

Catholic Editors

On Many Themes.

VAUDEVILLE CHURCHES.—A Baptist minister out in Chicago takes a rather pessimistic view of the future of Protestantism, says "The Republic," Boston. He is pained by the indifference of the people, especially in the matter of attendance at church services. He finds that even the startling devices invented to attract worshippers are "insufficient. These observations induce him to animadvert as follows upon the existing situation out in the Windy city: "Unless the church becomes a continuous vaudeville it cannot hold its congregation. And the minister must be the whole show and orchestra as well. Some of the churches have now adopted the plan of having concerts instead of church service for evening programme. Others have lectures on popular subjects, which have no pertinence to Sunday. They have even gone so far as to introduce the stereopticon as a means of holding audiences. Will the time come, we are asking, when all the churches will have adopted these methods?"

We sympathize, "The Republic" proceeds to say, with our Baptist friend in Chicago and with his Protestant brethren elsewhere who are struggling against terrible odds to capture and hold congregations. But has it never occurred to them to try a little real religion? Why do they ignore the eloquent object lesson set forth to them by the Catholic church, whose temples of worship are filled four or five times on Sunday by earnest, pious, Christian worshippers? No vaudeville shows are employed to gather them into the churches or to hold them. They go because they have faith and because they wish to strengthen and supplement their faith with works.

NOTIONS ABOUT WILLS.—The peculiar notions which seem to seize the minds of men of wealth just about the time that they realize the necessity of making their wills is well illustrated by the following clipping from the "Ave Maria." It says:—

The California millionaire who will provides that his infant daughter shall, twenty years hence, come into full possession of his fortune, "if she has led a proper and virtuous life," has probably ensured some singular litigation on the Pacific slope in the year 1920. Just what constitutes in the eye of the law, even nowadays, a proper and virtuous life, would perhaps be difficult to ascertain; and two decades from the present time the question will hardly be more readily soluble. If the baby is a Catholic, possibly the safest plan for her guardians to adopt would be to enter her as a pupil, as speedily as may be, at a convent school, and allow her to remain there for a full graduate and post-graduate course. If that doesn't keep her "proper and virtuous," her chances of possessing the millions will be small.

ABOUT POLITICS.—The "Catholic Columbian" thus practically and sensibly deals with this question. It says:—Everybody seems to think that politics is hopelessly corrupt and that no one can enter either the management of a party or the race for office, without becoming defiled. So low in popular esteem has the conduct of public affairs fallen that young men at the outset of their career in life are solemnly warned not to go into politics and old men, when they have achieved some success in trade or professional life, are urged not to accept a nomination to office lest they be dragged down "into the mire of politics."

It is good advice to a young man without a fortune not to make politics his bread-and-butter calling; for without independence he will have to submit to the wicked dictation of the bosses or lose his hold on public employment.

But young men and old men, American citizens, ought to be in politics to the extent of fulfilling their duty, at party caucuses, at conventions, and at the polls. Yet, wherever they are, they should take their principles with them. They should stand up for honesty, truth, justice, and they should oppose improper measures, unworthy politicians, corruption, and frauds, party or no party, defeat or victory.

If a Catholic young man has a prosperous business of his own back of him and can give his leisure to politics, by all means let him force his way into the councils of his party; or if an elderly man, with a competence, has a chance to serve his city, or State, or nation in public office, by all means, let him accept the nomination.

Let every good citizen be in politics to the extent of his duty and his opportunities, but let the Catholic citizen not lay aside his conscience or his principles there to do evil, as others do, who are without his

light and grace and training, to his own degradation and to the reproach of the Church whose unworthy member he is. Let him be true to God and he will be a power for good in public affairs.

VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Preaching at Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis the other day, Archbishop Kain said:—

"I fear that there are some Catholics so worldly-minded as to impede rather than to encourage in their children vocations to the holy priesthood.

"And I fear, moreover, that these worldly-minded Catholics are found di-

rectly among those who have the means to give an ecclesiastical education to their children. They wish to see their children rise to eminence in secular professions. They wish them to gain wealth and position and the applause of men. Not, I say, that they underestimate the sublime dignity of the Christian priesthood, but they themselves are so enamored with the glare of worldly honors and the tinsel of human praise that they imagine their children will be happy only in the attainment of these passing objects of worldly ambition. Hence there are, indeed, few vocations amongst those possessed of an abundance of worldly goods.

"When a boy hears at home nothing of the glorious privileges of the sacred priesthood, but has held up to him from infancy to youth and manhood only visions of earthly glory and projects of worldly aggrandizement, would he obey and not rather seek to strangle any call, however clear, however unmistakable, to follow the Divine Master and labor for the salvation of souls? Would he not be most apt to imitate the young man whom our Bless-

ed Lord called to follow Him, but who went away sad, because he had many possessions?"

"This refusal of a divine vocation pained the Sacred Heart of our Lord, and doubtless it pains that Sacred Heart to see the conduct of so many rich parents who encourage their children, not to accept, but to refuse the proffered vocations. Herein, then, we have one reason for the dearth of these vocations, especially in a class of Catholics whom God has blessed with abundant means necessary to qualify their sons for the work of the sacred ministry."

FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC SOCIETIES

On Sunday, December 9, in Cincinnati, the first State Federation of Catholic Societies was successfully organized, and Ohio again takes the lead in this grand movement. Representatives from the three cities—Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati—effected the work, adopted a constitution and elected temporary State officials.

It was developed that the dele-

gates present represented 146 societies, with a membership of about 30,000, and that new federations were in contemplation in many towns and cities.

A communication from Mr. Henry Fries, supreme president of the Knights of St. John and temporary chairman of the National Federation, in which that gentleman officially announced that the permanent establishment of the National Catholic Federation would take place in Cincinnati on May 7, 1901, was enthusiastically received.

WEARING OUT THE BRAIN.

A French investigator has come to the conclusion that the brains of military and naval men give out most quickly. He states that out of every 100,000 men of the army or naval professions 199 are hopeless lunatics. Of the so-called liberal professions, artists are the first to succumb to the brain strain, next the lawyers, followed at some distance by doctors, clergy, literary men, and civil servants. Striking an

average of this group, 177 go mad to each 100,000. Domestic servants and laborers are not far behind; the professional men supply 155 out of each 100,000 as candidates for the lunatic asylum. Next, but with a long interval, come the mechanics, of whom only 66 in each 100,000 lose their wits. Wonderful in relate, commercial men retain their sanity the best of the whole group; as they send only 42 out of the 100,000 to the madhouse.

The French scientist may be right, and doubtless he is so far as France is concerned, but in the United States we are convinced the order would be different. Doctors as a class would take a higher rank and the commercial men of this country go mad more frequently than the "beavers of wood and the drawers of water."—Medical Record.

ST. BRIDGET'S NIGHT REFUGE.

Report for week ending Sunday, 23rd December, 1900: Males 355, females 58, Irish 238, French 142, English 17, Scotch and other nationalities 26, Catholics 368, Protestants 45. Total 413.



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