Thoughts For Our Time

By His Eminence Cardinal McGuigan

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Optimism is not in vogue today. Perhaps we have too many sad things to think about. Certainly, it is easy to arrive at a rather lengthy list of terrifying problems. There is a threat to peace inherent in the political situation. There is a fear of extermination growing out of recent fantastic scientific progress. There is the growing persecution of religion in many lands. There is the tottering world economy, the fearful shifting of populations, and the disturbing need for more and ever more social welfare. All these calamities are real. When the human mind dwells upon them, and fails to see beyond them, it is bound to be overcome by a foreboding pessimism.

Pessimism, like physical and mental inertia, is a disease. It is a form of laziness which refuses to penetrate beyond the surface of a human problem. The normal methods of penetrating human problems are by the exercise of reason and by prayer. Neither is escapist; both are hard. But unless we proceed by reason and by prayer, beyond such patent facts as that H-bombs exist, or that nationalistic politics are dead, we simply cannot avoid the depths of human despair. To put this simply and in another way: If security is my God, and there is no security, then there is no God; or, if business is my God, and business looks bad, then God looks bad. For only too many in our day, either there is no God, or else God looks bad This is contemporary pessimism.

Men are capable of seeing beyond their problems—both by reason and by prayer. If we make our superior activities the most important part of our life, then the terrifying things around us suddenly become but so many sacraments of the present moment, but so many occasions for faith and hope and charity. Perhaps it seems strange to invite men to regard the discovering of bombs or economic chaos, or persecution of the Church as momentary occasions of virtue. Yet if we are convinced that it is the human soul that is alone important, they very quickly become so and there is no way of being sure whether the human soul is better off with or without bombs, in or out of persecution, during depression or prosperity.

Must Look Beyond

Do not mistake me. I am not advocating inaction in the face of problems. I am not standing behind any "best-possible-world" philosophy. We certainly do have to resist false doctrines like Communism, and exploitation by a greedy Capitalism. We clearly do have to find food for hungry, work for the unemployed, and homes for the homeless. The neglect of these things is a crying scandal. But as long as our efforts cease with these problems themselves, as long as they fail to carry us beyond them to the contemplation of the truth and goodness of God, we must be inevitably cast into despair and left helpless in the throes of pessimism.

There is an optimism which is neither blind nor complacent. It is the optimism, not of worldlings, but of saints. Were we to lose all we have, were we to be utterly ruined by the invader, a quarter of an hour's prayer ought to be enough to restore us to tranquility. Because, although it is true that we are here on earth for ourselves, we are also here for whatever is higher than ourselves. We are here, for example, for the perfection of the universe. And we are here for God.

True Optimism

As that celebrated Christian optimist, G. K. Chesterton, once wrote: "The pessimist thinks everything bad, except himself." The optimist does not think everything is good, but he has a "primary and supernatural loyalty to things." Above all, he has such a loyalty to institutions like the Church, the Family, the School and the Country, because they are lovable in themselves and in relation to God. He is far more zealous to defend them for the good they do than to fear the shadows of the times for the harms they may bring.

True optimism depends upon true knowledge. If this is so, it really matters very much what we know or (what is not totally different) what we believe. We must know and believe in God as a loving Father, as a personal Providence, if we are to find consolation in the face of the world's diseases. Walking down the street, or standing in a crowd, we can see innumerable people about us, and feel lost and desolate. But when we recognize a particular friend somewhere in the vast throng, we are filled with gladness and a smile illumines our face. It is the knowledge of persons which gives deep delight. And so, on a larger scale, in the realm of ideas. Until they are enlivened by the presence of a Person, they somehow lose their terror and we can face them with a deep felt joy. Pessimism, is shallowness, distrust of things, failure to find a personal God in the universe. Optimism is profundity, love of the things of nature, and awareness of the living reality of God.

IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of a dear husband and father, Guss P. Arsenault, who passed away May 15th, 1949.

Away in the beautiful hills of God
In the valley of rest so fair
Some day, some time, we know not when
We shall meet our loved one there.

Always Remembered by His Wife and Sons.

A MAN'S A MAN FOR ALL THAT

OXFORD, England, May 14 — (AP)—Lord Lawson of Beamish was a coal miner and labor leader for 42 years before the King made him a baron last February.

They get "this lord and lady business" all mixed up, the 68-year-old peer confided in a speech here. For example, he said:

"People come along to me and say 'well, you see my Lord,' then they get to "'it's this way, Mr. Lawson' then it's "tell me, John', and in the end it's 'see here, Jack.'"

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Personals

Mrs. Harold Jenkins of Charlottetown was a recent visitor at the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Muttart and family, North Tryon.

Miss Olive B. Durant returned home from Charlottetown after spending a very pleasant visit with relatives and friends.

Mr. Lawrence Durant Jr. and brother Clifford Durant of Charlotteotwn, spent Sunday with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Durant Sr. of Clermont.

Miss Eliza Campbell and Miss Nellie Montgomery of P.W.C., Charlottetown, motored to their homes in Park Corner, Wednesday afternoon.

Mr. and Mrs. Dingwell MacFadyen and two children, Joanne and Edward of Charlottetown, and Miss Lorraine Coffin, Morell, were visitors to Park Corner last week, the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Garnet Campbell and Mr. and Mrs. Heath Montgomery.

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ENGAGEMENT. — Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Cairns, Crapaud, wish to announce the engagement of their eldest daughter Minerva Cora, to Eric, son of Mrs. Butler and the late William Butler, North River. Marriage to take place in the near future

Canadians Boost U. K. Buying To New High

OTTAWT, May 13—(CP)—Canadians, with a keen eye for goods labelled "British-made," went on a buying spree during March that splattered the Dominions's over-all foreign-trade ledgers with red ink for the first time in almost a year.

Although spending $8,100,000 less for United States products than in the corresponding month last year, Canadians boosted imports from the United Kingdom to an *all-time monthly high of $32,700,000.* The net result, the Bureau of Statistics reported today, was that Canada had a debit balance of trade with all countries of $5,700,000 in March—the first adverse balance since April, 1949.

There was one bright side to the March debit balance picture. The $5,700,000 figure represented a sharp reduction from the $16,900,000 debit written into the ledgers in Match, 1949.

Imports from all countries in the month under review were valued at $237,400,000 compared with $200,200,000 in the preceding month and $236,900,000 in the corresponding month a year ago.

March exports, announced earlier by the Bureau, totalled $.23,200,000 compared with $199,500,000 in February and $206,800,000 a year earlier.

In the quarter, imports totalled $649,500,000 compared with $666,700,000 in the same period of 1949, while exports for the first three months of 1950 were $643,900,000 compared with $658,800,000.

With Canada striving to divert some of her heavy imports from the United States to the United Kingdom to both conserve her own supply of U. S. dollars and at the same time aid the U. K.'s exchange problem, U. K. imports soared to an all-time high of $32,700,000—about $2,600,000 above the previous high of $30,100,000 recorded in April, 1949.

The new high compared with $26,300,000 worth of goods bought from the U. K. in March last year. At the same time exports to the U. K. fell to $30,100,000 from $39,500,000.

For the quarter,, U. K. imports rose to $84,500,000 from $76,700,000 in the first quarter of 1949, while exports dropped to $109,100,000 from $139,400,000.

The United States remained Canada's biggest customer and largest import source. But in direct contrast to trade with the U. K., imports from the U. S. fell during the month and quarter, while exports rose sharply in the same periods.

Imports from the U. S. in March fell to $160,900,000 from $169,000,000 in the corresponding month last year, while domestic exports rose to $134,300,000 from $122,400,000. In the quarter, imports totalled $456,500,000 as against $482,500,000 and domestic exports aggregated $414,000,000 compared with $345,200,000.

Health Conditions Good At Cabano

HEALTH CONDITIONS

RIVIERE DU LOUP, Que., May 11 — (CP) — Dr. Sario Sirois, medical officer in charge of Riviere Du Loup health unit, said today health conditions remain good in fire-ravaged Cabano, 30 miles away, but medical supplies are badly-needed.

Dr. Sirois, who returned last night from the wrecked Temiscouata County milling town where 1,500 are homeless, said so far there have been no cases of influenza, typhoid or dysentery though yesterday's drenching rains may have caused colds among refugees from the fire

BULLETINS FROM BIRDLAND

BY WINIFRED E. WILSON

THE FLIES BEGIN

How we dislike fly season, and avoid the woods from now until at least the end of June! Yet flies mean an influx of certain birds which, though belonging to quite different species, have some characteristics in common. The majority wear whiskers to entangle the prey, their bills are flat, and their mouths deep and wide to enable them to scoop up dinner as they wing their way through the air.

Migration is comparatively easy *for these flycatching birds* because they are able to feed as they advance towards their breeding grounds. Some of them migrate by day, and have all night hours for rest. Ere now the different kinds of Swallows will have arrived — in fact, the Purple Martin and the Tree Swallow may have been here since shortly after mid-April, even though they must have flown miles out of their way as they zig-zagged northward, chasing flies. Chimney Swifts feed the same way. Except when "at home" in a chimney, they keep in the air continually, not even perching on wires as do Swallows. Nighthawks and Whip-poor-wills are particulary well equipped to trap high-flying night insects. They come about May 24.

Several species, grouped under the heading "Flycatchers", are mostly greenish grey and noted for their upright perching posture. A broad, flat bill tapers to a point; little round nostrils near the base are partly covered by bristly feathers; the big gape has bristles at its corners. The boldest of these is the Kingbird; the largest is the Crested Flycatcher, notorious for keeping a snake-skin in its nest; the Phoebe is often the first to get here. These and all the rest of their kind are night travellers.

Also journeying by night are four flycatching Warblers known to breed in Canada east of the Rockies. They are rather lightly built, with bills differing from those of other Warblers, being flattened and whiskered. The Hooded, though rare, is sometimes found in Southern Ontario; the Canada, that little fellow whose yellow eyering gives the illusion of gold spectacles, both catches flies on the wing and gleans among the leaves. The Black-capped, with butterfly-like actions, waits until near the last of May to arrive. Conspicuous in black and flame, the Redstart is one of the earliest Warblers. Constantly spreading its fine tail, it flutters about and darts rapidly after flying insects.

If we really wish to see all these birds, we must endure the flies.

What a distinguishes a Brant?

Literature And Life

By BOOKMAN

ATMOSPHERE

There is the atmosphere which has to do with climate, but we remember that life has climate too, and it is of this latter thing that I now propose to write. We begin life in the home and it has a certain atmosphere. I heard a teacher of a collegiate in Ontario say that their best pupils came from homes where books had a place—especially from the homes of professional men. Samuel Johnson surprised the professors of Oxford when he went there and he owed much to the fact that books were found in his home. He acknowledged his debt to his father's library. If the home talks of little but "getting on," in the ordinary acceptation of that term, then you need not expect much idealism there. The "prodigal" of Luke 15 was saved by the memory of his old home and the sight of his father's table, laden with good things."

To have a healthful atmosphere we need to have fresh air and to have fresh air we need to have the windows open. Daniel, in the Bible story, climbed the stairs of his exile-home and opened the window. Away beyond the horizon was the old home, where prayer was wont to be made. It kept him loyal to his God. I knew a man who said he never felt comfortable when he spent Sunday in play, for he recalled the way his mother regarded it. Literary men, like Browning, and Sir James Barrie told us often what they owed to their homes.

Besides there are places in the country which have certain atmosphere. "Can any good thing come out of Nazereth"— that question tells its own tale Not much was expected from that quarter. There are areas in Canada of which not very much is expected. Honesty is at a low ebb, people used to be bought at election time so the report goes.

On the other hand, we know places, far from lines of communication with the outer world and from almost every second house came a scholar who carried the name of the little school far afield.

Of course we help to create atmosphere. I knew an industry where because of the respect even the coarsest man had for a fellow workman, speech especially when he was around was "seasoned with salt." The rank and file of these labourers had such respect for this man that they would not for anything say a word which might offend him—speech was clean when he was near. Have we ever thought what we owe to our deference for woman? On the other hand, if she does not hold our respect, how we fall in the scale of respectability!

Today there are millions of people living behind an "iron curtain" and we know that the atmosphere is not healthy. When some one asked Socrates where he belonged, his reply was, "To the universe."

The atmosphere is not good "behind the iron curtain". Suspicion lurks there and does incalculable harm. Life needs open spaces and the blowing of clear winds. Two devastating wars have shaken our old world and we are now gathering the fragments together. We need mutual understanding. We need a clear atmosphere. The fog of suspicon hides us from seeing one another.

Churches too, have an atmosphere. We are told that some are cold—too cold. I recall a story told me by a friend. A minister in a Nova Scotia town one Sunday morning noticed a stranger in the audience. He did not get a chance to speak to him, but noticed him in the same seat at night. Going to him and regretting that he had not met him in the morning, he was more than astonished to hear the visitor say, "Had you spoken to me then and had shaken my hand I would not be here to night, for I do not come to church to get a handshake, but to worship God." He was a rare character, but there was some truth in his contention—some, we must admit, but he was a rare bird.

Describes Scene Of Destruction Along Red River

WINNIPEG, May 12—(CP)—A three-mile boat trip along the flooded Red River unrolled a monotonous and depressing river-eye view of destruction to a Winnipeg Free Press reporter.

Sam Street and photographer Dave Bonner boarded the power boat at Elm Park, south of Winnipeg, and passed through the worst-flooded section along the river through Winnipeg and its suburbs.

Street said they followed the middle of the river's normal course, now almost impossible to chart. Dodging debris and bucking a violent current, they saw Kingston Crescent and Victoria Crescent where houses are all deserted, most with water at least as high as the window-tops.

"The keynote was monotony," reported Street. "Home after home had been taken over by the torrent — only the Canoe Club looked in its element."

Houses of the rich and poor had received the same treatment.

"The flood didn't care whether they had cost their owners $25,000 or a fifth of that—it just moved in."

Edging in occasionally so Bonner could take pictures, the boat passed over dikes the river had submerged. One place that looked like the mouth of a Red tributary turned out to be a Fort Garry street. Greenhouses, summer-houses and small dwellings had been dumped on their sides.

Pathetic clusters of people worked at ruptured dikes protecting a few homes. They had done all they could and were watching the water take over.

"There was plenty to see," Street summarized. "It was all depressing."

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND HOSPITAL

ANNUAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of the Act of Incorporation a public meeting of all contributors to the Prince Edward Island Hospital will be held in the class room, new nurses' residence, Charlottetown, on Tuesday, May 16, 1950, at 8 P.M. for the purpose of electing trustees for the government of the institution in accordance with the by-laws and for the transaction of such other business as may be brought before it.

J. ANDREW LIKELY,
Secretary, Board of Trustees.

The Neighbors

By George Clark

"Mom won't let me wear lipstick downstairs. This is the only place I can be glamorous."

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Canadian Sport Snapshots

By JACK SULLIVAN
(Canadian Press Staff Writer)

TORONTO, May 8 — (CP) — Bill (Ottawa Journal) Westwick reminds those charged with selections for Hockey's Hall of Fame not to overlook Alf Smith, a member of Ottawa's famed Silver Seven who, Westwick says, "helped write some stirring early chapters in Stanley Cup history.

"Few who ever saw him play will not agree that in his prime there weren't many greater right-wingers than Smith," Westwick says.

Doug Picks 'Em

Doug (Windsor Daily Star) Vaughan figures a guy can't be sued for speculating and he goes out on a limb to pick coaches for the three N.H.L. vacancies — at Chicago, New York and Boston. Here they are:

Terry Reardon, coach of the Providence Reds in the American Hockey League the last two years, to succeed George (Buck) Boucher as Boston Bruins coach.

Ebbie Goodfellow, coach of St. Louis Flyers of the A.H.L. and former Detroit Red Wing star, or Frank (King) Clancy, freshman coach of Cincinnati in the A.H.L. and former N.H.L. great, to replace Charlie Conacher in Chicago.

Neil Colville, former New York Ranger and now coach of New Haven of the A.H.L. to replace Lynn Patrick in New York.

Art Is Miffed

Art (Cornwall Standard-Freeholder) Cameron has been reading the stories out of Calgary about the palsy-walsy attitude of the managers of Toronto Marlboros and Calgary Stampeders, Allan Cup finalists. He doesn't like it.

"This maudlin back - slapping may be calculated by the strategists of both clubs to soften up the opposition. But please fellows, let's not stand around like youngsters playing ring - around - the - rosie. What are you trying to do — take the color out of the nation's favorite sport?"

Phillies Purchase Veteran Infielder

PHILADELPHIA, May 10—(AP) — Philadelphia Phillies today announced the purchase of veteran infielder Jmimy Bloodworth from Cincinnati Reds for a sum of cash above the $10,000 waiver price.

Bloodworth, who hit .261 in 134 games last season, will be used as a utility infielder—something the Phils have needed with only Ralph Caballero on hand in event any of the regulars are sidelined.

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