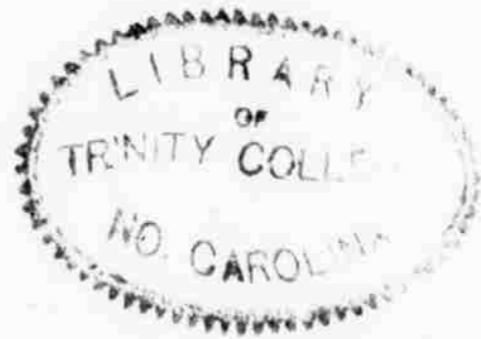


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SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE IN INDIAN SCHOOLS.

By John M. Moore.

AN ORDER has been issued by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs directing that sectarian garb and insignia be not used by teachers in Federal schools. The wisdom of this course is manifest. The Indian Department appears to have come to the conclusion that there ought to be a clean-cut line of cleavage between church and State. The practice against which the Commissioner of Indian Affairs has made this ruling, has been characterized as un-American in view of the fact that children educated under the care of instructors robed in religious insignia cannot receive their education in that complete liberty of mind and freedom from church restraint, the lack of which has wrought untold harm in foreign countries.

That such liberty of thought and conscience is one of the cherished possessions of every free country is recognized in this section of the Indian Department in prohibiting a display of church insignia in Indian schools calculated to bias in a particular direction the impressionable minds of young children. A glaring evasion has been made of the principles of American government, which purposes that instruction in Federal schools should not be colored by religious influence. The evasion has been effected by a plan which allows the renting of buildings for school purposes by the government from sectarian institutions. Such buildings can be furnished by religious denominations as a part of their establishments. The corps of employees transferred with the buildings to government control are not required to submit to the Civil Service examination, but are "blanketed in" practically without qualification. These employees in full religious garb then take the place of the public teacher and the effect on the children receiving instruction from them is practically to proseliterate them to the particular denomination which happens to have jurisdiction over the school.

The complete correspondence in the case is as follows:

On the twenty-seventh of January the following order was issued by Robert G. Valentine, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.:

"To Superintendents in charge of Indian Schools:

In accordance with that essential principle in our national life—the separation of church and State—as applied by me to the Indian Service, which as to ceremonies and exercises is now being enforced under the existing religious regulations, I find it necessary to issue this order supplementary to those regulations, to cover the use of those exercises and at other times, of insignia and garb as used by various denominations. At exercises of any particular denomination there is, of course, no restriction in this respect, but at the general assembly exercises and in the public school rooms, or on the grounds when on duty, insignia or garb has no justification.

In government schools all insignia of any denomination must be removed from all public school rooms, and members of any denomination wearing distinctive garb should leave such garb off while engaged at lay duties as government employees. If any case exists where such an employee cannot conscientiously do this, he will be given a reasonable time, not to extend, however, beyond the opening of the next school year after the date of this order, to make arrangements for employment elsewhere than in Federal Indian schools."

When this came to the knowledge of the Home Missions Council the following telegram was sent to the President, under date of February first:

"The President,

The White House,
Washington, D. C.

The act of the Honorable Commissioner of Indian Affairs issued January twenty-seventh relative to sectarian insignia and garb in Federal Indian schools is to our minds so manifestly American in spirit, judicial and righteous, that we heartily approve and commend it. We did not know that such an order was in preparation. But we now express our commendation and ask that nothing be permitted to weaken its force. We desire our representatives to have a conference with you if you find opportunity and occasion for this.

(Signed) CHARLES L. THOMPSON, President.

This telegram was acknowledged under date of February second, by the Secretary to the President, as follows:

"Your telegram of February 1 has been received and brought to the attention of the President."

Without further communication with the Home Missions Council and allowing no opportunity for conference, the President wrote to Secretary Fisher, of the Department of the Interior, a letter under date of February second, practically revoking the order. The concluding paragraph in the President's letter to Secretary Fisher is as follows:

"The Commissioner's order almost necessarily amounts to a discharge from the Federal service of those who have entered it. This should not be done without a careful consideration of all phases of the matter nor without giving the persons directly affected an opportunity to be heard. As the order would not in any event take effect until the beginning of the next school year, I direct that it be revoked and the action by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in respect thereto be suspended until such time as will permit a full hearing to be given to all parties in interest and a conclusion to be reached in respect to the matter after full deliberation."

The Home Missions Council—consisting of twenty-four organizations doing work throughout the United States and its dependencies—at a meeting of its Executive Committee, on February fifth, telegraphed its profound regret that the President had revoked the order of the Indian Commissioner without affording the opportunity for conference which was asked for the Council in Dr. Thompson's telegram.

The Commissioner's action should receive the hearty support of all Protestant denominations and cannot be reasonably objected to by those others whom it affects, in view of its impartiality and disinterested justice, which treats all alike according to no favoritism to any. It is in full accord with American ideas and advanced thought and as such cannot fail of public approbation.

The action of President Taft in setting aside the order of Commissioner Valentine must be very pleasing to Roman Catholic propagandists, but very displeasing to the great body of American citizens who believe in complete separation of church and State. The fundamental principles of our American republic are involved. Romanism evidently is making fine use of her papal representatives at Washington. Why has the President thus repudiated American principles? Possibly because only Romanists have spoken to him in forceful terms. Shall not Protestants, fifty million strong, declare themselves in uncertain words in favor of American principles, and the absolute separation of church and State?

Let every Methodist preacher's meeting, every institute, every Conference, and any other organization pass resolutions endorsing the action of Commissioner Valentine and send these resolutions to President Taft and to Commissioner Valentine. Let Senators and Representatives from all the States hear from their constituency upon this important matter. An aroused public sentiment should reach the President and the National Representatives of the people. The matter will not be

finally disposed of before a hearing from the people can be had. Let the American citizenship of this country reinforce the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in his fair and impartial treatment of all religious sects, in accord with the fundamental principles of the American government.

GIPSY SMITH IN SAN FRANCISCO.

By Rev. W. P. Andrews.

THE LORD'S forces in San Francisco, under the sub-leadership of Gipsy Smith, have been engaged in a twenty-five-days' battle with the world, the flesh and the devil, led, of course, by his satanic majesty Beelzebub. The battle opened on the evening of December 30, and ended last evening, January 23. While the victory cannot be regarded as complete, nevertheless, the enemy was "worsted" as never before on this particular battlefield, and there is great rejoicing in the arm of the Lord.

Of course, Gipsy Smith's reputation preceded him, and somewhat out of the ordinary was expected, but as a general, as a master of assemblies, he surpassed expectation. The pavillion rink, on Sutter Street, corner of Steiner, furnishing accommodations for an audience of 6,500, was chosen as headquarters. Here the evening meetings were held, also meetings on Sunday afternoons, and, toward the last, several week-day afternoon meetings, while noonday meetings were held in the First Congregational Church (Dr. Aked's) and in the Y. M. C. A. auditorium.

The interest was good from the beginning and increased as the battle progressed. The meeting places became all too small. The large Congregational Church was filled at the noon hour, while hundreds failed to gain admission to the pavillion in the evening and on Sunday afternoons. Sunday, January 14, was a great day. In the afternoon an army more than 2,000 strong, led by Gipsy Smith and H. J. McCoy, the Y. M. C. A. Secretary, marched four abreast through the streets, while thousands thronged the side walks. Mr. Smith said he had not seen a greater demonstration in connection with any of his meetings, East or West.

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," Gipsy Smith's are not. He resorted to no clap-trap methods. He used no slang, and engaged in no vituperation. His language was chaste, and brought the blush to no cheek, save as it carried conviction to the heart of some transgressor. He did not preach about science, new thought, the new theology, higher criticism, nor did he preach great sermons—not from a human view-point. In this sense, no doubt a majority of the preachers in attendance could out-preach him. What then? He preached the old gospel, plainly, earnestly. "The sword of the Spirit" was his weapon, and it was evident that the Spirit was in His servant, and directed the sword that went from his mouth. The gospel had not lost its power. "It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth"—even in San Francisco.

Two hundred preachers assembled at the evangelist's call last Monday morning. The meeting was discussed, plans laid for the future, and a general love-feast held. Mr. Smith said he had never labored where the ministers worked together more harmoniously. Even some of the Protestant Episcopal clergymen were among the workers. The exact number of the "slain of the Lord" no one undertakes to give. About 2,700 signed cards as accepting Christ, nearly all of whom went into the inquiry rooms. A large number of these, however, were renewals. All the pastors report the greatest interest in their congregations since the beginning of their respective pastorates in this city. It has been decided to seek to secure Gipsy Smith to conduct services during the Exposition of 1915. He goes from here to Los Angeles, California.