

Theatres and Their Programmes

(By An Occasional Correspondent.)

Now that the Lenten season is over, and the theatrical season is, as the saying is, in full blast, it might be well to give a moment's thought to the theatre generally and its influences, as judged from a Catholic viewpoint strictly.

A passing word may, however, be said in regard to what are known as the classics and other high class performances, for to deal with the theatre in a just mood, the higher elements should be taken into consideration as well as the lower.

The class of entertainment the theatrical managers are forced to offer the public nowadays may be classified under the heads—legitimate, society, comedy, melodrama, comic opera or musical sketch, vaudeville and burlesque.

Comedy, requiring less thought and being in a lighter vein, is not dangerous generally, although in many there is a substratum of thinly cloaked obscenity.

The great danger of melodrama is the temptation to youth. On the young mind a seat in the gallery of a cheap theatre is liable to leave a more vivid impression than reading half a dozen yellow backed novels of the old slench type.

In the musical comedy way the tendency lately is to cleanliness as well as sprightliness. Few questionable lines are permitted to pass.

Lastly—burlesque. Under no circumstances should a Catholic attend burlesque performances. The poor creatures hounded are to be pitied and prayed for.

FRSONAL.

Mr. Justice Curran's Report on Police Charges.

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The investigation into the police charges which took place before Hon. Mr. Justice Curran during the early part of this month, has now been brought to a close. It is very much to be regretted that when the charges were placed before the Chief Justice, twelve in number, six of these were so formulated as to force His Lordship to throw them out for lack of precision.

Although New York has been the last State to enter the federation, its founder, Bishop McFaul of Trenton, is closely allied with the New York archdiocese. In outlining the history of the American federation, Bishop McFaul made the following statement last week:

"Since the Columbian exposition the Catholic societies of the United States have been moving toward a national federation. At the Chicago convention there were four states already organized and ten more in process. The movement is increasing every year so fast that it is expected most of the societies will be represented at the convention in Atlantic City in July and that it is not too much to predict that all the leading societies will send delegates to the convention, which will probably be held at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis in 1904.

"To account for this rapid progress, it must be observed that federation has met with no serious opposition. Its promoters have never attempted to constrain any society to take part in the movement, and from the first they have insisted that every organization thus federated should maintain its freedom of action.

"When the entire Catholic body was aroused last summer by what seemed at the time to be detrimental to the interests of the church in the Philippines, the dignified and loyal attitude of the Federation's delegates in Chicago did much to inspire confidence in the administration, and to inform the American public of the true state of affairs in the islands.

"The framers of the constitution of the American Federation of Catholic societies acted wisely in declaring (Article X):

"Nonpartisan politics shall not be discussed in any of the meetings of the convention of the federation or subordinate body of the federation, nor shall this body or any subordinate body thereof endorse any candidate for public office."

The findings of Mr. Justice Curran may be taken as indicative that the Chief has been content to accept things as he found them. The most serious finding is that of suppressing proceedings against certain offenders. It is a comparatively small matter that the alleged offenders were allowed to escape; the evil is found in the fact that officers engaged in the prosecution of their duty had their efforts set at naught by the man to whom they were entitled to look for the most earnest support.

It only means that it shall be given to him to understand that he is chief of police, and that his duty lies to a greater extent in upholding his men in the performance of their duty than in catering to the desires of aldermen.

The Federation of Catholic Societies.

In another page of this issue, we refer to the recent action of Archbishop Farley of New York in connection with the American Federation of Catholic societies.

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"To account for this rapid progress, it must be observed that federation has met with no serious opposition. Its promoters have never attempted to constrain any society to take part in the movement, and from the first they have insisted that every organization thus federated should maintain its freedom of action. By deed, rather than by assertion, they have lived down the charge that they were seeking to form a political union. In their public actions they have avoided everything that could savor of politics, notably in their Cincinnati and Chicago conventions, held at a time when Catholics considered they had just provoked for adopting political measures.

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"Nonpartisan politics shall not be discussed in any of the meetings of the convention of the federation or subordinate body of the federation, nor shall this body or any subordinate body thereof endorse any candidate for public office."

From the start this enactment precluded the possibility of utilizing the organization as an instrument to advance party measures, or to control votes or political patronage for any party or personal advantage, and has lifted the whole movement to the high plane befitting a body with such exalted religious, social, and civil aims.

Father John Wynne, S.J., editor of the "Sacred Heart," who has worked actively to bring New York into the federation, supplements Bishop McFaul's expression by this statement:

"The object of the American Federation of Catholic societies is to enable the Catholic laymen throughout the United States and its dependencies to co-operate together in religious, social, and civil enterprises, and to endeavor, along with other bodies of citizens not Catholic, to promote morality and patriotism.

"Among the social interests of fed-

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etation are some peculiarly American—two in particular, labor, implying the proper organization of labor unions, the prevention and settlement of strikes; and legislation affecting marriage and divorce. Other social interests, such as Sunday observance, temperance, purification of the stage, and repression of gambling, important though they be in themselves, are in comparison with the two just mentioned really insignificant.

"Solve the labor problem and civil peace is assured; stop divorce and we avert national suicide. Catholic workmen are numerous enough, if rightly directed, to influence the sentiment of all labor unions in the land, and the Catholic position on divorce and on marriage generally is one of which all conservative minds look for a solution of the divorce question.

"With the opportunities afforded by pressing sound Catholic sentiment, there never will be any need of a Catholic party, nor will it ever be possible to repeat in this country the outrages heaped on the church in France."

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Sizes 1 to 5, per pair.....\$1.50

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An Infallible Teacher

(By An Occasional Correspondent.)

Last week we had the Rev. Dr. Hackett were willing to accept clear as the sun, upon of the Church changing ings, or adding new dog already accepted dogma no new, now, to repeat ments. We wish to com his statement that the infallible teacher is c Scripture, to history an We claim, and without fear of contradiction, th teaching is in perfect ac all three—Scripture, hist son.

For the present we will with the first of the thr for another article the the third. As it is cust those who enter upon c subjects to start out wi we will accept those tha gentleman has himself t that is to say:

In St. Matthew, xvi., 1 said, "Thou art Peter a rock I will build My Chur Lake xxii., 31-32, He sa Simon . . . when thou verted, strengthen thy and in St. John xxi., 15 gave the triple comman My sheep."

Then in addition we l that Christ, speaking to I am with you until the tion of the world." He p send them the "Holy Gh lighten and guide them a successors. He established called a Church—and left necessary powers for the of its mission.

It is beyond all ques Christ, being God, could things by halves; He c leave an institution in equipped to perform the w He had prescribed for it not leave a representative who would be devoid of ce his actions. If there is a that body is living, it mu soul. The soul is God, i Himself, is the Holy Spir enlighten and to sanctify t But the soul of man is not more is the soul of the Ch members and parts of the all visible. And the first tial one is the Head. It n more than one limb, more arm, more than one eye to the horizon around and be but it can have only one F only one tongue in that H Head of that body is Pete successor; the tongue of th when speaking as a teacher ters pertaining to faith and is the tongue of Peter or o essor.

Christ did not tell Peter disciples to go forth and down doctrines, to read for tions of the earth that wh been written. He ordered preach, and by preaching wh He had commanded, to tea world. And He promised to them for all time—that is t be with them when preachi they all should take their t from the Head, or from the representative of the Invisib Consequently, when speak Christ's own name, and fr throne of Peter, it would b late blasphemy to suppose i visible Head could err. If i possible for him to be mis could in turn mislead othe; say that Christ left a Chu earth that could, under any stance, mislead men, wou ply to deny the Divinity of When dealing with this sub the standpoint of reason and tory we will have occasion t these statements to their conclusion; but, for the pres will suffice to point out th did confide to Peter the care flock, and did command him. His faithful—that is to fee sheep. It cannot be suppose moment that Peter was not lible, in all matters that pe the doctrine which Christ com him. Nor do we think that a cere Christian has a doubt regard. But the argument Peter's successors are not nly possessed of the same q and privileges as was the pr the Apostles. It suffices to for a moment, to reflect in o perceive the absurdity of this tion.

If it were intended that the date given to Peter should be out of effect with his