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A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

It is a privilege and pleasure for the management and employes of The Catholic Courier & Journal to wish all subscribers and readers, and all of their loved ones, a happy and blessed Christmas. Long centuries ago, on the hills of Bethlehem of Judea, the first Christmas carol was sung and the first Christmas wish extended. But not by human lips, or the cold medium of printed lines. Angelic voices sang "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," and wished peace on earth to men of good will.

This is a beautiful wish—peace on earth to men of good will. No quarrels or bickerings, no sins or crimes, no grievances or discords, no wars or horrors of wars, but peace, a beautiful gift from God. Humbly and reverently we repeat that wish, with the hope, prayerfully expressed that every reader or friend of this paper may have happiness in his or her home on Christmas day—happiness beautified by the peace and love of God.

We are grateful to all our readers for their interest and friendship, and grateful to all our advertisers for their patronage and support. To each and every one of these we wish, from our hearts, the supreme happiness of a truly Christian Christmas. May the happiness of this day overflow all hearts and flood advancing days of the new year with sunshine, love and contentment.

DEMOCRACY OF THE CHURCH

The four-hundredth anniversary of the appearance of the Blessed Virgin to an humble Indian at Guadalupe, Mexico, was celebrated recently. Nearly one million people are estimated to have visited the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe during this celebration. Mexico, despite the dark clouds of persecution upon her horizon, had one of the most impressive and amazing religious spectacles in her entire history. Pilgrims from all over Mexico, from all countries in South America, and many places in the United States flocked to the shrine. A splendid omen was the fact that wholehearted co-operation was given to the Church authorities by Government officials, and that no untoward incident happened during the jubilee.

Hundreds of columns of newspaper space were given to the jubilee services by the great dailies in this country, and special editions were issued by many dailies in Mexico. One of the things commented upon in many American papers was the democracy of the crowds—which means the democracy of the Church—the meeting and mingling of the very rich and the very poor on a common level in the shrine. A beautifully written and truly sympathetic article by Carleton Beals of Mexico City, in a recent issue of the magazine section of the New York Sunday Times, is illustrative of the impression made upon writers by the democracy of the pilgrims. The article says:

"That early morning Mass is an awe-inspiring sight, with its thousands of candles lighting up the dim dark green and gold interior. The huge Corinthian piers rise into shadows, but as Mass proceeds, and the light of day gradually pierces the wheel windows and the grotto-circled brown lantern of the cupola, the silver gates and balustrades and the massive chains of the candelabra glisten; until finally the bronze wall legends and the Colonial paintings grow faintly visible.

"The whole world attends, rich and poor, top-hat and bob-tail, Indian and white. The latest model Eugenie hat is side by side with a blue rebozo mantling soft brown skin faces. Silks scrape calico. High French heels and bare feet peek out from the skirts of worshipers, kneeling together before the white portal of the high altar with its tall columns of Scottish granite."

From this shrine one can look down upon Mexico City, where so many harsh laws against the Church were enacted; where ancient and historic buildings tower above the flat roofs of thousands of shops and homes, and where the enormous towers of the largest church edifice in the Western Hemisphere pierce the sky. The Cathedral of Mexico City, opened now, but closed for long while persecution raged, but could not kill the Church. The great jubilee at this shrine—the most impressive religious ceremonies ever held in Mexico—will leave, we believe, an influence for lasting good upon the country and its people. The Virgin of Guadalupe made beautiful roses grow upon barren rocks four hundred years ago. Perhaps, too, she will deign to bring showers of faith blossom in the souls in barren souls, and bring to Mexico peace, happiness and freedom of religion.

SECRETARY WILBUR TALKS OUT

President Hoover's Advisory Committee on Education and President Hoover himself, it is understood, have expressed themselves as not in accord with the proposal for a Federal commissioner of education in the President's Cabinet. The Committee recommended the creation of such a cabinet office, to have full control of all Federal education matters, but not to interfere with rights of the states. The recommendation was strongly opposed by Catholic members of the Committee, and by Negro members, who have been quite active in protest, and never America—for the American people are not yet prepared to turn over their schools to a political bureaucracy at Washington, to be made the football of partisan politics at every biennial election.

More than a year ago Secretary Wilbur made stern criticism of a similar proposition. He has not changed his views. In his annual report, just made public at Washington, he hits the Cabinet Educational Commissioner proposition with a concentrated fire. He says:

"Our experience with centralized supervision of education for the Indians should warn the American people away from centralized control of their own education from Washington. Prejudice, bad advice, or lack of brains, may temporarily flood any educational enterprise; but a ship with 48 compartments is hard to sink.

"The policies outlined by the committee, emphasizing as they do the necessity for preserving the American theory of decentralization, are an excellent chart. The recommendation that they be furthered by creation of a Federal department of education deserves further study. My experience with Federal bureaus and departments does not encourage the belief that, once created, decentralization becomes their goal."

In other words, a Federal Commissioner of Education will gradually absorb political power, influence and patronage, and will thus become a menace to unimpaired State control of schools. Further, more Secretary Wilbur says:

"The political domination of education made by a remote central government, managed by administrative officers far removed from local conditions and sympathies, has always led to the evils of bureaucratic unresponsiveness to local and to changing needs, to bureaucratic standardization, red tape, and delay, and to official insensitiveness to the criticism of far-distant parents and citizens. Education is of too intimate concern to the American parents to be brought under a far removed civil administration which tends toward relative inflexibility.

"Partisan or class propaganda bringing itself to bear upon mature citizens in legislation is a serious enough difficulty for a democracy. Once it is allowed to operate on the plastic and uncritical minds of youth at school, democracy faces a catastrophe. A decentralized system of management and control of school is the one absolute reliable antidote to the easy capture of schools by the propagandists of an economic, social, or political cult."

The existing Federal Education Bureau at Washington is in Secretary Wilbur's department. This gives his words greatly added weight. He knows the touch of the poisoned hand of partisan politics in the administration of this Bureau, and he raises a warning voice, vibrant with strength, against any movement that will bring the schools of our States under control, directly or indirectly, of any bureau at Washington, cabinet officer or otherwise. It is well for the American people to give stern heed to this, for there are powerful influences at work to place control of all schools in the hands of a Federal bureau of any kind in Washington.

THE INN

Now Christmas is the poor man's feast,
and I would ready the table;
And I would make a house for him as
finely as I am able;
A little house of poverty, but builded well
and sure,
A little house so comely, for all that it be
poor.
It will bring a holier beauty to my
thoughts within that place
Than the world's store of gold could give
of its treasuries of grace.

Behold, I have built for Poverty that
Riches may abide
Pray now I greet all worthily the guests
of Christmas tide:
O my heart be an inn today for housing
of the Lord.
His crossing of the threshold my welcome's sweet reward
Christ's Mass be in that humble inn and
shall it indeed
Where I would kiss a cradle son, with
Mary for his Maid

—P. J. O'Connor Duffy
in The Liturgical Bells

The Peace of Christ

"The Pope wishes the peace of Christ, and not merely a sentimental pacificism, confused and not exempt from peril. But he cannot denounce, nor has he ever thought of denouncing, this or that nation which, confronted by real menaces or perils, provides for its material security. At the same time he, Vicar of Christ and sole moderator of consciences, repeats clearly, and to all people, that true security never can exist until there exists the true wish for peace that is, until justice and charity reign."—The "Osservatore Romano," semi-official Vatican newspaper.

THE LAW AND OBSCENE BOOKS

Not all people know, there is a law against the sending of advertising of obscene books through the mails. But there is a rigid law, and the postal authorities are glad to enforce it if proper complaint is made to them. This was emphasized in a striking way in New York Court by the case which Alfred Nussbaum, aged twenty-five years, and his brother, Eugene, aged twenty, were convicted of violating this law. Both face a maximum sentence of seventeen years in prison, though the jury recommended mercy for the younger brother.

For the profits he made out of the business, the older brother was willing to debauch the morals of his younger brother, and a large number of others, and the police found in Nussbaum's establishment, disguised under the cover name of "The Science Guide," a comprehensive list of books, "the largest assortment of obscene literature ever found in this district," all of the publications lewd and licentious. A three year sentence in the penitentiary is being sought in several states.

The partners in this nefarious enterprise had original ideas. They sent circulars to the students of the universities of their books, to professors, Protestant clergymen and college professors, as well as to many others. The librarian of the town's state library turned them down at once by making a complaint to the authorities.

The successful prosecution of a few cases like this will bring mixed results in the work of checking circulation of obscene literature. It is to be hoped that honest publishers will be encouraged, and the postal authorities deserve credit for their handling of this case.

GUIDE FOR DIVORCE

We have guides for deer hunting, guides for fishing, guides for growing corn, guides for foreign travel, guides for [illegible], and now we have a guide for divorce. It is written by a lady in Philadelphia. Lamentation over the chaos of our divorce laws fills the opening chapters. Not lamentation over the evils of immorality of divorce, but over the fact that, with existing laws, a man chasing a divorce is somewhat like a dog chasing a flea—you have it one minute, and in the next State it is gone.

This makes our divorce system to such an extent that it is possible for a man to be considered married under the laws in one State, divorced in another and a bigamist in a third, the lady explains.

The book offers information to the wife or husband contemplating a divorce, on the chances for success, the proper and most advisable place to sue, the approximate costs of proceeding and the variety and effect of decrees obtained at different places. The volume discusses alimony, grounds for divorce in different States and the problem of divorce in foreign countries. A regrettable oversight is the lack of information about what to do with children, if any—whether to drown them in the bathtub or take them to the dog pound.

A healthy divorce may be obtained in New York State for a minimum cost of $225, not including permanent waves or other fixtures. Gin parties in celebration of the event cost much more than the divorce. Mississippi, noted for its floods, evangelists and moonshiners, offers the most economical divorce products in America—Six dollars court costs, plus twenty-five dollars for the lawyer who pleads and weeps for you with a sort of unctious spiritual harmony. Any man or woman longing for a divorce should be able to save thirty-one dollars and hitch-hike to and from Mississippi.

French and Mexican divorces are welcomed in New York State, but some western states prefer toad stools, grizzly bears and cyclones. This is most embarrassing to a divorce who may be a bride in New York, and a bigamist in Kalamazoo. However, the author of this divorce guide expresses the girlish hope, properly adorned with the rouge of rhetoric, that the divorce laws may soon be ironed out as smoothly as the bosom of a Sunday shirt. Until that happy day comes we must live in chaos, get our divorces as best we may, and not cross boundary lines of states, until we have first read the game laws.

A GHOST FOR FOOTBALL CAPTAIN

Fordham University, with one of the finest football teams in America, will have a ghost for captain of its team next year. By unanimous vote the Fordham players recently elected Cornelius Murphy honorary captain of the 1932 team. Cornelius Murphy will give no instructions, map out no plays, deliver no commands to his teammates. Cornelius Murphy is dead. Fatally hurt in the final game of the season, Dead with Brecknell, his fine young life ended a soldier, noble and truly Christian, on that fateful line between Time and Eternity.

It had been planned to elect Cornelius Murphy captain of the 1932 football team of Fordham. His comrades, with that thought in mind, rose to glorious heights when they met the other day to select a captain. Dead he was not to them. Lifeless, no! But from his grave, where Nature wept over her best-beloved, he walked, head-erect, into their midst; aye, into their hearts. Every man on that team, sad because of his physical absence, welcomed his spiritual presence, elected him their captain, and next year will race the fields and fight football battles with his magic spirit leading the way, inspiring the conflict, showing them the course to supreme victory.

Beautiful and exalted is this tribute to Cornelius Murphy. He will not fail them now. He shows now how to cross the hardest goal of all—Death!

CURRENT COMMENT

HOW TO BUY A CHAIR

When grandfather wished to buy a chair, he lighted his pipe and pondered. Until he picked out the chair he wanted—easy chair, rocking chair, kitchen chair, so through the catalogue. Then he decided what he could pay for a chair. These knotty questions answered, he sallied forth to buy him a chair.

But that was in the days when most Americans could decide for themselves when to walk in the rain, and when to come in out of the wet. To-day, all these matters can be referred to the Federal Government. On receipt of twenty cents, the Superintendent of Documents will mail you a booklet which is the result of the pooled efforts of the most gigantic intellects in Washington. It is entitled, "Furniture: Its Selection and Use." You will also receive a handbill, which pictures Uncle Sam holding out a chair. "Let Uncle Sam Help You When You Select Your Furniture," is his tearful appeal. For a few extra pennies, the Federal Government will enclose an enlightening brochure which will teach the wife of your bosom how to wash Qunior's milk bottle.

The number of the unemployed now exceeds 7,000,000. It is unreasonable, however, to expect the Government to deal with this disaster, as long as problems so weighty as kitchen furniture and milk bottles must be studied by its experts.—America.

When You Make Your Will

Always, in every Diocese, there are churches and institutions which have heavy financial burdens, and whose work is handicapped by these burdens. When you make your will, the best way in the world to help these needy ones is to insert a paragraph something like this in the will:

"I give and bequeath to the Rt. Rev. John Francis O'Hern, D.D., Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Rochester, N. Y., or his successor or successors in office, the sum of $_____, to be used at his or their discretion for the work or the institutions of the Diocese."

If you are interested in some particular church, charity or institution a clause like this may be added: "I am interested particularly in _____ Bequests, large or small, are a great blessing to religion, and it is highly edifying to read of them in any will. No Catholic will should be without one or more such bequests.

WAYSIDE WHEAT

By the Managing Editor

The Republicans are fighting over Moses. Couldn't the Democrats take a swing at Pontius Pilate?

A "scientist" at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C., advances the theory that human life originated in "warm puddles" of water after the world's first rain. We suggest that this scientist sit down by a warm puddle of water some day and remain these until a human being, perfectly formed, emerges from the puddle.

There is no "cead mile failthe" in Ireland for the Irish World, founded long ago in New York by Patrick Ford, and for generations the American beacon light to thousands of Irish immigrants. A recent edition of that paper was declared seditious and suppressed in Ireland. It criticized the Government severely for legislation to prevent sedition and Communism. We recollect the good old days when Patrick Ford advocated blowing the King's throne, crown and whiskers into the river Thames with dynamite. Every edition of the Irish World steamed up the heart like a geyser. But when it attacks the Irish government it gets a wallop in the solar plexus—its circulation.

What has become of all the Irish and German athletes who used to push the world off its axis almost a few years ago? The line-up of many football teams read like a regimental roster of the Czecho-Slovakian army. But there's worse. In looking over the fight results in a daily paper the other evening, to see if any blood was shed any place outside of Manchuria and peace meetings, we find names that never came from Cork or Berlin: Frank Nekolny, Andy Savjola, Anatol Koser, Vidal Gregorio, Paolo Villa, Canto Roblete, Mario Campos. Among the wrestlers we find: George Kotsonaros, George Zaharias, Rudy Dusek, Jim Clinkstock, Gino Garibaldi, Dick Shikat, Renato Gardini, George Zarynoff, Darna Osteopovich. One hundred years from now a man named Pat O'Brien is liable to be in a cage among the curiosities at a side show.

Patrick J. Crowley, who will retire from the presidency of the New York Central Railroad on January first, wrote a letter of appreciation and good wishes to all employes of the road the other day. Son of poor Irish parents, Patrick E. Crowley got a job as a messenger with the Erie Railroad at the Cattaraugus, N. Y., station fifty-three years ago. By diligence, industry, perseverance, and by learning every detail of his work perfectly, he won promotion steadily until he became president several years ago of one of the greatest railroad systems in the world. Each year, on Memorial Day, he has come back to his little home village in Western New York to pray at the graves of his father and mother, and to give public expression of the Faith they taught him. He is a cousin of Father Burke, pastor of the Catholic Church at Holley, N. Y. Years ago he was quite active in railroad circles, and many a Catholic employe was penalized for his Faith. There is a story told of Mr. Crowley, when he was division superintendent of the M. & M. Railroad, which runs from Utica to Montreal, that a trainman named Murphy was discharged, after years of service, by a boss who was noted for his enmity to the Irish. The story has it that Mr. Crowley sent for the boss and asked: "Why did you discharge Murphy?" He received a stammering, incoherent explanation. "You didn't fire him because his name is Murphy, did you?" Mr. Crowley asked. He received a prompt denial from a badly flushed face: "No, sir, I didn't." "Well, put him back to work because his name is Murphy," said Mr. Crowley, with emphasis. The incident helped put a quick end to that kind of business on the road. Mr. Crowley was an exacting taskmaster with the men. He knew the work from the ground up, and he knew what should be done. But he was always fair and square with them, and many a time stuck solidly by them in wage and other disputes, when it would have been to his interests to vote with the other officials. He was one of the old school, and there are few like him left in action in America.

WHAT'S WRONG CALIFORNIA?

In the Catholic schools in California, according to the Official Catholic Directory of 1931, are 84,224 students of all grades. Of these, 48,274 are in the diocese of Los Angeles-San Diego. The cost of educating a public school pupil in the city of Los Angeles, according to the World Almanac for 1931, is $134.92 per year. At this rate the Church in California saves to the public school fund each year upwards of eleven million dollars, to say nothing of the capital saving on cost of school property—site, building, equipment, etc., required for the educational care of 84,224 students. Yet the state of California taxes Catholic school property, and thus makes the Catholics of that state actually pay for the privilege of saving upwards of eleven million dollars annually to the public school fund. We do not know the explanation for this extraordinary state of affairs, but California is the only state in the union where such a thing is done.—Louisville Catholic Record.