

Noted Chilean Hails U. S. Catholic Life Following Tour

SANTIAGO, Chile—The Very Rev. Msgr. Francisco Vives E., Pro-Rector of the Catholic University of Chile, received a most favorable impression of Catholics and the status of the Church in the United States during his visit there some months ago. Some of these impressions were recalled by Msgr. Vives in the local press.

Monsignor Vives said he wished to enlighten Chileans on "what the Catholic Church is accomplishing in the classic land of liberty and democracy." After 150 years of intense labor "which has not lacked martyrs and saints," he said, the Church lives "strong and respected under the protection of laws which permit her to develop works and apostolates which make her the model of the Catholic world."

Monsignor Vives has something special to say about "Catholics who arrive in the United States prejudiced by love of country where they think everything is just right," but once they have shared in the religious life of North Americans, "they realize that there is much to learn and that the seriousness and force of Catholicism (in the United States) are worthy of all admiration." He commends especially the devotion of North Americans at Mass. "No one goes to Holy Mass merely as an act of being present," he says. "A respect and a sincerity in attitude which shows profound faith and deep-rooted conviction are observed, and this is not only among the women but among the men, and especially the young men. Nothing could be more edifying than to observe the dignity and piety with which the youth attend church. At

the University of Notre Dame, where we had some opportunity to know the religious life intimately. The majority of students received Communion in the dormitory chapels at seven o'clock before beginning that day's activities."

Sees Churches Filled

In Washington, Boston, Chicago, New York and Philadelphia, Msgr. Vives saw the churches filled with people. He noted particularly two principles which "seem to sum up the action of the Church in the United States: her charity and her love of Catholic education." He spoke of the Diocesan offices of organized charity which put into practice the teaching of the Master: "Love one another."

To the Catholic of the United States, Monsignor Vives says, the motto "Catholic education for all Catholic children in Catholic schools" is an imperative command. In proof of this he cites statistics given at the thirty-ninth annual convention of the National Catholic Educational Association, and quotes from those compiled by the Department of Education of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. "The parochial school," he added, "has become the vital cell of North American Catholicism," and it is built even before the permanent parish church "because it is most important to prepare for the future." When the church is built, "it rises magnificent with the strength of all the children educated in the school that gives them faith."

In discussing relations between the Church and national life, Msgr. Vives drew attention to the cordial relations between the Holy See and President Roosevelt, the excellent religious service of the armed forces, and the "respect for everything that signifies the 'dissimination of the thought of the Church'." For example, the insertion in the Congressional Record of the integral texts of the Encyclicals *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*.

Priest Says Mass In Town of Criccieth

LONDON — For the first time in living memory Mass has been said in Lloyd George's home town, Criccieth, Wales. A Mill Hill missionary, the Rev. Herbert Hirst, was vacationing in the district and offered Mass in the memorial hall which on week days is used as a movie theater.

U. S. NUNS IN SOLOMON ISLANDS



Working in the Solomon Islands, scene of a United Nations offensive, are eight Marist Missionary Sisters from their motherhouse at Bedford, Mass., and four Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, whose motherhouse is at Orange, Calif. Marist Sisters with some of the girls in their charge are pictured in upper photo. Below, Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, who arrived at their mission posts in December, 1941, are left to right: Sister M. Irene Alton, R. N., of Santa Ana, Calif.; Sister M. Hedda Jaeger, R. N., of Los Angeles; Sister M. Catherine Belanger, of North Bay, Ont. and Sister M. Isabelle Aubin, Superior, of St. Petersburg, Fla. (N.C.W.C.)

Chaplain Says Mass Ashore, 2 On Different Ships Every Sunday

LONDON — A chaplain serving with the Home Fleet says his second Mass every Sunday on a battleship and his third on a naval

welfare ship, after saying his first Mass ashore.

Forty men of the U. S. Navy attached to the Home Fleet were present when a newspaper correspondent accompanied the priest on his Sunday morning journey in a motor-boat.

Shore-based chaplains in the position of this priest make visits to the ships in all weathers.

BRAZILIAN BISHOPS URGE ALL-OUT AID FOR NATION AT WAR

RIO DE JANEIRO (NC) — Several Brazilian Bishops, in various statements, have stressed the need for the closest cooperation on the part of the Brazilian people with the Government authorities in the present world crisis.

The Most Rev. Miguel de Lima Valverde, Archbishop of Recife, Pernambuco, and his four suffragan Bishops, in a joint letter to young army conscripts, remind that "the sad times which have called these youth to arms are the result of a neglect of God and His Law." "Be faithful to your country and worthy sons of Holy Church," the letter adds. "It was the Church, which, in times past, kept this vast country from breaking up and maintained the Faith alive, ever teaching a sound and effective patriotism."

Writing his thanks to Archbishop Valverde for the message, the Brazilian Minister of War stated that such encouragement from the Bishops is another proof of the readiness of the Church to cooperate with the Government in promoting the public welfare.

In a recent statement, the Most Rev. Antonio Reis, Bishop of Santa Maria, said "it behooves every Brazilian to fight incessantly against lethal ideologies, be they called Nazism, Fascism or Bolshevism." "The clergy," he added, "which always sided with true patriots in all the decisive hours of our history — and have often taken the lead — will be worthy of their glorious past in this hour of exceptional gravity."

MATERIALISM IS REAL 'OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE'

LONDON (NC) — Materialism and not the teaching of religion is the real "opium of the people" declared Joseph Cummins, national president of the Catholic Young Men's Society, at the society's annual conference held in Birmingham.

A special rule was passed at the conference to allow the re-election of Mr. Cummins for the fourth year. Two hundred delegates from all parts of the country attended the week-end discussions.

The Real Mohandas Gandhi—Hardly For Christianity

Written for the N. C. W. C. News Service by the Editors of The Shield.

As usual in the political disturbances which have shaken India during the past 25 years, the figure of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is conspicuous in the present outburst of opposition to British rule. Because of the possible far-reaching consequences of the present situation in India, it is important to form a true evaluation of this leader of the Indian masses. Christian writers have depicted him as a man with leanings to Christianity, while ardent young Independents have described him as an exponent of democracy. But a brief study of Mr. Gandhi's public utterances and public stands in the past will show that he is neither an exponent of democracy nor a particular friend of Christianity.

Gandhi first acquired prominence as a defender of the rights of the underprivileged during his residence in South Africa prior to the First World War, where he labored brilliantly on behalf of Indian immigrants. By his personal habits of abstemiousness he has established a reputation for holiness, according to the Hindu ideals, whence his title of "Mahatma," or holy one. His public penances — long hunger-strikes have been world-famous.

One of the curious facts about Hinduism, as contrasted with Christianity, is the amount of publicity which its ascetics receive. Whereas Christian penitents be-leave themselves to monasteries or practice self-denials quietly while pursuing their daily tasks, the Hindu "holy man" will perform a day-by-day confortion in the market-place or do a pilgrimage on hands and knees through the traffic of a busy street.

Of Mr. Gandhi's sincerity in the practice of personal austerities there is no need to doubt. And his respect for the social implications in the Sermon on the Mount seems likewise to be sincere. But it is necessary to note that most of his very long course, but separated by

high walls of social, religious and public actions have been colored by the philosophy of Hinduism or so directed as to serve a political purpose favorable to Hinduism.

London Round Tables

The true Gandhi appeared when the Round Table Conferences were held in London in the autumn of 1931. At that time, under Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald, discussions were opened on the issue of creating dominion status for India. One of the difficulties encountered was that of establishing a basis for voting in the proposed new government. A system of proportional representation was proposed, whereby the 50,000,000 Mohammedans would elect their representatives and the 240,000,000 Hindus theirs. This system seemed necessary because of the long-standing opposition between the two factions and because of the loudly expressed fear of the Moslem minority that they would be dominated by the Hindus in a government released from British influence.

But among the Hindus there is a group, numbering 60 millions, who are known as "untouchables." These are the low-caste and out-caste people, who are forbidden by Hindu custom from associating with the high-caste folk, even to the point of separate hospitalization and separate temples for worship. The British proposed to give the untouchables separate representation in the electorate. In any country tending toward democracy and using proportional representation, this would have seemed reasonable, and it had the support of high-caste Hindus. Mr. Gandhi, however, opposed it, and his opposition was not based on merely political reasons; in fact, in a letter to Mr. MacDonald, he said his opposition was "a matter of pure religion." "In the establishment of separate electorates for the depressed classes," he wrote, "I sense the injection of a poison that is calculated to destroy Hinduism and do no good whatever to the depressed classes."

Gandhi and the Missionaries

The true Gandhi was revealed again a little earlier in the spring of 1931 — when he expressed the opinion that Christian missionaries were overstepping their rights by attempting to "proselytize" the people of India. He gave as his reason that "India's religions are adequate for her people, and we need no converting spiritually." Such excitement was caused by this statement that Gandhi's friends in India tried to talk it down. But two years later, he re-asserted his stand when, in an address to the students at the Protestant seminary of Jubbulpore, Gandhi said he thought the field of missionaries was that of social service workers and that they should work in subordination to the agencies of Hinduism.

In 1932 Mr. Gandhi opposed the adoption of the "Temple Entry Bill," which would have allowed the untouchables to use the temples of the upper caste people. This measure was adopted for one or other of the native kingdoms, but its observance was mostly in the branch.

In all of these actions, Gandhi was actuated obviously by the desire to keep Hinduism in the saddle. Though he has worked for the mitigation of restrictions placed upon the untouchables and though he has denounced untouchability as "an unnecessary outgrowth" of the caste system, he stubbornly maintains that the plea of the untouchable people is in the Hindu fold. And the law of caste, he has declared, "inherent in human nature."

No Democracy In Hinduism

The caste system is not only the opposite of democracy, but it is based upon an unreal concept of human society. The castes — there are more than 2,000 of them — have been compared to a system of lanes, running side by side over a psychological, laws, through which there are no gates. If one is unfortunate enough to be born in the sweeper caste, he may never hope

to become a grocer, if one's father makes shoes of leather, he may never aspire to the level of the sweeper. The only way to transcend the walls of caste is the way of death by death and rebirth one may advance up the ladder of castes, unless one violates some rule of purification and takes a step backward. The effect of this system is to keep tens of millions in positions of hopeless poverty and to prevent, for religious reasons, any effective measures aimed at serious social and economic reforms.

Democracy is admittedly a political system involving adherence to ideals, but these ideals are based on reason, not on imagination. The Hindu caste system, on the other hand, has no foundation in reason, other than the desire of one caste to maintain superiority over another. Yet it is this system that Gandhi's efforts would maintain. He speaks of preserving India, but he is always thinking of an India that is Hindu.

"Non-Cooperation"

The means that Mr. Gandhi would use is "non-violent" or passive resistance, also called "non-cooperation." It is simply the boycott, and the Indian people take readily to it because it has long been a measure of coercion and punishment used by one caste against another. "If you want to know why the scores and millions of the masses have responded to the call on non-cooperation as they have never responded to any other call," said Gandhi, "it is not because I give voice to that call, but because it is born, it is bred in them, it is part of Hinduism."

How "non-cooperation" would be received by Japanese invaders is probably a purely academic question. Certainly there is no tolerance for any kind of resistance — passive or otherwise — in government in the Japanese concept of the State, much less in the totalitarian ideologies of Japan's Euro-

pean partners. In the mind of any political realist, a "non-resisting" populace is an invader's paradise. Moreover, Japan has had earlier invitations to intrusion upon Indian affairs. In 1930, for example, while Gandhi was directing a boycott against English-made textiles, considerable purchases of fabrics were made from Japanese manufacturers by Indian tradesmen.

Prospects For Unity

As to the ability of Gandhi to inspire unity among the opposing factions of India, his present campaign of "non-violence" immediately led to attacks by Hindu rioters upon Mohammedan business houses. There has been plenty of open hostility between Hindus and Mohammedans in the past. Festivals of one group have been the occasions for rioting by the other in the vicinity of temples or mosques, as the case might be.

Yet there was unity at the end of the First World War when the Mohammedans were incensed at the treatment accorded Turkey in the Treaty of Versailles and joined with the Hindus in opposition to the British rule, which they regarded as a symbol of the Western political system. At the present moment, the position of Mohammedan leaders seems to be one of adherence to the Empire and the cause of the United Nations.

Whatever the outcome may be, the leadership of Gandhi in the present crisis has one meaning over and above others, this is the opposition of Indian traditionalism to the ways of the Western nations. He is not so much the opponent of British rule as he is the apostle of keeping things as they are. He might have led India much farther along the way to independence had he been less concerned with the preservation of Hinduism. The present grave situation may decide whether or not he will be able to maintain any kind of leadership among his 375 million fellow Indians.