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THE ANTI-PAROCHIAL SCHOOL MEASURE

Considerable interest is centering around the so-called Compulsory Education or Anti-Parochial School measure which will appear on the ballot at the coming election as an initiative measure.

The measure seeks to make mandatory the attendance of every child between the ages of six and fourteen years at the public schools and making unlawful the attendance of such children at any private or sectarian school. Exception is made in the case of private schools where no sectarian religious instruction is given, power to say what children may or may not attend such schools being placed in the hands of the school superintendent of each county.

Many persons seem to be of the opinion that the Anti-Parochial School measure is aimed at and will affect only Roman Catholic educational institutions, but a glance at the arguments that have been filed against the measure for publication in the State Official Pamphlet shows that opposition to the measure is by no means confined to the Catholic church. Seven arguments have been filed against the measure by the following individuals and organizations:

Lutheran Synod, Portland Citizens, St. Helens' Hall trustees, Principals of Private Schools, Seventh Day Adventists, Presbyterian Ministers and Catholics.

A few excerpts from the several arguments are of interest:

Lutheran Synod—"Who owns your child? Who feeds and clothes your child? The state? Not while you are alive and able to care for your own. . . . Now if you own your child and are in duty bound to feed and clothe it, you certainly have some say about your child's education and its teacher. The state has a right to compel you to educate your child just as it has a right to compel you to feed and clothe your child. But the state has no more right to choose the teacher for your child and the school it shall attend than it has to tell you where to buy your child's clothing and what kind of clothing it shall wear.

"This bill, if enacted into law, will deal a terrific blow to your constitutional rights, confiscate your parental authority, and undermine your personal liberty. It will also curtail your religious liberty."

Continuing, the argument quotes President Harding "In my experience of a year in the White House, there has come to me no other such unwelcome expression as the manifest religious intolerance which exists among many of our citizens. I hold it to be a menace to the very liberties we boast and cherish."

Ex-Vice-President Marshall is also quoted in these words:

"I have an old fashioned notion that in a government where freedom of religion is guaranteed to the citizen, as the father of a child, I have a right to train it along the lines of my own religious belief. I doubt that any officer, however gifted and high-minded he may be, can have a tenderer regard for my child than I myself possess, that he can more sincerely desire his health, happiness and success."

Thirteen prominent citizens of Portland, including W. M. Ladd, John C. Ainsworth, Chas. H. Carey, Wm. D. Wheelright, Richard Montague, W. B. Ayer and several others, none of whom are Catholic, join in an argument against the measure in which they say in part:

"This measure imitates the method of public education which brought Prussia to her deserved destruction—giving the state dictatorial power over the training of children and destroying independence of character and freedom of thought. In present day Russia the Bolshevist government treats the child as the ward of the state. This measure proposes to adopt this method and to substitute state control for the authority and guidance of the parents and is destructive of American Independence."

Seventh Day Adventists—"We believe in our public schools. We believe they should be supported by public taxation. We believe their highest aim is to assist in developing intelligent citizens. We believe in compulsory education. We are not at all certain, however, that a man educated in the public school is more intelligent than if he were educated in a private or sectarian school. Nor have we heard convincing argument that a person is necessarily more patriotic, if educated in a school not supported by public taxation.

"For its first fifty years our country had no public schools; but the patriotism of that time cannot be questioned. If anarchy is taught by any teacher of private or public school, this can and ought to be corrected by the government. Is it proven that anarchy is bred, and hatred for the "stars and stripes" is begotten by a daily study of the gospel of Jesus Christ? Those initiating the measure are well aware that not all who have attended private schools are desirable citizens. Anarchists and criminals have, many of them, attended public schools; therefore attendance of public schools is not the infallible road to good citizenship.

"We favor state inspection of all schools. We favor an educational standard for private or sectarian schools, at least equal to the standard of the public schools.

"The measure is 'paternalism' on the part of the state, and a thousand evils will surely follow if it is ever enacted. It should be defeated."

Presbyterian Ministers—"Whereas, much of the propa-

"111"
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Heppner is a quiet town lately, many of the residents being in the mountains or at the seashore dodging the hot wave. A large colony of Heppner folk are camped on Ditch creek picking huckleberries and enjoying the mountain air.



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ganda in favor of this bill has been conducted in the name of Protestantism, we the undersigned ministers, members of the Presbyterian Church, believe that the proposed legislation is inimical to the highest human welfare for the following reasons:

"1. It proposes to abolish one system of religious education and offers no substitute for it in any plan of religious instruction in connection with the public school system.

"2. It is based on the philosophy of autocracy that the child belongs primarily to the state; it is an unjustifiable invasion of family authority and threatens ultimately the guarantee of our American liberty!

"3. The proposed legislation in its conception, promotion and execution violates what we conceive to be the spirit of fraternity and brotherly love taught by our Master.

"At the same time we desire to be understood that we favor the erection of standards by the State Department of Education for both students and teachers in all private schools."