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Friday, August 27, 1915

Churches Exempt

Press despatches bring the news that the Constitutional Convention is likely to adopt the report of committees that church property is to continue exempt from taxation...

Those who sought to tax the churches forgot, perhaps, intentionally, the great amount of charitable relief institutions provide for the unfortunate...

There is another side to the question. Even their bitter enemies are forced to concede that the churches exert a splendid moral force for good in the community at large...

This movement was started by the bigots and conceived in bigamy for no other purpose than to hamper and harass the Catholic Church...

As a matter of fact, we think that the exact opposite would have resulted. The poor are the most liberal supporters of religion and we fancy they would rally to support of their churches in a manner which would have confounded their enemies.

However, we think the Constitutional Convention never will dare to take the chance of imperiling chances of success at the polls of its new Constitution by loading it down with such an unpopular rider.

Study It

From the stenographic reports—not from the press reports because the war news is so much more sensational if not so instructive—we learn that the Constitutional Convention, now in progress, is settling down to serious business and is preparing to put its finished labors into final draft for submission to the electorate of the entire state for approval or disapproval.

At this date, it is impossible to measure whether the proposed new Constitution, as a finished whole, will be a radical reaction or a compromise measure. History would bid us prepare for either, rightly or wrongly, and if the compromise measure, But there are many delegates sitting in the convention with pronouncedly reactionary reputations and punishment, especially upon records. Unless the leopard changes his spots, it is inconceivable that they would ever put their signatures to even a mildly radical document. However, many thinkers and students of strange things happen and politics very often make strange bedfellows.

Whether the change will operate to lessen the number of murders is another question. Very many thinkers and students of criminology hold that it will not. On the other hand, there are students who think that it would tend to make juries be less inclined to acquit murderers if there were the alternative of life imprisonment to fall back upon.

A Rochester baseball club without John Ganzel will be like Hamlet with Hamlet left out. With all the filth and nastiness that is abroad in the secular press there never was a time when Catholics needed the presence more in their homes of Catholic papers and magazines. Now is a good time to subscribe for the Catholic Journal.

Nosophistry, no pleading of honor and all that, can excuse the murder of Leo Frank by a Georgia mob. We do not believe that all this fuss about infringement upon the rights of automobilists comes from the motorists but from other interested parties.

From the fact that the New York State Railways want to put the jitney out of business, we infer that Rochester is about to have better street car service. What has become of the baseball boosters' league? Why do not the police pay a little more attention to the bigots who give street talks every little while at the corner of Main and Water streets?

The net results of "Clean up week" are wearing off as the days go on. There should be a spirit of civic pride developed sufficiently to carry on cleaning up process fifty-two weeks in the year. Evidently, the Constitutional Convention is not unlike the State Legislature in that it leaves all its important work until the very last minute.

Former Governor Slaton, of Georgia, talks very boldly at long range. So does Mayor Woodward, of Atlanta. Let us redouble our prayers that the hot-heads may not put us for a share in the European war.

In the death of Cardinal Van der Meer the Church loses a valiant son and Christianity a devoted champion. May his soul rest in peace!

Apparently the yellow journals are not content to permit the Holy Father to judge his own course in the European war. If he repudiates their gratuitous denunciations, then they denounce him. It is, or should be, the duty of a thinking person that the Pope does not permit himself to be dictated to by the newspapers.

Furthermore, he cannot permit himself to be swayed this way and that as it pleases the editors of the jingo press.

September Weddings. Call and see our styles of wedding invitations. The prices are very reasonable. Catholic Journal Co.

To-day in Illinois, at least, the jury fixes the penalty as now proposed for New York state. This relieves the judges of imposing the penalty and shifts responsibility upon the jury. It is safe to predict that, if the proposed change is approved by the people in the general election this fall, but very few convictions for murder in the first degree will be had in this State. At present there is a pronounced sentiment against capital punishment—whether History would bid us prepare for it, rightly or wrongly, and if the Constitution is changed as is proposed we fancy very few juries would ever impose the capital punishment, especially upon records. Unless the leopard changes his spots, it is inconceivable that they would ever put their signatures to even a mildly radical document. However, many thinkers and students of strange things happen and politics very often make strange bedfellows.

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