

FIREMEN OF BOSTON AND THEIR CHAPLAINS.



CONVENTION of the Massachusetts State Firemen's Association was held October 16 in Boston, at which an address was given by the Rev. William St. Elmo Smith, of the Fathers of Mercy, attached to the French Church of St. Vincent du Paul, New York, and chaplain of the New York Fire Department.

pungent smoke of the burning drugs to the street. While awaiting an ambulance, I administered restoratives, and during a spell of consciousness, heard the dying man's confession. It was a weird and impressive scene. There, amid the roar and rumble of a dozen snorting engines, the glare of the flames, and the heavy clouds of suffocating smoke that rolled from every opening in the building, stood a dozen fire ladders and policemen with bare heads forming a semi-circle. Within this space I knelt, my ear close to the dying man's lips. Suddenly the fire department searchlight turned its bright light on the reverent group and held it there motionless, while I gave Extreme Unction to the fireman, whose eyes were fast closing. Surely such a sight as this must have a salutary effect upon the brawny men who risk life and limb daily in the performance of duty. The knowledge that far below stands the anointed minister of God ready to give the consolation of religion in case of fatal accident, must undoubtedly steady the foot and nerve the arm of this fire fighter as he plies his perilous vocation in mid-air.

DEPRAVITY'S PROPAGANDA ON THE STAGE.

It is said that the world is daily growing more corrupt, and it is to be feared that there is ample cause for such an unpleasant statement. However, there is a bright side to the picture, and if society is on the decline there is no stint of endeavor to prop it up and to redeem it. That a regular propaganda of vice is daily and hourly carried on is not a matter of surprise. The Devil is as active, and may be more so today, as ever he has been, and the Church, that has ever been arrayed against him and his works, is just as potent, a vigilant, and as determined at this hour as ever she has been throughout the centuries. In a recent number of the Boston "Republic," Hon. John F. Fitzgerald, editorially calls the attention of all Catholics on this continent to one of the latest efforts being made to destroy the morals of the rising generation and to undermine the influence of the Catholic Church. He says, in one place, that "The Republic" calls upon "its brother-journals in all parts of the country to set forth in its true light this travesty of holy scenes and holy personages." In view of the fact that Canada, and especially Montreal, may be treated to the exhibition, and similar ones, to which the article refers, we feel it our duty to reproduce the principal portions of that wise and timely warning. The Editor thus writes: "It would seem that Miss Julia Marlowe's managers might have selected a play which show forth her abilities as an actress without shocking the sensibilities of Catholics. This they have done, in a most grievous manner, in "Queen Fiammetta," which is now completing a two weeks' run at the Hollis Street Theater.

ring than that of the religious sisterhoods in the hours of recreation which they all enjoy, and the cloister contains far more of true happiness than the Venusberg. Nothing of this, however, appears in Miss Marlowe's play. No religious figure in it is quite innocent and sincere, except the abbess, who is the subject of ridicule and, moreover, insignificant. Certain grisly incidents of religious history are shown, as if this were all there were to it. By this process of selection one could compose hymns from Voltaire and piece together profane sentences may be literally true and yet profoundly untypical, and this is the case with "Queen Fiammetta." It does not even afford a just picture of Renaissance Italy, which had its saints as well as its artists and brigands. No one denies that the paganism of the Latin blood asserted itself boldly at that period and that the spirit of a Nero and a Claudius sometimes crept into the gown of a Churchman. It reappears occasionally in modern times (let us say contemporary Paris), in the robes of a poet or a prime minister. Yet poetry is not essentially licentious; nor is persecution the whole study of a statesman. But "The Republic" is not dealing especially with Catulle Mendes. It cannot prevent foreign authors living in the Paris of Combes and Waldeck-Rousseau, from giving shape to their own interpretation of religion, however base and blind it may be. But it can and does warn American Catholics to shun these imported exhibitions. It calls upon its brother-journals in all parts of the country to set forth in its true light this travesty of holy scenes and personages. Only a few years since, religious themes were avoided in the drama, by an unwritten rule which rested on the doubly sound foundation of prudence and good breeding. If we may not appeal to a lost sense of courtesy, an instinctive reluctance to give offense, in the breasts of the theatrical managers of to-day, we may at least entreat their prudence to take heed of our objections and our numbers. We are some twelve to fifteen millions in this country, chiefly collected in the cities, where theatrical troupes seek their patronage. A united voice of protest on our part might result in a revival of the old principle of forbearance and the speedy retirement of this bigoted production by the unspeakable mocker Mendes."

THE SENSATIONAL LIES OF THE SECULAR PRESS.

READERS of newspapers supplied with European correspondence by the Press Publishing Company were recently treated to the following choice morsel of news, especially cabled, and displayed under "scare" headlines: "Paris, August 30.—Louis Probst, a government engineer, asserts that most of the water used to heal the pilgrims of Lourdes does not flow from the grotto where the Virgin is said to have appeared but is brought from a river in a neighboring cave through subterranean pipes, said to have been secretly laid by monks years ago. Engineer Probst occupies a high position here and is a firm believer in the Roman Catholic religion. "A year ago he took his wife, who is afflicted with a malady the doctors had pronounced incurable, to Lourdes expecting a cure by a miracle, but as soon as she plunged into the tank she died. "While the arrangements for her funeral were being made the engineer spent several days in observation. He noticed that the water used in the bottling department did not taste like that in the grotto and it occurred to him that the enormous quantities consumed could not be furnished by the scant grotto spring. Afterward he got a quantity from the grotto to investigate, and now he has made a report, in which he gives a chart of underground channels and analysis showing different chemical elements in the water. Last year nearly 3,000,000 pilgrims went to Lourdes, and the monks in charge contributed \$250,000 to St. Peter's papal fund besides buying more lands and buildings. "Lourdes was a mere hamlet fifteen years ago. To-day it is a beautiful, solidly built city of 80,000 inhabitants."

teen years ago. To-day it is a beautiful, solidly built city of 80,000 inhabitants. "Of course," he says, "any one who puts implicit faith in all that he reads in his favorite newspaper, especially when the news come by special cable, as did the above, had his belief in the Lourdes' shrine considerably shattered, after perusing this sensational item. "Indeed, who could be better qualified to expose the monks' clever canalization scheme than an engineer, and a government engineer at that! Moreover, he is an exception to the common run of present day state officials in France; he is a firm believer in the Roman Catholic religion. Hence, he could not possibly have acted in his denunciation out of hatred or malice towards the Church. If it had not been added that he was a firm believer, it might have got into the head of the sceptical newspaper reader—a rare bird nowadays—that the fellow with the "high position" was a common fraud of the Professor Muller type, the learned Bavarian pedagogue who attacks the Church, as per his own acknowledgment, for revenue only. Not very long ago, Professor Muller expressed his willingness to give up his anti-religious zeal and to devote himself to scientific subjects entirely, if the Bavarian bishops would but be pleased to drop in a few shekels, when he would pass the hat around among them. "All grounds for doubting the truth of the great piece of information were eliminated by the careful stating; that Louis Probst was a government engineer, that he was a firm believer in the Roman Catholic religion, that he occupied a high position. "But alack and alas for all the titles of Louis Probst! "He is neither an engineer, nor a Catholic nor a man with a high position, according to the ordinary standard of a 'high position.' "He is a common, every day clerk, in an obscure dry goods store, of an obscure provincial town. All the engineering he ever did consisted in measuring out yards of calico for his employer's customers. "His Catholicity is as wide of the mark as his engineering, for he is a member of the Lutheran church, and one of the most venomous anti-Catholic agitators of his district. "His wife may have been sick, and she may have plunged in the water of the grotto; but she certainly did not die there, for she is alive and well. "The observations he made while the wife, supposedly dead, was being prepared for burial, might as well have been made, for the purpose of the lie, thousands of miles away; they would have had equal value—viz., none at all. "The Superior of the Lourdes Fathers did not at first condescend to notice the foolish invention of a notoriety-seeking humbug. When he did, on account of the immense publicity given to the fake, the famous engineer came out with the startling retort—that the Fathers had in the meantime done away with all trace of the incriminated canalization, making the proof of the fraud impossible to him. "The idiot did not reflect for a moment that if the channels existed no more, neither could the enormous quantities of water continued to be furnished. Up to date no one heard that the flow diminished in the least. "If the monks contributed \$250,000 to the Peter's Pence, they certainly did not make the Press Publishing Co. correspondent, nor Mr. Probst, the confidant of that little transaction. "The good Fathers very likely contributed their modest share to the Papal Fund as it is every Catholic's filial duty to do; and the veracious and omniscient correspondent multiplied that contribution by a thousand, just as he multiplied the population of Lourdes by ten. "Indeed, a town that shows only an increase of six or seven thousand in fifteen years would not deserve to be made the object of a yarn of the dimensions above stated; but for the sake of a beautiful, solidly built city of eighty thousand inhabitants, one may do something."

CRIMES OF THE TONGUE.



R. H. T. SUTTON in a recent address, at a banquet, held under the auspices of the Knights of Columbus, speaking of "Crimes of the Tongue," said— "We are all so busy with the cares and pleasures of the world that we are prone to forget our own imperfections, like the man St. Paul spoke of, who beheld his countenance in the glass and presently went his way and forgot what manner of man he was. We are apt to take our ideas of ourselves from the image reflected in the mirror of public opinion, and it is only serious illness or approaching death that brings us to a full realization of our wrong-doing. It therefore behooves us to study ourselves carefully, in order to eliminate that which is objectionable from our lives and to cultivate that which is good. "It is the duty of every member of our organization to exert his influence for all that is manly and good and to oppose with the same zeal all that is lacking in these essentials. But few men, indeed, have escaped with unwounded conscience from the sins of the tongue. The tongue, in large measure, shadows forth the true character of man, showing whatever good or evil he possesses in life. There is to-day no other existing social evil which disturbs so much the friendly relations between men or renders the domestic life of men and women so unhappy as the crimes of the tongue. "And it is not alone the members of the so-called weaker sex who indulge in this crime, but strong-minded men as well. There is no other crime that becomes so quickly uncontrollable, and there is no other reform which would elevate society more. It is falsehood and slander that cause perpetual strife among kindred, and develop the fullest bitterness of hatred between man and man. Then, Sir Knights, let us, in our efforts to do good, make a bold crusade against this most dangerous enemy to the soul. "Theft and murder are awful crimes, yet in a single year the aggregate pain, sorrow and suffering they cause a nation are but microscopic compared with the sorrows resulting from the crimes of the tongue. Place, if you will, in one of the scales pans of justice the evil resulting from the acts of criminals, and in the other, the grief, tears, and suffering caused by the gossiping tongues of those who are supposed to be Christians, and you will be amazed to see how quickly the former will shoot high into the air. At the hands of thief and murderer few of us suffer either directly or indirectly, but from the careless tongue of friend or the cruel tongue of enemy, who is free? "Shakespeare said, more than four centuries ago, "Be ye pure as ice or as chaste as the unsunned snow, you cannot escape calumny." The same is true to-day. No human being can live a life so good, so pure, as to be beyond the reach of malice or immune from the poisonous emanation of these tongues. The insidious attacks upon one's reputation, the loathsome falsehoods by which they seek to ruin character, are like the insect parasite which kills the heart and life of a mighty oak. So cowardly is the method, so stealthy the piercing of the poisoned thorn, so insignificant the separate acts in their meaning, that one cannot be on guard against them. Ah! the dynamite gun, with all its deadly and destructive power, cannot be compared with the slanderer's tongue. The gun kills bodies only; the tongue kills character and reputation. The gun does its work alone; each loaded tongue has many accomplices. The havoc of the gun is visible at once; the full evil of the tongue passes down through ages and it is supposed to trace it to its finality. "Then, Brother Knights, let our promises of brotherly love serve to prevent us from indulging in the crimes of the tongue; let us try to remember the good things we hear about each other and reject the slanders. Let us also be free and Christian-like in our forgiveness of those who inflict wrongs upon us, for the man who has not the spirit of forgiveness in his heart cherishes an enemy who may yet arise to slay him. We should be sparing in our condemnation of others, for who of us is assured of his own salvation? "To those who have been slandered, I could do no better than quote the language of our Blessed Redeemer, when He said: "I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that calumniate and persecute you."

They called her small, dark-haired, great mournful eyes, such deep black circles round County Kerry the companions knew of her she toiled from early at night in one of the which are so frequent England States of A them, she received in pittance, of which the went to the dear one land. But what was in that? Nothing, such of every three was do "Kerry" worked her with the rest in that which is often found the Irish character. T ence between her and ions lay, perhaps, in the which she hedged hers her companions, wit hearts, respected it. During the short ea-day, no one was than "Kerry" to hear lead across the sea, n share in all joys and for herself, she seldom ter. In fact, she seen the world, save that ings found their way one at home. At rar letter came, having h queer, foreign writing, girls next saw her the pious redness, about forbad questioning. Was there any little It could be traced to opportunity to lighten some poor soul? "Ker After hours she could ing along with the rest compartment of on establishments called Boarding Houses, and when the meagre supp finished, she disappear seen again until retirin was she after her har work. Perhaps if you poor invalid in the ne came of an evening to ly life, sometimes to saved from a scanty m answer you. Perhaps t ter, so lonely in the corner could tell. The sanctuary lapp see when she entered and harder to pierce the s its feeble rays. Surel peep over the shoulder white angel with the g would be satisfied. There was one differ her cot and the rest. Was a tiny picture of And many of her comp ed that she had a spe to the saint. When sh her short night prayer turned lovingly toward picture. When any of came to her with their would invariably send poster-father of the Ch fecially was it whisper or Brigid's mother wa poor lonely girl would hand steal into hers an ple words, "I am sure will give her a very h am praying hard for h This reminds me of larity which the keen were surprised to obs ery"—a great dread of ever a weird tale of a being told, "Kerry" way unseen, and were ed, she would fairly s self, and look so pitte questioner would forbe further. For three years, day and week after week, steadily to her labor, of her companions of slender the little form. Then, after an unusua ter, she found herself. But many had greater she had much to be At all events, she was tated for work, and it most important consid "The wind was howlin the poor rectory. The heaped high in great reached even to the w and the white flakes w ing through the air. Above all the counti knock, clear and rever

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