

Treatment Differs

John Reid, an Alberta Socialist, lingers in jail because he was found guilty of seditious utterances. He deserved his punishment. Public opinion in these parts justifies and upholds the fair administration of Canadian laws.

But it does seem, it is very plain, in fact, that Canada is not a country where there is common justice. There are men in parliament who have said worse than Reid, and defied authority. La Patrie, of Montreal, tells also of the case of Abbe Guilbault. Cancelling his subscription to La Patrie, he wrote a letter. Abbe Guilbault is the parish priest of Saint-Viateur d'Anjou, in the County of Berthier, a small parish of 300 souls, founded in 1909. His epistle in full:

"You are hereby instructed to stop sending your paper to my address. For a long time I have been feeling disgusted at your mercenary patriotism and at your servile devotedness to 'that old woman,' the empire.

"You have already shown what was your good faith and your sincerity when you advocated the emergency contribution of Borden, a needless waste, as is now evidenced by the facts.

"By your writings you have contributed to throwing the country into the extravaganza still more insane, more anti-national, of military imperialism. You never understood what were the right interests of your country. For French-Canadians, it is a shame and a conduct that can not be explained. Moreover, the kind of journalism that you are conducting against Germans is absolutely childish and ridiculous. Hence, you do not deserve any credit and any readers with people in earnest.

(Sgd.) "Eug. Guilbault."

"Parish Priest."

The writer of such a letter in this province, or Alberta, would be interned. Not so in Quebec.

Why should the authorities there be so timid?

As La Patrie points out, in the first week of the war, His Grace Archbishop Bruchesi, of whom the Bishop of Joliette is a suffragant, declares publicly: "Never did a people start in a war with a conscience that was neater and a better defined conviction (than Britain). We are fighting for a principle that is at the bottom of civilization. It is the duty of every one of us to give Britain his loyal and generous support. Our people will not fail to it. They are invited as strongly by the call of the church as by the call of the land."

In a joint letter of all the bishops, published in the third month of the war, letter that was signed by His Grace Bishop Forbes, of Joliette, the director superior of the parish priest of St. Viateur, it was said: "We could not dissimulate it, this conflict, one of the most terrible ever witnessed, must have its repercussion on our country. England is engaged, and to her is tied the fate of all parts of the Empire. She has a right to count on our co-operation, and that co-operation, we are pleased to say it, was generously offered in men and money."

And in January last, the Archbishop of Montreal, during a speech delivered at Laval University, said: "Canada is not a neutral country, and we feel it. Remember the fear that caught us, when we heard for the first time that German submarines had reached the St. Lawrence waters. Fortunately, the information was wrong, but it could have been possible. Germany considers us as enemies. If her Zeppelins could cross the Atlantic they would come here and bombard our monuments, our churches,

our public buildings; we would be treated without mercy. We are not neutral and we are not independent. We are a colony of Britain, and if Britain was defeated, Canada would be the first prize of Germany. But we do not want to become German. For that reason we must do all that we can, because the fate of Canada is tied to the British guns. At the beginning of the war the bishops studied the situation. There was no question of dogma or moral, there was a direction to give. The bishops of the Province of Quebec gave theirs and since then their opinion has not changed."

La Patrie is mystified that Abbe Guilbault should express his disloyal views so freely.

Explanations are in order from the politicians.