

NO GOD FOR THE CHILD

Ont in Michigan, an aggregation of individuals with an avowed fondness for the "social uplift," are plotting against the peace, dignity, and continuance in good order, of the Peninsular State. Their efforts will probably fail, yet their schemes should awaken at least a passing show of interest among American Catholics.

The association in question was founded to give the good people of Michigan a ready and easy means of promoting the welfare of the State, by securing desirable constitutional amendments. It proposes to promote this welfare, first of all, by taking God out of the heart of the child, as far as an education purely secular can attain this desirable end.

How a Godless generation will benefit the State of Michigan is a question as to which the association has given no answer. The plotters repeat some ancient and some long discredited stratagems. In this there is no danger. Catholics, in some respects, are sluggish folk, yet once bitten, they are twice shy.

But some of the devious devices employed by the Michigan association are so dangerous a campaign against the welfare of both Church and State. For the plotters are determined that no longer shall American children be allowed to reverence and worship Jesus Christ in any school. All, without exception, Jew and Gentile, agnostic and atheist, are to be herded in State Schools, that is to say, in schools from which Jesus Christ would be summarily expelled.

It is not urged in support of this petition, that all wisdom begins and ends in the public schools, or even that, supported as they are by public funds, the State schools have scored an unequalled success in the difficult art of teaching. Nor are the parochial schools indicted on the ground that they impart a training of so inferior a kind that they must be suppressed in justice to the young.

Nor, apparently, has attention been directed to the trifling circumstance that the parochial schools, besides giving all that is given by the public schools, and more, represent an annual saving of several millions of dollars to the opulent citizens of Michigan. In fact, the case of the Catholic schools is not discussed at all. To the contrary, the proposed constitutional amendment, the case is closed. The parochial schools are founded on the principle that Jesus Christ, and not a secularized State, must take the first place in the heart of the child.

"What further need have we of testimony? You yourselves have heard the blasphemy." Michigan attack may be clumsy, or again, it may hope to carry all before it by its very boldness. Hitherto, it has never been held good public policy in this country, so to strengthen the State as to destroy what few rights modern social and religious conditions have left within the parental domain.

No one denies that the State has not only the right but the duty to care for the education of the child, when the natural guardians are unwilling or unable to fulfill this function; but the law which makes the child merely the ward of a secular State is conceived in a spirit of insolence and gross tyranny. It is a return to that paganism, set forth so eloquently by certain German philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which would reduce the child to a slave in his place, a bureaucratic State supreme in every sphere of human activity.

Only time can make manifest whether the plan of taxing the parochial school out of existence, a proposal which finds favor in the East, or the bold Michigan scheme to bring up all children as wards of the supreme State, or in the mephitic atmosphere of godless schools, will put God out of the heart of the next generation more quickly and more completely. Meanwhile, even in these days of stress, Catholics will do well to keep a watchful eye on all legislation affecting education. The atheism which would ruin the faith of the children whose fathers died for France, is active in our country. The plotters are not enrolled in their country's service; therefore are they free to extend their nefarious designs against Christ and His mystical Body, the Church. It would be fatal to suppose that they will spare the little ones left at home, when American soldiers lay down their lives on foreign fields, that liberty, even liberty of conscience, may be made a reality among the nations of the earth.—America.

extend the leave, if he could be absent from Rome, a short time longer, and come to London.

He did so, and, one presumes, his chiefs have so profited by personal conversation with him that his leave has been extended over three weeks. That is easy to understand. It is indeed fairly obvious that even the political matters in which the Holy See is interested are not so well known in London—where there is only three years' record—that conversation with the representative on the spot, who really has got a full grasp of them, must be very valuable. And further, before coming to Rome Count de Salis was minister to Montenegro. He was there through the Balkan war and only left when the Austro-German invasion came. He knows more about the near East than most people and the near East is in the thoughts of the Allies just now.

So his experience should be very valuable to the foreign office. Indeed, a hazy fear was suggested to the writer a short time ago that the foreign office might keep him and promote him to a post of responsibility just on account of that expert knowledge. If anything of the sort were to occur it would cause sincere regret at the Vatican, for anyone who goes up there can tell you that he has gained the confidence and appreciation of the Holy See to the full, and never more than in the rather difficult diplomatic times through which we have been passing lately.

FROM THE MISSIONS

Sister Marguerite, Nyeri, January 31st, writes the following in addition to the sad consequences of the long and terrible War which are felt everywhere, we have to bear the disastrous effects of an incessant rain which has lasted almost the entire year. It has rendered absolutely impossible the cultivation of the fields which is the only source of riches the black man has, as well as his sole means of subsistence.

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a kingdom for all nations and all peoples.—The Monitor.

FINDING RELIGION

The war is not all gloom. There is something else to record besides bombarded cathedrals and destroyed works of art. Physical suffering there has been in abundance, yet as the brighter side of the picture there is to be considered the fact that affliction has in a multitude of cases brought men nearer to God.

Looking at the matter from the point of view of the Church we find that some fifteen thousand converts have been made since the beginning of the trench days. These are not random figures, rather do they fall far short of the actuality. The work of keeping account of religious conditions in the army is well systematized among the English Catholics. The chaplains are required to report from their own experience and from their findings it is seen to what extent there has been a revival of interest in spiritual things.

But the work of conversion has had success not only in the trenches but in the home. On this side, we have not realized the steadiness of the flow of converts back to the Catholic Church. It is not so merely for these years of war.

For years past the number of converts has been remarkable. For a long time the average number of conversions has been more than eight thousand. The past year the number has increased to over ten thousand. And on one considers that in this great number are to be reckoned not only those who personally have been converted, but in most cases the many who in one way or another will come under their influence, and will eventually find the way back to the Church, one sees what reason there is for joy at the reviving glory of His Church in a country where not so many years ago it was a thing to be scorned.

What has done this? After the grace of God, which is always the great factor in conversion one must find that the way has been prepared by the War. The War has made people think. The thinking has not always been accurate. In some cases it has led to the inanities of Mr. Britling and his new god; in others to the attempt to solve all difficulties by spiritualism as with Mr. Conn Doyle. Both have obtained a following. The two systems of religion are empty things. Yet the one thing they do show is the desire of many to get at the heart of religion. And surely it is a hopeful sign when in a world that was presumed to have declared that it could get along very well without God, there appears on every side an interest in the soul, even though those first strivings are weak. The world is learning the lesson of sacrifice and with that learned it is possible to speak of the things of God, His law and His Love.

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He had the unique position (sic) of speaking in a Methodist church, followed by Governor Catts of Florida. This and much more did the man Methodist say, for he told of a great secret Order, of which Bishop Burt of Buffalo is "State Master of the Lodge in New York" and announced that this particular Bishop who has been engaged in political work for years, was looking for a Catholic for whom he might help do away with the "Mass business."

All this is so clear and instructive that it were a shame to gloss it. However a remark or two will not detract from its clarity and didactic power. The Methodists are in an uproar because Catholics follow the example of Christ and use wine in the celebration of the Mass. A noble example of zeal. The country is rotting at its roots from divorce and birth-control and other moral filthiness of like nature, and the Methodist Church is silent. There is no question of a well-financed campaign against divorce and remarriage, for any and every cause. There is no question of a great Order, secret or otherwise, with State lodges presided over by Methodist Bishops for the suppression of birth-control. Moral filthiness of this nature may be as great as rotten hearts can make it, and the Methodist Church will remain dumb. But when there is a question of something that Christ taught and practised that is another matter.—America.

GENERAL DE CASTELNAU. General De Castelneau, the brilliant strategist, who saved the day at Nancy and at Verdun has always been "a Catholic in the open," and the fear that the uncompromising profession of his faith might hinder his advancement by an anti-clerical government, made him cover a half's breadth from the Church traces for her loyal children. The inestimable value of his services to his country has forced Castelneau's enemies to respect his Catholicism. He trusts in God, seeks light in prayer and is a frequent communicant. Just before a victorious assault at Verdun he mounted his horse and addressing the troops called out: "We meet again here, or there," and pointed with his sword toward heaven. He has lost three sons in the present war. The following account of how he behaved when the news came that his youngest boy had fallen, throws a flood of light on the General's character as a soldier and a Christian.

On August 20, 1914, in the heat of the action, Castelneau is dictating his orders. He is interrupted by the entry of an officer with a report. "General, the Fourth Battalion of Chasseurs has repulsed the enemy after five hours' fighting. Unfortunately the officer who was in command has been killed. His head was shattered by a bursting shell."

"What was the name of that officer?" "Sub-Lt. Xavier De Castelneau." The General bows his head a moment in prayer. Then turning to his secretaries: "Gentlemen, let us continue."—Walter Dwight, S. J., in America.

PROHIBITION ON THE HUSTINGS. Quite recently the population of the peaceful city of Baltimore was increased by the addition of a man and a woman who deprived Albany of much sweetness and light by fitting thence to Maryland for the sake of bringing salvation to the Orioles, through a prohibition bill. Both of the gentle creatures were of the Methodist persuasion; as a consequence they talked and talked and talked again and then again, and their topic was as ever the iniquity of Rome. The man Methodist gave an interview and apparently forgot to allow his emotions to filter through his brains, for he dropped wisdom intended for the elect only. Said he: "We must have prohibition in order to end this Catholic Church business. They cannot exist without booze. The streets of Baltimore are going to run with blood within a year, and it is going to be over the question of this Mass business. Why, they are having Mass in the Y. M. C. A. huts. One of our members wrote us from Texas that Mass was said in the Y. M. C. A. huts at Camp Funston, and we have continued complaints from other sources. What is the matter with the Y. M. C. A.? I intend to find out, and we are going to keep the wine from going to those huts, if we cannot stop this Popish business in any other way. The Catholic Church cannot live without liquor. Their Mass goes to the dogs when the National Prohibition Amendment is written into the Constitution. We have a powerful movement on foot and we won't have to wait for national prohibition to stop this business. We will soon be able to stop the shipment or possession (sic) of wine at the front, or in or near the army or navy. . . . We are here to stay until we put an end to popery and to the Catholic schools, and when we get rid of this Mass business, we have finished our work. . . . The Anti-Saloon League held its convention in a Methodist church at Washington. The League has a Roman Catholic priest on its Board, but it made him speak in the Methodist church, though he squirmed about it. He wanted to talk at the meeting held in the theater, but he was not invited to the stage there.

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The suffering borne in setting up a good work draw down the graces necessary for its success.—St. Vincent de Paul.

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