

impossible within the scope of this paper to give more than a brief survey of the Catholic press

In Canada and the United States.

In Canada there are no daily papers for English-speaking Catholics. The most important weeklies, the *Casket* and the *Record*, were established nearly forty years ago. The latter has upwards of 50,000 readers. The monthly *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* has a circulation of 150,000. French Catholics have several newspapers and numerous parochial bulletins, of which 50,000 are distributed gratis in Montreal. The *Ecole Sociale* of Montreal brings out 1000 pamphlets on social questions every month; the *Action Populaire* of Quebec is responsible for a daily paper, *L'Action Sociale*, with a circulation of 18,000, and some excellent tracts. With two exceptions, the non-Catholic press is tolerant and fair-minded, but several Protestant sects in Western Canada publish leaflets which delight in vilifying Catholic faith and practice. Their bad influence is being actively combated by clergy and laity alike. There are also some scurrilous publications issued by the French Freemasons. The *Action Social Populaire* is also the centre of the French League of the Catholic press in Canada and the States, which numbers some twenty periodicals.

The Catholic Press in the United States does not receive that widespread support which it deserves. Three of the largest weeklies—two German, the other English—have a combined circulation of 37,650. The editor-in-chief has been instrumental in helping to organise a Catholic Press Association, founded two years ago. In the first year it received 1100 dollar subscriptions. It has arranged to obtain a weekly cable letter direct from the Vatican, and to transmit it to those papers which subscribe for it. The Social Service Commission of the American Federation of Catholic Charities during the past year has supplied thirty journals with a much appreciated article on social problems. The International Catholic Truth Society, incorporated in 1900, is active both in Canada and the States. The report for 1910-11 shows a membership of over a thousand, and 118 affiliated societies, while 199,188 pamphlets were distributed. It is in communication with the small, though active, branch of the Catholic Truth Society in Australia, which has some 628 members. During its eight years of existence it has circulated more than one million of its crisply written publications, many of which have found a ready sale in the States, the Argentine, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. Each of them has its press committee.

This brief survey of press propaganda abroad seems to emphasise two important facts: the one a national, and the other an international need. First there is the vital necessity of a central information bureau in every country, such as those already existing in Belgium and Switzerland, which shall supply news to the Catholic papers, and shall challenge, if possible, all false statements on Catholic matters which are published in the non-Catholic press. Secondly, there is the want of an international Catholic press agency. 'We need an International News Agency,' is the cry which comes from the Old World and the New. Thus alone can the wall of calumny, misrepresentation, and silence which the non-Catholic press have built around Catholic thought and action be broken down; thus alone can the whole truth be proclaimed to the world.

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YOUNG IRELAND LITERATURE

THE CAUSES THAT INFLUENCED IT

At a recent meeting of the Catholic Federation at Palmerston North it was proposed that lectures should from time to time be given by members of the Federation. At a meeting on Monday evening, September 22, Rev. Father McManus presided, and after the business had been transacted, a short lecture on the 'Young Ireland literature, and the causes that influenced it,' was delivered by Rev. Father Kelly.

Early in the forties of the last century (said the rev. lecturer) O'Connell began to realise that his hold on the people was not so strong as it had been; apathy grew around him everywhere, and his clarion voice no longer awoke responsive chords in the hearts of Irishmen; so the great Repeal organisation was in peril, and, though his lion heart never lost hope, he grew very anxious. Then there came into the movement three young Irishmen, who quickened and fired to new enthusiasm their tepid countrymen; the three were Thomas Davis, John Dillon, and Gavan Duffy. Davis and Dillon were lawyers, Duffy a journalist. Davis was a Protestant, and besides his genius, his ardent love for Ireland, and his broad sympathy for mankind, he had that magnetic charm which made all who knew him love him. Duffy had his full share of the common sense of the northern Irishman, and was gifted with rare literary qualities. Dillon was one of the truest, purest, and most fearless of all that gallant band of those who loved Ireland in all ages. They liked O'Connell, but did not see eye to eye with him in his policy; and they had a deep distrust of English statesmen; they preached the sound gospel that Irishmen of all creeds and classes should be united, that in no whining supplicants' tones, but with manly independence they should demand to have their wrongs made right. They wanted Irishmen to be self-reliant and self-respecting, and they would have these qualities nourished and strengthened by meditation on the storied past of Erin.

In the summer of 1842 they sat under the leaves of an elm tree in the green lawns of Phoenix Park, and, as was their custom, spoke earnestly of such problems as they had at heart. And there came to them the idea of starting a newspaper to further the propaganda of their doctrines. Thus was born that wonderful paper known as *The Nation*. Its purpose was 'to create and foster public opinion in Ireland, and to make it racy of the soil.' Its qualities of freshness, of high seriousness, of manliness, soon made it famous, and attracted to it a galaxy of brilliant writers, whose contributions, during the twelve years it lasted, crowned it with a halo of glory that will never fade in Ireland. *The Nation* was first published in the autumn of 1842. Three years later the blight first appeared in the County Wexford, and quickly spread over the whole land. The terrible years of the famine had come. The green leaves of the potatoes shrivelled up and died, and the tubers at the root became a fetid, putrid mass. The once verdant acres grew into disgusting patches of drab-yellow that hurt the eyes; and the heavy stench of the rotten plants pervaded the great fields and the sweet country hedgerows of Ireland. Their food was now poison; and the poor people sickened and died. They died in thousands: old men and old women, boys and girls in the full flower of youth, little children, babes at their mothers' breasts, cried aloud for food, and because there was none, they too, like the green plants, shrivelled and died. It was a common sight to see starving, half-naked women and children going through the empty fields searching for turnips or mangolds which might have been left behind when the crop was gathered in. Eight millions of Irish people cried for food, and died in thousands—300,000 of them in one year. And they saw before their eyes Irish corn, which would have kept them alive, carted away under the protection of soldiers, to be sold to enrich the landlords. And because the people paid no rent in these years, they were thrown out of their homes to die like dogs by the roadside. O'Connell was dying slowly, though at the time few realised it. His son, John, a man utterly unworthy

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