

more of that foremost Christian virtue, charity. But it is certainly less pious. Why?

If the Church is to the religious life what clothing is to the physical, is it, as some say to-day, worn out? It seems to me that it is, rather, a misfit. Too large? or too small? Perhaps too large at some points and too small at others.

Misfit clothing which we had neither the skill to alter nor the wherewithal to renew we would endure, unless perhaps in some climate so mild that clothing could be discarded altogether. There

may be something in the moral, social, economic atmospheres to-day that enables so many to discard all religious clothing except a meager breech-clout of death and marriage sacrament.

But a winter may be coming. For this reason, as soon as circumstances permit, I will resume church attendance, little as I am directly interested, and continue church support in such ways as I may be able. Charity I trust I have in some degree. What my hope is, I hardly know. But at least I have faith in the continuity of an institution older

than Christianity; an institution in which Christianity itself started as an alteration meeting altered needs; an institution which has changed its form times without number almost beyond all recognition to meet the changing needs of men.

Once more the old order changeth, but the new has not yet come. Perhaps if you have found that better land in which you so implicitly believed, you see things hidden from

Your loving
GRANDSON AND NAMESAKE.

Messing Up Our Pioneer History

By CHARLES MOREAU HARGER

Here is a voice from the once-wild West, appealing for an honest record of its former wildness. The author is a delegate from the Amalgamated Union of Disgusted Pioneers

ONE of these days the movies are going to be visited by a devastation from the "wide open spaces." It will not be because of the hifalutin doings out at Hollywood, though the prairies do talk of barring every actor who gets into a scandal. Anyhow, that uprising will be from those who take the movie folks seriously. The real ruction will come from the Amalgamated Union of Disgusted Pioneers—those who remain of the generation that helped set up its towns and plow the sod and generally transform the plains into a haven for wheat shockers and Ford cars.

It has all happened because the film producers have gone into early Western history. It was endurable so long as they stuck to the Canadian police and Alaska, which nobody can locate definitely; but lately have come along a lot of pictures that propose to give the actual doings that happened in actual towns away back in the before-Bryan days. And those towns become all "het up" over the preliminary announcements by the press agents of reproduction of scenes, buildings, characters, right there in the town where the big happenings were originally presented. The old-timers have gathered on the street corners for twenty years, telling just where Wild Bill Hickok stood when he picked off Jim McCandless, exactly where the "Last Chance Saloon" held forth when the cowboys made their famous and fatal raid. And now it was all to be shown in pictures at the Palace Theater—a "first run," because this was the very town in which it all happened—

hurrah and hurroo for the revival of the good old days!

Not only this town but others have been going through that same thrill, for frontier-time pictures are becoming common, located "just where the events took place"—presumably. And after many weeks of trumpeting by the local papers along come the flaring posters and dodgers and advertising, telling that the event is at hand.

One of them arrived the other night. It purported to be the life story of a famous frontier character, a "bad man" of early days, with notches in his gun and all that sort of ornament. Hundreds of the men who knew him as a familiar town notable are living. Many of them were at the theater, eager to see the town's favorite hero depicted.

"Well, what about it?" I asked the most interested of them all after the show was over.

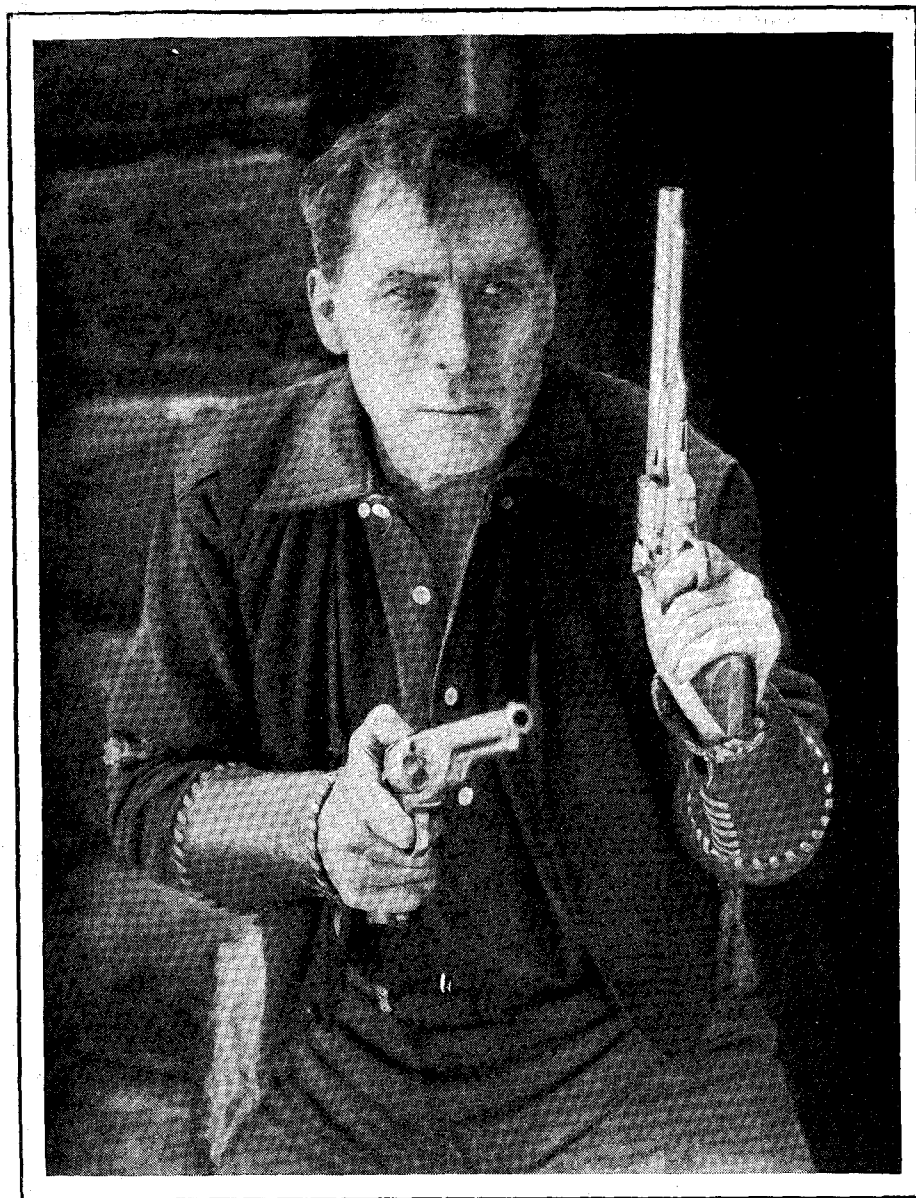
"It was all 'bunk,'" he replied, sadly. "There wasn't nothing right about it anywhere except the title. That hero lived here and did his big work here, yet the scene was laid in a town where he never was in his life. The actor didn't look like the man at all. No human being could have done what the picture showed, standing in the middle of a street and killing a dozen bad men while they was shooting at him and never get hurt. They didn't shoot that way. The ending was wrong; he was shot up North, and is buried there. I don't care about the acting, or the killing when it couldn't be done; but why should the young genera-

tion get its history wrong? Why, this town wasn't even shown, and it was right here it all happened!" He was then and there enrolled as a charter member of the Amalgamated Union of Disgusted Pioneers.

His criticism had nothing to do with the technique of the filming, the action of the play, but was concerned with the facts—foisting on a well-known character whose life was well known to him a fake assortment of movements, locations, and accomplishments. He could not get it out of his mind that the truth would have been so much more interesting and would have really been of some worth. He would like to have history preserved as it was.

The other day a Western woman brought suit for \$100,000 damages because in one of the famous historical pioneer pictures her father is shown as a drunken boor having two squaw wives, instead of being, as she claims, a rough but clean gentleman. The audiences have already their visualization of the old scout, however, and it cannot well be changed. Had the events taken place hundreds of years ago, considerable could be forgiven, for perhaps it is impossible to make a perfect reproduction of those times. But these are to-day's history, familiar and with definite remembrances in contemporaries' minds.

The country town is sensitive regarding its history. It is like a family with pride in ancestry. Each village has its own particular set of heroes, and the prairie country is so new that the very



William S. Hart as "Wild Bill" Hickok.

beginnings of things yet remain fresh in the residents' minds. And every town shown on the screen with events twisted adds its older population to the membership in the A. U. of D. P.

Last summer I was at Sauk Center, the home town of Sinclair Lewis, associated by thousands with "Main Street"—and proud of its distinction. On the principal thoroughfare is the Main Street Café. The first conversation the visitor hears is information regarding the famous author and what the town thinks of the book, where he lived, and some account of his reputation as a town cut-up in his boyhood days. Across from the hotel is the new picture theater. It was here that the film of the famous book was first shown in the State of Minnesota and the doings of Carol Kennicutt and her fellow-residents of Gopher Prairie were delineated.

"It was funny," said the garage-man as he was filling up my car's gas tank. "Folks came for miles that night; every-

body in town was lined up long before the doors opened—we wanted to see just what we looked like. We thought, you know, that practically all of us would be shown in the picture. But shucks! there wasn't none of us there, nor Sauk Center, nor nothing—just a picture with the characters that we didn't know. Of course a lot of folks were glad of it, because they don't think the book is exactly fair to the small town, and they rather dislike the idea the country seems to have that this town was really Gopher Prairie—which it wasn't."

The point of the incident is that the Western town is jealous of its position in history. When it is mentioned either in fiction or sterner relations, it desires accuracy. Curious how far-reaching is this interest in the early history of the West. Residents of a town made prominent in the cattle-trail story "North of 36," by Emerson Hough, have received scores of letters from every part of the country asking if all the incidents were true to

life. Could a woman go over the trail accompanied only by her cowboys? Of course she could, but the old-timers say none did. Was there a Fourth of July celebration in the early history of the town? Was there a band to welcome the first herd that wended its weary way from the Texas plains to the newly established shipping station in central Kansas? These and dozens of other queries come. The latest was from a professor of English in an Eastern university; another was from a Congressman. And the old-timer, sturdy in his faith and knowledge, with the events of frontier days yet fresh in his memory, takes his pen in hand and covers pages, reciting what he recalls of the real happenings and ending with the plaintive remark, "I don't see why it wouldn't make a better story and be just as easy to tell things right."

Not much printed record exists of the frontier days. Photographs are rare of the beginnings of things; not until towns had made some growth did the dispenser of tintypes and card photographs appear, and kodaks had not been invented. Nor was there a newspaper until the town had assumed rather dignified proportions, and it is fortunate if the early files have not long ago been destroyed.

So in the memories of elderly men now remains all the real history of the frontier. They are for the most part unversed in literary art. They can talk by the hour on incidents and events, but have little capacity for putting it all in connected and vivid print. When they are gone, the history of the pioneers will be left to legends and to such collections of documents and facts as have been gathered by enthusiasts in preserving the story of the West's awakening.

Writing or picturing events without the aid of the men who lived through the stirring times when foundations were laid gives to history a crooked slant. Because the sections where history was made most vividly are keenly sensitive to this and because they are exceedingly jealous of the part they played in the building of the plains, they voice through their newspapers and in their letters a vigorous protest.

It may be that the organization of the A. U. of D. P. will eventually get results. It may be able to stir some genius to delve into the records and project a true reproduction of early days, a writer who will not allow imagination to run away with facts, a poet who will soar low enough to visualize the landscape. If this be not accomplished, the members can merely continue to dispute and register dissatisfaction. They are doing that now, and seem likely to maintain their position with increasing positiveness.

What Our Farmers Found Out

By THEODORE M. KNAPPEN

The author of this article traveled through Europe with the delegates of the Farm Bureau Federation. He presents a graphic picture of Europe through the eyes of American farmers

OUR farmers investigated Europe in their own ingenuous way. We bravely invaded formal Europe, official and social, from Southampton to London, to Antwerp, to Brussels, to Paris, to Copenhagen, to Hamburg, to Berlin, to Verdun and Rheims, and back again to the French and British capitals, without the grace of a dress suit. Notebook in hand, we talked audaciously with the great and mighty and sympathetically with the weak and humble.

The party desired to find out, as representing the American Farm Bureau Federation, what is the matter with Europe from the standpoint of American farmers with more to sell than Europe is ready to buy. It was suspected that maybe there was some impelling relation between the alarming mortgage foreclosures in the American wheat belt and the smokeless smoke-stacks of the Ruhr. The Ruhr, of course, is only the symbol for the reparation problem. Naturally, reparation implies injuries and damages, so our farmers wanted to inspect both in that battle-scarred strip of territory in the north and east of France.

At Rheims we were deeply impressed by the shattered Cathedral, reared in the thirteenth century, as the inscription has it, "To the Glory of God," but I think we made fully as deep an impression on Cardinal Archbishop Lucon.

The venerable prelate insisted on going with us from his official residence to the Cathedral, despite a raw and biting air. When he had completed his moving account of the bombardment day by day, and how each shell that struck the sacred edifice was promptly reported by telegraph to the Pope at Rome, and by him telegraphed to the German Emperor, one of our party said:

"Say, Cardinal, come over here now and have your picture taken with me." And the Cardinal "come."

Apparently the august man of God took no offense, but when we got back to Paris and related this incident to a French friend he exclaimed, in horror, "Don't you understand that the Cardinal is next to God himself!"

In the devastated region, on the Belgian side, we saw farmers using cows as oxen. Why? Because the horses that

the Germans took away in the four years of Belgium's agony had not yet been replaced. That was a form of damage that appealed to farmers. Then, when we traveled in automobiles for hundreds of miles along the old battle-fronts and saw hundreds of peasants' villages slowly rising again from the inconceivable chaos of ruins (800,000 houses destroyed) we visualized some more damage, and we began to understand why the French farmers—and they rule France—stand solidly behind M. Poincaré and his undeniable and unconquerable determination that the Germans shall pay. This French peasant may be a stupid fellow, we reflected, but he is apt to have his way; even as 400,000 of them fell in defense of Verdun, and 700,000 Germans fell with them, to make good the slogan of that great defense, "They shall not pass."

A little humor was injected into the grimness of the ravaged zone when some of the villagers in the Marne salient of 1918 complained thus: "Your fresh young American army was too impetuous and too keen; the Germans had not destroyed our houses during their occupancy, but your boys were so eager to use their artillery that they would not give the Germans a chance to retreat unmolested, and so, messieurs, it was really the American guns that did the damage here."

Of course we had to have a talk with Tiger Clemenceau—two of them, in fact. The vigorous old man received us in simple fashion at his Paris home at No. 8 Rue de Franklin. We did not need to ask him any questions. He tore right into the subject.

"May I take some notes?" I said.

"Certainly," was the answer.

"It's a very complicated question," said the Tiger, "not depending upon economic matters only, which you as American farmers probably cannot understand. We are all in a very bad fix—France, Germany, England—all Europe. The military victory over Germany was finally achieved, but we had enormous losses, so had England; then you left us. It was a great misfortune for the world, a supreme misfortune, that America left the Allies in the hour of victory. I gave up a great deal to America that I would not have given up to England. Alas! while the signature of France is on the



Dog and woman team—a sight the Farmers' Delegation saw in Prussia. The woman seemed happy at that. The husband, also happy, is on the right