

The Catholic Courier And Journal

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Friday, August 15, 1930.

DROUGHT

Do you remember the old song: "We never miss the water until the well runs dry?" It seems to apply just now. We are missing the water, and we did not miss it when God was dealing generously with us, sending us all we needed in our country even though on other lands there has been need of copious rains.

In the "Our Father," our Lord taught us to pray for our daily needs. There are some who explain the words: "Give us this day our daily bread," as applying to the needs of our souls, that is, the need of daily Communion. In that great Sacrament of His Body and Blood our Lord gives us the daily bread of Himself to nourish our souls. But it seems that His words go farther than the needs of the soul. God, who made us and who is all wise, knows our bodily needs. We did not make those needs. God made us with them, the need of food and drink, and clothing and warmth in winter, and other necessities. He knows all about it, for He planned us and gave us these requirements. Hence it seems to us that He wants us to pray for them, that we may have all that we need for the necessities of our bodies, which are the work of His Hands.

We are faced with trouble, for the land is going dry, not prohibitively dry, but agriculturally dry. The crops in half of our country need rain, and lots of rain, to save them and to provide food for us. God can provide and will provide, but perhaps He is awaiting some action from us. We must admit He has not much part in the lives of many. Some in our land do not believe in His existence, others say they do not believe and others who believe in Him never turn to Him with a prayer from year end to year end.

"We wonder if this drought has not been permitted by God to force His children to turn to Him, to look to Him for their bodily needs. Surely it should cause many prayers to be said. Many souls who have been selfish and thoughtless about their Creator, will remember Him who said to us: "I am the Lord thy God."

No one can know the mind of the Lord, but we do no harm when we try to fathom it a little bit. Let us pray for rain, for God to bless our farmers in their hard work, for God to bless us with what we need for these bodies He gave us to use while we are on this earth, journeying towards heaven.

SAVING NEBRASKA

The religious atmosphere of Nebraska is all "het up". Methodist bishops, in trying to save the State for Christianity, have made a bad mess of it. U. S. Senator George Norris is a candidate for reelection. He is outside of and above any party halo, being a complete halo in himself. A gentleman named Stebbins is his rival on the Republican ticket, while a lady named Jennie Callas, clinging to the tail of the Democratic mule, is also running, but with a speed befitting a lady.

Senator Norris, it will be remembered, fell from Methodical grace when he flipped to Alfred E. Smith in the late Presidential election. But Dr. Jennie, a National Democratic Committeewoman at the time, evened things up by flipping to Hoover. The natural supposition would be that Senator Norris would have the Methodist Church—which is boisterously and boastfully engaged in politics—standing on his neck. But no, Bishop McConnell, Methodist, forgetting the Senator's earlier flop, comes out with a letter declaring that "the Nation cannot afford to lose Norris."

So far, so good. But Bishop Leete, Methodist of Iowa-Nebraska, rushes into the arena with a letter, notifying all Methodists in his domain that Stebbins and Dr. Jennie are "strongly engaged" by Prohibition officials and Christians and habergastination. The result of the Nebraska Anti-Prohibition fight, Dr. Swallow, a noted prohibitionist, just died.

Things That Endure

Honor and truth and marshood— These are the things that stand, Though the sneer and jibe of the cynic tribe Are loud through the width of the land. The scoffer may lord it an hour on earth, And a lie may live for a day, But truth and honor and manly worth Are things that endure alway.

Courage and toll and service, Old, yet forever new— These are the rocks that abide the shocks And hold through the storm, flat-tire, Fad and folly, the whims of an hour, May bicker and rant and shrill; But the living granite of truth will tower, Long after their rage is still.

Labor and love and virtue— Time does not dim their glow; Though the smart may say, in their languid way, "Oh, we've outgrown all that you know!"

But a lie, whatever the guise it wears, Is the lie it was of yore, And a truth that has lasted a million years Is good for a million more! —"Optimist" in Freeman's Journal, Australia.

Saloon League endeavored to put out the conflagration by declaring that the letter of Bishop Leete was private and should not have been published, because Bishop Leete had previously given his episcopal blessing to Senator Norris's aid ideals. This explanation added only to the blaze. The text for next Sunday's sermons in Nebraska's M. E. pulpits, we understand, will be from St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians: IX:24:

"Know you not that they that run in the race, all run indeed, but one receiveth the prize."

OUR METROPOLITAN STAGE

The Catholic Theater Movement of New York City, sponsored by His Eminence Cardinal Hayes, and with that capable and vigorous priest, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Michael J. Lavelle, rector of St. Patrick's Cathedral, as its active director, has launched a determined attack upon evil and obscene plays in New York City.

The depth of degradation to which the metropolitan stage has sunk may be judged by the fact that the Catholic Theater Movement publishes at regular intervals a "White List" of plays for the guidance of persons who love what is good and wholesome in the dramatic world, and that on the latest issue of this bulletin only two New York plays are regarded worthy of mention. These plays are "The First Mrs. Fraser" and "The Green Pastures." All other stage productions in New York City are contaminated with moral filth or obscenity, or both. This is an almost unbelievable condition of affairs. No wonder Msgr. Lavelle declares:

"The stage in New York has sunk so low this summer that it is an outrage of public decency and the dishonor of America's finest, noblest and most hospitable city."

These are strong words. No mincing of adjectives. No pussyfooting. No holding back, for fear of hurting the feelings of influential dramatic producers.

Two current productions, it seems, brought to a head this vigorous action by the Catholic Theater Movement—"Lysistrata," "a classic of unabashed pagan mockery, as audacious an assault upon public decency as has ever been perpetrated on our stage"; and Earl Carroll's "Vantities," "speciously claiming to be artistic, but which, in the words of a prominent critic, is meant to be 'nude and leering, and close to the mood of the gutter.'"

The necessity for the action by the Catholic Theater Movement may best be judged by the fact that the heartiest kind of commendation and the warmest words of encouragement and approval are being heard on all sides. Bishop Manning, the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of New York, hastened to commend Cardinal Hayes for the attack made under his direction upon the indecency of the stage. So did Rabbi Wise, outstanding Jewish rabbi of the city, who was especially warm in his approval.

"Lysistrata" and the "Vantities" are, as Msgr. Lavelle says, "the logical outcome of tendencies which have grown stronger year by year."

This filth, then, is no sudden determination to try something radically new. But it is a building up, stone by stone and brick by brick, of the temple of indecency, the unhallowed home of obscenity parading in pitiful imitation of art. The producers, as Msgr. Lavelle says, seem to be "trying to test how far commercialized obscenity and degeneracy on the stage will be tolerated." It is high time to show them that it will not be tolerated at all when it is brought face to face with the right kind of men and the right kind of ideals.

The Catholic Theater Movement will be watched with hope and pride and joy by all playgoers of decent instincts, and there will be many a prayer said that it will succeed, both for the good of the stage itself and for the good of humanity.

A pastor in Kansas paid for his church by keeping bees. If the Sunday collection wasn't a good one, he had the sexton kick the bee hive just as the congregation was going home.

Names mean nothing. Dr. Swallow, a noted prohibitionist, just died.

Suppose You Go --

to Washington to see the President, and he refers you to his secretary. You may not like it, but you have no recourse. So with confession of sins to a priest. We might prefer to go direct to God Himself, but He has referred us to His Church (John 20-23) and whether we like it or not, that's just what we have to do. There is no room for discussion. Our likes and dislikes were not considered at all.

THE BAROCYCLONOMETR, WHICH PREDICTS TYPHOONS, WAS INVENTED BY FATHER ALGUE, A CATHOLIC PRIEST, WHO SAVED DEWEY'S FLEET AT MANILA

CATHOLICITY IN BOSTON

The forty-ninth annual convention of the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus will be opened in the city of Boston, Mass., on Sunday, August 17th, and it will be brought to a conclusion on the following Thursday.

The Knights and their friends, we may be sure, will receive a welcome that will be traditional in its cordiality and unforgettable in its hospitality. One hundred and fifty years ago they would have received no such welcome. They would have been chased out of the community with vigor, venom and possibly with pitchforks.

A glance at the Catholicity of the city of Boston at this time will be interesting. The Diocese of Boston was created in 1808. It covered all of New England. Territory was one of the most generous gifts received by the early American bishops. There are now eight prosperous and progressive Dioceses in the same territory. In 1808 the Catholic population of New England was counted by hundreds. Now it is counted by millions. There are more than one million in the Archdiocese of Boston, and approximately four millions in all New England.

History works strange problems. When Cromwell put his "curse" upon Ireland—the curse of fire, sword, torture rack, gibbet and exile—he shipped thousands of men and women to the Barbadoes and sold them as slaves to the negroes. That, he thought, would put an end to the Irish problem. But the Irish were always noted for their ingenuity, and it wasn't long many of these exiles were over in America, injecting vim, vigor and a detestation of England into the blood of the country. One of those who escaped from the Barbadoes was Ann Glover. Cotton Mather, who was galled mentally something like many of the prohibition cranks of the present day, called her "a scandalous old Irish woman, very poor, a Roman Catholic, and obstinate in her idolatry." Which was an eloquent way, though he didn't know it, of praising her loyalty to her Church and her God.

Robert Calef, a Boston merchant who mixed bigotry with his beans, and a touch of sympathy with both, wrote of her: "Goody Glover was a despised, crazy, poor old woman, an Irish Catholic who was tried for 'affecting' the Goodwin children. Her behaviour at her trial was like that of one distracted. She did her cruel. The proof against her was wholly deficient. The jury brought her guilty. She was hung. She died a Catholic."

Goody Glover, in other words, was a victim of the "religious liberty" many people say the Puritans brought to Boston. Her fate was and is a vivid example of what they thought of Catholicity in Boston in the year 1688. In 1689 the boast was made in the "Andros Papers", which are still preserved, that "there is not a single Papist in all New England. Poor Goody Glover was quietly at rest in her grave at that time."

In 1756 Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts refused to permit a priest to visit some two thousand exiled Acadians who had drifted down into his State from their beloved native land, compatriots and kin of Evangeline. "The people would, upon no terms," the Governor wrote, "have consented to the public exercise of religious worship by Roman Catholic priests." Sixteen years later the "Boston Town Records," clamoring for religious liberty for everybody but Roman Catholics, said the "Catholics were subversive of society." The writer probably meant they would rather be hung than give up their Faith.

A favorite sport in Boston on November fifth of each year was to hold a procession with a statue of the Pope and of the Devil sitting side by side. The people mocked, giped and threw missiles at the two figures. An attempt was made to hold this procession in 1775, when General Washington was organizing the Patriot army to fight for American liberty. He issued a stern order against the proposed procession and said he could not "help expressing his surprise that there should be officers and soldiers in this army so void of common sense."

Better days came with the Revolution. Blood, Catholic and Protestant, flowed in common on the battlefields, and everywhere the Irish were in the van, leading, fighting, dying, to make sure "the curse of Cromwell" would not be visited upon America.

Bishop Carroll visited Boston in 1791. That "arch traitor," as England called him, John Hancock, was Governor of the State. He attended Mass as a mark of respect to this great patriotic Bishop and outstanding American. Bishop Carroll afterwards wrote of his visit: "It is wonderful to tell what great civilities have been done to me in this town, where a few years ago a Popish priest was thought to be the greatest monster in the Creation." Even then there were scarcely more than one hundred Catholics in Boston.

In 1808 a brick church, St. Patrick's, was built in Boston. The glory of a new day was beautifully exemplified by the fact that John Adams, President of the United States, organized a committee of Protestants and collected \$11,000 for the church. A famous Protestant architect, Charles Bulfinch, designer of the Capitol at Washington, drew plans for the church and donated his services. From that day to this, good will, good feeling, good fellowship, confidence and trust have prevailed, as they always should, in Boston. The old hatreds were gone.

Now the Knights of Columbus and their friends will find a city amazingly Catholic. There are more priests in Boston than there were Catholics in all of New England one hundred and fifty years ago; about eleven hundred, and nearly four thousand Sisters; nearly four hundred churches and chapels in the Archdiocese, about two hundred Catholic schools and approximately one hundred thousand children receiving Catholic education. Goody Glover surely smiles down from Heaven upon this wonderful transformation. If she should come back now she would be hailed as a queen. From the humble grave where sleeps this poor victim of a terrible tyranny and an incomprehensible intolerance there has grown a mighty oak of Catholicity. Its roots are in her heart.

CONVICING DRAMATIC PRODUCERS

Convicting dramatic producers who stage indecent plays seems to be a well-nigh hopeless task. The Earl Carroll case in New York City is a case in point. Arrested some days ago with three members of his company, and with sworn testimony that a young woman danced completely in the nude, protected only by a fan, before an audience that filled the theater to capacity, he and his players were nevertheless set free by the Grand Jury. The defendants complained the dance of the young woman was merely an "artistic" one.

When the defendants were informed of the Grand Jury's decision, they shook hands, kissed, laughed, commended the jurors, and voiced gratitude for their "vindication." In other words, they showed a sporting spirit towards a jury which showed a sporting spirit towards them. The whole proceeding, from their point of view, apparently lacked serious foundation.

The dismissal of this case, in the face of the recently launched attack by the Catholic Theater Movement upon indecent plays, may result in a vigorous uprising of public opinion in favor of decency. Certainly the action of the Grand Jury which dismissed the case cannot be considered as sympathetic with any sincere effort to sweep the dirt out of the drama.

ABOUT MARRIAGE

One of the popular weekly magazines of the day, boasting a circulation of more than two million copies, in an editorial on "Girls and Their Great-Grandmothers," looks at marriage with the eyes of a sick fish, as the following paragraph well indicates:

"Then, too, the lighter marriage tie means that the presence or absence of marriage is more lightly regarded. With divorce easily obtained through a little mental brutality or a little perjury, marriage doesn't hold the awesome respect it used to. And undoubtedly the spread of a knowledge of birth control has had its effect. Whether these things are on the whole good or bad is hard to tell. But we don't believe there are many women nowadays who would like to have their sex returned to the status of 1830."

There is an almost boastful tone in this editorial in a broadly-expressed intimation that women are privileged to go morally wrong these days without being discarded from society. The pitiful part of it is that this magazine is not stating an untruth about the marriage situation, as far as the views of the world are concerned. Co-education, the promiscuous mingling of the sexes in work and in business, the gradual lowering of moral barriers, due chiefly to the decadence of religion in the hearts of millions of men and women, all have had their effect on marriage, as well as on morality.

WAYSIDE WHEAT

By the Managing Editor

One of the last letters written by the late Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee was to the editor of the Catholic Daily Tribune, of Dubuque, Iowa, in regard to a so-called movement to demonstrate the patriotism of Catholic people, and their loyalty to America. "Hit it, and hit it hard," the Archbishop wrote. "Catholic citizens are full fledged citizens and need not apologize to any other group of citizens. The thing is ridiculous, and an attempt on the pocketbook of our people who need their money in these hard times more than monumental patriotic displays."

Common-sense patriotism is the best kind of patriotism, and the beloved Archbishop had that in a large degree.

"President Hoover Stays Home to Help in the Drought," a newspaper headline tells us. That's why many Americans leave home and go to Canada.

The Catholic Church, it can be truthfully said, is the only barrier that protects the world to-day from a frightful deluge of immorality and that keeps the marriage tie sacred and binding. The old Church has not forgotten the voice of St. Paul: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and delivered himself up for it; nor has it forgotten that, by the law of God, the bonds uniting husband and wife can be severed only by death—for "what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder."

Cynicism towards marriage, and indeed in a large measure towards morality, can be found everywhere in the world except in the Church. It takes root frequently in the public high school, and deeply in the secular college, and poisons what should be one of the most beautiful and sacred experiences of life. Many of the churches which clamor so blatantly for the eighteenth amendment never lift their voices for the sacredness of marriage, or for the preservation of the marriage bond. We need not be shocked, therefore, when cynical magazines reflect the cynicism of the age and paint for us a picture that irreligion has fashioned.

OBERAMMERGAU— A GREAT INFLUENCE

It is good to read these days of the steadily increasing throngs of people flocking to Oberammergau to see the Passion Play. They go from all parts of the world. They are of all religions and all races. They go with respectful and even reverent spirit. The soul of the play grips their souls, and they feel, many of them, as if they were standing in the shadow of Gethsemane and of Calvary.

Premier MacDonald of England and a numerous party of friends were among recent patrons of the play. They were accorded a welcome that was most hospitable. They were devout spectators. The play, apparently, made a deep impression upon them.

This is true of practically all who see the play. They carry away with them a deep and helpful realization of the religious spirit, of the Christian spirit, of the love and sufferings of Jesus Christ. Oberammergau, surely, is exerting a great influence upon many thousands of people.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GOD

Many of our good non-Catholic friends are worried over the disappearance of God from the lives of millions of American people. Dr. William Lyon Phelps, of Yale University, a non-Catholic, and one of the foremost of American critics, has some pertinent comments to make on this subject in the August issue of Scribner's magazine. A generous portion of this article is published in this issue of The Courier & Journal.

Dr. Phelps does not mince matters. He deplores the tendency in Protestant circles to minimize the divine origin of Jesus Christ. If Christ was not divine, he says, we might as well close our churches and sing hymns to Emerson, Socrates and Confucius. All the lamentation about people staying away from church applies only to Protestant churches, Dr. Phelps says, for the Catholics need no sympathy in this matter. He says he has never seen a Catholic Church that was not crowded, and that the number of Catholic churches keep increasing all the while. For instance, when he was a boy, he says, there were three Catholic churches in New Haven, his home city, and now there are thirty.

He likes many things about the Catholic Church; for instance, its uncompromising faith; its firm belief in the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ, and because the Church always puts religion first. "It is refreshing," he says, "to enter a Catholic Church and breathe the atmosphere of Faith."

This article should do a lot of good for sincere non-Catholics, for Dr. Phelps has put his finger right upon the sore spot of their spiritual sufferings. They cannot, he tells them, ignore the divinity of Christ and expect their people to believe in Christ; they cannot on empty moral subjects, and expect their people to enthuse over religion. The real difficulty with Protestantism to-day, Dr. Phelps says, is not in the pew, but in the pulpit.