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Mexico

Distressing, indeed, are conditions in Mexico, so far as Catholics are concerned.

The Mexican Government has put into force laws that practically destroy religious worship, except as it may be practiced in the secret recesses of retreats. Unless the ministers of God, in effect, acknowledge President Calles as greater than God, they are not allowed to say Mass, baptize, confirm. While the decrees are aimed at all creeds because the Catholic bishops are appointed by the Holy Father in Rome and also because if those Mexicans who have any religious preference or profession, nine out of ten are Catholics, the decrees affect us more than any other body.

Rather than acknowledge and pay reverence to Monsieur Calles as greater than the Creator, the Mexican priests, at the direction of their bishops have announced there will be no more public Masses, no baptisms, marriages, or confirmations, in the Catholic Churches that have been seized and confiscated by President Calles.

Soon Forgotten

Death of Robert Todd Lincoln, only surviving son of the martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, brings home the reflection: how quickly one is forgotten, no matter how prominent.

Nine persons out of ten—if asked any time during the last ten years, concerning Robert Todd Lincoln, would have asserted he was dead, because he had retired from the public arena about ten years ago, after having been Minister to England and President of the Pullman Co.

The curiosity-seekers have always been peeved because Robert Todd Lincoln did not make a business of exploiting his relation with the martyr President. Undoubtedly, they will be the greater peeved when they learn that the R. T. Lincoln collection of personal letters of the Martyr President, which is sealed in the Congressional archives, is not to be unsealed "until 21 years after my death"—or until 1947.

But Robert Todd Lincoln was a modest man—he was not a proficient self-advertiser. He detected exploitation as the son of Abraham Lincoln and of hearing continually speculation as to whether he ever would fit in his father's shoes. So he withdrew of late years entirely from public life and lived quietly with his family and his books—six months in Washington and six months in his country estate in Vermont.

One thing the curiosity-seekers and the sensational press over-do—exploitation and unfair comparison of the children of great men with their fathers—witness the Lincolns, the Grants, the Roosevelts, the Harrisons, the Smiths.

Men and women should have an opportunity to make a career for themselves, not blamed or pampered as the offspring of illustrious ancestry.

Poison hooch is no new concoction. But this time it seems to have had wider general distribution at one time.

Mayor Martin B. O'Neill appears to be making good as a general, all-around harmonizer.

Rochesterians who have visited the sequentennial exhibition say it may be a great show when it is finished—but not yet.

Rochester's park system is a popular institution this year.

Rochester is experiencing far less discomfort from gales, tornadoes, etc. at this locality far more advertised as ideal places to live.

Either Roland Woodward or Meyer Jacobowitz will represent us creditably in Congress.

What They Would Like

Wayne Wheeler, Orville Poland, William H. Anderson and "Pussy-foot" Johnson, doubtless wish that President Calles were President of the United States and that he would repeat the law he has just promulgated as Dictator of Mexico to repress and stamp out religious belief and which after positive declaration that all ministers and priests must be Mexican by birth and those who are not shall be deported forthwith, the Calles law goes on:

"Article 6. The state cannot permit that there be carried into effect any contract, pact or agreement that may have as an object the deterioration, loss or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of man, whether it be for the reason of work, education, or religious vow; the law, in consequence does not permit the establishment of monastic orders, whatever may be the denomination or the object for which they may seek to be established.

"For the purposes of this article, monastic orders are those religious societies whose individuals live under certain rules peculiar to them, by means of promises or vows, temporal or perpetual, and who subject themselves to one or more superiors, even though all the individuals of the order may have their living places separate.

"Monastic orders or established convents shall be dissolved by the authorities, after having made a record of the identification and affiliation of the ex-cloistered persons.

"If it is proved that ex-cloistered persons return to live a community life after the community has been dissolved, they shall be punished with a penalty of from one to two years in prison. In such case, the superiors, priors, prelates, directors or persons who may have a hierarchical standing in the organization or direction of the cloister shall be punished with a penalty of six years imprisonment.

"In each case, women shall suffer two-thirds of the penalty.

"Article 7. Persons who induce or lead a minor to renounce his liberty through a religious vow shall be punished with 'major' arrest and fine of the second class, even though there may be bonds of relationship between them.

"If the induced person is of age, the penalty shall be 'minor' arrest and a fine of first class.

"Article 8.—Any individual who, in the exercise of the ministry or priesthood of any religious cult whatsoever, publicly incites, by means of written declarations, or speeches or sermons, his readers or audience to disavowal of the political institutions or to disobedience of the laws, or of the authorities and their commands, shall be punished with a penalty of six years in prison and a fine of the second class.

"Article 9.—If, as the direct and immediate result of the incitement to which the foregoing article refers, less than 10 individuals intervene using force, threats or physical or moral violence against the public authorities or their agents, or if they make use of arms, each of them shall be punished with one year in prison and a fine of the second class. The priests or ministers who may be the instigators of the incitement shall be punished with a penalty of six years in prison, the penalty to be increased according to the aggravating circumstances from the first to the fourth class, in the discretion of the judge; except in cases when a transgression may arise from the disorder that merits a greater penalty, in which case such penalty shall be applied.

"If the individuals who intervene in the disorder are 10 or more, proceedings shall be taken in accord.

Radio: English

Says the New York "Evening Post":

If pronunciation in England is shortly discovered to be improving, credit for the development belong to the radio. British announcers are to receive instruction in the proper way of speaking their native tongue. Their audiences, hearing words pronounced after a certain fashion over and over, will ultimately adopt the approved pronunciation without conscious effort. There is something thrilling in this wholesale jacking up of a nation's speech. It suggests quantity production and hence might have been looked for in this country rather than abroad. But wherever it starts, it is a distinctly hopeful sign for the United States. If the radio is going in for culture, our future in the realm of refinement is assured.

It is a fact that the radio stations in the United States are those which have the announcers of cultured accent and trained in elocution. Also that radio audiences tune in on the broadcasting stations that balance their programmes often rather than those whose programmes are chiefly confined to cabaret and jazz.

The weather sharps who predicted unusual heat and unusual cold both claim fulfillment of their prophecies.

George Bernard Shaw continues to be the prince of confidence men—he kids the dear public, the newspaper press and the world at large.

The Ferguson's are through, apparently, in Texas, Well whatever their faults, they put a crimp in the K. K. K.

Parsimonious

It is a pleasure for the Catholic Journal to indorse and commend the following splendid editorial in a recent issue of the Rochester "Democrat & Chronicle":

Attention has been directed recently to the inadequate pensions provided by the city of Rochester for widows and orphans of those members of the Fire Department who give their lives in the service of the community. The most recent example of the working of the pension system is in the case of a man killed while his company was answering an alarm of fire. His widow and two children are assured an income of only \$25 a month from the city, although slightly more may be granted by the Fire Department trustees if real need is shown.

Mayor O'Neill, in bringing the matter to public attention and suggesting a complete overhauling of the city pension system, has taken a course, that is certain to meet with general approval. It is pointed out that the provision made for pensions for dependents of city firemen was drafted years ago, at a time when dollars were comparatively few and of high purchasing power. Since that time the general level of wages has risen and prices have increased until the \$300 a year allowance seems not only pitifully, but ridiculously small. Even the pension of \$500 yearly provided for dependents of policemen is regarded as inadequate. In both the Fire and Police Departments, therefore, more adequate pensions are required to relieve the city of the stigma of penny-pinching parsimony toward those deserving of its generosity.

No class of men gives to the city more faithful service than members of the Fire and Police Departments. Despite the appearance of inactivity at times about the station houses, the men are under a constant strain awaiting a summons to duty that may require not only their utmost mental and physical ability, but life itself. No fireman can foresee the day when a falling wall or a heavy truck may crush his life out. No policeman knows when some lurking gunman may send a bullet his way. Yet both firemen and policemen carry on, guarding the community against dangers that, because of their service, seem to the average citizen impersonal and far away until sudden emergency shows the need of such protection.

Surely Rochester, which spends generously for public improvements and worthy causes, cannot afford to have it said that the widows and orphans of its faithful policemen and firemen are forgotten. Common business acumen, if no more worthy motive ought to dictate adequate pensions for those bereaved when a fireman or policeman gives his life for the community he serves, for the knowledge that his loved ones will be provided for cannot fail to be a powerful incentive to faithful performance of duty by each member of either force. The burden of just pensions would not be severe. Not to provide them would be a continuance of injustice.

Urban Costs

According to the New York Housing Commission, it costs \$151.66 per inhabitant to operate the government in New York city; \$136 in Buffalo; \$107.74; in the third class cities of New York state, \$66.44; in the villages \$27.91 and for the counties, \$17.71.

Commenting thereon, the Ottawa, Canada, "Citizen" says:

"Municipal authorities recognize that it is not feasible to go on increasing the cost of government indefinitely, and a determined effort is being made to check the rising tendency, not, however, when any conspicuous success. Speculation upon the problem revealed in the figures quoted has led municipal specialists to devise plans for averting the logical outcome of growing urban centers and diminishing rural communities. That outcome is an exorbitant cost of municipal government; and up to now the most feasible means put forward for avoiding the unbearable civic taxes is proper regional planning."

"Quebec would correspond to an American city of the first class, the typical example of which is Rochester. To live in New York would demand a much greater contribution from every family. Of course, one gets many things in New York which are not provided in Quebec; but many will consider that the noise and bustle and "efficiency" of the crowded capital are scarcely worth the price exacted. On the other hand, in the big cities the items of fire and police protection account for a considerable share of the tax rates; good roads, sanitation measures, parks, water supply, drains, lighting and all the accessories of efficient city administration are costly necessities, but they are necessities, and not luxuries. The cheapness of life in the country consists to a large extent, in fact, in doing without."

So long as costs of government go up, prices of things to buy must stay up, likewise wages. So long as wages of private employees advance, salaries of public employees will increase. And there you are!

Harry Goodwin aspires to be the stormy petrel of Monroe County politics.

Governor Al Smith is through, so he says. The leaders of Tammany wink the other eye.

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Parish Aid Sisters Is Lay Apostolate Of Munich Women

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Munich, July 24.—The organization of Parish Aid Sisters is the latest move taken to relieve the overburdened parish clergy of that part of the city which can be done by the laity. The scarcity of priests and the increasing spiritual needs of the people have led to the systematic organization of the lay apostolate in many large cities of Germany.

The need of definite training for this work was recognized by the Munich authorities, who were quick to observe that unorganized or occasional aid of the laity was totally insufficient to meet the ends in view. The result is the organization of a body of professional lay apostles among the young women who, after receiving the necessary training, are supported by the parishes. These Parish Aid Sisters take no vows and do not wear a religious habit, but they live in community in a house bought for them by the bishop. They have a special Director and their own five-year term as president of the constitution. In May they numbered 22 Sisters and 8 candidates.

The activity of these lay apostles is both general and local. Some of the Sisters go out to the city offices to copy data relating to births, marriages and new arrivals of Catholics. These statements are forwarded to the various parishes or to Catholic Associations dealing with such subjects. Thus every parish priest knows how to find Catholics who are not married according to Church law, children who have not been baptized and new parishioners who do not come to church, etc. It is stated that in many cases the statistics compiled by the Sisters have contained startling revelations which have amazed some priests who were optimistic concerning the spiritual life of their parishioners.

The local work of the Sisters is equally important, and consists mainly of family case work and parish visiting. The following is the record of the work done in 18 parishes during the year 1925: 3,000 office hours, 17,000 visits to families of which 6,300 were for spiritual help (marriages, baptisms, prevention of apostasy, etc.), 4,000 for charity, 1,400 for help to young people, 4,000 for completing the church statistics, etc. This is the record of the local groups. From the central headquarters notices were sent to parishes and Catholic associations concerning 10,000

births, 6,400 marriages registered in State bureaus, 750 immigrant families and 7,200 individual new residents. Religious burials were arranged through this channel in 7,900 cases.

It is stated that 100 Sisters are needed for Munich alone and that parishes outside the city are calling for Sisters also. However, on account of the nature of the work, only persons who have the proper education and experience as well as a desirable personality are admitted for training.

New French Mission Magazine For Young

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Lyons, July 23.—A new missionary review, to be known as "La Croisade Missionnaire" (The Missionary Crusade), has been started here. The first issue appeared about a week ago. The unusual feature about this review is that it is intended for young people and contains not only general articles but numerous tales of missionary expeditions. The review is a monthly and is profusely illustrated. Its foundation was recently decided upon at the tenth Congress of Salesian Cooperators at Turin.

Techy Fathers Build House For Guests

(By N. C. W. C. News Service)

Chicago, July 30.—Fathers of the Society of the Divine Word at Techy, Ill., a suburb of Chicago, have erected what is to be known as St. Mary's Guest House, as an adjunct to St. Mary's Mission Home. For years the number of visitors to Techy has increased so rapidly that it was almost impossible for the Fathers to care for their guests properly. The new building contains two dining rooms and twenty bedrooms.

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