

Fatherless Children of France

By Canon G. B. Cabanel, Chaplain of the Blue Devils of France, and Member of the French High Commission.

I am in America for but a brief time, asked by the French Government to come here as a priest to see my brother priests and tell them of the difficulties which face the Catholics and the children of Catholics in France. But I have a message also to the good Catholics of America from the Catholics of France. May I give it to you who read this?

For three years and a half I lived in the trenches with the brave soldiers of France you know as the Blue Devils. I was called a Blue Devil, my friends—, but I tried always to be a Blue Angel before my God, before my friends, and before France, and to these boys who needed the comforts and consolations of a perfect faith in the midst of perils so great, I love those Blue Devils of mine. I know them so well, their sufferings, their bravery. I have seen them go forth to death with a serene heart, trusting to God their little ones so soon to be left fatherless. They died as die the saints.

We were so saintly in the trenches, so ready to die, able to say bravely as we heard a shell arriving, "This one is for me"! In the 67th Battalion we established the Perpetual Rosary. When one of the boys finished his prayer, he would say to the next, "Now, you continue!" Night and day the prayers ascended to God. There was never a moment that a prayer was not rising from our trenches. And so often when a boy would say, "Now, you continue", it was for him—about to go over the top to face the fire of the enemy—the "now" of the last moment.

In another battalion we established Perpetual Adoration. When we could see the tower of a church, we would say to our boys, "Let your prayers join with those of the angels whose prayers surround that holy tabernacle." But when there were no churches—only the mud of the trenches—we would say "Your God is in Heaven. Send your prayers into Heaven", God was with us, in our hearts; our religion comforted and sustained us through all the terrible trials.

Once in the trenches of Alsace, I saw a young boy standing. The shells were bursting over us, and suddenly he received one in his shoulder. It threw him down into the trenches, and sunk him beneath the mud. One could not see his eyes, his mouth, his nose. I bent to succor him, murmuring from my heart: "My poor boy!"

"Father", he answered, as we lifted him gently from the mud, "Please don't pity me. This mud is noble mud, holy mud! Here all the mud upon my soul has been washed away."

"My boy", I replied, "we shall pray together."

"Yes, father." And so we said together the one prayer of the trenches—"Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now," and when he arrived at "now" he died and passed into the eternal glory of the Paradise of our God.

And as he died, pure in soul, sustained by the faith of our religion, so did thousands of others die.

"One other time there had been a terrible battle and the dead were so many my heart was bleeding. As I went about among the boys that day, one of them was so joyous of face that it was like a blow to me, whose heart was broken with grief. I could not but reproach him.

"Oh, boy", I said, "how can you be so happy when my heart is breaking?"

"My heart is broken also, dear father," he answered, "but you see I am joyous because tomorrow morning I leave these trenches and go to visit my mother who is a widow, aged, poor and sick. Father, my mother is all the world to me. I am all the world to her."

Even as he spoke a shell exploded, and literally cut him in two. He had but time to speak. There was no plaint, no grief for himself, only the words "Oh, my mother!"

My heart was torn. I thought to do something, to say something which should sooth his last moments. "Boy", I said, "tonight I become the son of your mother."

"He smiled a beautiful smile. "Father, is that true?"

"Yes, my boy. Die tranquilly. It is true."

"Since it is so, Father," he whispered, "tonight I shall speak of you to your mother in Heaven." He knew I had lost my mother. See the reward to me!

His mother is now mine, but there are things just one man, though he be a priest of God—cannot do. There were 1,500,000 men who died as bravely as he, in the war. There were 500,000 men "perdu," as we say in France—that is, we do not know what has become of them. There were 3,000,000 little children left fatherless. What of them, I can take care of this mother, but who shall be father to these little ones?

In America, in the first month of the war, a society was formed to give help to these little children. It conceived the idea of giving ten cents a day to each child, to help it from going hungry and cold and naked. All through the war the Fatherless Children of France, as this organization is called has worked devotedly for the orphans of the brave soldiers who died for us. It was with great concern that I learned a rumor had been circulated that this help was being used to turn Catholic children from their religion. My friends, this is not so. Each child helped is left with its nearest relatives and is brought up in the faith of its father. There is no interference with the religion of the child. It is with pain I must admit that most of the help has come from Protestants—only a very small number of Catholics have come forward to aid these helpless children through this organization. Is it not a sad thing that devoted little Catholic children have had to look to those of other religions for their first communion garments? Yet it has been the case.

To a devout Catholic, the Catholic of another country, of another race, is yet of the one big family. These little children in France are most of them Catholic children—they are, therefore, the children of the Catholics of the world, in the eyes of our God. It is as a priest that I speak to you and say: Give to yourself this beautiful experience. Become the American godmother or godfather of one of these little children. How many of you can give \$36.50 that some poor child may have the little ten cents a day to keep a soul and body together? The child remains in France, but you may write to it, and it will write to you, its American godparent. If you will write to Mrs. Walter S. Brewster of the Fatherless Children of France, at Room 741, 410 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, who has been the generous friend of thousands of little Catholic children in France, she will tell you just how to help.

Your American Cardinals, your archbishops, your bishops, have seen the letter which I bear, written by Cardinal Amette and making his protestation against the rumors that Catholic children in France are being turned from their religion. We priests of France have given a sufficient example of our faith, so that you may know we watch over our own. We are strong enough to go to any mother who fails to send her boy to confession, to church, and say to her: "Give us your boy! He belongs to us."

It is not for long such help is needed. France was very rich before the war, she will be very rich again. But this year life is almost impossible. Help is sorely needed now and for perhaps another year. Come you, and help! And when arrives the moment that you take your rest at night, you will be able to say with a great exaltation of your soul: "I have not seen the poor today; I have not visited the sick—my duties have pressed me too hard. But that poor little child of France has received today my ten cents."

It is a beautiful feeling, my friends, and when I seek my couch tonight I shall bless God and as a priest of God, bless you unknown to me, for the help that you shall give these little ones.

Addresses Chamber of Commerce at Notre Dame University.

Frank D. Connolly, son of Martin F. Connolly, 420 Castle street, Geneva, N. Y., recently delivered an address before the Chamber of Commerce at Notre Dame University on "Direct Selling in South America." He prepared his talk under the direction of Rev. John F. O'Hara, dean of the College of Commerce at Notre Dame and dealt briefly with the South American business situation, the position of the United States in South American trade, methods of selling and the future of the trade.

Connolly is a sophomore in the foreign commerce department of the College of Commerce at Notre Dame. He is an active member of the University Chamber of Commerce which boasts a membership of students from 45 states and from ten foreign countries. He will take an active part in a big Chamber of Commerce Luncheon next Saturday, at which Col. P. H. Callahan of Louisville, Ky. and P. W. Brown, editor of "America at Work" will lecture.

In Rome there are about twenty-four national colleges, among them two American.

Late News of Ireland

Cork
Charleville Gaelic League has elected Rev. Dr. Dinneen, C. C. president; S. O'Brien, vice president; Messrs. T. Murphy and M. Sheehy, treasurers, and J. McAuliffe, secretary.

The scheme for lighting Bandon by electricity has been begun.

Dublin
The late J. Vaughan, J. P., Kingstown, left £10,484. He died intestate, and letters of administration have been granted to his son, Dr. J. S. Vaughan.

His Grace the Archbishop of Dublin has made the following appointments: The Very Rev. William Magill, P. P., St. James', to the Subdiaconal Prebend of Tipperkevin (second portion); the Very Rev. Eugene Byrne, P. P., Balbriggan, to the Subdiaconal Prebend of Donaghmore (first portion); the Very Rev. Peter Monahan, P. P., Ballymore-Eustace, to the Subdiaconal Prebend of Donaghmore (second portion).

Fermanagh
Died—At Glasgow, Peter McMahon, youngest son of the late Hugh McMahon, Inishmore.—At Enniskillen, Denis Reid, son of the late John Reid, builder, Enniskillen.

Kerry
Miss Nora Daly has been elected matron of Listowel Union in succession to her mother (retired), getting 65 votes to seven for Miss M. McElligott, the assistant matron.

Kildare
On correspondence being read at Celbridge District Council, Mr. Giltrap, J. P., said if the government only spent half a million on lowering the level of the Barrow from Monasterevan to Loughrea they would get peat fuel from the district that would supply the whole of Ireland.

Louth
Right Rev. Mgr. Segrave, P. P., V. G., presided at the annual public meeting in connection with the distribution of prizes to the successful students of the Drogheda Technical School. A lecture was delivered by Professor B. F. Shields, M. A., of the National University on the "Economic History of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century."

Mayo
The death is announced of Mrs. Tighe, wife of Owen Tighe, who is well known in the cattle trade in connection with his father, T. Kelly Tighe, J. P., deceased was a daughter of P. McDonagh, Castlebar.

Queens
Died.—At 47 Main street, Maryborough, Mrs. Loughan.

Roscommon
Patrick Coleman, Tawnytaskin, Boyle, has taken the B. E. Degree with honors. His sister, Miss Bridget Coleman, has taken her diploma as teacher in Carrystof, Blackrock, and also a bi-lingual certificate, as well as some for higher mathematics. These youthful and brilliant scholars are son and daughter of John J. Coleman, D. C., vice chairman of Boyle Board of Guardians. He is a well-known and popular public man in North Roscommon.

Tipperary
John Spain, a large farmer of Lisgarode, Nenagh, died rather suddenly.

For the first time within the memory of the oldest inhabitant there was no fair held at Templemore. The banks often paid out \$60,000 on that day. Four soldiers and as many police, all fully armed at the entrance roads to the town prevented a fair being held.

Irish Loan Week

The week of January 17th-26th will be "Irish Loan Week" in the United States. This date for the wind-up of the Irish Republic Bond-Certificate Drive has been fixed by the National Headquarters.

President DeValera has just returned from his record-breaking speaking tour across the country on which he addressed scores of gatherings and audiences ranging from 5,000 to 35,000. He brings back word the friends of Ireland in all cities he visited are on tip-toe awaiting the word to go forward in the nation-wide drive. Reports received at the National Headquarters from all sections of the country indicate a healthy interest in Ireland's Cause.

There has been no end of drives in the United States in the past year. Nearly all races of people of the earth have appealed to the generous heart of America for funds to aid them through the reconstruction period. Many small nations have secured their independence with America's aid. Great financial institutions, besides, have been pouring billions of money and credits into Europe. Domestic, religious, educational and charitable institutions have been raising millions. Meanwhile only Ireland—the one white race in slavery—has remained in the background. By January 17th nearly all other nations will have about finished their appeals. Then Ireland's supporters will take the field and ask friends of human liberty of every class and creed to "Go Over The Top" for Erin.

If Ready Go Ahead At Once

While January 17th-26th is fixed as the culmination of the appeal in the larger cities, communities are not limited to a definite day in launching and prosecuting the drive. Preparation for the floating of the Bond Certificates entails a tremendous amount of organization work. In some of the more isolated sections and in rural districts particularly the subscriptions doubtless can be taken at once, and in such localities the friends of Ireland are urged to proceed without delay. In all communities, however, large or small, where the machinery is ready it is urged by the National Headquarters that the taking of subscriptions proceed at once. But from one end of the country to the other all friends and well-wishers of Ireland and the Republic are urged to make January 17th-26th the red letter days for the Motherland.

The minimum certificate subscriptions allotted to the United States by the Dail Eireann, the elected National Assembly of Ireland, is \$10,000,000. Certificates are in denominations of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$100, \$250, \$500, \$1,000 and \$10,000.

President DeValera Goes To Washington

President DeValera will go to Washington, this week. The Mellon bill carrying an appropriation of \$14,000 with which to set up the United States Consular Service in Ireland, is pending. Well-known supporters of the Irish Cause from all sections of the country are expected to be in Washington, and the President hopes to establish touch with the friends who will be present.

Why Not NOW?

A New Year's Resolute Worth Keeping—Buy an Irish Bond Certificate.

An Ideal Christmas gift—Send a \$100 Irish Bond Certificate back to the friends in Ireland.

Catholic

St. Joseph's...
St. Mary's...
St. Paul's...

The total membership of Daughters of Isabella...
St. Paul M.D.A. will...
to organize a special choir for the Cathedral...

When first discovered...
St. Mary's...
St. Paul's...

St. Mary's...
St. Paul's...
St. Joseph's...

Through...
St. Mary's...
St. Paul's...

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St. Paul's...
St. Joseph's...

St. Mary's...
St. Paul's...
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