TIMELY ETERNALS

By Rt. Rev. Msgr. Peter M. H. Wynhoven
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South

Northern and Southern Sympathy

It is true that not enough white leaders champion the Negro or earnestly work for his betterment. Again, the same statement can be made with equal truth as far as the economic welfare of low-wage white workers is concerned. If President Roosevelt deserves God's blessing for one thing, it is certainly for the interest he has shown and the legislation he has had enacted for the benefit of the poor in this country. His "spending of money" (thus saith the rich taxpayer) in furnishing public work and making slums unfit for human habitation, and in building decent homes for the poorest of our white and Negro population, will prove a boomerang for generations to come.

There is one important point that among generations of kindness and Christian thoughtfulness, and it is that [illegible] never to be omitted. When a man of the upper class, who is in a position to help a less fortunate neighbor, does [illegible] he is generally [illegible] and generally [illegible] of the Christian principle of charity.

In other words, he normally expects a little appreciation of the procedure of good-will from the one in whose behalf he [illegible] are blessed. This appreciation is not often granted. Or he [illegible] by the recipient of such voluntary kindness. Our present-day society of [illegible] is still too suspicious to stand much of this sort of condition.

This, perhaps, is the reason why people who are not dedicated by profession, office or vocation to alleviate the sufferings of others or to interest themselves in the plight of the social underdog are so hesitant in championing the cause of the underprivileged. When someone goes out of his way of direct duty to help a cause along, and is afterward criticized for not doing enough, or criticized for approaching the problem in his own well-meant, but-clumsy manner, not wholly approved by the ones who are immediately interested and who expected arbitrary and unwise methods of procedure, it is the inevitable consequence that the spirit is disappointed and the sense of charity is deepened.

Very often, this happens in the field of Negro uplift. The Negroes themselves, as a rule, are grateful, and they genuinely appreciate even as little as a kind word in their behalf. But not infrequently, their leaders and their white so-called champions will harm their cause by impetuous demands. In a recent article, we brought out, merely as an illustration of the sense of fear that Colored people are afraid to go near a cemetery at night. [illegible] of the fact that, in [illegible], they listened to harrowing stories about [illegible]. There was nothing disparaging in the observation; still, we received several letters from the North, indignantly and painfully appealing as that the Negro does not lack courage, which is altogether different argument. The criticism was absurd, and it did not mean much; nevertheless, such things make one inclined to comment, "O well, what's the use of bothering at all?"

Northern people, with an avowed concern about the Negroes' plight, generally labor under an unhappy and unfortunate state of mind on the subject; namely, that one of the really solid approaches to betterment for the Colored. This is entirely beside the point, which can be proved day by day by concrete facts. The important difference between the northern sympathy and the southern kind is that the Yankees manifest by words an interest in the Colored cause as a whole and in the abstract, but we "rebels" show our good feeling in the individual and in the concrete.

An old Negro expressed it well: "In the North, you live in a white folks' house for years (yes and they invite you into the parlor and talk nice to you about social equality, but you never leave empty-handed; in the South, the lady you stand on the porch and talks kinda rough, but you come away with what you went for."

It does not serve a good purpose to condemn and belittle the South for its attitude to the Negro. This is history, it is all past and gone, very much to be regretted. But, today, we have intelligent and upright citizens below Mason and Dixon's line who are steadfastly fostering the best interests and welfare of the Colored people. Things may be progressing a little too slowly for some, but, for all that, we are actually getting there by degrees. To bring up a substitute of years gone by, and by inference, it seemingly, is not to help matters a bit.

Another situation we be [illegible]

Words That Speak

[illegible]

Bible is a [illegible] of Roman [illegible] Christ [illegible] Latin [illegible] Hebrew [illegible] Greek [illegible] Latin [illegible] Hebrew [illegible] Greek [illegible] Latin [illegible] Hebrew [illegible] Greek