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Another Milestone

Another year has passed. Twelve months have rolled into eternity. What they have brought us, in happiness, in sorrow, in wasted time, in unimproved opportunities, are now beyond recall.

Before another issue of the Journal reaches its readers, 1906 will have said an eternal farewell and 1907 will have made its initial bow.

Doubtless, many of us would wish the year now drawing to a close might be lived over again but this cannot be. We must let the past go and devote ourselves to the future.

It has come to be the rule, and mayhap with good reason to sneer at New Year's resolution but, nevertheless, good resolutions if lived up to for only a few weeks are of some avail.

If we feel that the year past has not been as fruitful as we feel it should have been, it will not harm us if we resolve to do better in the year to come. But if we try to do it of ourselves, we shall surely fail. It is only by the grace of Almighty God that we can hope to attain to good and noble heights. No earthly help can avail no matter who argues to the contrary.

The Journal wishes to all its readers, old and young, a Happy New Year and hopes that God's choicest blessings will be showered upon them.

Who Broke It?

It would appear that the French Government had reckoned that the American Catholics and the American people generally would sit supinely by and watch it plunder and oppress the Catholic Church in France without uttering one word of protest.

The French Government, apparently, has control of the press and has established a censorship on all despatches going out of the country because the cables bring a woefully distorted account of what is going on in our so-called sister Republic.

But American Catholics are aroused and when they set about their task in seriousness the Administration in Washington will not dare to ignore the voice of twelve million citizens of the United States, especially if the conviction is forced that this mighty contingent is likely to back up its protest with ballots.

Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Farley and O'Connell, Bishop O'Connell, all have spoken out boldly and bravely, summoning American Catholics to stand by their brothers in France. All over the country, councils of the Knights of Columbus have adopted ringing resolutions. Here in Rochester, the Catholic Federation has let the public know how the men in that organization feel in the matter.

But the good work must go on. Wherever and whenever the situation in France is mis-stated, we must be ready to write corrections and when polite request to publish such is refused, then publication must be compelled. If no other way presents itself, then we should have it published in advertising columns, at regular advertising rates. We must not forget that if the French government wins out the bigots in this country may feel emboldened to try smaller tactics here.

Great stress is laid by some ignorant American papers on the allegation that the Vatican broke the Concordat, the treaty concluded between the Holy See and Napoleon when that ruthless dictator wished the aid of the Church in bolstering up the First Empire. A writer in the "Union and Times" demonstrates in an able article that the Vatican not only has not broken the Concordat but that the French government never gave the Holy Father notice, as is always understood between parties to a contract, that it intended to abrogate the contract.

It is also insisted that the State in France has always had the title to the Church property and that it has generously allowed the Church to use the property rent free, besides paying the salaries of the priests. Nothing is farther from the truth. By the terms of the Concordat, Napoleon promised to restore to the Church such of its confiscated property the title to which had not passed to other owners. It was also agreed that the French Government was to pay the salaries of the priests as a partial recompense for the property which had not been returned. As a matter of fact, the State has not paid out in salaries of priests a fair interest on what the State derived under the terms of the Concordat.

Moreover, the Churches since have been enriched by vestments, sacred vessels, statuary, and other adornments which never did belong to the Government and to which the Government had no title, either in law or even in equity.

Yet the Government has seized all such, yes, even the bequests for charity by piously disposed persons! It has sent its agents to all the churches to take inventory, not to see if the so-called government property is intact, but of everything! It has coolly and audaciously announced that it proposes to confiscate to itself everything! Private property loaned for religious purposes is also declared confiscated to the State!

And what is proposed? That the churches may be used but only upon petition by lay associations, whose officers may be Catholics or Free-thinkers, and Government officers are to be present at every service with authority to arrest the priest if he preaches what they do not like or to close the service!

This is the humane, the generous, the brotherly-love spirit in which the French government meets the Church!

Separation of Church and State! Tyranny of State over Church, over Religion is what it really is! But what else is to be expected of a Government whose minister of Public Worship publicly declared that "we must hunt Jesus Christ out of the nation?"

Sympathetic

It is apparent that there are a few militant Catholics in Rochester. Last week the Rochester branch of the Federation of Catholic societies spoke out in no uncertain tone regarding the situation in France.

In last week's Journal appeared editorial communications approving the proposal of the "Register" that the Knights of Columbus, their families and all other American Catholics unite in a boycott on French imports and refuse to purchase goods made in France until the Government gives the church a square deal.

We note that some of our contemporaries are inclined to frown upon the boycott proposition. We have read their argument but they do not convince us that the Register's plan is not a good one. True, it might effect trade and so diminish the profits of some Catholic merchants but some sacrifices must be made to achieve any great result. Moreover, it is our recollection that the contemporaries who deprecate the boycott on French goods have advised the boycott of some merchant in their home town who manifests bigoted tendencies. How much more reason then to employ the same club to bring an unreasonable government to terms and compel justice to thousands of our countrymen?

It is not reprehensible for a shop-

per to refuse to purchase goods he does not want. Then, if the shopper makes up his or her mind that goods manufactured in France do not appeal to taste or fancy, what is reprehensible in that?

To speak plainly, there are too many milk-and-water Catholics in France and in this country. They are ashamed, almost, to be called Catholics. Certainly, when their pocket-book is likely to be touched, they are too prone to think of purse and dividends first, and of Catholicity second.

Eastern Mayors

Truly, Massachusetts, the cradle of Puritanism and blue-nosed bigotry, is changing.

In the Bay State, parochial schools have made great strides and on the school boards Catholics are being recognized. In recent years two renowned Catholics have sat in the mayor's chair in Boston—the late Patrick Collins and John F. Fitzgerald. Catholics are forging to the front in all walks of life in the Hub.

This is not all. From the Boston "Pilot" we learn that in Massachusetts and Rhode Island these Catholic mayors have been chosen:—

- Northampton—Egbert I. Clapp.
- Marlboro—Edward F. Brown.
- Malden—Dr. Charles T. McCarthy.
- Worcester—John T. Duggan.
- Taunton—John B. Tracy.
- Lawrence—John P. Kane.
- Fitchburg—James H. McMahon.
- Fall River—John T. Coughlin.
- Providence, R. I.—Patrick J. McCarthy.

In several instances, these gentlemen were re-elected, showing that they conducted affairs so well that their constituents desired to continue them in office.

It is refreshing to know that in New England Catholics are not ashamed to be called Catholics or to stand up for their faith.

It has come to be the rule for the papers which derive their inspiration from the "Times" syndicate—London and New York—to charge that the French bishops all were willing to accept the Combes law but that the Pope overruled. The New York "Evening Post" cannot be with authority to arrest the priest if he preaches what they do not like or to close the service!

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Why have not the "reformers" in this country who seeet political chicanery and graft in every turn come to realize that there is a nice lot of politics involved in the present French controversy? It is stated that the French ministry has 680,000 positions in its gift! It is figured that each of these placoholders control five votes—nearly 4,000,000 ballots—a neat start in any political contest! Is it not supposable that this small army had something to do with the continued control of affairs by the Combes ministry and its successor, the Clemenceau regime?

Recent events force more and more the conclusion that in the Catholic Church is to be found the bulwark against control by the Socialists. Then why try to belittle the work of this great organization, viewed in a material sense, to say nothing of its spiritual side?

Because the Church refuses to permit the State to regulate its services, it must not be charged that it is interfering with politics.

It would be well if all Catholics would realize the value of the following advice from the "Northwestern Chronicle": "Depend upon it—a Catholic family brought up to read, year after year, a good Catholic weekly, will get a thousand-fold the value of the subscription paid."

Would the Methodists like it if the Common Council were to decide that their religious services came under the section of the penal code which applies to street assemblages—say to riots—and insists that police officers must be present at every meeting? Probably,

there would be an uproar! Yet that is practically what the laws of 1881 in France stands for and this is the law the papers in this country would have the French Catholics submit to!

If a bill introduced in Parliament becomes a law, Lord Clanricarde, the great arch-bishop, will be brought out by the British Government!

Five Minute Sermon

The Prophecy of Simeon

In to-day's Gospel we are told of the predictions of Simeon and Anna made when the Child Jesus was presented in the temple in compliance with the law which required the presentation of every first born. Simeon recognized in Jesus Christ the Son of his Eternal Father, and therefore adored and glorified Him and awaited His blessing and the application of His merits and grace. He then did not bless Christ; he blessed Joseph and Mary, to whom he foretold the heavenly favors and graces relative to their high office and to the arduous duties imposed on them.

Anna said that the Child was indeed the expected Messiah, the Son of God, clothed in our flesh; that He came to take away the sins of the world and to redeem the human race from the slavery of Satan and from eternal death. All this she told to those pious souls who, resting on the faith of the patriarchs and trusting in the promises of the prophets, believed and hoped in the Christ to come, and awaited from Him the redemption of afflicted Israel.

If we begin from childhood to lead a holy life and persevere, as Simeon and Anna did, in good works, we can, like them, press to our breasts Jesus Christ in spirit and truth; we will obtain light, and be able to make Him known to many. And lastly, at the end of our lives we shall be contented and resigned, as Anna and Simeon were and be able to say with them that we die happy, because death for us is the passage to eternal beatitude.

New Year's Day

Gospel: St. Luke ii. 21.—"And after eight days were accomplished that the Child should be circumcised His name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel, before He was conceived in the womb."

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