

FOOD CONTROL IN IRELAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Present Rulings Have Interesting Precedent in Mediaeval History.

The system of food control, put into practice throughout a large part of Europe, parts of Asia and in some of the American countries, have for their purpose the observance of a mandate observed in many places during the Middle Ages, providing "the common first food of poor and rich alike." The long period of the reign of Individualism is thus being interrupted by the recognition of the common weal on the one hand and by Government interference in the matter of the food supply in the same interest on the other. Such recognition was one of the basic thoughts which inspired the philosophy and the social order of the Middle Ages, and food control, the control of the essential requisites for the physical wellbeing of the people, was considered not only a right but even a duty by society, and its chief administrative organ, the State. Many interesting cases might be cited from the history of Italy and Germany to illustrate this point. A highly instructive illustration to the same effect is offered from the history of Ireland by a contributor to the Irish Theological Quarterly.

Sean Gall tells us, in the article mentioned, that in the Ages of Faith the primary duty of the Irish Corporation was "to control all corn coming into the town, whether by sea or land, to provide daily bread for all inhabitants alike." Not merely food-stuffs but practically all imports were put beyond the power of traders not satisfied with "an honest penny." The Mayor of Kilkenny (1202) ordained "that no assize of victuals (fixing their market price) be made in the borough except by the common assent of the burgesses and the consideration of the bailiffs." Inistoge (1206) and Kells (1210) issued similar regulations.

Attempt at fraud by those who wished to make unjust gains out of the common need was a dangerous game. Every ship entering Cork (1339), we are told, after paying customs, had to enroll, with the bailiff of the town, the master's name and the names of the consignees of all corn or other merchandise. Every buyer had to transact business by daylight, "before dinner," he was bound to grant "lot" to all citizens who demanded "lot" of him, before sunset on the day the corn was bought. To prevent deception in the purchase, all buyers and sellers were urged to record their names, the quantity involved and the purchase price at the Gild Hall. To prevent secret buying of, say, a shipload of corn, it was ruled that before the cargo was unloaded all the various parties were to be enrolled at the Gild Hall, "on pain of forfeiture of the corn." In the event of proven deception or improper collusion the buyer's goods were to be seized and their value given to the foreign seller (importer), the forfeited corn was divided among the citizens and the price obtained paid to the bailiff.

The price for communal purchases, "an honest price," "a just price," was fixed by the Corporation or the Gild Merchant. In Waterford (1433-34) the Corporation were common buyers for all imports into the city and distributed them to all "citizens and communalty of the same as the shall see behooffull." Anyone who offered a higher price for corn, victuals, or other goods than the Mayor and Council of Galway (1524) had offered, was heavily fined. The Gild Merchant, in many cities, possessed vast powers to prevent "corners," monopolies, and undue competition on the part of "foreigners" (non-members of the Gild). In many cases he was a member of the Town Council; in Dublin, he was distinct from that body, at least in later mediaeval days. At any rate, evidence is clear and strong that his power was great and that the power vested in him and the Council proved an effective force for food control.

The question of profiteering, hoarding, the "shortening" of flour by miller or baker, were dealt with in perfectly clear and unquestionable rulings. The composition of the daily bread, the mode of baking it, and the price to the consumer were set down for the guidance of the baker. In fact, all food-stuffs were regulated according to the standard for corn, to which we have briefly referred. Punishment for the selling of tainted meat was provided, as well as for the sale of spoiled fish and of ale which did not measure up to standard. All of which illustrates the prudence of the framers of the food-laws of those days, and, by induction, the soundness of the philosophy of the social system which prompted such ruling. In these and many other cases, the community itself, not the State, was the agent of the law and the people themselves the source of the law.

A return to the solidaric spirit of that age would have a most wholesome effect on present-day society, albeit a return to the forms of organization and government of those times may be both impossible and imprudent.

C. B. of the C. V.

Alsace and Lorraine have ever been rich in vocations to the priesthood, and in Alsace was born Rev. Francis Paul Mary Libermann, a converted Jew, who founded the Missionary Society of the Holy Ghost and thereby gave to slave-ridden Africa one of its most devoted congregations of apostles. The West Coast, where these priests labor in great numbers, is called the White Man's Grave, and from 1843 until 1911 seven hundred and forty priests and brothers perished from fever, want and accident, or were killed by savages, or devoured by wild beasts. The cause of Blessed Libermann's beatification is in progress.

National Catholic War Council

Conference Held in New York Last Week.

The New York Conference of The National Catholic War Council was attended by delegates from the dioceses of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Ogdensburg, Albany, New York, Brooklyn, Trenton and Newark to the number of about five hundred, was held on October 9th. Bishop Hayes of New York presided, and, in the course of the proceedings, Bishop O'Connor of Newark delivered a short address. The meeting was opened by Bishop Hayes, and in this the convention was particularly fortunate, as Bishop Hayes, in his capacity as Chaplain General, has personally visited perhaps ninety-five percent of the camps, has learned at first hand the excellence of the work being done by the Knights of Columbus, and is equally well informed as to the part the other six organizations are taking in the recreational and welfare work which the money being raised in the United Campaign is designed to support. Moreover, Bishop Hayes took part in the New York Diocesan Drive of last Spring, and is therefore familiar with the form of organization now proposed, and with the part it is possible for the clergy and their parishioners to take in such a campaign; this message he delivered with great clearness and forcefulness. His Lordship was followed by Mr. William P. Larkin, a National Director of the Knights of Columbus and Director of the Knights of Columbus work overseas. Mr. Larkin made an eloquent statement of the work done by the Knights of Columbus since the war started, and his plea for the continued support of the men at the front was warmly received, not only by representatives of the Knights of Columbus who were present in large numbers, but by the clergy and the large number of superior officers of other national societies and lay Diocesan Delegates.

The Convention was then addressed by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who has undertaken, at the request of the seven organizations, the direction of the campaign in Greater New York. Mr. Rockefeller could hardly fail to have been impressed by the warmth of the greeting tendered to him when he was presented in a very felicitous introduction by Bishop Hayes. Both when he arose to speak and when he concluded his address, the demonstration was continued much longer than would suffice to indicate an ordinary display of courtesy. His statement was clear cut, businesslike and emphatic. He was particular to state that he had all along realized the desirability of substituting the widest co-operation for what had previously, to some extent, the appearance of competition between bodies which were, in their several ways, doing parts of the same work. "I have therefore worked for many months as best I could," he said, "to bring about a unification of effort when the appeal for funds was found to be necessary." He rejoiced that the unification which had been produced in regard to the mechanics of the drive had been succeeded by a still more gratifying unity of spirit when the representatives of the seven organizations at last found themselves actually working together.

I. F. C. A. TAKING ACTIVE PART IN LOAN DRIVE.

The International Federation of Catholic Alumnae has again come prominently to the fore in its patriotic and earnest work for the success of the Fourth Liberty Loan. A letter from the corresponding secretary, Miss Helen Reed O'Neil, addressed to the secretaries of all affiliated alumnae associations, throughout the country, is an eloquent appeal to enlist every member in the Liberty Loan campaign.

The letter reads in part: "All members of the I. F. C. A. are most urgently requested to join in united and individual effort to promote the sale of the bonds. The splendid results achieved by the federation in the Third Loan inspire confidence for still greater success for the fourth issue. There is greater need than ever for the success of this loan. Nearly 2,000,000 American soldiers have been sent overseas, transported with a safety, rapidity and precision which has won the enthusiastic admiration of all co-belligerent nations. The first American army under an American general has been organized and has taken over a most important section of the battle front. Every American has been thrilled by the marvelous success of the American forces recent engagements, exceeding the most successful records of our victorious armies in previous wars.

"The American navy has made a wonderful record for the safe convey of thousands of troopships and thousands of merchant vessels. Every operation on land and on sea confirms the confidence of the glorious victory over autocracy in which the American arms will have a commanding influence.

"Americans who cannot go to the front line must support and maintain the war policy of the Government until the victory has been achieved. The Fourth Liberty Loan gives all an opportunity to participate in the campaign as effectively as if serving in the front line and on the battlefields.

"Three of the Liberty Loans have been oversubscribed. The fourth must be more successful than all the others.

"Create enthusiasm, stimulate patriotism, work for the loan, for the nation and for victory.

"Very sincerely yours,
HELEN REED O'NEIL,
Corresponding Secretary.
September 26, 1918."

In a recent communication to members of the federation a stirring appeal was made by the president, Miss Clare T. Cogan, A. M., to co-operate with the Home Service department of the American Red Cross in caring for and assisting the families of American soldiers and sailors. "A large proportion of the men 'somewhere in France,'" reads the communication, "are ours by the double tie of nationality and of faith. The Red Cross asks us to go to the relief of our brothers and sisters to meet their every need intelligently and sympathetically."

Since the entrance of the United States into the world conflict the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, composed of 50,000 graduates and former pupils of Catholic high schools, academies, colleges and universities has lent its united energy and effort to assist in every possible way of home war activity the winning of the war.

Late News of Ireland

Carlow
At the Bridgiding Convent, Tullow, Miss M. Bennett, Sister M. Baptist, daughter of J. Bennett, Gurtmullen, Roscrea, was professed.

Right Hon. Walter Kavanagh, has been unanimously re-elected vice chairman of Carlow County Committee on Agriculture.

Cork
The death took place in Cork of Cornelius Donovan, an old Fenian, who had been one of Captain Mackey's bodyguard. Michael Heelan, Ballysahill, who has died, was brother of the Auxiliary Bishop of Dubuque, U. S.

W. O'Riordan, principal teacher, Millstreet, N. S. has died. Mr. Morgan, manager, National Bank, Kilmallock, has been transferred to Killaloe.

Dublin
Capt. John Emoe, late of the British and Irish Steam Packet Co. and Duke Line, has died suddenly at his residence, David road, Drumcondra. On the outbreak of war, he was in command of a vessel at Hamburg, and was interned at Ruhleben, leaving the camp in January, 1917.

An instrument called the optophone has been invented by Dr. E. G. Fournier D'Albe, till lately resident near Dublin, to enable blind people to read ordinary print by the transmission of the letter values into sounds.

Kerry
At Cahirciveen during his absence in Dublin a large force of police and military raided the residence of P. Sheehan.

At the Presentation Convent, Yeughall, Miss A. White (Sister Mary Bridget), daughter of P. J. White, Ballymullen, Tralee, was professed.

Longford
Sixteen Sinn Fein Clubs were represented at a meeting on Inch Island, Lough Gowna. A dozen boats plied between the mainland and the island, carrying hundreds of passengers. A football match was played, and after a visit to the Monastery, founded by Soluncille in 561, the meeting was held, at which speakers pointed out the importance of preparing for the General Election.

Limerick
Miss E. Fennessy (Sister Mary Angelica), daughter of D. Fennessy, Newcastle, made her solemn profession in the Convent of Mary Immaculate, Rock Ferry, Liverpool. Her sister, Miss M. Fennessy (Sister Mary Rosa), on the same day, and in the same convent received the habit.

Mayo
Married—at Dublin, by the Rev. William Landers, assisted by the Rev. T. Jones, John J. Heakin, Neale, to Mary Anne Nugent, Dublin.

At Kilcolman Cemetery, after the Rosary had been recited in Irish, wreaths were laid on the grave of the late William Partridge, a native of Ballaghaderreen. Mr. Partridge fought in the Easter Week Rebellion.

Tipperary
The death is announced of Rev. P. A. M'Dermott, Ph. D. at Duquesne University, Pittsburg, U. S. A., of heart disease. He was born in Clonmel in 1859.

The death took place at the Presentation Convent, Dundrum, of Rev. Patrick Duggan, after celebrating Mass. For forty years he was pastor of St. Francis' Church, Hartford, Connecticut, and he built a new church, schools, and a convent. In October, 1914, he retired, at the age of 72, and returned to Ireland.

Interesting Notes of Catholic Affairs.

Soldiers and marines of the United States have been dispensed from the obligation of abstinence on Fridays, except on Good Friday.

The Chicago Archdiocese Employment Bureau has ceased to exist as a distinctive Catholic organization and has been merged with the Federal Employment Service.

S. Abbot Maginnis State dep. of the Knights of Columbus in Utah has been appointed U. S. Minister to Bolivia.

At Delhi, Ohio, the Church of Our Lady of Victory has celebrated its 75th anniversary.

In Iowa City the Daughters of Isabella have organized a Catholic students' information bureau.

Explorers are in Nakneet, Alaska, to make an intensive study of the Valley of Smokes. Their recompense will be to see the grandeur of that valley when ice and snow come in contact with the millions of steam jets which flare from the floor of Mount Katmai.

The Westminster Cathedral in London will hold 12,000 persons.

The "Canisius College," of the Jesuit Fathers in Buffalo, N. Y., has been designated as "preliminary training school for army officers.

The Grand Council of the Knights of Malta, the most ancient and noble of orders, has made Sister Maurice, Superior General of the Sisters of Charity in the Hospital of St. Martha, Rome, an honorary member of the Order.

The editor of "La Croix," who was banished by the French Government, has been repatriated.

Under the direction of the Holy Father, the Rome sculptor, Commendatore Galli, is fashioning a marble statue of the "Queen of Peace. His studio is in the Vatican.

One-third of the total population of Germany—approximately 24,000,000—is Catholic.

The new Code of Canon Law expressly provides for the holding of diocesan and provincial synods, and Plenary Councils. In accordance, the Church in Sicily is preparing to hold a Plenary Council.

Cardinal Vico has succeeded the late Cardinal Martinelli as prefect of the S. Congregation of Rites.

The Dominican Fathers are accomplishing much good in Tonkin, China.

It is computed that in India are 700,000 villages. In but few of them are found Christians.

The actress Anna Held, who died in New York a fortnight ago, was baptized and received into the Church on her deathbed.

The spiritual retreat for women given at Notre Dame University was attended by over 200 ladies.

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