

THE CATHOLIC JOURNAL

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AT
64 North Street, Rochester, N. Y.
BY THE
CATHOLIC JOURNAL PUBLISHING
COMPANY

If paper is not received Saturday notify the office.
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SUBSCRIPTION RATES
Per Year, in Advance \$1.00
Entered at second class mail matter.
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Friday July 30, 1915.

These Are Facts!

It is peculiarly fitting that we should pay some attention to the internal affairs of those communities whence emanate the most scathing attacks upon the Catholic Church. It is a rule of law that he who would seek justice in the courts must approach with his own hands clean.

Let us take up Georgia first. In this state is published Tom Watson's Jeffersonian, one of the nastiest of anti-Catholic publications. In this sheet we are caricatured, held up as responsible for crime and vice. Well, in Atlanta, where the Jeffersonian is published, there are less than 10,000 Catholics out of a population of about 224,000 inhabitants. Not much chance there for Catholics to be responsible for existing conditions? Catholics do not hold any office, do not dominate in any way. Georgia is supposed to be a prohibition state. Yet statistics show that last Christmas was a saturnalia of drunkenness and crime in Atlanta. From four o'clock the day before Christmas until ten o'clock Christmas night, the police made 225 arrests! The secular Atlanta Constitution made these scathing comments:

"As a rule Christmas in the South has meant a saturnalia of crime, debauchery of battle, murder and sudden death. Let us hope that in days to come the South will chasten itself of this spirit, that it will celebrate the birth of the Redeemer without the accompaniment of bloodshed and riotous living. We live in an assumedly Christian country. We should observe the most important day of the Christian year in a Christian manner."

"For 46 years," we have argued for an observance of this nature. The nearer the section approximates it the nearer we will be to a civilization Christian in fact as well as in word."

In Georgia the percentage of illiterates is 20.7 per cent of the total population of the state or 39,770 in all. But 51.7 per cent of the children attend school, the others going into the factories because child labor is rampant in Georgia. Not so long ago the mayor and several of the Atlanta aldermen openly argued in favor of the abolition of the high school rather than erect a new one to take the place of the present dilapidated building!

These facts are worth putting aside for refutation the next time some bigot starts in to tell you how the Catholic Church encourages illiteracy, crime and drunkenness. Especially are they illuminating on the prevailing conditions in the Southern States, the starting point of the present anti-Catholic campaigns.

We'll Face It Here!

Up in Buffalo already the anti-Catholic bigots propose to set up a political party—they want to

call it non-partisan but that will not go—to elect city commissioners who shall be "Protestants and patriots." We understand that notice has been served by the Rochester bigots that unless every Catholic is eliminated from the republican democratic tickets the bigots will nominate a mayor and entire set of municipal officers of their stripe.

We do not know what answer the political leaders have made but we commend to their careful perusal of the following letter to the Buffalo Express by Rev. Richard Boynton, pastor of the First Unitarian Church of that city:

"We need not stop to inquire to what extent the so-called 'patriotic' party, in diverting some thousands of votes last fall from good candidates who otherwise stood a fair chance of being elected, is indirectly responsible for the present orgy of misgovernment at the city hall. Let that pass. But the strongest practical reason for opposing this injection of the religious issue into politics is that, whenever and wherever it is tried, it works to the disadvantage of decency and plays into the hands of the worst elements. Does the writer of this letter suppose that there are no independent voters among the large Catholic population of this city? How, then, does he expect to rally these voters to the support of candidates standing on a platform of Catholic exclusion, which is an insult to their citizenship, not to speak of their religion? Even if everything that is alleged concerning an undue interference of Catholicism in public affairs were true—and much of it is the purest fabrication—still, is it justifiable for any body of men seriously to propose a form of government for city, state or nation from which Catholics by the mere fact of their religious profession shall be shut out? Yet that is what this 'patriotic' party aims at here in Buffalo and elsewhere. What will be the inevitable result if such a policy is pursued to its logical conclusion? One thing surely, fair-minded Catholics, who know efficiency when it is put before them, and who now vote for good men regardless of their religious affiliation, will begin in sheer self-defense to confine their voting to Catholics only. Then, to the usual passions of a political campaign we shall have added a sectarian strife that will embitter relations among neighbors of differing beliefs and go far to make life in this community unendurable."

Pope Benedict.

Rene Bazin, the noted French novelist, who has been in Rome and while there was received in audience by Pope Benedict XV, thus writes his impressions of the Holy Father:

"I have had the honor of being received by the new Pope. I have seen a benovolent Pope, and I found myself full of joy that I had come to him. Were I to describe him I should say that, unlike many Italians, he has not expressive features, but that thoughtfulness and the wish to know the miseries of the world have sculptured his face.

"Rarely have I encountered a look so intelligent, so grave, so intensely full of attention. The Pope wants to know. He wants to understand completely the causes that are brought before him; one feels that he has a most loyal heart, and that he will not change when he has given his word, or in his friendships, or, above all, in what God commands and sustains him for the defense of the truth. I shall not relate my audience—that is one of those things that respect and refinement should prevent. But what I can say is that, in the conflict which divides the world, I found him as clear-sighted as I had hoped, and that in his great soul I recognized not only the desire for peace, but that most perfect

of the blessings of peace; a keen sense of justice, pity for suffering, power of divining causes. I left him truly happy and thanking God for having given another good Pope to the Church."

Probably, the Holy Father is in the most delicate position of any of one interested in the European war. We should pray that no harm come to our spiritual father and ruler.



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