

Things for Our Peace

BY

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This is the tenth annual meeting of the Catholic Historical Association of Canada. The first decade of your history witnessed the world crisis and its catastrophe. The coincidence might be of little moment in the annals of other societies established at the same time as your own. But it has a special relevance to the purpose and policy of a national organization founded to promote public interest in Catholic history. The Catholic historian carries all the Christian centuries in his arms. He has, however, a special preoccupation with those episodes – cyclic, it seems, in human affairs, – which mark the great ages or periods of historical experience. He is, therefore, immensely concerned with the events which gave so signal, perhaps so unexpected, a significance to the motives which inspired the founders of this Association ten years ago.

There never was a time of which there is any record in which men generally have lived so consciously through a great crisis as have we ourselves through that which has so crowded our lives and so cued our hearts. And yet there never was a time in which so full a consciousness of the course of events was accompanied by so careless a conscience regarding their causes and their consequences.

It has occurred to me therefore, that, on the present occasion, you might permit me to place before you an entirely personal, but I hope not entirely subjective, commentary upon some of the issues which appear to me to emerge clearly and inflexibly from the controversies that have been raging all around us in the incredible interregnum in which our lot has been cast.

Let me confess to you that I am impressed by an overwhelming sense of the responsibility which the circumstances of our time impose upon public discussion of current controversies. I am convinced, however, that the high fundamental questions which concern the great company of mankind stand clearly defined against the background of events, and escape, by transcending, the confusion of political conflicts or ideological warfare. I, therefore, commit these disconnected, but, I hope, not wholly unrelated observations with humble confidence to the members of this great national association which is dedicated to the promotion of the study of historical subjects of oecumenical reference.

I must not presume in this place to emphasise the importance of a sound historical sense to any true assessment of present national trends or international tendencies. A sound historical sense imports, for one thing, a

sense of Catholic tradition, that is, a sense of the historical reality of authentic Christianity in the story of the human race and a frank recognition of the part which Christendom has played in the development of international law and relations. We all, I am sure, have welcomed the recent revival on this continent of scientific studies in Christian philosophy and culture. That is a timely and remarkable event. I have had the privilege of listening to many instructive lectures on these subjects during the past few years. I could not fail to observe, however, how large a number of these lectures are devoted to somewhat abstract, or, at all events, very theoretical topics of discussion. This development was perhaps inevitable, and I myself – as witness this text – should not be the first to complain of it. It will have been wholly justified if it does not create the impression that Christian philosophy and Christian culture are subjects, in so far, for example, as human thought is concerned, for the philosophers, and in so far, for example, as human society is concerned, for the political scientists or the constitutional lawyers. These subjects are not the exclusive concern or domain of a professional, or an intellectual, élite. They predominantly, and, I think, primarily concern ordinary men and woman. They concern ordinary men and women, first of all, as human persons, and, secondly, as citizens by whom, in the last resort, the tone and temper of national thought in all countries are formed, and the aims of national policy determined. The historian of Christianity who seeks to understand its meaning and to measure the dimensions of the vast and profound influence it has exercised on mankind and on human affairs will fail of his task unless he realizes that Christianity is wholly a sacred and not wholly a secular subject, that it is, first and last, a religion divinely founded and divinely sustained for the single divine purpose of the sanctification and the salvation of the human soul. That is the sum and substance of its mission, and the whole object of its mighty dogmas, its Holy Sacrifice, and its spiritual sovereignty.

That is also the assumption which underlies all I shall have to say to you this evening. I am daring to offer you a criticism of some modern political conceptions from the standpoint of that postulate. Catholic history claims the whole field of human activities and relationships as its province, even as the authentic mission of Christianity itself embraces all mankind at all times and all human society under whatever form or polity it may be organized from time to time in different parts of the world, or in the world at large. It so happens that one of the major public controversies of our own time has centred around the question as to the relation of the citizen to the State. That controversy is not confined to the totalitarian countries. The notion of citizenship is the most embattled intellectual issue in the whole of modern political science. It became so the moment the moral basis of citizenship itself was denied, and its rights acclaimed as a gift bestowed by the community or guaranteed only by a Constitution. The truth remains that the relation of the

citizen to the State is entirely determined by his relationship, as a human person, to God. The State was instituted for time, the human soul was created for time and eternity.

There is a whole new scholarship – perhaps I should say a new school, but that remains to be seen, – growing up in the United States around the controversy on the subject of the margin or hiatus which exists between the American system of education and the American system of Government. The controversy itself at this hour of the day, is a terrifying phenomenon. What it comes to is that one hundred and fifty years after the founding Fathers, actuated by Christian motives, established a system which placed no positive obstacles in the way of the practice of the Christian life, the American Universities have ceased to educate, or even to seek to educate, for Christian citizenship. You have accordingly this strange frontier between the system under which American students are schooled and that under which American citizens are ruled. And along that frontier today the forces of the human mind are being mobilized and a fierce and somewhat primitive battle of philosophies is being waged.

I advert to this fact in order to pass from it. It does, however, illustrate my own view that the political framework of a great democratic country does not necessarily create, or necessarily even tend to create a Christian democracy. Any more than a house makes a home, or an edifice a temple of God. It is the life lived in a house that makes it a household and it is the oblation offered in the edifice which makes it a living altar and an abiding tabernacle of the Most High.

No standard work with which I am acquainted has noted the fact that, in the past few years, constitutional discussion has taken a new turn. It is no longer concerned with the organs of Government, the Parliament, the Executive, the Judiciary, their relation to each other, or their place in what I might call the constitutional balance of the State. It is concerned more and more with the character of the community itself and the relation to the political sovereign. Constitutional discussion has, in other words, ceased to be external and has become internal; it has ceased to be institutional and become ideological. I personally welcome this development because it marks the growth of a new interest in the inner life of the nation as distinct from the external form of the State. The old controversies like that in England, for example, between the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the elective chamber and the hereditary chamber, are played out. And everywhere in democratic countries the Constitutions of a hundred years ago designed to check and restrain the power of the newly enfranchised electorate have been refashioned or amended to meet new national needs or international necessities. The fears of the opponents of those instruments were largely falsified, the fear, for example, that, in a pure democracy, the poor would oppress the rich; the fear, again, of my fellowcountryman, Edmund Burke, based upon his apocalyptic reflections on the French Revolution, that general

disorder would follow universal suffrage. All that eventuated, in fact, was that public authority was given a popular sanction and that, with no recession of public order, the people became the masters. The people become not only the masters of national policy, but as well, the arbiters of the constitutional system itself. And so the long drawn out controversy as to the mechanical relations of the organs of the State to each other passed out of constitutional literature. At bottom, it had been a delayed concussion between the hereditary principle in government and the elective principle; between a broken conception of the divine right of kings and an immensely confused philosophy and, as I think, a disreputable theology of – using capital initials – the Rights of Man.

The extraordinary impact of that struggle upon domestic politics and the programmes of political parties in European countries and on this continent for so long after the issue itself was settled is a circumstance which, no doubt, the constitutional historians will, in due course, fully explain. It seemed that emancipation, was itself so great a triumph and the establishment of the doctrine of the will of the people so resplendent an achievement that the very exercise of freedom, or to put it in another way, the very expression of the popular will on public questions, was to be the sole tribute to the work of the founders of the new age, and the sole contribution of the people themselves to the new political and social order. For three or four generations after the enthronement of the people the exercise of hard-won electoral rights seemed to have had no other purpose than that of illustrating the nature and extent of constitutional liberty. The use of power was merely a method of arguing the possession of it. The machinery of the method was the franchise. Democracy became identical – in the public mind – with popular sovereignty. The new freedom became no more and no less than majority rule.

A parallel tendency disclosed itself at the same time in the domain of international relations. For purposes of international law, a State became an agglomeration of juridical rights. Rights were endlessly discussed, endlessly defined, and endlessly disputed. Rights or vital interests were reserved from treaties of bilateral and multilateral obligation. International law itself ceased to be called the “*lex gentium*”, and became “*le droit international*”. That was not merely a French idea; it was an English idea also, and a German idea as well. When a new State entered the Family of Nations it had to show that it possessed the rights laid down with great precision by the school of jurisprudence which flourished under the patronage of the Charter members. International society was apparently not to be extended at the expense of international good form. The débutante to the international society of a hundred years ago – it is the same today – came decked in the crown of her sovereign rights, and not, as you and I would expect, demurely adorned with a chaplet of devotion. Rights became the “*idée fixe*” in a legal notion of State sovereignty in which the State was conceived as an organized community exacting allegiance but owing none, imposing its laws upon its subjects or

citizens, but amenable, in the exercise of its sovereignty, to no authority or jurisdiction higher than its own. Thus, in the rough jurisprudence of the Nations, sovereignty became synonymous with irresponsibility and was set up as a legal defence for actual injustice and indiscriminate objective crime. Inevitably, in an era of industrial expansion, the doctrine of rights became a mad obsession driving for conflict.

I offer this digression into the wider field because of our more recent historical experience. That experience has shown that there is a direct relation between the character of national communities and the trend of international events. But the more relevant observation for my present purpose is that there is a direct relation also between the character of the individual citizen and the political community in which he lives. And the point I wish to emphasise is this: that when the political controversies about the rights of the individual and the will of the people came to an end, with the triumph of both, that was a result which, obviously, had a rational purpose as such, but the chief purpose of which was, nevertheless, overlooked or obscured. Freedom is not a final end in itself. It should be a beginning of social progress, for it is an instrument of development, a condition of self-destiny, or self-rule, that is to say, self-control. Freedom can be lost and won, and lost and won again. That is true of individual human beings and of Nations. It is the inner life of the individual which chiefly matters and the inner life of a Nation. If the life of a Nation is destroyed it can never be restored. I am submitting to you that the chief tragedy in modern political history has been the failure of the free Nations to make their freedom a shield or bulwark of civil society. It became, instead, a kind of constitutional guarantee of the right to undermine or destroy civil society. The whole purpose of the long drawn out struggle had been to enable individual men and women to live in accordance with their rational nature, free from persecution and tyranny, and to enable individual nations to live in accordance with their own traditions and ideals and culture. You will recall that, in the case of my own country, it was only when the life of the Nation was imperilled, not so much by a military invasion of its territory, as by an attack upon its culture and its civilization, that Irish nationality came to be defined in terms of Irish freedom. When our people stood in battle for seven centuries they did so not because of any racial hatred on their part, but in order to secure for the generations which would survive the struggle, however long it might go on, the right to live in accordance with the law of the Christian life and the traditions of one of the richest secular civilizations ever bequeathed by an ancient race to the inheritors of their name. And that was why, practically the moment the struggle ended, during the twenty years – between 1919 and 1939 – in which Ireland was represented in the key capitals of the world and at world conferences her spokesman stood for a definite standpoint of forms of freedom, and discussions on forms of freedom became part of her foreign policy. Ireland, you see, although never likely to gain the whole world, had gone perilously near suffering the loss of

her own soul. Irish leaders felt that Ireland's new place amongst the Nations gave them a new responsibility which, if wisely used, would gradually grow into a steady influence making for a conception of interstate relations based, like of Vittoria and Suarez, upon a fundamental Christian ethic. All that, again, was why, as soon as all obstacles were removed and they were very formidable indeed, the Irish people gave themselves a new National Constitution which took account of their national thought and which embodied the ideas and principles for which they themselves and their forebears had passed through the most fearful vicissitudes and with which the Irish race had been identified throughout the world for more than fifteen hundred years.

Speaking of Suarez and Salamanca, may I digress for a moment to escape from the rigour of my text. I am sure many of you have visited the Palais des Nations at Geneva. You will recall the Council Chamber in that edifice, or, should I say, – with respect – that sarcophagus. The ceiling of the Council Chamber is painted by the great Spanish Artist, Signor Sert. On your way to the Palais des Nations you probably passed the monument of Jean Jacques Rousseau in the Parc des Genevois. Rousseau sits in his sedan of stone and broods over the city somewhat more darkly than Mr. Lincoln broods over Washington. There today he gazes with unseeing eyes across the still waters of the Lake, and across the scene over which Mont Blanc is suspended in the autumn sunshine like a red lampion keeping its vigil before the Alpine altar of central Switzerland. When you enter the great classic pile you will come almost at once upon the Chamber of which I speak. The ceiling is its most striking feature. There the artist depicts the struggle of mankind towards civilization. There are jungle animals fighting other jungle animals, and men fighting other men – like jungle animals. There are children held to the cannon mouth by fierce Amazonian matrons, and there are tragic youths and maidens, horror struck by Armageddon, – it is a picture of great power and beauty – with eyes uplifted and arms extended to some vague, forlorn image of peace in their time. If you gaze long enough your eyes will beckon into focus the outline of a small deft picture of a white Gothic Church which lights an obscure corner – and to me floods the whole theme of the sombre masterpiece. It is a miniature of Salamanca cathedral, the Church of the great Jesuit theologian, the canonised saint of the great international lawyers of France and Belgium and Poland and Portugal and Spain. I shall always remember that white Cathedral scarcely seen in the gloom of the Chamber and almost lost in the crépuscules of the crumbling continent, which a modern Spanish artist with the brush of Velasquez and the soul of Loyola flashed across his great canvas of the passion and epic of mankind as he saw and painted it, even as Handel wove the broad motif of the Messiah into the dark brocaded tapestry of oratorio music.

But let me resume. There is a moment, I think, in which the philosophy of life of a people passes into their national law. The question that should

arise in any country newly freed or any community newly enfranchised is the question as to what the people are to do with their freedom. And the answer to that question will depend upon the national outlook or frame of mind on the “raison d’être” of the State. And the answer to the question as to the “raison d’être of the State will depend on the national outlook or frame of mind on the purpose of human life. To us, who are Christians, the purpose of human life is plain. We do not theorise about it. Man is a creature of God, made in God’s image, fallen from a state of original grace into a state of original sin, redeemed by the Blood of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity Incarnate, and heir, by that historical fact, to an everlasting Kingdom in a life to come. I say “that historical fact” because there is a tendency to take the stupendous reality of the redemption of the human race out of the context of history, where it belongs, and to treat it, exclusively, as a thesis of the dogmatic or a hypothesis of the mystical theologians. The historical phenomenon which changed barbarism into civilization and Europe into Christendom, which made Europe the centre of the world and the leader of world order was the single fact of the belief of masses of men on that continent in the divine origin of the human soul and the supernatural destiny of all man-kind. No fact of history, no political dogma, no philosophical doctrine, no scientific truth or theory, no human experience or event and no accumulation of human experiences or combination of events has contributed so profoundly and so permanently to the meaning and value of human life, the development of human progress and the stability of human institutions so much as this acceptance by multitudes of men and women of the teachings of the Christian Gospel. Speaking to the Catholic Historical Association of Canada I do not need to advert to the Age in which the teachings and the practice of the Christian Gospel informed the whole of human life and human society. The monastic, the mendicant, the military orders; – you know the age to which I refer – the great pilgrimages to Compostello, Canterbury, Mont St. Michel, Rome, the Holy Land; the sublime Christian literature, the superb symbolic poem e.g., which its author called a Comedy and which the world calls Divine; the consummate art; the massive music struck in a mighty unison with the yearning of the Christian soul, breaking today across the centuries, “like the outpouring of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound”; the Gothic temple, that monumental memorial whose towers forever etch the Christian genius for worship and sanctity upon the summit of the religious experience of the human mind. One could go on and on. But the point I wish to emphasise in this address is that all the teeming supernatural life of the age of which I am speaking was reflected, and, indeed, embodied in the political life of that age as well. Government was a sacred office. The law was a codex of divine and natural justice, and the judges were the official interpreters “utriusque juris”, i.e. of the holy canons as well as of the civil code. Citizenship was defined in terms not of rights only but of duties also, and the authority of the community rested for its sanction not upon its sovereign

rights or the consent of the governed but upon a doctrine of obligations founded in a moral order itself based on the eternal law of God to whom citizen and State alike were bound. Here you have the whole contrast between the character of the Christian Commonwealth and the framework of the modern political or economic or social State. It is at bottom a contrast between, on the one hand, the human person, growing in wisdom and age and grace with God and man, and a society in which his moral, intellectual, and material well-being are protected and fostered; and, on the other, the citizen of the modern State and the modern State itself, the one, battling for his new freedoms without the Faith on which they are historically founded, the other propounding new deals and new orders without the Hope and the Love of the New Testament. The whole legal notion of modern citizenship is based upon a false equation of temporal or material well-being with integral human welfare. The peculiar end of civil society is not only to secure respect for the individual liberties and rights of every citizen, or to ensure material comfort, but also to procure the truly human and therefore moral good of the body politic, man and mankind.

Let us look for a moment at the notion itself of "liberty", the one idea of all others about which one would have thought that men generally might be expected to think in similar terms. You remember, for example, Lacordaire's address to liberty in his sermon in Notre-Dame, Paris, on the death of Daniel O'Connell. There, the great French preacher put personal liberty and political obedience into their proper relation to each other. Yet there is, perhaps, no idea generally accepted as inflexibly clear which has been so ill-defined and so abused as the idea of individual liberty. The liberty of the individual has been given a new apotheosis in our time; the god called personal freedom occupies the chief place in the pantheon of the deities of modern capitalistic, as distinct from Christian, democracy. You know the usual classification of individual liberties which is found in all the books between the French Revolution and the War of 1914 – liberty of worship, liberty of speech, liberty of association, liberty of assembly. I omit the more recent additions to the list. The abstractions of the psychologists and the romantic poets, like, for example, Keats and Shelley in England, became the postulates of the constitution makers from the Abbé Siéyès, Benjamin Franklin, etc., to Gambetta in the 19th century and down to our own time. It took concrete form when they related it to a man's conscience, as freedom of worship; i. e., freedom to worship, not as God commands, but as the worshipper determines the matter for himself, and when they related it to society as, respectively, a man's freedom to speak his mind as he thought fit, as his right to associate with his fellows for any common purpose, and as the right of groups of men to assemble in public, to discuss questions of private interest or public importance so long as they do not constitute a riot at common law or under the statute or become an obstruction to the traffic, or a danger to the State. I am contending that, if you examine the notion of personal liberty as conceived

by the theorists to whom I have referred, and, indeed, the notion as it is understood in the popular mind today, that is, by average men, you will find that it is still pretty much of an abstraction, and therefore only a half-truth or what comes to the same thing, a falsehood. A man is, intellectually at liberty to think, but he is not morally at liberty to think, as he likes. Hamlet said: "Nothing is either good or bad, but thinking makes it so". That frame of mind denies intrinsic truth. It invests human reason with the divine attribute, or the divinely commissioned prerogative, of infallibility. It enthrones private judgment as a rule of faith and as the sole criterion of morality. It vitiates by avoiding your conception and mine of objective, that is to say, normal standards of human conduct. It gives a kind of magisterium or majesty in the moral order to the *a priori* forms in which the German philosopher Kant erroneously conceived the human mind to be clothed.

Consider this in the context of the exercise of the stupendous faculty which we rightly call "free will. What is our experience of the exercise of the faculty of free will? Here, again, there is a school of moralists who define free will as the power of doing as one likes. But the more exact definition of that phenomenon should, in my submission, emphasise, not the power of thinking or doing, so much as the power of refusing to think or do, as one likes. Surely our experience, in the moral crises of our own lives, is that will-power is the power to refuse to pursue, indeed, to resist a line of thought or a course of action that runs parallel to the pull of the forces operating upon us at a particular time. But that is by the way. My point here may be no more than one of the incidence of the emphasis on words in a precise definition. The broader point on which I want to insist is that, if you set up a doctrine of individual liberty that is something more than freedom to think and act, something which becomes a right to think and act just as one likes, something the results of which are a matter of indifference to others or at any rate which it is broad-minded in others to tolerate, you are investing the human person with a dangerous propensity which must become a principle of disorder in private or public behaviour, and you are making society a passive on-looker in the tragedy of a man's intellectual self-destruction or moral suicide. You are doing more, you are making society itself the sponsor of the forces which encompass and ensure its own dissolution.

The positive aspect in all this discussion on liberty which I want to place before you is that our personal liberty of action needs to be, not regimented, but regulated; not diminished, but defined. We cannot defend indiscriminate liberty of thought, or teaching, or worship, as so many rights bestowed on man by nature or conferred on him by the authority of the State. My submission to you is that if nature had bestowed rights in these terms or the State could confer them, then it would be natural and, lawful, to reject the sovereignty of God and the moral law altogether. The result would follow that the restraint of human licence would, by virtue of the law itself, fall outside its own scope and authority, and would rest, ultimately, upon force. If we

hold that force is the basis of public order and morality within the State we should not complain when it becomes the instrument of international action as well. No; we must reject a doctrine of man's personal liberty which comprizes the independence of his intellect of truth and reality, the independence of his will of any external rule whatever. We must reject a doctrine of freedom of speech which includes a so called right to blaspheme or corrupt or calumniate, or a doctrine of liberty of conscience which includes a *right* to refuse to worship at all. Indeed, we must reject the whole conception of personal autonomy in the domain of civic status and social relations. You cannot divorce freedom from truth and morality. It is the truth which makes us free. And you cannot divorce morality from the eternal law of God. It is the Faith which makes us whole. If we seek to do so, and if our constitutional law becomes the legal sanction and guarantee of the attempt, it will become the sanction also of what I may call a status parity of truth and falsehood, of justice and injustice, of good and evil. This parity of truth and justice and good with their opposites is the "metaphysical panacea" which so many modern thinkers and writers have offered to mankind as the new revelation to light a new way of life in a brave new world. Against them stand arrayed all the great political thinkers of pagan and Christian times.

Let us look down the long-battleline of this conflict.

The absolute ruler of Plato, ruling as he chose, became even to Plato himself a philosopher King ruling, not as he chose, but in accordance with law. Cicero defended the Roman law as a reflex of a law of Nature above and beyond its scope and jurisdiction. The "civitas" was subordinated to the "respublica". For three hundred years before Christ came the practice of Roman jurisprudence developed around the stern morality of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, and thus the foundations of our modern courts of equity or chancery were laid. Aristotle stood for the family and private property and rejected the quaint communism of his master, Socrates. What was all this but the prelude to the great drama of man's intellectual dependence on objective reality and the homage of his will to external standards, played off against the background of the old classical world. And when the great drama itself, at the very moment in which it began in earnest, reached a sudden height in the first centuries of the Christian Era, see how the representative teachers of the time, claiming to be the moral teachers of all mankind, sought to define off and, however unheeded, did define off for all succeeding generations the relation between a man's conscience and his king. You have it in the "Fear God, Honour the King" of the Prince of the Apostles. You have it again in St. Paul's declaration of the divine right of the common man, his insistence on the equality and fraternity of all men irrespective of race or condition, his sublimation of the Law of Nature in the dictates of the Christian conscience, and his doctrine of the spiritual origin of the civil power. And you have it, later on, in the great metaphor of St. Augustine which flamed across the ruin of the Visigoth invasion, and, after the confusion which had followed the

conversion of Constantine, segregated again the things which are God's from the things which are Caesar's. Yet the great drama moved on and the problem continued to challenge, and because men would not learn, to seem to elude solution. I may not pursue it through the centuries that followed. But reduce to their simplest terms the controversies in which the Roman Empire passed to its doom; the efforts of the Christian Fathers to temper the rule of the Byzantine Kings to the precepts of the Gospel; the conflict of the secular power and the spiritual sovereignty of the Church which divided Western Europe for a thousand years; the political science of John of Salisbury in the Middle Age whose theory of a man's peace of mind did not shirk the logic of a regicide peace; the mighty work of the greatest of the mediaeval thinkers — I mean St. Thomas Aquinas — in whom, the genius of Aristotle and Augustine glowing together, the politics of the one and the moral teaching of the other were welded forever in a masterly synthesis: reduce to their simplest terms the systems of Marsiglio and Machiavelli, the system which solved the conflict between the spiritual and the secular power by the process of abolishing the moral authority of one, and the system which solved the conflict by abolishing the moral responsibility of both; reduce again to their simplest terms the doctrines of what has been called the Age of Reason, of Locke and Rousseau and Montesquieu and Kant, from Locke to Jeremy Bentham and his utilitarian ethic of the greatest good of the greatest number; and what do you find? Do you not find that the argument which has thundered through the centuries forms out in a syllogism with a major premise which is either accepted or disputed, or denied? If we are to have a political philosophy at all must it not proceed from some basis of truth, some first principle or premise conceived and accepted by mankind in general as a postulate to be assumed or a proposition adequately proved? Must not our whole outlook on the question of the relation between the individual and the State and the relation of States to each other be shaped and formed on the basis of our notion of the nature of man and the object of man's life upon this earth? Call a system Communism or Fascism, call it Democracy or Dictatorship and, if you are unwise enough, build up your whole political science on the basis of one or the other of these facile and deceptive antitheses, but let us have no delusion about the matter, our whole attitude of mind will depend, consciously or unconsciously, on our attitude to the more fundamental question of man's first origin and last end.

I plead for a political science, and a canon of art and literature, based upon the true conception of man for what he is, the masterwork of God, and for what he became, the temple of the very spirit of God. I plead for the return to history of the historic human person arrayed in the whole raiment of his created nature, and robed in the full light of his supernatural destiny. That is a mighty task. It is the mission of a mighty apostolate. If that mission be vouchsafed to us and we be worthy of it may we not yet be the instruments of a recreation and a renewal of the face of the earth. What a chapter for some

future Catholic historian of this generation to record! Would it not stand with the passage in the record of the great Pentecost itself when men from every part of the known world heard each his own tongue wherein he was born, Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadoeia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, Jews also and proselytes, Crates and Arabians, – and those beloved and so greatly predestined strangers from Rome?

These observations are offered as an introduction to the study of modern political systems from the standpoint of Catholic history. The study itself will carry us far beyond the question of person freedom and the political or legal status of the human person. The Christian constitution of States envisages a law of status not for the human person only but for certain institutions, e. g., the family, the marriage bond, private property and so on, conceived as essential to his spiritual and temporal welfare.

I have been requested to make some reference in this address to the Constitution of my own country. Let me do very briefly before I conclude.

If the political motive of Irish national movements had been to end alien rule, then when that had been achieved, there was no more to be done. But the motive has been deeper than that: it had always been expressed in positive rather than in negative terms. The motive had been to secure political control for a purpose, the purpose, namely, of founding a great new republic not free only, not Gaelic only, not democratic merely, but, chiefly, and above all, Christian as well. Once the people were in control the question at once emerged as to what they were to do with their freedom. You know what was happening all over Europe, and of Asia, at that time, before the present conflict began. Like a vast psychological earthquake, upheaval after upheaval had erupted across half the width of the world at one stage, taking names at random, from Valencia to Vladivostock, and the domain of international affairs had been more and more affected by the oscillations of those seismic domestic disturbances. It was the penultimate instance of our recent historical experience – to which I referred at the beginning – of the relation between the character of national communities and the trend of events abroad. Here, thought leading men of learning and vision in older European capitals, in Vienna, in Lisbon, in Berne, in Madrid, in Warsaw, in Dublin, here was a tremendous juncture and turning point in the history of political systems which might be seized upon to inaugurate a new era in which the State could be made the minister of a social order within its constitutional framework that would accord with the origin and nature of man and the object of his life upon this earth. Here, thought the Irish leader, for example, was the supreme opportunity, the first given to the Irish people for seven hundred years, of building up a body of law that would take account of our national thought and that would reflect the philosophy of life of our people.

I cannot on this occasion outline the programme then contemplated and already in course of being realized. It was an undertaking of great magnitude;

it aimed at reconstructing society from top to bottom in the part of the national territory which the National Parliament then effectively controlled, and ultimately upon the whole island. The State was to be made the servant of the people's true interests, and not their total master. The Parliament itself was to be, not representative only, but, in due course, vocational. The Christian family was to be raised to its rightful place and dignity, its interests were to be fostered as the basic social unit in the new régime. The marriage bond, as the shield of the sanctity of the home, was declared (so far as I know for the first time in a democratic Constitution) to be inviolable, and the Parliament was directed that any law providing for divorce would be unconstitutional, and, therefore, null and void.

The State acknowledged that the homage of public worship is due to Almighty God. It recognised the special position of the Catholic Church as the guardian of the Faith professed by the great majority of the citizens.

A censorship of publications was established against the judgment, and outcry of a shallow intellegentia who thought that the people should be allowed to read and think and speak as they liked and that the State had no duty to set Christian moral standards before the youth of the new Ireland. The shibboleth that all citizens are equal before the law was discarded, and the true doctrine that all citizens are equal, as human persons, in the sight of God, was written into the law. The laws against blasphemy and indecency were given a new standing. Freedom of speech was declared to be subject to morality and public order.

The social policy was laid down in the Constitution itself as a guide for the legislators. The policy outlined was the framework of a social order based on justice and charity. It secured to heads of families the means of supporting their families in frugal comfort. The abuse of free competition resulting in the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few to the detriment of the general welfare was to be curtailed. Credit control was to be aimed at a balanced production in a planned agriculture and planned industry. The agricultural policy of the State was declared to be directed towards the establishment of the largest possible number of working farmers on the land in economic holdings privately owned. The State was to stand sponsor for the sick poor, the infirm, the widow, the orphan and the aged. Conditions in industry were so regulated as to safeguard the physical and moral health of the young, to prevent exploitation, and to prevent employment by economic necessity of a kind injurious to the sex or age or physical condition of the worker.

Similarly, in the field of education the whole inner life of the Nation was transformed. But I must make an end. Already I have wearied you, and so I shall yield to your fatigue, my own indisposition and the lateness of the hour. In conclusion may I say this. We hear a good deal about God being on the side of democracy. Well, I hope I have given you a rough idea of our attempt to put our democracy on the side of God and so to make it safe for ourselves, and, who knows? – safe also for the world.

Mon père Président, mes chers amis.

Ce sont des choses pour notre paix que j'avais à cœur de vous parler ce soir. Sans doute, vous avez écouté bien des fois la critique de mon pays que nous sommes un peuple d'un génie destructif, un peuple de vues incertaines, d'une mentalité inconstante, de haine féroce et tenace, et de loyauté rompue. Croyez-moi, cette critique n'était jamais plus qu'une partie d'une ancienne diplomatie maintenant, espérons-nous, heureusement épuisée. Nous avons survécu à tout cela. Le peuple irlandais est une vieille race européenne; co-fondateur, avec des autres, de la civilisation intégrale de l'Ouest; loyal pendant quinze siècles à la Foi dans laquelle cette civilisation est historiquement fondée, sans laquelle elle a presque failli, et sur la base de laquelle tout ordre politique ou économique ou social, national ou international de l'avenir, doit être bâti. C'est le devoir de l'historien catholique de rendre compte de la contribution superbe de notre Nation à l'établissement du royaume de Dieu sur la terre et au progrès culturel et matériel de l'humanité universelle dans quatre continents et même dans chaque quartier du monde entier.

Malgré que ce soit moi qui le dise, peut-être sommes-nous une nation trouvée juste, dont la semence est, dans les desseins de la Providence, puissante, pour ses fins, sur la terre, et, qui selon les promesses éternelles, deviendra plus puissante encore.

Membres de la Société Canadienne de l'Histoire Catholique, priez pour nous, afin que nous continuions d'envoyer nos fils et nos filles travailler avec les saints ouvriers des autres pays de l'Europe continentale, dans les champs des missions. Rappelez-vous que chacun de ces pays est jusqu'au moment actuel profondément et essentiellement catholique. Priez pour l'Irlande, bien-aimée terre de la sainteté et de la science, que le Maître Lui-même de la sainteté et de la science la protège et la sauvegarde pour collaborer dans Son ouvrage avec ces autres pays dont je viens de parler, et le vôtre, tous séparés ici-bas, mais néanmoins véritablement et éternellement unis à travers les siècles, à travers le monde, et au-delà des cieux.