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Signs of the Times

Even our non-Catholic friends are beginning to see that the trend of the times is unwholesome, especially when divorce is made so easy and so eagerly sought. At a recent convention of Jewish rabbis in Atlantic City Rabbi J. Leonard Levy put forward a sensible and practical suggestion to those who persist in taking advantage of the human law and pay no attention to the Divine Law. He would have no action taken on a petition for divorce for at least three months, in order to permit the petitioners perchance to repent of their hasty action.

Dr. F. J. C. asserts that domestic morality is the seed of national greatness, and that as is the home so is the nation. He then utters this warning against the present trend of times:—

A new era appears to have dawned. Conditions like unto those which prevail in America to-day have rarely before existed. Authority is contested. The new gospel proclaimed throughout the land is expressed in the words, "Dollars and Pleasures." The age is commercial and its thought finds expression in economic phrases and demands, to the exclusion of moral sentiment. Under such circumstances it is but natural that we would find throughout the nation evidences of unrest. Nowhere is this more noticeable than in domestic life, a high standard of which is so vital to the greatness and growth of the nation.

When one remarks that parental authority is laughed at, when reverence for the aged is sneered at and irreverence is rather encouraged in the younger set, that parents act as if they were not displeased when their daughters attract attention from men they ought to look upon with contempt, he is impelled to ask "Whither are we drifting?"

Prison Reform

If the stories we have been reading are true, and we have reason to believe they are, then there are two state prisons in New York state, at least, that should be abandoned as soon as possible and new institutions established in their stead. It is well known that Sing Sing and Auburn are antiquated, unsanitary, unhygienic and utterly unfit for human habitation. They would be condemned as a sweatshop factory. Then, why should they be tolerated as institutions where many men spend their entire lives? It matters not that these men are criminals, they are entitled to a place to sleep, to eat, to be free from vermin and dampness, where the plumbing is modern and at least equal to that of a rural hotel if not modern construction and design.

But let us not forget that these recommendations have been made by the state prison superintendents and prison reform associations for at least twenty years and are no new discovery

by present state officials. Legislature after legislature turned down recommendations that Sing Sing prison be abandoned and removed to a point not so near New York city. Partly this was because of the expense and partly because friends and relatives of convicts raised the cry that they could not see them if the prison were sent far from New York city. To be sure, this plea would not seem to have much weight because the convict should have thought far enough ahead not to be in prison. But this plea had weight and also has kept the Randall's House of Refuge in a location ill adapted by natural situation and restricted quarters for years.

Let us be fair. Let us concede that the prisons are not what they should be. Not this generation is responsible but three other generations. And let us also never forget that men who sin against either human or divine law must pay a penalty which will bring it to its senses. Prisoners should not be ill treated, neither should they be treated like conquering heroes.

These Public Schools

Dr. R. W. Corwin, of the University of Colorado, lays this indictment against the public schools:—
"A cesspool of degradation exists under the shade trees of Princeton, and similar conditions exist in other States. If for the next one hundred years our schools would discontinue all higher and aesthetic education and devote all their energies to improving the human stock, at the end of the century we would find the people not only one hundred years older, but two hundred per cent. better, stronger, wiser."

The Catholic Standard and Times adds this pertinent comment:—

"Making all due allowance for the enthusiasm of doctrinaires (of which these two gentlemen may be examples), it is pretty evident that the care of the public school children is not by any means looked after as it should be. Formerly it used to be said that the public school system was much superior to that of the Catholic parochial schools. We believe now that the position is reversed, and that our parochial schools compare most favorably in every respect with those maintained at the public expense.

Carnivals are to be the order of things in 1913 to raise money for Rochester charities, it would seem.

Why does not Congress hurry and pass the tariff and currency bills, so that we may know what to expect and proceed to settle down to business?

Philadelphia Catholics are taking a commendable activity in the crusade to bar obscenity from the mails. The Rochester Herald, apparently, does not agree with them. It advocates the utmost liberty, if not license, of what should go through the mails. It would also permit every published book upon public library shelves.

The best antidote to poisonous literature is a bountiful supply of some reading matter which is wholesome. In this list a Catholic paper should always be included in a Catholic home.

It were well that we have industrial peace in the land. We can have it if irrepensible agitators are kept out of our city and if the forces of labor not only refuse to follow them but will ignore them and repudiate them altogether.

Modesty is a trait which may be overlooked, apparently, but even in this day and age its possession does not pass unnoticed.



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Boston, Mass.

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\$4.05
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