

universities, judges, statesmen, and soldiers. Through lines of soldiers his bier passed amid a silence that manifested the grief of a great nation for the passing of a benefactor of the human race.

St. Joseph

On March 19 the whole Church celebrates the feast of St. Joseph, the spouse of Mary and the foster-father of her Divine Child, Jesus Christ. There are numerous traditions and legends about his life, but we have no serious warrant for accepting anything beyond the bare facts handed down to us by the Gospels. Bethlehem appears to have been the birthplace of the Saint. But before the time at which the Gospel narrative opens, he was living at Nazareth. Later he went to live in Galilee, probably in pursuit of his calling which was that of a tradesman, probably a carpenter. The Greek word *tekton* means a mechanic in general and also a carpenter, and St. Justin says that in regard to St. Joseph it is to be taken in the latter sense. It was probably at Nazareth he betrothed and married Mary, who was to become the Mother of God. In due time the miracle of the Incarnation was accomplished. It happened that just as Mary was near her confinement, an edict issued by Caesar Augustus summoned to Bethlehem for enrolment the descendants of the tribe of David. Finding no room in the inns there, Mary and Joseph took shelter in a cave, and there the Son of God was born of the Virgin Mary. The coming of the shepherds, the adoration of the Magi, the Presentation in the Temple, and all the marvellous events of the Childhood of Christ left Joseph "wondering at those things which were spoken concerning him." An angel had already revealed to him what a high dignity was his, and now came another warning him to take the Child and His mother and flee into Egypt and remain there until further notice. Thus they escaped from the fury of Herod, whose fears for his kingdom made him massacre the male children under two years of age. A few years later, came the summons to return to Palestine, and the Holy Family again settled at Nazareth. The only notable incident for the rest of the Hidden Life was the seeking and finding of Jesus. After that wonderful spectacle of the Boy of twelve teaching the doctors in the Temple, followed years concerning which all we are told is that He went down to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and was subject to them. Tradition tells us that St. Joseph died before the Public Life began, and as there is no mention of him in the Gospels during that period we are warranted in accepting it as true. St. Epiphanius says he was ninety years old at the time of his death, and St. Bede tells us that he was buried in the Valley of Josaphat. Others think it more probable that he did not live to a great age and that he was buried at Nazareth. Joseph was a "just man," and he alone was chosen to be the foster-father of Christ and the spouse of Mary. Hence it is not strange that from the earliest ages we find records of public recognition of his sanctity. His feast was kept by the Copts as early as the fourth century, and it is said that in the great basilica erected at Bethlehem by St. Helena there was a magnificent oratory dedicated to him. In the West he had his place in martyrologies of the ninth and tenth centuries, and in 1129 a church was dedicated to his honor at Bologna. The devotion to St. Joseph was zealously promoted by SS. Bernard, Thomas, Gertrude, Bridget of Sweden, and several other saints of the Middle Ages. Later, SS. Vincent Ferrer and Bernardine of Siena were especially remarkable for devotion to him. The celebrated Gerson used all his learning and eloquence in advocating public recognition of the cult of St. Joseph, particularly at the Council of Constance, in 1414. The Dominicans, Franciscans, and especially the Carmelites, were zealous in urging the devotion to the Saint; and their exertions were successful in making it widespread throughout Europe before the Reformation. Amongst the Popes, Benedict XIV., Pius IX., Leo XIII., and Pius X., may be mentioned as having the devotion much at heart. It is no wonder that with such powerful promoters it has become universal in our

age, and never in any age was it more wanted by mankind. For the proud, St. Joseph is a model of humility; for the workers, he is the natural patron, and for heads of families, in this age of the decay of Christian family life, his example is salutary and inspiring. Tradition also says that he died in the arms of Jesus and Mary, and thus he has come to be regarded as the patron of a happy death, by Christians all over the world.

Ireland's Financial Outlook

It is rather a surprise to read that, financially, there has been some progress in Ireland during the past troubled year. Owing to the insane destruction of public buildings, of railroads and bridges, and of private property, one cannot expect to find a credit balance at the end of the year; but nevertheless, it is good news that trade has done well and that exports have increased enormously in value. It is hopeful as a promise of what the future will bring when Irishmen stop killing one another. We note that Mr. Cosgrave and Sir Horace Plunkett believe that the end of the civil strife is in sight, and we are assured from various sources in Ireland that fear of murder alone keeps many youths still in the ranks of the *de Valeraites*. The Free State Government made a criminal mistake in executing rebels by way of reprisal, but otherwise its forbearance and patience were as much as could be expected when dealing with midnight assassins and with wretches who burned to death cripples. The London *Economist* thinks the crux of the financial trouble has passed and that Ireland will win through and advance towards full national well-being and the realisation of all her hopes. Ireland will have to enter the money market as a borrower on her own credit, and the *Economist* says:

Yet although the agony of Ireland has reached the climax where "the blood of the bearers of honored names is like to flow—not in the heat of armed conflict, but by the deliberate act of executive severity," this weekly believes that the crisis will be safely passed and Ireland will win through to the paths of ordered progress which lead toward "full national well-being and the possible realisation of all her hopes." Meanwhile we are advised that Ireland must now enter the money market "as a borrower on her own credit," and it is pointed out that—

"Although in a period of transition and emergency estimates both of revenue and expenditure are inevitably provisional, yet it is clear that the expenditure of the Irish Free State for the year 1922-23 can not fall far short of £40,000,000, and the revenue can not much exceed £27,000,000. In so far as the ultimate amounts differ from these figures, it will probably be because the gap between them is greater rather than smaller. The estimated revenue is apparently based upon the British Treasury figures furnished for the purposes of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and it will be by similar estimates that the revenue ultimately available for the year will be finally determined, because, until the new fiscal and financial systems are in actual operation, estimated and conjecturally apportioned figures for Great Britain, Ireland, and North-east Ulster respectively form the only possible method of transacting the financial business of all three. If the taxes be fully paid, and business and the consumption of dutiable articles maintain their normal level, the Irish Free State should, on the present basis of high taxation, have an abundant revenue. The expenditure figures are swollen by such items as £7,000,000 for the Army and £10,000,000 for compensation for destruction of property and £1,800,000 for superannuations. The figure for compensation is merely a provision for what will probably be payable before March 31, 1923, and is known to represent only about a fourth of the ultimate amount. In addition the completion of Irish Land Purchase has to be financed, and financial provision made for a further scheme of land settlement, an extension of peasant proprietorship, to which the new régime is pledged. However these matters may be handled as between revenue and capital accounts, it is quite clear that the Finance Minister will need

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