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The CATHOLIC COURIER has my most enthusiastic approval. A diocesan newspaper has become an essential part of the program of Catholic action in every diocese. The CATHOLIC COURIER should be found in every Catholic home in this diocese. I find it hard to understand how any Catholic can be so indifferent as to what is transpiring in his church throughout the world as to rely upon unreliable sources of information or even to seek no information whatever. Let us have a brief slogan "The CATHOLIC COURIER in every Catholic home."

✠ JAMES E. KEARNEY, Bishop of Rochester.

No Room For Them

There was no room for Jesus; Mary, and Joseph in the inn. They had to be content with the accommodations of a poor wayside stable. There was room for them there.

For 1900 years the recurring birthday of the Saviour has found like conditions awaiting Him. In too many places there has been no room for Him, no room for Joseph and Mary. But there has been room for them in an ever increasing number of places throughout the world.

No room for them! No room for the purity of Mary's Divine Motherhood: no room for the dignity of Joseph's foster fatherhood: no room for the Word of God made flesh! The inn of Bethlehem is a striking figure of the nations and cities and homes that are still unhospitable to the Holy Family. It is also a figure of the men and women, in high station and low, who have no room for the Holy Family in their hearts.

What a different world it would be if Christ were permitted to have a part in the deliberations of national leaders! Justice and charity scheming that make no account of them, and love of mankind, to supplant the sinister Wisdom that is founded on God's way and not on man's. The desire to minister to men of all nations those things that are their right, to take no man's and no nation's belongings, to find a way of life that will enable all to enjoy the peace and prosperity that God would bless them with. An abhorrence of all that would bring on men the visitation of ruin and death and desolation, of famine and disease. This is the boon that the Holy Father so sincerely hopes for, so fervently prays for, so urgently recommends to the people and rulers of the nations. If men would only receive Jesus Christ into their lives and into their councils! The example of the greatest Ruler should be followed by the lesser Rulers of men. The Vicar of Christ rules in spiritual matters over his subjects in every nation under heaven, and rules only for the greatest good of the greatest number. To those national leaders who follow his example, who truly respect the heavy responsibility that is theirs, who labor as servants of God to bless their people and the people of other nations, Christ will gladly come. He will find room in their hearts.

Our homes and our hearts should be open for Christ's coming at Christmas. He comes poor, lonely, humble. But He brings with Him riches above any earth can offer, companionship worthy of men destined for heaven, dignity and majesty in keeping with His high office.

Our homes and our hearts can not be open for Christ's coming, unless they are open likewise for Mary and Joseph. There must be that ready habit of loyalty to God, of fidelity to duty, of abiding faith, that Joseph will recognize as his sign of welcome. There must be in our hearts and homes that chaste love of God, that purity in thought and world and act, that acceptance of the better things, that will be to Mary her token of welcome.

May Christmas of 1940 find us ready to receive Christ gladly at His coming! All else must give way to Him. He came to His own 1900 years ago, and His own received Him not. May men and the leaders of men soon learn that without Him they can do nothing, with Him they can do all things! To as many as received Him, He has down the years given them the power to be made the sons of God. When we receive again at Christmas Our Prince of Peace, let our first prayer be for peace for this unhappy world.

Contamination

Prompt and earnest was the word of warning that went out when it was discovered that the water supply of Rochester had been contaminated. A serious danger threatened all the patrons of the Hemlock system. All the [illegible] to furnish the people with a dependable [illegible] pure supply of water had for the [illegible] gone for naught. The unclean water [illegible] had been sent through the [illegible] carrying danger of typhoid [illegible] to all using these mains, [illegible] drinking water from this source, [illegible] means of making it safe. Chlorine [illegible] added to all water going [illegible] but has taken many days before [illegible] could be sure it has reached [illegible] of the system in quantities [illegible]

[illegible] did their duty well in [illegible] the measures needed to [illegible] against the polluted water. [illegible] of the Water Superintendent was warranted by the findings of the investigators, is a question on which thoughtful citizens will suspend judgment until they can see some connection between what has happened and any wilful neglect of duty or incompetence on his part. Citizens are entitled to know the facts, and will get no comfort out of the discharge of the Superintendent unless the facts show him responsible for the contamination of our water supply. The State has also sent in its medical officers to work with the city on removing the contamination, and restoring the water system to safe use.

What the city and the State are doing to avert bodily harm from the people, is being done by our societies and civic organizations to protect them from harm to their souls. Contamination of our literature is an ever present danger, pollution of our amusement centers can happen at any time.

The Legion for Decent Literature needs your help in keeping the public away from stores that convey to our people immoral and filthy and crime-approving publications. The Legion of Decency keeps clean the channels of the movie industry, that no contamination may enter into the souls and minds of our people through them. But your help is needed to make these organizations effective. Pass the warning along! Guard your little ones against contamination of the soul with a vigilance like to that with which you warned and protected them against drinking contaminated water.

All Flesh Shall See the Salvation of God

The Church considers Advent not only as a preparation for the anniversary of Christ's birth, but also as a making ready for a new acceptance of His whole life and mission on earth. Just as the people of old and their prophets and leaders looked forward not merely to the coming of the Messiah, but to His entire career as a Redeemer of men, so today the Church would have her children give special thought during Advent to all that the coming of Christ has meant to the world.

Thus, the Gospel for the 1st Sunday of Advent is Christ's own foretelling of His second coming at the end of the world, when the complete accomplishment of His career shall be manifest in the fact that the Kingdom of God is at hand. The remaining three Sundays bring before us St. John the Baptist actively preaching to his hearers the need of immediate preparation for Christ's appearance as their Redeemer: "Do penance, for the Kingdom of God is at hand."

Bring back Christ's answer to John's query, "Art Thou He that art to come?" That answer speaks of the actual exercise of the Redeemer's mission: "The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Works of mercy that are the very signs to the people of His divine power and nature, go along with His preaching of the Gospel to the poor. The priests and levites from Jerusalem ask John directly who he is and what his mission, and receive the answer that he is the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord." He is not the Christ, not worthy even to lose the latchet of His shoe: He is the precursor of Christ, preparing the way for His public preaching and His institution of the Church. The Fourth Sunday's Gospel repeats John's characterization of himself as the voice in the wilderness urging the people to prepare the way of the Lord. John states in this Gospel the work of Christ in the world, that shall enable all flesh to see the salvation of God.

Because of the importance of Christ's coming, of the work He began nineteen hundred years ago, St. Luke is careful to set down in most precise historical detail the time in which John prepared the way before Christ, the time in which the blessings of the new dispensation were first made available to men.

He refers to the reign of the Roman Emperor, Tiberius Caesar, names the very year, the 15th of that reign; names the ruling Procurator of Judea, an official of the Emperor, Pontius Pilate; tells of the three neighboring Tetrarchs; tells of the leaders of the Jewish Religion, the High Priests Annas and Caiphas. Luke was writing down the historical record of the great work that he had seen accomplished fifty-seven years before, the first presentation to the world of its Redeemer in the flesh. Luke's record remains to us as one of the historical papers that declare authoritatively to the world the coming of the Salvation of God.

WHY ?

What Is Meant By A Cardinal?

The Cardinals are the electors and counsellors of the Pope and rank next to the Pope in the Hierarchy of the Church. The Cardinals were originally the parish priests of Rome; somewhat later the deacons who had charge of fixed districts in the city were added to the number and still later the Bishops of dioceses in the immediate neighborhood. There are now Cardinal Bishops not exceeding six in number, Cardinal Priests not exceeding fifty in number, and Cardinal Deacons not exceeding fourteen in number. Each Cardinal has his titular church in Rome. No one who is not a Bishop may be a Cardinal Bishop; no one who is not a Priest may be a Cardinal Priest; but a Bishop or a Priest may be a Cardinal Priest or Deacon.

Quote--End Quote

"Those nations on their backs would do well to get on their knees."—Archbishop John J. Glennon.

"What has become of the father who used a razor strap on his kids in the woodshed? Alas! too often he has no woodshed—or razor strap—or kids."—The Tablet.

Feast Days

Sunday, Dec. 22.—ST. ISCHYRION, MARTYR.
Monday, Dec. 23.—ST. SERVULUS.
Tuesday, Dec. 24.—ST. DELPHINUS, BISHOP.
Wednesday, Dec. 25.—THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST OR CHRISTMAS.
Thursday, Dec. 26.—ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST MARTYR.
Friday, Dec. 27.—ST. JOHN, EVANGELIST.
Saturday, Dec. 28.—THE HOLY INNOCENTS.

God Bless Us, Everyone!

The "Christmas Carol" is a traditional part of the holiday reading of English speaking people. Charles Dickens wrought a work of art when he composed this beautiful and inspiring story. Its characters seem to live in surroundings that become real to us as we peruse its pages: their virtues and failings, their family and business interests, their varied reaction to the spirit of Christmas, stir up our imaginations till we seem to become part of the story ourselves. It is a tale that we can read again and again, and in which we find new beauties and new meanings with each perusal. It has the real spirit of charity that belongs to Christmas Day.

There are some who would throw out "The Christmas Carol," some who would assail it as unworthy of Christmas! These critics bewail the lack of reference to the fact that it is the birthday of the Christ Child, and they see in it a glorification of natural virtue to the exclusion of supernatural love. There is some justification for this feeling, when one considers merely the surface manifestations. Deeper study of the story, of its characters, of it hidden meaning, will convince us that the "Christmas Carol" relates by implication far more than it speaks in words. England had been a Catholic country, with a glorious tradition of faith in the living Christ and in His Church. The coldness of unbelief forced on its people by the so-called Reformation under Henry VIII drove out of their hearts for a time the Catholic virtues of love of God and love of the neighbor. The pageantry and the heartiness of the festal celebrations gave to English life in pre-Reformation days a style and a beauty that became typical of and peculiar to England. They were founded on the firm faith of the people. All this the Reformation strove to destroy. The old English spirit of fair-play, which was just an open manifestation of Christian love for one's neighbor and of justice and charity toward that neighbor, gave way to the spirit of pride in material possessions that oppressed the poor, cast them into prison for debt, destroyed hope in their hearts. The worker was no longer the respected personage listed in the Guilds as a servant of society; he became the slave of the mine-owner, the mill-owner, with long hours at starvation wages. His children were impressed into labor in the mills and factories in their most tender years.

Then came the reaction. Then was revived the memory of Merry England of old, the England of hte Catholic tradition and culture. Dickens was its earliest spokesman; the "Christmas Carol" was one of its most powerful dramatizations. The defect in Dickens and in his works, as well as in his followers, was that they longed for and fought for the good things of that tradition without joining them to the Catholic Faith on which it was founded. Therefore, we have the admirable and lovable characteristics of the folk who live in the "Christmas Carol" as a new presentation, a reappearance, of the old Catholic Christian virtues even though Dickens does not so describe them. It was a longing for the things of Christ, without an expressed acceptance of Christ: it was a reaching out for the spirit of Christmas without marking Christ as the center of all Christmas joy and gladness. But the reader instinctively supplies what Dickens omitted. The reader knows that the simple goodness of the poor as shown in some of the characters, and the final conversion of Scrooge to the better things of life, could be explained only through the influence of the Babe of Bethlehem Who gave us Christmas when He gave us Himself."

"God bless us, every one!" Tiny Tim speaks to us and for us, out of the "Christmas Carol" a happy and a salutary greeting for Christmas Day. God's blessing, God's love, God's goodness, are all personified in the Christ Child, the Son of the Eternal Father, Who for us men and for our salvation became one of us and was born in Bethlehem on the first Christmas morn. Therefore, do we with enjoy and gladness sum up in our wishes for a Merry Christmas to all, the paryerful exclamation of Tiny Tim—"God bless us, every one!"

To War Or Not To War?

By REV. JAMES M. GILLIS, C.S.P., Editor, The Catholic World

Do the American people wish to go into this war? "Wish" is ordinarily a weak word, but in this instance it may be too strong a word. Of course we do not wish to go to war. Well then, revising the question, are we resigned to go to war?

I know my own conviction, but I shall not try to inflict it upon any other man Only one thing I should like to do—remind the reader of what lies ahead of us if we go to war. Not indeed all that lies ahead. No one can prognosticate all that may happen. But we may guess, or we may know part of what lies ahead.

First: The federal debt will mount to a dizzy height. It stands now at forty-five billions. It will jump to sixty-five or eighty or perhaps even one hundred billions. Two or three years ago, certain expert statisticians declared that we could carry fifty billions of debt without breaking under the load. At that time their estimate seemed startling, perhaps extravagant. There was apparently no danger of our getting close to the fifty billion dollar danger line ? We now face the prospect of taking on twice that amount.

Sursum Corda

Second: We shall meet once again our old acquaintance H. C. L. Older folks will remember the High Cost of Living during the World War and in the years immediately after. Wages will go up, but perhaps not so soon and not so high as the cost of living.

Third: Although we are not yet in the war, we have accepted conscription. Relatively few of the drafted have been called to the camps But more and more will be summoned if we get nearer to war, and there will be an influx of millions of young fellows to military life if we officially go in. First, they will train; then they will fight. Thousands will be killed, perhaps hundreds of thousands. We must not blink that ugly fact.

Fourth: As soon as we go in, there will be a great curtailment of personal liberty, much greater than in any previous war in which we have engaged.

Fifth: We shall be rationed in food, clothing, the use of heat and light and power. The war now in progress is totalitarian in more senses than one. It was precipitated by totalitarian powers, but it is totalitarian also because it takes in the whole population of any nation that enters it. Present-day warfare directly afflicts men, women, children, old, young and all. Those who stay at home may suffer more than those who go to the battlefield.

Sixth: Say what we will and do what we will, we cannot guarantee that our hard-won advance in the matter of social justice will not be swept away It has taken two or three generations to build it up. It can be knocked down in six months. It may remain destroyed for a long, long time.

Seventh: All those who have looked upon the rapidly-increasing power of the Federal government and the consequent decline in States' rights and of home rule in cities and small communities, will have additional reason to worry There will be such concentration of political power as we have never seen before. Whether democracy (in whatever measure it now exists amongst us) can survive such concentration is a problem. But one thing is beyond doubt or debate—centralization of governmental power will increase enormously with war.

Eighth: The radio and the press will be far less free. We shall not know from the beginning of the war until the end just what is happening here or elsewhere. There may or may not be deliberate systematic lying (have you read Ponsonby on "Falsehood in War Times," and Sir Philip Gibbs on "Now It Can Be Told" and "More That Must Be Told"? but whether or not the sources of information are poisoned, they will certainly be diminished. We shall be given what news is thought good for us, and no more.

Ninth: There is the possibility of our being on the losing side. If we are, we shall "pay and pay and pay" Or as Ambassador Kennedy said a year ago, we shall be left "holding the bag."

Tenth: When the war is over—if I may venture an Hibernicism—it will not be over. Rather it will commence. The new Japanese Ambassador has said, "There will be a chain of subsequent wars if England wins and a chain of subsequent wars if Germany wins." We cannot go into this war without involving ourselves in a chain of wars.

In view of these and other consequences are we ready to go to war? No wise man and no wise people will take a first step without having some idea of what the last step will be Certain human actions may perhaps be done impulsively without great harm. But we dare not go into a war impulsively If ever there be need of careful deliberation, we must deliberate now. We cannot see all the consequences of our entrance into war, but we can see a dozen or more. In the light of what we see, we should make our decision. It must not be a leap in the dark.

One word more We citizens do really make the decision. Not the "government" but the citizenry. We are not pawns on a chess board We have a mind, and a tongue The responsibility rests upon us.

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Florida-Bound

By REV. DANIEL A. LORD, S.J.

Ahead lie three days in Florida, the Florida State Sodality Convention, and a jump from Michigan to Tampa to make it . . . spanned by the universality of the Church and the nationwide character of the Daughters of Charity, for I say Mass at St. Mary's Hospital in Saginaw, with the Charity nuns as my gracious hostesses, and then say Mass, en route, at St. Vincent's Hospital in Jacksonville, welcomed by the same charming messengers of mercy. It's almost a cosy land when one finds a waiting altar all along the road . . .

On the platform the extremely well dressed woman says good-by to a male friend, interlarding her conversation with a succession of damns and hells. Clearly she thinks it's funny. She gets a laugh from the porter. To me it suggests a new figure of speech: As unoriginal and unimaginative as profanity. I understand better the fable of the fair maiden who when she spoke uttered frogs and snakes . . .

Along The Way

So many old people heading South for the winter. One old gentleman with an extremely patient wife—must have had years of practice. She orders orange juice, he decides she'll have melon. She has melon. He asks for a book, she tells him where it is. He decides it's elsewhere and looks for it there It's where she said it was. If it's a vacation they're on, is she going to get one?

At Sanford, our train delivers up from the baggage coach a casket. It is met by colored mourners, and we stand reverently in the presence of genuine and vocal grief.

The train takes on Conventioners. Florida young people—always charming and attractive . . . and always seeming so happily young. Maybe it's the climate. Or did they find what Ponce de Leon missed?

Florida hospitals, I find, do a rather terrifying amount of business in auto accident cases. Surprised? Neither was I . . . In Florida nature lovers are wise to keep watching the sky. It's lovely. So are orange groves . . . and the frequent little lakes, like sectors dropped from the sky. But otherwise—well, the vegetation is often pretty grey; the growth looks stunted; no one could possibly like the stands of tall pine. Spanish moss is as pretty as an old man's dirty whiskers; and palm trees are palm trees. I never see them without remembering that they were the only tree that Joyce Kilmer (author of "Trees") is supposed to have liked. Not me . . . Anyhow, keep looking at the sky. It's lovely.

We notice that a French singer returning from war-suppressed France tells of a rooster in the yard of the chateau where she was staying When the first planes roared overhead, he started crowing and the louder the planes grew, the louder he crowed After the raid, the chateau dwellers decided that there was noise enough without the rooster, and they stewed him.

Who are we from our safe angle to be ironic or critical? But I for one would think the French people had been lucky if the rooster which once was the symbol of France had had something of the spunk of that particular bird. They should have boxed the rooster and sent him to the men who ruled France and ran. A militant rooster was too precious to be stewed.

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The advanced degrees taken by our teaching sisters become more numerous and constantly more important. And the facilities for their taking these degrees grow steadily better and more adequate.

For example . . .

Just across the street from our office in St Louis, the Notre Dame Sisters have opened a beautiful new residence hall for the sisters studying at St Louis University and already a large number of communities have installed their sisters in the charming private rooms of the new hall.

Then the progressive Ursulines of New York have opened a residence hall for the sisters taking their graduate degrees at Fordham University The plaque in the hall commemorates Miss Mary McGovern as the donor. The lovely recreation hall and sunny dining room, the charming little chapel and comfortable living rooms make the hall a perfect place for quiet study And the trip to Fordham (as is the case with the trip to St. Louis University) is just a matter of down a block and a half Except that in New York one enters beautiful Fordham grounds through what is called the Conservatory Gate (and rightly) and passes from teeming Bronx into the calm of beautiful Fordham.

We can hope that communities who are looking for the university training of their members will be glad to know of these two new residence halls—For Sisters Only.

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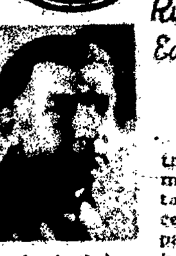
"Do you suppose," writes a correspondent, "that God would 'pull a joke' on a person? I started a novena to St. Ann for money, not mentioning any definite amount But in my mind's eye I somehow visioned a large, a mountainous sum On the second day of the novena, I received a birthday present, and money at that—one dollar. I laughed. Was God smiling too?"

PAGE MY PASTOR

by

Right Rev Msgr Peter M H Wynhoven
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South



Why Pastors Worry

Frances and Mercedes were wrapping toys for the orphans' Christmas tree after the sodality meeting Their fingers flew busily on with their task and as Cedie snipped the ends of the red cellophane ribbon on an interesting-looking package, she picked up the thread of an argument she had been having with Frances before the meeting.

"Fran I still don't see why we look at religion so differently. We grew up together made our First Communion at the same time, and all the rest. Why should you get so much more out of it than I do?"

"That's easy Cedie I'm more convinced of my religion than you are.

"I know—but why."

"The chief reason, I think is because I've had nothing but Catholic education all the way down the line."

"But in the public school we—"

"In the public school, Cedie you must admit God and religion are mentioned very casually."

"Of course but I still think—"

"I hope you do Because, if so you could see that people don't become enthusiastic over something they don't understand or that they know very little about. No one can duly appreciate music, or intelligently discuss the finer points of opera, unless he has studied. You who have never majored in chemistry would make a pretty impression by writing to the du Pont laboratories, telling them that you don't agree with some of their formulas and I, who see only three football games a season should get the big 'ha ha' from the coach and the captain of our local team were I to tell them in what plays they made mistakes or now to win games in the future."

"Hand me another teddy bear please, Fran I see your point there, of course but I should think you could get enough religious training on the side."

"Cedie, understanding religion is a science. It takes study and training to acquire its finer points."

"Oh, now you're just giving yourself an excuse for having taken that awful course in Christian Doctrine and apologetics at college. Talk about grinds. Whew! I'd no more let myself in for a dose like that."

But darling you can't know your religion sufficiently by just studying the Catechism in preparation for First Communion. The more you know about it, the more you enjoy it and benefit by it. I never was so grateful for anything in my life as I am for the opportunity of attending Catholic schools and colleges Have you any more of the red ribbon, Cedie?"

"Only about a yard. Here, it'll finish that package all right.

"Thanks, Cedie"

"You know Dad was talking only last night about Catholic schools He says he thinks the pastors must be wacky to take all that expense and trouble on their backs Looking at it from a purely material stand. I can see his reason for thinking that But he can't see their motive their incentive their objective"

"Meaning—?"

"Shame on you, Cedie The same great ideal for which Christ died on the Cross Think of the nuns the Brothers, and the priests who go through the daily drudgery of teaching—and for what?"

"Well it certainly can't be for the money. From what I hear they don't get a cent for it as far as they themselves are concerned. Why do you suppose they do it?"

"In that same spirit of sacrifice that the Church constantly calls on her best sons and daughters to manifest in giving up their dreams of selfish personal ambition and devoting their lives for Christ's sake to the education of children"

"I think that parents might feel some—"

"Through indifference or ignorance or taste to educate their children spiritually I imagine most people would be lost for eternity if it weren't for the influence and sacrifices of someone else"

"Golly I'll have to take that apologetics course myself, to hold up my end of an argument with you. Are there any more of those grisly-looking popguns left to be wrapped?"

"No, that was the last one, Cedie. That about finishes the lot All jokes aside, darling, it wouldn't do you any harm to take that course. I may not be any better than you are, but I'm certainly not floundering around in a fog that's more or less self-made."

"Ouch! A nice way to talk to me just before Christmas. If you're not careful I won't give you that plush-lined frying pan I embroidered for you Come on, dash into your coat and we'll stop at the corner for a hot chocolate. Ready?"

Library Signpost Appears on Page 16, This Week.

Diocesan Recordings

A Blessed Christmas to all is the sincere wish of the Recorder.

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Twin evils of indecency in motion pictures and in publications will be wiped out only when twin-pledges to stop seeing such pictures and to stop patronizing stores selling such publications are kept There can be no armistice with occasions of sin the war continues until indecency is annihilated.

• • •

This may not be Catholic Action in the exact meaning of the term but it is prompt action by Catholics, laymen co-operating with the priest. He was a young fellow come from another city. Desperately he tried to get work. Down to utter poverty he was forced to live with down-and-outers. He had entered the Church in his early days. Here he became acquainted with two young Catholic men. They received a note from him one day recently saying that he had taken an overdose of poison. He was that thoroughly despondent. The friends getting the note went into action. They got hold of the young fellow before, they hoped, it was too late. He said he did not want a doctor but he did want to see a Catholic priest. They took him to the priest. The priest said, "What are you worrying about I'll get you a job tomorrow" The sick young fellow was rushed to the hospital. He was relieved of danger. He has taken the job and is now a practicing Catholic with strong hope for the future.

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Without "Christ in Christmas" what can Christmas mean to Christians

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The national census reveals a falling rate of population in these United States and it is not all blamed on immigration.

Clips

Occasionally everyone feels the need of change writes an editorialist. Except taxicab drivers—they always need change, it seems. Saginaw "News."

You can always identify the nations that are free countries. They are those whose citizens complain more than they suffer. —San Francisco News.

STRANGE BUT TRUE
Little-Known Facts for Catholics

By M. J. MURRAY

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