

The Listener - October 1933

Dorothy Day

The Catholic Worker, Oct 1933, 7.

Summary: Miscellaneous musings about child labor, study clubs, mimeographed newspapers issued by altar boys. (DDLW #274).

Although we have seen many copies of mimeographed papers put out by zealous Communist young people, the first one we have seen done by Catholics was brought in to us by Edwin F. Britton. It is called *The Magnet*, and is “a monthly published by the altar boys of Our Lady of Guadalupe Council of the Knights of the Divine Child, to inspire Catholic Action.” Its editor is Mr. Britton, who does the hard work of mimeographing it every month, devoting his evenings to the work, for he is employed during the day in a jewelry store. The motto of the paper is, “We want a Daily Press.” It is an eight-page paper with a bright rose cover, attractively made up and containing stories, editorials, jokes and poems. The copy he showed us was Volume 3, No. 24. This is a splendid piece of neighborhood action and we earnestly advise other young Catholics in schools and parishes to follow Mr. Britton’s example. He said if anyone wanted to find out how it can be done to call on him or write to him at 256 West 15th Street.

We refer study clubs and schools who want literature on international peace to the Catholic Association for International Peace, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. Miss Sweeney there will advise as to pamphlets and leaflets and study club outlines for classes.

Miss Kelley, a high school teacher and a member of the Teacher’s Union, dropped into our office last month and was telling us about the activities of the Communists in the Union, and their tactics of prolonging meetings until everyone is so exhausted that they have control of the situation and can carry things their way. She was urging that every Catholic teacher join the Union in order to fight Communist teachers in the public schools.

Another Catholic teacher says that there are several teachers’ organizations and that it is hard to belong to all of them and to pay dues to all of them.

Miss Kelley also told about working some years ago in a summer school, having the afternoon sessions, and about a little boy who always came to school so tired that he fell asleep at his desk. She investigated and found that he was working in a laundry as a sorter from seven to eleven so that he arrived at school in a state of exhaustion. She informed the proper authorities of the case and the little boy was able to give up his grueling work.

We have found a good and enthusiastic friend in Mollie Callanan, of Buffalo, New York, who heard about the paper up at the Cenacle of St. Regis and came down to see us. She immediately volunteered to help us and took papers down to Wall Street to distribute after the talks there. Another day she arrived at the office to get copies to distribute in Union Square. She had heard of Dorothy Weston's experience in the Square when she went to distribute papers in preparation for the meeting of the unemployed. Dorothy had been set upon and argued with (and to argue with her the Communists found it necessary to grab her by both arms, so she was almost torn limb from limb) and when she extricated herself from the milling mob, most of whom wanted copies of the paper and some half dozen of whom wanted to prevent the others from taking it, she found her chic nose veil ripped from its moorings and askew over one eye. Mollie declared herself ready for anything, but on the day set for her appearance in Union Square it poured rain and she had to forego her apostolate to the Communists, for this visit to New York at least.

We got an invigorating letter from her on her return to Buffalo in which she tells us of a Sister Fabian, "a live-wire nun who is moving mountains in a quiet way." We enjoyed the mixed metaphors.

Our friend J. Lehane of Long Island City came in during the month with another union man, both of them offering to serve in eviction cases, help to move furniture, or assist The Catholic Worker in any way they could. We talked of the railroad – he belongs to the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks – and Mr. Lehane pointed out that if more men had been employed on the railroads, the Erie wreck, where so many were killed last month, would not have occurred.