

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
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Bishop Noll Thanks You.

The Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D., Bishop of Fort Wayne, has written to thank you for the prayers and Holy Communions offered for the repose of the soul of his father, who died during the holidays, after a long life of good deeds.

Are You "George Washington Conscious?"

A few weeks ago a Bulletin was published on "The Publicity Racket." A case in point has just come up. It is disgusting enough, but it is typical. We choose it from many because of its prominence.

A successful effort was made in Congress a few days ago to cut from \$427,000 to \$250,000, the appropriation for the George Washington bicentennial commission, the evident purpose of which is to make the country George Washington-conscious. The daily papers carry various details of the commission's work which you can look up if you are interested. The details were brought out in the debate when certain representatives objected that the appropriation was a waste of good money in hard times.

Now comes the suspected blurb - or press story designed to make the public G.W.-conscious. Today's papers carry the story that the famous picture of Washington Crossing the Delaware has been removed from its place in the Metropolitan Museum of Art and stored in the basement. There is the usual sheaf of pro-and-cons, which are inconsequential. If it is a blurb, the fireworks will now start. There will be memorials and resolutions from the Colonial Dames of Pudunk Center and Hix Corners, from the Anti-Predestinarian Sunday School and the Young Men's Antiquarian Association, and suddenly the country will become what the commission wants it to become - \$250,000 worth.

This may be rash suspicion and false judgment, and since it may be we leave it in the category of the hypothetical. However, the removal of George Washington's picture - be it art or a daub - on the eve of his bicentennial, has all the ear-marks of a blurb, a press agent stunt. And this may be said without casting any reflection on the moral integrity or the gravity of officials of the Metropolitan Museum or of the bicentennial commission. The true press agent gets things done in the most plausible way, but reveals no sinister motives: to do so would be to kill either the story or its news value.

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With this illustration in mind you may be able to see through other cases as they come along. Shortly before the holidays our mail was cluttered with copies of a clipping from a certain "smart" magazine containing an attack which the boys thought should be answered. Either the magazine was not smart enough to see that the attack was a blurb, prepared by an unscrupulous man who had something to sell (and everything but the price was listed in the story), or it was unethical enough to accept the advertising as news and run it as such. In either case the attack could not have been answered without giving the attacker just what he wanted - publicity.

Controversy is the life of trade. It's the best advertising you can get, if it is lively enough. The author or the publisher who can get a book condemned by the Watch and Ward Society is "made" financially - for the moment, for there are enough evil-minded people with loose change as well as loose morals to give a dirty book a substantial run. If the depression lasts long enough to shake out all this filthy lucre we may get some peace from such blurbs.

PRAYERS: Joe Borda's father was anointed yesterday. An aunt of Joe Caton is very ill. Wm. Loon, an alumnus of the '90s, asks prayers for his deceased wife. A relative of Ed Murray died recently. Two students ask prayers for friends who are very ill. Four special intentions.