

THE CATHOLIC JOURNAL
 PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY AT
 470 Main St. E., Cor. Windsor St.
 4th Floor. Rochester, N. Y.

BY THE
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Friday, July 9, 1920.

Keep Close Watch!

Press despatches, including the National Catholic Welfare Council news service, bring the news that in states like Illinois—where the revision of the entire Constitution is under consideration by a convention elected for that purpose—and in Michigan—where the voters are asked to approve in popular election various amendments to the State Constitution—the perennial bigots, the pseudo-patriots, the Bible reading advocates, and a score of other "non-sectarian organizations"—which are only a mask for "non-Catholic propagandists"—are hard at work to bind and gag the Catholic Church in every way possible and to make "religious liberty" apply only to the fifty-seven different varieties of Protestant sects.

It behooves us as Catholics to keep close watch on all these propositions. Whenever an amendment to a state or the Federal Constitutions is proposed we should scrutinize it carefully lest some handcuff be slipped over our precious prerogatives and liberties.

We should not be lulled into a comatose state by the specious plea whispered in our ears that "this educational provision does not affect you Catholics. You have your own Catholic schools and you support and operate them. We want to make certain requirements applicable to the state schools so you let us alone."

It should be borne in mind always that there are localities where the Catholic population is not financially able to support a separate Catholic school and so the Catholic children have to attend the state schools and these new requirements, such as Bible reading and opening religious exercises in the school, would affect the Catholic pupils, and quite probably in an adverse way. Then there are the many, many localities where there is no Catholic high school and any new requirement would apply to the Catholic students. The same is true, in a lesser degree, of colleges and universities.

Hence we should be on our guard all the time. The great majority of our non-Catholic citizens want to be fair to us. In a great measure, it will be our fault if we permit a small but noisy and persistent minority of conscienceless bigots to impose their will upon an entire American community, whether it be a town, a city, a state or the nation.

It is perfectly justifiable, in fact it is our bounden duty to expose "bogus oaths" or other alleged atrocities sought to be conveyed to the public as part and parcel of regular Catholic routine. But would it not be as well to refrain from attributing similar practices to our opponents unless we have some proof of the accuracy of our charges?

Women in

Whether we approve of the innovation, whether we like the situation or not, the fact remains that removing the restriction of the suffrage to males only, has brought women into active political life. They are participating in party primaries; they are sitting in conventions as full-fledged delegates; they are helping write the political platforms; in short they are mixing in politics on precisely the same basis as men. In all probability, they will vote for President in all the States this fall.

This being so, let us hope and pray that the advent of women into active political life may have the effect of elevating politics and that their influence will be exerted toward civic betterment in all that the term implies. We have full confidence that our Catholic women will do their part toward achieving this desirable result.

Good Work!

Florida is redeeming itself in the eyes of decent persons. It has turned down the infamous Catholic-baiter, Governor Catts, in his aspirations to go to the United States and renominated Senator Fletcher by a three to one vote.

Just what issue Catts made his campaign upon and just what his defeat signifies is shown by these extracts from the Catts campaign literature:—

"The Catholic toe-kissers of the Pope," said one of the Catts' screeds, "know very well that if Catts gets to the senate they will hear his strong, fierce voice, urging that the United States shall not be sold to the Pope of Rome."

Catts spent considerable of his wet powder in attacking a bill introduced by Senator Fletcher in 1919, aimed at those who attempt "to overthrow the government of the United States." The bill had no religious significance whatever, but Catts clawed it in this manner:

"It may be that the Knights of Columbus have taken Fletcher for a soft case and are getting him to fix the people of the United States, and when they have done away entirely with the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, they will, with Fletcher's aid, hold up the Roman Catholic dogma and creed and say to the despised Protestants, 'You worship as the Holy Mother Church says or you go to prison or the fires of persecution.' Poor old Fletcher, he must be in his dotage to let those ancient hypocrites and Jesuits pull the wool over his eyes."

The many friends of Archbishop Dougherty of Philadelphia, will sympathize with him in the death of his beloved mother, who died in Honesville, Pa., on June 4th, aged 92. She was a native of Ireland and her Christian name was Bridget, true evidence of parental love for Erin and wish to honor the memory of a Saint dear to every Celtic heart.

Educational experts are wondering if introduction of "vocational education" into the universities has not rather lowered the level of the "cultural education" for which these institutions have been famous and also whether it will be found necessary to eliminate the vocational altogether in certain great universities. This is a big problem and needs much study.

Bishop Fitzmaurice of Erie was a valiant churchman and a real Shepherd of souls. May his soul rest in peace!

Governor Catts of Florida failed to make the United States Senate but John Sharp Williams is still there.

As at Chicago, the "Senatorial Cabal" was strong at San Francisco.



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