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Friday, August 25, 1916

Greater Rochester.

The Catholic Journal this week consists of 16 pages; a number of which has been devoted to pictures and facts concerning our growing city. They will be found interesting.

Breaking It Down.

In the course of a serious and well-told article in the current "Columbiad" entitled "The Civic Melting Pot", John A. Heffernan strikes a note, sounded more than once by the Catholic Journal. Speaking about various civic movements now in progress all over the United States, Mr. Heffernan asks if the Catholics are represented as they should be in the boards of these activities in order that the Catholic position may be thoroughly understood and Catholic influence exerted to the end that these movements may not be absorbed entirely by latter-day faddists and opponents of all religion.

Mr. Heffernan goes on:—"I can think of no better way of breaking down such prejudice as exists against our Church and our thought than an active participation of Catholics in work of this kind. We must keep in mind that prejudice is often honest and that only honest prejudice hurts Catholic interests. There are many men, good men and men whose motives are patriotic, who dislike the Catholic Church simply because they misunderstand it. They are under the influence of three hundred years of the written lie they think is history. They feel that there is something hostile to America and American ideals of government in this Church of ours. We know that it is unreasonable, but they do not know it. They find Catholic names mixed up in corrupt politics and they assume that politics are corrupt because they are Catholic. It is the Catholic name in that relationship that makes incision in their mind; the name that is not Catholic does not impress itself upon them. The fact that there is a dishonest Catholic politician has a greater significance to their minds which a long course of historical fiction has sensitized, than the fact that there are more non-Catholic than Catholic politicians that are dishonest. Many of them undoubtedly think of Tweed as a Catholic and Charles O'Connor as a non-Catholic. The inclination of a mind will sometimes invert a picture as will the inclination of a lens.

"The state of mind is characteristic of men who believe themselves to be exceedingly tolerant. The prejudice disguises itself—they think their dislike of the Catholic Church itself is evidence of their breadth of mental view, of their modernity which they confuse with tolerance. It is in the Civic Melting Pot that this prejudice can be dis-

solved. It is in the association with Catholic men in projects of virtue and Americanism of which these non-Catholic men recognize that they will have borne weather in order to work upon them that the Catholic Church is not what they believe sort of speeches thought necessary by over-zealous campaign committees.

Race Prejudice

So cleverly does the "Ave Maria" rebuke the over-zealous clerical friends of leading presidential candidates in the following brief editorial that we reproduce it herewith as follows:—

Many American Catholics rejoiced over the elevation of Justice Louis Brandies to the U. S. Supreme Court; and the Catholic Senators who voted for his confirmation had special satisfaction in doing so; knowing that, besides being an eminently worthy citizen, thoroughly qualified for the high position, he was a Jew. This was the secret of so much opposition of him, of so much misrepresentation of him. We Catholics like to see religious bigotry and race prejudice rebuked, because we have suffered so much in the past from them, and are still so often victims of both.

Although neither at all depressed nor in the least alarmed because the two presidential candidates are sons of Protestant ministers, we leave all demonstration over this circumstance to their co-religionists, convinced that in neither camp will there be lack of enthusiasm. In fact, it is likely to be wild. Thanksgiving sermons have been preached and exhortations delivered in Baptist and Presbyterian pulpits, while children sang patriotic songs and waved flags in Sunday schools. If Catholics anywhere were to indulge in this sort of thing when one of their number happened to obtain political preferment, what a howl the ministers send up, and what strident protests there would be against mixing religion with politics!

Laymen's Retreat.

We have referred before to the benefits to be derived by laymen in retreat, if only for the week-end. In these days of bustle and hustle, men must literally tear themselves away from all intercourse with the public if they would enjoy the mental calm necessary to self-inspection once a year. No matter how earnestly one may desire it, this mental calm cannot be had if one tries to acquire it at home. Something is certain to intervene, to break the spell as it were.

But once the man has entered upon the retreat, unconsciously worldly thoughts and business cares are put aside, and all thought is centered upon himself and how to save his immortal soul. He is able to make such self-examination as he never could while in and of the outside world. Things present themselves in different light. Obstacles do not appear so formidable. Blessings are seen in their true light. And the spiritual peace that comes must be felt, cannot be described.

We are glad that the annual laymen's retreat is a settled institution in Rochester and expect to see the number making it steadily increase.

A Little Early.

Those who are criticizing political candidates for their somewhat over fervidity in these August days should make due allowance for the superheated atmosphere. In such weather men's temperatures are apt to rise unduly and the result is rather more of the superlative and the expetive than in ordinary weather and under ordinary circumstances. When the weather moderates then men's temperature cools and the quality of their oratory is likely to be of different order. Possibly, more exactitude of statement may be noticed, too. To those who are familiar with

Cooler weather may change the quality of the campaign oratory.

Powerful.

As reported in the New York papers, our own Bishop Hickey made a powerful address before the delegates to the American Federation of Catholic Societies for Catholic unity, Catholic solidarity and Catholic progress.

Bishop Hickey stands on sound ground when he deprecates a purely Catholic political party but insists that we present a united front for our principles and rights and, then, no political party will ever dare refuse our just demands for free speech, freedom from scurrilous attack and freedom of action as citizens.

The Bishop emphasizes what the Catholic Journal has stood for consistently and persistently. That the best Catholic cannot but be the best American citizen.

"One of the most powerful pulpit orators in the American hierarchy" is the way the New York "World" aptly describes the Bishop of Rochester.

In order to check decaying limbs it is not necessary as a rule to cut down the whole tree. Yet that is precisely what extremists of today would do. To cure a few abuses, they would overturn our entire theory of government.

Graduates from Catholic educational institutions should make manifest that fact in their daily life and conduct so that due credit may be reflected on "Alma Mater."



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