

## THE COMMONWEAL

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### WEEK BY WEEK

**T**HIRTEEN persons wounded, two fatally, and worse trouble averted only by martial law—not in a Russian pogrom, not in a Mexican revolution, not in a Chinese tong war, but in Niles, Ohio, in a battle between the Ku Klux Klan and the Knights of the Flaming Circle! The Ku Klux Klan we know as the most outrageous, sinister and ridiculous manifestation of ignorant bigotry, and of shameless violation of American principles, ever revealed—but who are the Knights of the Flaming Circle? The creation of a profiteer in prejudice? Or the spontaneous work of ignorant and violent men enraged by the arrogant clamor of the Klan—violence clinching with violence, lawlessness opposing lawlessness, the depths upsurging against the depths of anarchy? We know not, but we do know that unless politicians, high and low, cease once and for all pandering and truckling to the Klan, or any other group of anarchic men, and as their first duty stand for and support loyally the fundamental law and authority of the government, and the right of free men to live in this republic peacefully no matter what their religious beliefs or their racial origin may be—Niles, Ohio, will be only one of many places to be stained with a disgrace that threatens the fair fame of the nation.

**B**UT encouraging signs indicate that the Klan wave is receding. By a vote of two to one (according to the early returns) the voters of Michigan have defeated the stupid effort of the Ku Klux Klan to outlaw private and parochial schools. The bigots tried to ef-

fect their purpose by tampering with the State Constitution—the favorite method of fanatics in both national and local affairs. Mrs. FERGUSON won against the bedsheet patrioteers in Texas. WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE lost in Kansas, but the courageous high-spirited campaign of the Emporia editor, thoroughly American, in the best tradition of true politics (which is for the common weal rather than for individual or party profits) was worth a score of merely partisan victories. All the bigots of the country would have rejoiced (burning thousands of crosses, double ones among them) had Governor SMITH been defeated—his victory is a blow to bigotry, quite apart from other considerations. All in all, the K. K. K. doesn't seem to have amounted to much, in really vital matters, in this election. The selection of a few politicians to office does not really matter, practically, though it is a sad thing to see Americans voting for the creatures of a sinister secret society.

**A**GREEING whole-heartedly with certain New York newspapers in their opinion that the dolorous Mr. EARL CARROLL, who chose to go to jail instead of accepting bail when a judge held him for trial on the charge of exhibiting indecent pictures at his theatre door, was only seeking free publicity instead of "martyrdom" for Art (O, poor Art!), we wonder why some of these very papers exploit pictorial and textual sexuality so persistently. So many daily newspapers pursue a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde policy—preaching righteousness in editorial columns, and exploiting salaciousness in news columns and Sunday supplements and advertising sections—that perhaps it is invidious to name the particular offenders we have in mind.

**L**ET us turn to The NEW YORK HERALD-TRIBUNE, on a different matter. (The curiosities of journalism are endless.) Sunday, November 2, The HERALD-TRIBUNE published a despatch (apparently a despatch) under a two-column heading, no date, place given as Quito, Ecuador, correspondent's name not given, nor any trace of the source of the article. It begins dogmatically—"Religious conditions in South America are similar to those of the Middle Ages. [Glorious news, if true, though we suspect the writer implies something entirely different.] One can find in all parts an unbelief and absolute indifference to spiritual things among both men and women that is hard to believe or realize until one has traveled through these countries and has seen the conditions." The rest of the article is more specific; but after the sweeping generalizations of the prelude, we wonder how far the reporting of the details are to be trusted, or even respected. "Religious conditions in South America"—not Chili, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, or any particular country or city, but all of that huge

continent, disposed of in one statement. "In all parts"—unbelief and absolute indifference. Why should not *The Herald-Tribune* give authority for this summary treatment of a whole continent's religion, of which really competent observers have given such a different view? Where did the article come from? Its own correspondent? A news agency? A missionary society? It's all very curious.

IN another page of the same issue of *The Herald-Tribune* that contained this singular treatment of South American religion is to be found a book review taking Don MANUEL UGARTE severely to task because this gentleman in a book entitled *El Destino de Continente* (Madrid: Editorial Mundo Latina) accuses the United States of imperialistic designs on its southern neighbors and of a general unfriendliness, calling, in Don MANUEL UGARTE's opinion, for unified resistance on the part of the Latin American countries. Don MANUEL UGARTE's propaganda against the United States, it may be remarked, while having much to justify it in our ominous behavior in Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua and elsewhere, in the maladroit conduct of all too many American business houses, of smalltown official representatives of our crude Jingoism, and of superficial travelers and sensation-mongering authors, is really unfounded in fact. If our South American friends came more often to visit the United States, to travel and study here, instead of making our land the mere steppingstone for a trip to Paris, they would soon learn that we have too large and difficult a problem in Americanizing the foreigners already within our frontiers, to make anything like an imperialistic program involving South America not only a scheme undesirable but actually intolerable to the truly North American mind. Because of this fact, Don MANUEL UGARTE's fears are baseless.

JUST the same, when South Americans find that their noble cities—Quito, the most Catholic of them all, Bogotá, Lima, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile, and so forth, are lumped with primitive jungle villages, and that millions of people ranging from the most cultured of individuals to the savages of the upper Amazon, are described as being devoid of *all* religion—who can wonder that there is a Don MANUEL UGARTE to voice their just resentment?

If there is need for South Americans to visit us, study, observe, learn our national character by direct contact, far more need is there for our writers (and editors!) travelers, and sensible business men, to visit the nations of the South and learn something of the high culture, the rich heritage and the present vigorous condition of art, and the great natural wealth and opportunities of our neighbors, which should invite not to covetous exploitation but to fair and friendly

commercial coöperation. In these matters we should set an example.

MR. STUART P. SHERMAN, reviewing ANATOLE FRANCE, writes as follows:

"Sometimes I am convinced—almost convinced—that nothing can finally resist the full seduction of the rising tide of pagan hedonism but the Petrine Rock. The Church of Rome and its champions still stand fast in their ancient faith. And they are pretty nearly the only powers which oppose to the point of view of ANATOLE FRANCE a definite point of view of their own. In France, Christian idealism has long been accustomed to formidable adversaries; its apologies are not, as generally with us, defenseless babes, going down helpless and speechless before the spears and banners of an overwhelmingly superior enemy. They study the invader: see him as Achilles, and find his heel; see him as Goliath, and plant their white pebbles between his eyes. The most searching criticism of ANATOLE FRANCE which has yet appeared, the best informed, the most appreciative and at the same time the most destructive, comes from French Catholic writers, whom English popularizers plunder without acknowledgment, bearing to the English public the honey of their appreciation and leaving the sting of their criticism behind."

American, English, Italian, French, Irish, Canadian, South American, German, Austrian, Spanish, Dutch, Belgian, Polish, Scandinavian, Hungarian and Bohemian writers who have the Faith in common will write for *THE COMMONWEAL*. They will "oppose to the point of view of ANATOLE FRANCE, a definite point of view of their own." The Petrine Rock is that force which will "resist the full seduction of pagan Hedonism." Upon that Rock *THE COMMONWEAL* stands.

FROM dawn until noon, from the hundred thousand churches and chapels of Christendom, the Mass bells rang on the Feast of All Souls. On this day and on Christmas only, may the priest celebrate the Holy Sacrifice three times. Three times, for the birth of God. Three times, for the souls of dead men and women. Yellow and black and white are the hues of the altar, the vestments, the candle flames. The millions of worshippers offer up their prayers, their Communion, their love and sorrow, their tears also, as the incense smoke arises, as the blessed water is sprinkled. Their hearts remember and their souls go forth in service to those others, the "poor souls"—to use the beautiful Catholic colloquialism. They remember the dead. But more, they know that the dead still live. No hopeless sorrow theirs, still less, no grotesque commerce with necromancers in the sordid purlieu of Spiritualism. Noble music enwraps their prayers with majesty. *Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine. Et lux perpetua luceat eis.*

## AN INTRODUCTION

THE question will naturally arise why the editors of THE COMMONWEAL believe there is room for another journal to discuss public affairs, to review the important publications of the day, and produce original fiction, essays and poetry. Do they hope to find place for THE COMMONWEAL through competition with the weekly reviews that already occupy the field? To such questions we reply:

We believe that THE COMMONWEAL will be so fundamentally different to our contemporaries that in place of competition in an over-crowded field we shall occupy a position that hitherto has been left vacant. For the difference between THE COMMONWEAL and other weekly literary reviews designed for general circulation is that THE COMMONWEAL will be definitely Christian in its presentation of orthodox religious principles and their application to the subjects that fall within its purview: principles which until now have not, we believe, been expressed in American journalism except through the medium of the official organs of the Catholic Church and of the various denominations. As a sure background THE COMMONWEAL will have the continuous, unbroken tradition and teachings of the historic Mother Church.

But it will be in no sense—nor could it possibly assert itself to be—an authoritative or authorized mouth piece of the Catholic Church. It will be the independent, personal product of its editors and contributors, who, for the most part, will be laymen. Its pages will be open to writers holding different forms of Christian belief, and in some cases to authors who do not profess any form of Christian faith. Where the opinion of its editors, contributors and readers differs on subjects yet unsettled by competent authority, it will be an open forum for the discussion of such differences in a spirit of good temper.

In presenting the first number of THE COMMONWEAL to its readers, or it may be more exact to say, to those whom we would have as readers, the editors realize that it is not by what they may say about their intentions so much as by the way their intentions are realized that the new journal will be judged. Therefore, they ask that the judgment upon their work be not exclusively based upon any one issue of THE COMMONWEAL. A new journal cannot convey its character through any single number any more than a new acquaintance can establish claims to one's friendship at a first meeting. Nevertheless, the proper ceremonial usages call for a brief introduction of THE COMMONWEAL on the part of its sponsors.

There is being promulgated a widely accepted theory of what civilization is, or what it should be, which, if it proves successful means the end of Christendom, so far as the expression or influence of Christian principles and ideas in the institutions of civilized life are concerned. It is unquestionably a spiritual, moral, and

patriotic duty for thinking people at least to make an effort to apply the conserving and regenerative forces of the fountain head of Christian tradition, experience and culture to the problems that today all men of good will are seeking to solve. As opposed to the present confused, confusing, and conflicting complex of private opinions, and personal impressionism, mirrored in so many influential journals, the editors of THE COMMONWEAL believe that nothing can do so much for the betterment, the happiness, and the peace of the American people as the influence of the enduring and tested principles of Catholic Christianity. To that high task THE COMMONWEAL is dedicated.

## WORLD BUSINESS

WITHOUT voicing an undue optimism, it is evident that many forces both at home and abroad have been merging during the last few months to effect greater moral and economic stability. We intentionally place moral forces first. They are not subject to statistical analysis; rather they shape statistics and give them their value and prospective.

Thus the successful flotation of the German external loan means far more than the dollars and cents supplied as a cornerstone to the Dawes plan. It means the attainment of a definite will for accord, without which no plan would amount to more than mental gymnastics. So, too, the British elections are important not so much because they placed the conservatives in power as because they marked the end of divided counsels, compromise ministries and precarious responsibility. They represent a forceful moral decision, upon which other countries can reckon and plan accordingly.

The patent economic facts likewise present a refreshingly definite aspect. In this country, industrial production shows a moderate expansion with continued extreme ease in money rates. Employment is increasing. In representative industries, there have been recorded during one month about forty wage increases to six reductions. Commodity prices have advanced sharply since the year's low point in the second week of July. Railroad freight loadings indicate a brisk distribution of goods. Even the cotton mills are showing greater activity, while building operations are remarkably sustained and higher than last year. Above all, the crop yields and prices have revolutionized the agricultural outlook.

Abroad, favorable signs appear everywhere except in Russia. French revenues from taxation have exceeded the budget provisions. The Dawes tonic is being administered to Germany. Belgium is about balancing her budget. Italy shows a reduced import balance, increased shipping activity, and a fall in unemployment combined with an increase of savings deposits. We would seem to be on the threshold of progress through a cycle of economic expansion.