

mentioned above, don't quite know whether they want to inconvenience themselves or not, what will be the result? Failure of the most sacred enterprise.

A program for the purification of the moving pictures will meet with the unqualified approval of all right-minded citizens. Those who are really in earnest and who mean to lend the strength of their support to the endeavor, a most laudable one, can assist immeasurably by remaining away from any theatre where an objectionable film is being shown, thus encouraging others to imitate them.—The Pilot.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR OCTOBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS XI.

OUR BISHOPS

One may be tempted to ask whether it be not a lack of respect to solicit the prayers of the faithful for those whom the Holy Ghost has chosen to govern the Church of God. We know how the proprieties must be observed in other spheres of human effort. In civil society, a superior, as a general rule, is to consider it a lowering of his dignity were he implored for him from his inferiors, and if he so wished he could measure his loss in authority and prestige by the number or the weight of the favors received from those beneath him. Happily, pride has no place in the councils of the Catholic Church; other sentiments prevail; other methods are in vogue. Charity and union and mutual dependence on one another take the place of the conceit and self-complacency so prevalent in the outside world. Our spiritual leaders realize the responsibilities of their sublime office, and none are more ready than they to seek the prayerful aid of those they are called upon to govern.

The work which the Church is commissioned to do in the world is infinitely above the natural strength of any of her members, and as all are interested in this work, all should use the means at their disposal to obtain for one another the supernatural strength needful for its accomplishment. It is this theory, reduced to practice, that will explain the marvellous union and strength which exists in the Catholic Church, which binds all her children one to the other, which infuses life into all from the humblest to the highest, which puts each in a state of dependence on the entire body, and which, far from leaving one to lead his life alone and bear his own responsibilities, gives him the means of aiding in the work of Christ, as the Acts of the Apostles tell us (xx, 16), from Whom, "the whole body being compacted and fitly joined together by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every heart, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity."

The apostolate of prayer, through which this vital and visible influence is spread, follows in certain aspects of its operations a different law from that which governs the apostolate of the word and the sacraments. This latter apostolate calls for pre-eminence of dignity and power; it operates downward, for the reason that it is exercised by superiors on their inferiors; only those who are chosen have the privilege of dispensing the gifts of God. But the apostolate of prayer exercises its energies upward, and may be employed by the humblest members in the Church to reach the highest. In this way the little child, or the poor outcast, who prays fervently for the Holy Father and the Bishops who govern the Church, may contribute his mite to bring about the accomplishment of their sublime and difficult mission among human souls. Saint Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, understood this perfectly well, and no one was more earnest than he in craving the prayerful help of those he had begotten in the Faith. In his petitions for prayer, it is not merely a desire which he expresses, it is rather a duty he imposes, and he leaves us under the conviction that the graces he required for the success of his external apostolate among souls depended on the internal apostolate of prayer which he wished to see active among his followers. On their prayers he counts in order to obtain the power of speech fittingly to proclaim the doctrines of Christ. "Pray for me," he wrote to the Ephesians, (vi, 19, 20), "that speech may be given me that I may open my mouth with confidence to make known the mystery of the Gospel, and so that therein I may be bold to speak according as I ought." It was through the prayerful intercession of his followers that he hoped to escape from the snares of his enemies and to assure the free spread of the Gospel. What more pathetic than this message to the Thessalonians: (ii, iii, 1, 2), "Brethren, pray for us that the word of God may run and be glorified, even as among you, and that we may be delivered from importunate and evil men." And again he wrote to the Colossians (iv, 2): "Be instant in prayer, praying for us, also, that God may open unto us a door of speech to speak the mystery of Christ that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak."

In inspiring the great Apostle to make these humble petitions for

prayer, the Holy Ghost pointed out to Christians in all ages one of their most glorious prerogatives and one of their most imperative duties, that of helping by their intercession the successors of St. Paul and all who are engaged throughout the world in work similar to his. In praying for our Bishops, we cooperate consciously in their ministry, and as there is nothing in the world greater than the ministry of the Bishops of the Catholic Church, we should see to it that prayer for the help on which they count is a duty to be fulfilled.

We should ask for them what St. Paul desired that his disciples should ask for him, namely, courage and fortitude to defend the truth at all times, and the faculty to spread it around them. These virtues are as necessary in our day as they were in the days of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The enemies of our spiritual leaders have to deal with differ in kind, perhaps, from those St. Paul encountered; but not in malice nor in perseverance in their evil designs. How few of us ordinary folk know the trials and tribulations which only too often worry the hearts of our Bishops. Has anyone ever considered the obligations attached to the office of those chosen to govern the Church? How few of us ever try to weigh the responsibilities that rest upon their shoulders. Who of us would undertake to solve the questions that look to them for solution? Who would be daring enough, without supernatural aid, to make the delicate decisions they are often called upon to make in the difficulties inevitable in human intercourse? Have we ever considered the multiple interests that come into conflict among people professing the same faith; or the initiative our spiritual leaders must give proof of in fostering the interests of the Church; or the constant guard they must keep over the flock under their care; or the strength of character they must show when reproving of erring children becomes imperative; or the lofty example of life and duty that must be given by those whose light should always shine?

And yet the interests of the Church of Christ, which our Bishops are in duty bound to look after, are as much our affair as theirs. As Catholics we are all our brothers' keepers, when it comes to the welfare of souls, and we all have our obligations whether we be in high or low position. And because we cannot evade these obligations, the zeal which we owe to Christ's cause should urge us to help our Bishops with all our hearts and with all our strength. Since prayer is such a powerful factor in the salvation of the world, we should put no limit to the zeal with which we use it. If we are not privileged to struggle with our spiritual leaders on the open field, we should at least act in humbler spheres. Let us therefore keep our hands raised to heaven until success crowns their efforts, until the victory is won.

If we consider ourselves honored when we receive the blessing of a Bishop, which is a pledge of the Divine blessing, should we not appreciate the power that is in our hands of obtaining similar blessings for him and his noble work? Gratitude to God for the privilege of membership in the Church and all that this title means to us, should urge us to help those who govern the Church. When we pray for our Bishops, therefore we are working for God and His Church, and, besides, we are yielding to the wish of the Supreme Bishop, Christ's Vicar on earth, who has designated this intention for the present month.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

CLEANER BOOKS

The campaign for cleaner movies is being followed by a campaign for cleaner books. It is high time that some concerted action was taken to stop the flood of filth that comes from some publishing houses under the cloak of literature. Things have come to such a pass that discriminating readers reject the whole output of modern fiction and so-called scientific writers on social subjects. The suggestion has been made to appoint a literary overlord who shall act in a similar capacity to Mr. Hays in the movies and Mr. Thomas in the drama.

There is a remedy for every evil in the world. Public decency when it is outraged rises in its wrath to smite the wanton disregard of the proprieties and conventions, and the flouting of the moral code. As in the movies, so in modern literature a decided reaction has set in against the purveyors of filth. What was but dimly discernible a few years ago in the modern realistic school of literature is becoming clearly apparent in recent months, that is that such writers who pander to depraved tastes are not working in the interests of truth but for financial gain. They are engaged in that remunerative occupation known as fooling the public. But the public refuses to be fooled all the time.

The much abused reading public has just awakened to the fact that such writers of filth are fooling them. They see the methods such writers employ. One writes a book and others of his ilk laud it to the skies. The first in turn hails the others as new stars in the literary firmament and such advertising swells the sales of the whole school. Those who pay good money for such books find to their disgust that such writers in lieu of being

original seek to be shocking and succeed only in becoming loathsome.

Realists for revenue only is the epithet which Booth Tarkington is reported to have applied to such erotic writers. And the secretary of the society which has taken the initiative in the present movement against filthy literature hails Mr. Tarkington as an example of a successful novelist who never writes anything that is not wholesome, delightful and clean. The author himself declares that he does not write such things because he does not think about such things.

The really great writer, whom the public enshrines in the inmost recesses of his heart is the one who does not think such things and therefore cannot write them. Florence Barclay's novel *The Rosary* has been translated into eight languages. More than a million copies of it have been sold. Probably five or six million people scattered over the world have read it and been helped by it. This writer gives the following account of her aims and methods, quoted in the recently published memoir by her daughter: "My aim is never to write a line which could introduce the taint of sin, or the shadow of shame into any home. Never to draw a character which would tend to lower the ideals of those who by means of my pen, make intimate acquaintance with a man or woman of my creating. A great French man and writer has said: 'The only excuse for fiction is that it should be more beautiful than fact.' There is enough sin in the world without an author's powers of imagination being used to add even fictitious sin to the amount."

These are high ideals, but they are the ideals of the true literary artist, who esteems the canons of good taste and the principles of the morality above financial gain. If the reading public would rebuke filthy writers by refusing to purchase their works, there would soon be an end of salacious books. That good books can succeed and have remarkable sales was shown in the popularity of Maria Chapdelaine, and Abbe Pierre. Unfortunately there is no poison label placed on bad books to keep them out of homes. And the reading public, therefore, is gradually suspecting all books. Literature like the movies must purge itself of its evil influences.—The Pilot.

NO MORE WAR!

Referring to the Great War, Dean Inge in the course of a sermon preached in London last month before the delegates of the International Peace Congress, remarked: "It seems to most of us now that we were all stark mad together." For once most will agree, no doubt, with the "gloomy Dean." Now that the memory of the world-wide horror which began in the summer of 1914 has become less vivid and men are able to realize better the vast range and the lasting evil results of the violent insanity that then afflicted so large a portion of the human race there are consoling indications that in almost every land large and clamorous classes of people are determined to keep the world from going war-mad again. Late in July and early this month enthusiastic demonstrations were held in England, Germany, the United States and in the cities of other nations, to observe fittingly the eighth anniversary of Armageddon's beginning, and the ringing slogan, "No More War!" was the burden of every speech and the cry of all the marchers. Convinced that the Great War did nothing but unmeasured evil to every nation that took part in it and instead of permanently "settling" things, it only made them worse, the demonstrators clearly indicated their opinion of "the last argument of kings."

It is not at all clear, however, what effect the world-wide protest had on those rulers, diplomats, "statesmen," captains and financiers who are said to be busily occupied even now in preparing for the "war of extermination" which is sure to follow the next seizure by war-insanity that attacks the human race. But the proper corrective for the Armageddon-breeder's blood-thirsty habit of mind, well observes the current Month, is

"To dispel the common intellectual apathy in regard to war and to break up the age-long tradition that looks upon it as something outside the control of human volition. War has its roots in human ambition and cupidity, strong impulses which can be regulated in the community as well as in the individual, and the Church, with her clear practical teaching on justice, her stern condemnation of fraud and violence and robbery and murder, her lofty ideals of charity and human brotherhood provides the best means of supplanting that old pessimistic belief by something more worthy of the Christian profession. The Catholic Church is the greatest of all peace societies, for she upholds principles which would make all war impossible except that waged in pure self-defense, and would base that defense upon the common interests of the organized World-States."

An old school of romanticists used to speak of the moral values of war as the training-ground for the manly virtues: we know better now. War is dysgenic not only because it slays the youngest and bravest, but because it gives new vitality to passions and vices which long years

of civilization have worked at weakening or eliminating. It is in the practice of Christianity that the manly virtues received their best support. Self-conquest calls for more courage and discipline than the conquest of others.

"Yet even moral enthusiasm requires a basis in reason lest it should lapse into mere sentiment. The causes of war must be studied with a view to their removal. The old brag of nationalism, which is only pride masquerading as patriotism, and which, while ignoring national faults, induced a spirit of contempt for other races, should be purged out of our history books. All peoples sin alike in this regard, though some are worse than others. National histories glorify war indiscriminately without condemning those that were unjust in aim or method; the evil passions of past times are perpetuated amongst generations who have never wronged each other: hatred, mistrust and scorn are actually cultivated as essential parts of patriotism, and embodied in injurious nick-names. Because Christianity has not succeeded in correcting these defects of the natural man, the superficial conclusion that Christianity does not condemn them. Hence the need of a better morality in our text-books." Such a policy as the foregoing far from being "craven pacifism," is merely the application of plain common-sense, on the part of nations, to problems which are similar in kind, though not in degree, to those that neighboring householders with a little goodwill are accustomed to settle almost any day. But what hope is there of inducing the rival nations of the world to use that required modicum of common-sense until their leaders and statesmen are ready to hearken, as in days of old, to the voice of him who holds at Rome the place of Peter?—America.

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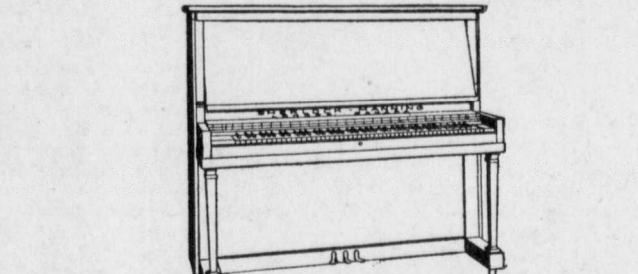
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