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Official Censorship

Of Motion Pictures Is Urged by Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Gleason and other Clergymen.

In conjunction with the efforts of the international reform bureau to obtain effective official censorship of motion pictures, a letter was received from His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons on this general subject by Rev. W. F. Crafts, a Protestant Minister of Washington, superintendent and treasurer of the bureau.

The Cardinal's letter, which was written from his residence in Baltimore, is as follows: "Whatever will make our American people better, and therefore happier, I am, of course, for.

"Films and moving pictures have a wide, formative influence, and hence I should like to see them instructive and moral, at the same time entertaining and artistic.

"To secure such we must both try to stop off the flood of degrading pictures and appeal to our people to demand good films.

"Like food for the body that the government says must be pure, like correspondence in our mails which the government again says must be decent and not obscene, so, too, the mental food; the correspondence that is carried daily into the minds and hearts of our rising generations through moving picture parlors should be wholesome and elevating."

On the question of motion picture censorship, His Grace Most Rev. Archbishop John J. Gleason, of St. Louis expressed himself as follows:

"I want to go on record as being heartily in favor of the movement to have a local film censorship created. It is the duty of the municipality through its proper officials to supervise this very important field of public amusement."

"I have noticed a statement in some papers opposed to this censorship question, wherein we are told that the public can be relied on to approve or condemn—that public opinion and taste should be the court wherein matters such as these should be decided. Such a statement is not made in good faith; for those who make it know full well that in the field of the film picture and theatricals in general, the public has no means of voicing its opinion; and has no opinion to voice until after the exhibition is made; and then if it were to speak, it is too late. If the picture is wrong, the damage is done; and the popular referendum, condemning the picture, only advertises it for the next town where it is to be exhibited. Indeed, this so-called public opinion is regarded by the theatrical people as one of their best methods of advertising. The picture or show after two or three weeks in New York is condemned by the New Yorkers; it comes to St. Louis with New York's condemnation on its head; our people here of course want to see how good it is, or how bad it is, or why in the world it was condemned; and they begin to agree with New York people about the time the show is nearly ready for the next town. The show was a success; and public opinion condemned it. At which, I say, the managers thereof do not weep; rather, they regarded the critics, and the condemnation is helpful for the next place."

"The truth is the bad picture or film ought to be condemned before it is exhibited and this is only possible by an established censorship, which, representing the public, would be able to voice its sentiments in advance of the scandal of an exhibition."

A hearing was given last week by the Assembly codes committee on the bill of Assemblyman Fred M. Ahern. The bill provides for the creation of a state board of moving picture censors, to consist of three members, to be appointed by the Governor, each to have a salary of \$5,000 annually, and the term of office to be six years. The purpose of the bill is to prohibit all films regarded as

sacrilegious, obscene, immoral, or improper in any way.

Rev. Michael J. Looney, pastor of St. Joseph's church, Albany, representing the largest parish in the Albany diocese; Rev. Joseph A. Dunnehy, S. T. L., superintendent of Catholic schools of the Diocese of Albany, and Howard Clark Barber of the Society for the Prevention of Crime advanced strong arguments why the bill should become a law.

In opening his arguments, Father Dunnehy said: "To take the open view, the movies are primarily a money-making proposition. It is inherently false to say that they are either educational or artistic. Where 6,000 reels are produced in a year, it is impossible to procure these results; facts prove it. Nine out of ten films are shady and make appeal to a low intelligence. Not one in fifty has either form or finish.

"A sop is thrown to the respectable now and then but it is not more than a sop. Movies are made not to uplift, nor to educate, but to pay a return on invested capital. Box office returns are the chief consideration.

"It will not do to call upon an odd respectable movie to justify the trash that is flung on the canvas. The old dime novel and nickel shocker were Sunday school weeklies alongside of the stuff that is now projected to appeal to the imagination and the consciences of the unwary.

"I have no hesitation in saying that the greatest enemy we have to encounter in our educational activity for clean, strong character building is the uncensored movie. This is my conviction after covering sixty-five schools and discussing the matter with over 22,000 children."

Father Dunnehy further declared that motion pictures uncensored were extremely dangerous to children. "Motion pictures," he said, "are one of the three greatest educational powers in the world to day, because of their power to picture truths or untruths. At least fifty per cent of the pictures shown to-day are objected to by every clean, wholesome child, man or woman. It is argued that censorship will hurt the trade. Of course it will. Every reform will hurt somebody, but why not let it hurt those who are guilty. The right of this State to guard its citizens cannot be questioned and the mere fact that this bill is on the table before you to-day is proof that there is objection to the movies shown to-day."

"There is a State-wide feeling against the abuses of the motion picture show. I can see the danger of the moving picture show better than anyone here. Why? Because I daily study the decline of the schools and in the lack of interest of our school children I can see the movie fever. The children themselves are not a bit backward in admitting it. They are morose of seeing the movies than they are of going to school and securing an education."

Rev. Father Looney declared that the censorship would not hurt any honest producers and therefore they certainly could have no strong objection to it. He declared that the schools are being demoralized because the children are running off each night to the movies when they should be at home studying. Their minds are growing light, he declared. Mr. Barber registered several strong arguments in favor of the bill pleading strongly for the protection of the children.

The committee deferred action.

Weekly Church Calendar

First Sunday in Lent.

Gospel, St. Matt. iv., 1-11.

S. 12. St. Gregory the Great, P. C. D.

M. 13. St. Euphrasia, V.

T. 14. St. Mathilda, Q.

W. 15. St. Zachary, P. C.

Th. 16. St. Finian the Leper.

F. 17. St. Patrick, B. C.

S. 18. St. Cyril, B. C. D.

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News From Ireland

At Carlow Petty Sessions

Governey, Co. C. (chairman), U. D. C. was sworn in as a magistrate for the borough of Carlow. *Carlow.*

W. J. Carolan, Virginia, has purchased the old established licensed premises and hotel of Messrs. P. D. Lynch & Company, Virginia.

Died—January 31, at his residence, Bridge street, Belturbet, Timothy Boland. *Clare.*

The death is announced, in his 64th year, of Rev. J. J. Hogan, Adm., New-market-on-Fergus. His first curacy was at Killoccoman, near Birr, and was afterwards on the mission at Carrigahall, Miltown Malbay, and Ennis. Later he was transferred to the charge of Kinnetty, Kings county and just two years ago he was appointed to Newmarket-on-Fergus.

J. Gordon, Boys' school, Ennis, has been appointed headmaster of SS. Peter and Paul Boys' school, Kilmallock, in succession to M. B. O'Donnell, appointed principal of the Courtensayschool, Newcastle West. *Clare.*

The death has occurred in his 80th year of R. W. Swanston, one of Skibbereen's most esteemed citizens. *Clare.*

The Marine Hotel, Gandore, which had been burned to the ground last year, is at present in the hands of Jerome O'Donovan, who has undertaken to rebuild it. Miss Bridget O'Brien has been "running the post" in Roscarbery for the past few weeks as rural postman. *Donegal.*

Rev. James Harte, C. C., Pettigo, has been transferred to Clougher, and is replaced in Pettigo by the Rev. Father McDermott. *Down.*

A handsome Celtic cross has been erected in Downpatrick Catholic cemetery to the memory of the late Very Rev. William Dempsey, P. P., V. G., Downpatrick. *Downpatrick.*

The death has occurred at Gafothy, Banbridge, of Rev. Patrick Fitzpatrick, C. C., well-known priest of the Drogheda diocese. *Kildare.*

Councillor James M. Gallagher, the outgoing Lord Mayor of Dublin, was at a quarterly meeting of the Municipal Council, re-elected to that position. *Fermanagh.*

Lisnaskea Guardians have rescinded the appointment of Dr. Knox, as M. O. at Derrylin, in room of Dr. Annesley, now in the army, and appointed Dr. Shields, of Swanlinbar, instead. *Kildare.*

Married—January 26, at parish church, Athy, by the Rev. F. O'Donoghue, C. C., Jack E., son of J. M. Ginhane, Limerick, to Margaret, youngest daughter of Mrs. Daniel Lawler Moore, County Kildare. *Kilkenny.*

Died—At Frankford, Mrs. Mackey.—At Attanoe, Mrs. O'Keefe.—At Ballyspellan, Johnstown, John Phelan.—At the Parade, Kilkenny, suddenly, John A. Davis. *Limerick.*

W. B. O'Donnell, principal teacher of Kilmallock Boys' school, has been appointed headmaster of the Newcastle West National school in succession to J. D. Musgrave, who filled the position for about thirty years. Michael Kelleher, Upper Clare street, Limerick, a well known big buyer, has succumbed to an attack of pneumonia. *Mayo.*

On his departure from Westport on promotion to Carrick-on-Shannon. Linesman G. Hanly, M. G. W. R., was presented by the staff and officials with a silver watch and chain. *Fast.*

Died—At Ballinrobe, John Staughton.—At Balloor, Castlebar, Mrs. Mary Mitchell.—At Louisburg, Mrs. Rose Jennings. *Fast.*

Doctrines Which Refuse To Die.

Lull in Radical Circles Should Not Deceive.

The Example of the Single Tax Idea.

For a time there has come to radical circles in our country an apparent lull in their activities. The organized Socialist movement is not creating the stir of a few years ago. From which many people have supposed that radicalism is dead or dying, that there is nothing more to fear from it. As a matter of fact, this is far from the truth. Radicalism, though perhaps slumbering to a degree, is far from extinct. It lacks but for the moment an efficient agency through which to express its ideas in a crystallized form.

Evidence upon evidence could be adduced in testimony of this fact. Especially striking, however, is the instance of the single tax idea which continues to exist in a quite virile form among the people. So strong has it become that one of its best-known living advocates, Louis F. Post, editor of The Public, has been appointed to the position of Assistant Secretary of Labor in the present administration. Colonel Gorges, the great Sanitary officer who conducted the work in the Panama canal zone, and Mrs. Jos. Fels, the wife of the deceased soap manufacturer, are also actively interested in its propaganda.

An interesting and enlightening instance of the hold of this idea on a great number of the people is furnished in a debate recently held at the ninth annual convention of the North Dakota Society of Equity in Fargo last week. J. E. Kelly of Pierss South Dakota, and James Manahan of St. Paul were the debaters, the former for the negative, the latter for the affirmative side.

"That them at the same time the decision would be favored to single tax," reads the report of the affair in the Co-operators' Herald of February 23rd, "was assured from the start, for it is well known that the majority of North Dakotans favor tax reform, and the single tax propaganda has proven especially attractive." "The writer," continues the account, "has been a single tax advocate for years yet cannot compel the admission that Mr. Kelley argued Mr. Manahan off his feet on practically every essential point of the debate."

Mr. Manahan, evidently secure in the knowledge that his audience was largely in his favor, dealt largely with the sentimental side of the question. "Most frankly be admitted. But this is not all by far. "After the debate," we are informed, "many of those who heard the argument remained to compliment Mr. Kelley for his argument while expressing their belief in the theory of the single tax. Mr. Kelley recognized that his audience were composed of men who were largely believers in the doctrines of Henry George, and his acceptance of the negative side under the circumstances was appreciated. At the conclusion of the debate the rising vote showed that the affirmative was sustained by a large majority."

And so we learn that among the farming class of a great agricultural state, where it would be least expected, the doctrines of the single tax have taken a strong hold. Radicalism flows strong among that population. So much so that it is a mark of courage and congratulation for a speaker to be bold enough to attempt to remedy such ideas. Well can it be understood therefrom that we have not at all disposed of radicalism. Its doctrines will not so easily die as we have been prone to imagine. There are two things that we can do to aid toward that desirable end; endeavor to powerfully assist in stamping out its teachings and lend our hands to remedy the conditions which make radicalism possible. For all errors contain half truths, and are enabled thus to appeal to men. The single tax doctrine, as a way.—Massinger.

an example, cannot be merely done away with by attacks upon it, but by a more equitable distribution of wealth and by a just system of taxation.

C. B. of C. V.

Foreign Mission News

Special correspondence by The Propagation of the Faith Society 318 Lexington Ave., New York City.

Brief Of His Holiness Pope Benedict XV.

To the Directors of the Society For The Propagation of the Faith.

Dear Sons, greeting and Apostolic Benediction. Summons by Divine mercy to the direction of the Catholic Apostolate. Nothing would be dearer to Our Heart than to receive you here and set forth to you our projects. For whenever we cast our eyes over the world, we see that there are other sheep who are not of the fold of the Church and that it is Our duty to lead them thither.

This thought naturally causes Our heart to turn affectionately towards you and the pious Society which you administer wishing that from day to day, better results may crown your labors. It is true that owing to God's mercy, your solicitude and zeal have brought forth abundant fruit, as is proved by the contributions which you have secured from the faithful and the numerous apostolic undertakings which these offerings have made possible. But Alas! at the very time when we would have wished the charity of Catholics to become more generous towards this Society, we behold an unfortunate array of circumstances which both we and you deplore, whereby the Ministers of the Gospel and the subsidies necessary to maintain them are at the same time reduced. But your tried virtue makes almost superfluous to ask you not to permit your zeal to diminish although confronted by increasing difficulties. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, as you know, so closely linked with the eternal salvation of men, for which it labors beyond measure, that He Who wills that all men should be saved and Who died for all will give the seed to the sower and the increase to the laborer which the apostolic laborers have planted.

All therefore, that we ask of you is that you will persevere in your activity and that you will always give to the Holy See and to the Church, the assistance that you have hitherto given them. Your plans and efforts may sometimes meet with obstacles where the fruits of your work are lessened, but assuredly this will not be true of your merit before God nor of the eternal reward which you may expect from Him.

We look with gratitude upon the services you have already rendered and to you, very dear Sons, and to all your co-workers throughout the world, as a pledge of heavenly gifts and in token of our special benevolence, we give very affectionately in the Lord, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome at St. Peter's, the 6th day of January, 1915, the second year of Our Pontificate. *Benedictus PP. XV.*

Our associates will see with profound gratitude what interest His Holiness, Pope Benedict XV, deigns to take in their work. The beloved Pontiff expresses in tender terms his wishes for its prosperity and sends it a special blessing in pledge of Heaven's abundant favors.

We are all concerned with responding to these precious marks of paternal tenderness by redoubling our zeal, so that in the present dark hour the Society which we foster, may continue to provide for the material necessities of the missionaries in all countries where error or infidelity is ripe.

All you can hold in your dear hand is what you have given away.—Massinger.

Hard Working Priest Wishes To Build a Chapel.

Father Joseph Gravere went out to India thirty years ago, at the age of three-nine; with admirable courage and perseverance he tackled the difficult Tamil language, in which he became sufficiently proficient to take charge of a big district in 1915. He was assigned to the place of Fr. Girard, that priest who died of sunstroke after working so hard to finish his beautiful and urgently needed church at Tindivanam. The church, still without a roof, has not been touched for nearly two years; Father Gravere now writes that any help which could be given him would make it possible for him to think of baking a few thousand bricks with a view to starting the work again.

He is a man of admirable zeal, ready to do anything in his power for the service either of his Christians or of his fellow-priests, and at the same time so hard upon himself that he has had to be cautioned more than once by Mgr. Morel, lest the same fate should overtake him as overtook his predecessor.

Danger Of A Breach Of Promise Case.

Fr. Felix van de Pol, B. F. M., says this is the first time he has asked Americans for aid. Formerly his friends in Belgium supplied most of his needs, but can no longer help him and he thinks now of the land of the free. He has heard moreover, that America, growing ever richer, is trying to beat old Europe in the line of charity.

Here is his story in his own words: "In the year 1912, a severe typhoon destroyed almost completely the Parish of Numancia with its many Barrios. I found it impossible to rebuild the church in my largest settlement. In the opinion of the people the poor little church without walls and for a great part even without a grass roof was good enough. Indeed it was good enough, as there were only thirty persons at Mass on all Sundays and no more making their Easter duty.

"After three years' labor I succeeded in bringing the congregation up to a good-sized number, and on some Sundays had a hundred and fifty communicants. The eyes of the natives at last were opened, not only to their own miserable condition, but to the state of the church also. They want a new church and a new convent as good as they used to have in the old day. They are going to start the work themselves, but I have promised them some help. Am I to be accused by them of breach of promise? It all depends on my friends."

What The Fiji Islands Are Doing.

We recently announced that the work of the Propagation of the Faith had been established in Fiji, and a few particulars regarding these islands may be timely. They are an English colony and have about 4,000 English residents. The remainder of the population is made up of 75,000 Fijians and 45,000 Hindus.

The missionary work is entrusted to the Marists, who are now reaping a harvest in a field that was sown in blood. The Catholics number 12,000 cared for in twenty-eight posts. Sixty Sisters of the Third Order of Mary do invaluable work among the women. They are helped by fifty native Sisters.

Vocations for the priesthood have been developed, and four young Fijians are now preparing for the altar.

—He who forgets his own interests in the service of God, may be sure that heaven will watch over them better than he could have done himself.—St. Ignace of Loyola.