone of these United States, or one town or even one individual alone that experiences the desire of having the truth manifested. "I want to know" is as universal a cry as "I want to eat." There is hunger and thirst in the soul as well as in the body. The power which gave man an eye with capacity and tendency for sight, an ear with capacity and tendency for sound, gave the soul a curiosity with a capacity and tendency for knowledge. The reason why these commonplace remarks acquire a particular and pertinent appropriateness here and now is found in the multiplication to-day of the means of gaining information. Horizons are indefinitely extended; the sphere of sound prolongs its radii to tremendous distances. The voice that sailed on the waves of air and sped a few yards away, has now been launched on a sea of less sluggish billows and sweeps in vastly wider surges to thousands of miles. Nor need we await the sound's travel along the channels of wire when even swifter channels open up to it through all the radiating

