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Friday, February 28, 1919.

Grand Old Man.

Well, indeed, was it that all the American hierarchy gathered at Washington to observe the golden jubilee of the "Grand Old Man" of the American Church, Cardinal Gibbons. What his golden jubilee means to the Catholic history of the United States and the world at large can best be summarized in the Cardinal's own words at the banquet in his honor:

"When a man like myself becomes an octogenarian he is disposed to be reminiscent and to praise times passed away. He has the temptation to embellish his narratives because his audience, who are his juniors, have no means of contradicting him. He has the whole field to himself. But I assure you that I have no disposition to yield to the temptation myself.

"At the close of the Third Plenary Council, over which I had the honor to preside, I addressed the assembled prelates, and referring to the words which St. Paul wrote to Timothy, I thanked them because they did not despise my youth. If your predecessors in the episcopate were so patient and forbearing to me in my youthful experience, you have always been kind and considerate to me in my declining years.

"I am to-day the sole survivor of the nearly 1,000 bishops who attended the vatican council, and by a notable circumstance the oldest prelate at the time of the council was a bishop from South America.

"What is still more noteworthy, I am actually the only survivor of the eighty prelates who attended the Third Plenary Council of 1884.

"The last to descend below the horizon of the tomb was the venerable patriarch of the West, the great apostle of temperance, the patriot whom his fellow citizens loved to honor, without distinction of race or religion, the Lion of the Fold of Judah—I refer to John Ireland, Archbishop of St. Paul.

Anarchy

The attempted assassination of Premier Clemenceau, of France, is an earnest of a condition that, if not repressed or checked, constitutes a menace to civilization. It is a manifestation of an intense hatred of all constituted authority, whether the authority be in shape of monarchy or republic, and goes further and proclaims the infamous creed of "No God, no master."

This condition of mind prevails wherever there is a tendency to deride Religion and to deny the own potency of Almighty God. Wherever people are strong in their faith in God, there is an absence of anarchy and unrest. Where faith is reviled, religion is lacking, there is discontent and anarchy and chaos.

It is plainly evident that anarchy does not need monarchical atmosphere to thrive and flourish. There are symptoms of anarchy right here in this Republic where there is supposed to be such freedom of speech and action as exists nowhere else in the world. There is a reason. While monarchs do not rule in this land of ours by hereditary right there are men who will use despotic power by reason of enormous wealth, by reason of strong places as heads of organizations of craftsmen, by control of the sources of education. The ordinary, everyday fellow who is not in the inner circle of these controlling factors, thinks himself aggrieved and straightaway begins to agitate. His spirit is communicated to others and ere long there is a well organized agitation of discontent which threatens the peace of the community. Weak politicians in high place, lacking courage to restrain the despots referred to and fearful of weakening their political influence if they seek to curb the agitators, fold their hands and sit idly by while anarchy rears its reptilian head aloft until some such episode as the Clemenceau attack, stirs the heart of the entire people and the agitators are treated roughly.

Did the public authorities but exert themselves to eliminate both cause and effect before iron is at white heat, much of the unrest could be avoided. Did the public authorities recognize more clearly the potent influence for good the Church exerts and not seek to minimize it by fool laws and worse that seek to instill a hazy code of morals into the people by mere legislative fiat, there would be a saner, political atmosphere and less waving of the red flag of license and licentiousness.

Restraint

It is not to be supposed that President Wilson's policies would meet with unanimous approval. It would be strange indeed if everybody agreed with every clause in the proposed constitution for the Society of Nations. It is to be expected that there would be those who believe a Society of Nations is unfeasible.

No one, unless perhaps there be a few bureaucrats in Washington who think differently is so profound an admirer of Woodrow Wilson that he objects to honest criticism of one or the other of President Wilson's policies or ideas. But there is a limit to honest criticism. When a man of the supposedly high type of James M. Beck, descends to personal vilification of the President of the United States because, forsooth, he does not like some of his policies, he transcends the proprieties of legitimate controversy. Billingsgate is never effective argument. There are many points in the League of Nations covenant that need explanation and elaboration. There are features which the President must explain and also tell what induced him to consent to their incorporation before the people of the United States will approve ratification by the United States senate. We feel that the President made a tactical mistake in cabling a request that there be no discussion of the League agreement until he had met with the Senate and House committees on foreign affairs. We feel that the people want that explanation made in a public message to the Congress in public assemblage where all may see and read. We have always felt that Mr. Wilson's greatest fault is in his apparent impression that he is still a schoolmaster and that the people are his pupils, to be instructed as he sees fit, willingly if possible, if not then by force. Undoubtedly, Mr. Wilson makes the mistake of believing that the people are but children and should be treated accordingly.

Having said all this, we still maintain that nothing is to be gained by personal vilification of

the President. Let us assume he has acted honestly and with best of intentions. If he cannot convince the Senate—our chosen representatives—that his policy is the best for this country to follow, then the League plan in its present form will not be approved and the treaty to carry it into effect will not be ratified. With this verdict, provided the people show coincidence, the President must be satisfied as he is the elected servant of the people—not their ruler.

But let the debate be orderly and the controversy dignified and impersonal!

Womes

It is plain that the question of women in industry, as well as in politics, is a burning one and will be for some time to come.

There is a strong organization formed to see that women are placed in every position they can fill without regard to whether men have hitherto held such positions or whether the advent of women will oust men from the places they now hold. This organization has already made it plain that it will stand staunchly back of any woman who is now holding a job formerly held by a soldier and who refuses to yield it back to the returned soldier. No matter whether the soldier fought bravely or whether he is wounded, or whether his employer specifically promised his old job would be his upon his return from overseas, the woman who has his place is refusing to give it up and this "woman's conference" announces it will stand back of her. And good reason why! The conference exists to provide good places, at nice salaries, to legislative agents, publicity artists and organizing managers. But whatever the reason the women who are now in industry and politics are in to stay and they want the jobs and the political places. And what's more they can outvote the men and they intend to hold the whip hand.

Withdraw It.

We feel sure that once President Wilson is fully informed of the infamous views regarding marriage and other supposedly sacred social relations he will withdraw any credentials that have been issued to Mr. George Herron even to treat with the murderous, treacherous and impossible Russian Bolsheviks.

That Mr. Herron should be permitted to represent decent citizenship of the United States in any official capacity is unthinkable and an insult to every Christian man or woman.

We repeat: The President must disavow Mr. Herron. He cannot afford to stand before the people as an official associate of such a man.

Chairman Hurley, of the Shipping Board, Justice McKenna of the United States Supreme Court and W. Bourke Cockran were among the noted Catholic laymen who attended the golden jubilee celebration for Cardinal Gibbons.

Three Cardinals at an American Catholic celebration shows how the Church has progressed in the Western Hemisphere.

"League of Nations", here's hoping it may be an accomplished fact and produce all the results its backers hope for.

Those puritans in New York who want to prohibit by law Sunday ice cream, Sunday cigars, Sunday golf and Sunday recreation of all kinds might as well spare their efforts if they hope thereby to attract the people to their Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening performances under the guise of "services". The average man or woman may be attracted to a place where the Gospel is preached but he considers himself amply qualified to select his own amusement places.

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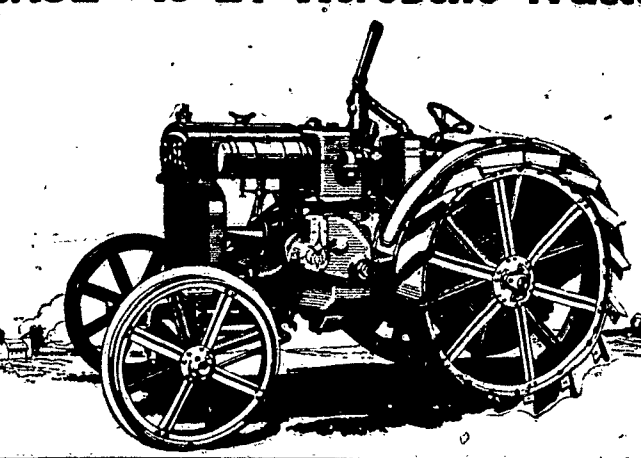
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