

# The Catholic Record.

"Christianus nihil nomen est Catholicus vero Cognomen"—(Christian is my Name but Catholic my Surname)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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## SOCIALISM.

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The Rev. Father Poland's pamphlet on the economic aspect of Socialism deserves wide circulation. Well and dispassionately written, it can be recommended to all who wish to know something of the fundamental principles of Socialism, and their application to the socialistic state, which however, is but a dream, a theory of men who do not condition themselves by the facts of human nature. Father Poland says that the Socialism of today aims simply at common ownership of all the means of production, to the end that each one may receive a wage, a compensation due to him for the labor which he has expended upon the common production. The socialistic system does not propose to dispossess the capitalist brutally, but will give him, after his plant has been handed over to the collective state, an annuity in the form of labor certificates according to the value of what he has transferred.

## THE THEORY APPLIED.

Now, says Father Poland, let us suppose the socialistic state to be agreed upon, and an effort set on foot to put into running order. One thing necessary for the continuance of any community along the lines of material progress is the freedom of individual demand. The new state, then, will have to regulate supply according to demand. It is hardly possible for a human intellect to conceive the enormous governmental machinery which will be required for the entire production, the kind and amount produced and the distribution of all things, in all places, and for all emergencies. If the new state cannot and does not do this it will be an enslavement instead of being a liberation. In a word, it will be the destruction of individuality. This state will be under the rule of committees, of factory bosses, overseers who can, whenever they see fit, put an insuperable obstacle to the development of individuality and the practical untrammeled exercise of that inventive spirit upon which the purely material progress of a community depends. The best men, it is said, will be always elected. Looking, however, at things as they are, we may suppose that whatsoever disturbing elements may be eliminated, the Socialistic state and its adherents will not be devoid of ambition. Some of our friends dilate upon our Religious Orders as confirmation of this theory. But if they would try to account for the bond which holds these men together, and make use of it in some measure for themselves and others, we should have far less support of that visionary entity, the Socialistic state.

## ANOTHER DIFFICULTY.

Father Poland shows the difficulty of selection and application of a more or less determinate unit measure of value for the purposes of exchange. In the socialistic scheme the labor hour is the standard of value. If the labor hour is to be paid by time, then when you are working amongst a hundred men to produce the common store, and you are working harder than the ninety-nine, they will be receiving the fruit of your labors and you will be receiving none of theirs. If we insist upon the time measure for the value of the labor hour, what safeguard have we against indolence and incompetence? The other way to eliminate pure time as a measure of value, and to measure value by the need, desirability or mere demand of articles produced and services rendered. An estimate of relative value will then have to be passed on everything that may be demanded. Consequently it will be necessary to establish a ratio of value between each resultant of labor and every other resultant of labor. What are the precise relative values of the labor hour employed in weeding a potato patch and the labor hour devoted to sewing on glove buttons?

Again, who is to have the privilege of applying himself to the most lucrative kind of labor? Who shall decide this? Putting aside civil service examinations—which would stop business—it would be decided by the committees. But if these would give the privileged places to their friends—what then?

## THE HIGHER PROFESSIONS.

In regard to this point, let us take a single case in the higher professions. In the socialistic state who will be the physicians? Will the committee select at random? That would not be justice to the community. Will it select its friends? That would be the equality of distributive justice which is the professed aim of the collective state. And considering that certain physical and moral qualities which can exhibit themselves only in the course of practice, go far to make a medical practitioner of real value to the community, it will be seen that the committee is in danger of making mistakes in its selection of candidates. Suppose they are selected, what is to make them strive for excellence with no competition, and the earning of the daily wage in the public service as the goal, the entire profession is degraded and the entire community is put at the mercy of the half educated charlatans. We sympathize with those who aim at redressing the wrongs of the toilers. Every attempt at reasonable reform should be hailed as a sign of life and progress. And any encroachment on the toiler's rights as a man should be repelled by legislative enactment. We should remember that Leo XIII. said:

"The maternal love of the Church for mankind is as wide as the paternity of God; but, nevertheless, faithful to her origin, and mindful of the Divine example, she has always been accustomed to devote herself by predilection to the lowly, to the afflicted, to the disinherited of fortune."

And each of us can show in our lives that justice and human brotherhood and their meaning and support in the words "you are all brothers and of one Father Who is in heaven."

## THE TRUE REMEDY.

Relief for the toiler must come not from socialistic machinery, but from virtuous living, organization of labor for the enforcement of its just demands, and proving that Christianity has not lost its power to lessen human misery. The Church has ever been in the van of movements for the improvement of the condition of the worker. We do not forget the interest taken in them by Leo XIII. and Pius X. And before them we know that the German Father Kolping organized journeymen clubs and in the Rhine district, not to mention others, had a roll-call of eighty thousand men. Cardinal Mermillod in Switzerland and Archbishop von Kettler reminded workers that they were men and not machines. Speaking at Leeds, in 1874, Cardinal Manning declared: "If the great end of life is to multiply yards of cloth, and if the glory of England consists in underselling all the nations of the world, let them go on. But the domestic life of the people is above all; the peace, purity and duties of home are sacred, far beyond anything which can be sold in the market. If the conditions of labor resulting from the unregulated sale of man's strength and skill shall lead to neglect of children, the turning of women into machines, of men into creatures of burden, who rise before the sun, and come back when it is set; able only to take food and to lie down to rest—domestic life exists no longer and we dare not go on in this path. What Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland and Bishops of the United States and Canada have done for the rights of the workman is known to our readers. They agree with Pope Leo XIII. that human law cannot reach the real seat of the conflict between labor and capital. Each must look at the other through Christian eyes. There is no power that can deal with social discontent, but organized religion. It alone can restore a moral balance to the human race." The laborer is worthy of his hire, and the industrialism which, to quote Karl Marx, for a profit of 300 per cent., would oppress the worker, should receive no quarter. But it does, unfortunately; and the cries of indignation attract no attention from the worshippers of gold. Let us hope, however, that the teaching that man should not consider his outward possessions as his own, but as common to all so as to share them without difficulty when others need them, may guide our actions. Our dividends, then, will be secure.

## NOT MYSTERIOUS.

We are not disposed to wonder at the fierce denunciation of the capitalist that we hear from some quarters. They cannot understand why they, willing to labor, can find nothing to do or if perchance they find it, obtain but a pittance for the use of their brawn.

And that ostentation that flants itself in the face of Poverty, and the cries of children going the way of starvation and disease—all this, and much more, that we see fires the brain with an unreasoning hatred of the capitalist. And the capitalist smiles, the newspaper chronicles his platitudes, and the world swings on. But did not a queen ask people who wanted bread why they did not eat cake? They who have their eyes on eternity—who know that we have not here a lasting city—are the breakwaters against the waves of social discontent; but the thousands who come from the godless school and family menace society.

## A REMINDER.

For the unjust capitalist we have the weighty words of St. James:

"Go to now ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you. Your gold and silver is cankered. . . . You have stored up for yourselves wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of the laborers . . . which by fraud has been kept back by you crieth and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

## PERJURY AND ITS PUNISHMENT.

A SOCIAL CRIME AND A PUBLIC DANGER.

We publish with pleasure a part of the timely and exhaustive pastoral on "The Oath," recently issued by Right Rev. Joseph Medard, D. D., Bishop of Valleyfield, Quebec. The Bishop says in part:

"The oath is in itself one of the gravest of actions, it possesses a sacred character, and man only uses it because he is essentially a religious being and wishes to unite himself closely to his God. In pronouncing it, he, in effect, directly calls upon his Creator and Master. He calls upon Him, and, in a certain sense, upon the oath, so grave and so much to be feared, has become in our days of extraordinary frequency. It is taken, not only upon those solemn occasions for which it would appear to have been reserved, but, so to speak, on all occasions, and in circumstances in which it appears, to say the least, superfluous to exact it. It is no longer vested with its sublime dignity, under the exclusive protection who regulate public affairs, it is placed in the hands of all and used every day, every instant, in the regulating of private affairs. To this frequency of swearing, which justly frightens us, is added the numerous causes which may lead to its abuse, and which, unfortunately, are not less numerous. The temptations that may beset man at certain times are so terrible, the traps set for him so subtle; the issue of a lawsuit, the victory or downfall of a candidate, the ties of relationship, of friendship, common interests, prejudice, party spirit, more or less direct influences, fear, sometimes the desire for vengeance, personal interest, solicit him so nervously that in order to keep within the strict bounds of truth affirmed upon oath, he stands in need of his entire faith and energy. Also when the most serious of men, honorable magistrates, complain loudly of the lightness with which the oath is but too often treated, and of the evident profanation of which it is so unfortunately the object, we are still more pained and frightened than surprised at this cry of alarm put forth in presence of a social crime, which is at the same time a public danger."

It therefore, seems necessary and even urgent to expose to you the entire Catholic doctrine regarding the oath, in order to make you properly understand its nature and the essential condition without which it is absolutely forbidden to swear, to make you aware of the horror that attaches itself to the crime of perjury, and to point out to you the terrible consequences thereof.

In order that the oath may preserve the character of a religious and sacred act binding the conscience, it is not indispensable that it should be administered with all the legal solemnity, or with the aid of certain judicial formulas defined by the laws. It suffices, as it often happens, at least in an implicit manner and with our own intentions, that we call upon God by His own or by that of one of His creatures, that we consider as coming from Him, to bear witness, in the presence of a fellowman, to the facts which we attest or the engagements which we undertake.

That may be done by a word, an act

or a gesture expressing the intention to take oath, such as placing one's hand upon the Bible, raising it towards the crucifix or placing it upon the hearth.

It would therefore be an error, and it is probably a very common one, to believe that there is no real oath binding upon the conscience only that taken in the presence of magistrates and by the authority of the laws and with certain recognized expression.

It is God Himself, dearly beloved brethren, who established and sanctioned the use of the oath, as we may see in many places in the Sacred Scriptures. "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God and serve but Him alone and swear by His name." (Deut. vi. 13.) "Lord," says holy King David, "who then shall be found worthy to inhabit Thy house?" And He answers: "He who shall have sworn not to deceive his neighbor." (Ps. xiv.)

The Church herself uses the oath in her most solemn acts; she exacts it from her pastors before their consecration; she submits it to the faithful when she calls upon them to give evidence.

It is, therefore, an established fact that the oath is in itself an act of religion; that it is of a nature to give honor and glory to God and that it offers, as St. Paul says (Heb. vi. 20) "the greatest certainty that we can obtain of the truthfulness of a word."

By this right it is the base of humanity. It is a necessary instrument in the hands of men to maintain the observance of justice, to give to all the highest possible guarantee against weakness or human malice, the but too logical consequence of the original fall.

But in order that the oath could attain an end so elevated and so important to common security, to swear honestly, there are certain essential conditions, without which it would deviate from its end, to become a source of the gravest disorders. These conditions the Holy Ghost points out to us in the following terms:

"You shall swear by the Lord, but with truth, with judgment and with justice." (Jer. iv. 2.) These words comprise, in short, all that is necessary for the rectitude and holiness of the oath. If the oath is without truth, says St. Thomas, it is false; if it is without justice, it is pernicious; if it is without judgment, it is irreligious. In the first place, it is necessary to swear with truth, that is to say, that truth should be the groundwork and principle of the oath, that it should be affirmed in good faith, with sincerity, without any disguise of words capable of deceiving our neighbor, because we cannot deceive God, and it is He Who is called upon to swear above all, to fix in our mind the sense of the formulae that we employ, regarding the meaning that it bears, not only for ourselves, but also for those who hear it and accept it.

We must also have a certain and exact knowledge of what we affirm under oath, feel no doubt in ourselves regarding it, or, at least, only swear with the measure of certainty that we possess regarding it.

If it be a question of a promissory oath, as, for example, that taken by persons called upon to fill certain administrative functions, it is indispensable for them in pronouncing it to have the firm purpose and will to strictly fulfill all the duties attached to the office confided to them, and to faithfully keep all their engagements.

The want of truth in an oath renders the swearer guilty of perjury, a terrible crime, which embraces at once the qualities both of blasphemy and sacrilege, since it profanes the name of God and makes it serve as the support of a lie. It is, at the same time, an outrage to public morals that lose thereby an essential means of having the rules of justice and honesty observed among men; it is a grave menace upon society in general, which has a need of being able to count upon the respect due to the oath in order to maintain itself in good order and to guarantee the protection of its members.

It is not desolating, dearly beloved brethren, to think that there are numerous occasions of falling into the sin of perjury, and that especially if we count upon the impunity of the part of men, that we are so often exposed to commit this terrible sin.

To what extent should be on their guard not only those who swear, but again, those who demand the oath, and who have as a special mission, by their state or profession, the exacting of testimony from those who have taken it.

It is evident that their only object should be to obtain the truth, to make it known to the tribunal and not to needlessly provoke flagrant contradictions, in no way necessary to the wants of their case, with the one purpose of tormenting the witness, and having as an only result the augmenting of the number of perjuries and the destroying of the public confidence which the oath should possess. Are not those still more guilty who in order to serve a mean and passing interest, forgetting all religion and abdicating all dignity, imitate the sacrilegious impiety of Catholics, do not fear to summon false witnesses and to induce them, either by flattery or by threats, to commit, even in courts of justice, the most abominable of crimes? What an odious trade of consciences! What a dreadful treason against God and against society!

In the second place, judgment is necessary, that is to say, wisdom and discretion, not to swear for vain things and on all occasions, but only when such is necessary.

The third required by the Holy Ghost for the holiness of the oath is that it be taken in justice, that is to say, that a

person never should swear otherwise than in a manner conformable to the law of God, to the rights of society and those of his neighbor, and that it never be permitted to bind one's self by an oath to things that are contrary to our conscience. This is what happens when we support by oath affirmations, or when we promise to do certain things that touch unjustly the honor, the reputation or the fortune of others; when we promise, again, under oath, to keep ill-will, not to become reconciled; in a word, to do harm to his neighbor.

Those also swear against justice who, becoming members of societies condemned by the Church, or that are gravely suspected in her sight, pronounce in entering them terrible oaths which bind them down all their lives, chain their liberty, and can eventually compel them to work in a manner, conscious or otherwise, calculated to trouble and even to sap away religious and social order. But this oath, as imprudent as it is unjust, the one affiliated to a secret society poses in rebellion against the most legitimate authority and as a bound adversary of this same society. This oath, which they have thus pronounced to keep secrets with the legitimately constituted authority, to practice absolute submission to unknown chiefs and to execute in extreme cases orders, the object of which they are ignorant, is at the same time a profanation of the name of God and as injustice towards our neighbors.

It is for this reason that the Church forbids it to the faithful and of this same society. This oath, which they have thus pronounced to keep secrets with the legitimately constituted authority, to practice absolute submission to unknown chiefs and to execute in extreme cases orders, the object of which they are ignorant, is at the same time a profanation of the name of God and as injustice towards our neighbors. It is for this reason that the Church forbids it to the faithful and of this same society. This oath, which they have thus pronounced to keep secrets with the legitimately constituted authority, to practice absolute submission to unknown chiefs and to execute in extreme cases orders, the object of which they are ignorant, is at the same time a profanation of the name of God and as injustice towards our neighbors.

It remains with us now, dearly beloved brethren, to say a few words to you concerning perjury, of the terrible malice of this crime, the consequences which it entails and the punishments which it merits.

Perjury is the crime of him who swears against truth or who falls in the promises he has made under oath. A perjurer, consequently, is he who, before the tribunals, or in elections, in public business office or elsewhere, by invoking the name of God, or with his hands on the Holy Gospels, or taking in any other way God to witness, affirms or denies something in a manner not exactly conformable to the truth as he actually knows it, without any doubt, without any possible hesitation. A perjurer is also the one who, before undertaking the duties of a certain function, swears to be exact, faithful, disinterested, impartial in the discharge of his duties, and yet who has no well defined intention to fulfill all those conditions, as would also be a perjurer he who, having taken the same oath, would subsequently take pains to regulate the affairs of public interest confided to his care to the extent of this promise.

The violation of the oath of office and false swearing are two forms of perjury equally contrary to the sanctity of God and the general interests of society.

The perjurer, says Bossuet, is an impious man and a blasphemer, who takes the name of God in vain and who thereby treats God as something vain, and who does not believe that God is able to punish, and does not fear to do him any harm, and does not fear His majesty, which he invokes against himself, any more than that, instead of God, he invokes the name of a vain, mute idol.

At the same time that it is a terrible profanation of the name of God it also tends to shake the very basis of the social edifice, since it takes away from the tribunals, or in elections, in public business office or elsewhere, the authority the only means that possesses of knowing the truth in points touching the peace of families, the security of contracts, the administration of justice and in general all that either attaches itself to or maintains the right of every body, staple and firm.

This is one of the crimes which God holds most in horror: "I will draw near to you for judgment, and I shall appear suddenly as a witness against those who swear falsely." (Malach. iii. 5.)

And again: "I shall spread the malediction of the oath which shall spread itself over the face of the earth; it shall enter into the house of him who swears falsely by the name of God; it shall remain therein and consume it even to the wood and stones thereof." (Zach. v. 4.)

The perjurer menaced by God Himself with the most terrible chastisements, of which we have many examples in the sacred writings, has also been from time immemorial the object of severe repression amongst all people. The old laws sometimes punished him by death, but oftener by tortures, the cruelty of which marked the horror of this crime. In our days, which have mitigated the rigor of corporal punishment, they inflict, nevertheless, upon the one guilty of a false oath a stigma of dishonor still worse than all physical sufferings could be. The perjurer is marked upon the forehead, an ineffaceable stamp that renders him an object of reproach to his fellow-men; he has lost all right to public consideration and the confidence and esteem of his neighbor. His word has no longer any value, and we refuse to believe him even under oath, which is

a supreme injury. If his crime remains secret, he is nevertheless forced to confess it to himself, to say interiorly that as a liar and falsifier he used the name of God in order to have accepted as truth what he knew to be falsehood and treason. He is dishonored in his own eyes.

The Church, knowing how holy and terrible the name of God is, with what solemn respect, with what fear and trembling it should be pronounced, has always stood up in her strength against the horrible crime of perjury. She has done it particularly in our country, frightened as she was at seeing the occasions for swearing becoming multiplied, not only before the tribunals, as the custom has always been practiced, but again in those days of license when public elections are carried on, when there is so much danger of taking rash, false or unjust oaths. She has, by a special decree of the Fifth Council of Quebec, made of perjury a sin, the abolition from which is a case specially reserved to the Bishop. The Council of Montreal has confirmed the severity of this discipline throughout the entire extent of our province, and judicial perjury is inscribed amongst the number of those offenses from the guilt of which the offenders can be regularly absolved only by the ordinary of the diocese.

## WHAT THE CONFERENCE WILL DO

The Third Conference of Missionaries, held two weeks ago at the Apostolic Mission House, Brookland, D. C., is one of those hopeful, inspiring events, which often become epoch-making in the history of the world. This Conference, which owes its origin to the mighty aspiration which would make America dominantly Catholic, reaches out with its message of faith to the utmost confines of the country. It was a soul-stirring sight to see gathered together such a notable body of men, all intent upon the accomplishment of one great purpose, mighty in will, and pledged, one may say, with their very lives, not to conquer, but to win, the American people to the fold of the Church. Uniting high resolve with undaunted courage the members of this Conference, each and all, bore within themselves the necessary elements of success, powerful energy and a faithful hope, together with the missionary's peculiar longing for the offering of souls to God.

That this Conference will have great and practical results, reaching far into the years, no one will doubt. The immediate fruits are self-evident—a rejuvenated zeal, a concentrated energy, together with a strengthened resolve. For this conversion of America to the Catholic faith is not an idle dream, nor a chance speculation; it is a living purpose for which men to-day are spending themselves and being spent; it is a possibility which will become more and more a reality, as the teachings of the Church are rightly understood, and her mission comprehended. To do this our missionaries must keep before them the illuminating message Archbishop Keane sent to the Conference: "The typical Missionary of the future must have before him always two great aims; first, to rouse men to a conviction of the necessity of religion, of union with God, and to some desire of the Supernatural; second, to make clear to them that Christ and Christianity are historical facts, reasonable, beautiful, salutary and imposing a practical heavenward obligation on each man individually. Light and Love are the two gifts which from Our Divine Lord, and which he must seek to scatter around him in all his words and acts. That is the kind of a man who will be sure to work conversions."

## A PROTESTANT TRIBUNE.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THE FRIEND OF THE POOR, THE HELPLESS, FALLEN AND SUFFERING OF EARTH.

The campaign of the slander carried on by one shameless section of religious bigots against Catholic institutions of charity in Sydney, Australia, says the Freeman's Journal of that city, has evidently caused a searching of hearts among leading Presbyterian divines, if one may judge from the words of the Moderator uttered before the Presbyterian Assembly the other day. He (the Rev. J. Kemp Bruce) confessed that the efforts of the Presbyterian and Protestant churches toward uplifting the helpless, and the weak, had been very meagre. He couldn't explain why Church work in behalf of the people had been neglected by them. And here he, instead of slandering Catholic institutions of philanthropy, as is done stealthily by his fellow clergy who direct the slanderous organ of bigotry, paid this high testimony to the work of the Catholic Church:

"To him it was a very sad and humbling thing to notice that practically the whole of the distinctly church work done for the relief of the poor, helpless and suffering was, to the hands of the Catholic Church. She was wise in her generation. So long as the Presbyterian Church left to the Catholic Church the duty of assisting the weak and helpless, so long could they expect to see her ranks recruited from Protestant men and women. He had seen boys and girls, born of Presbyterian parents and baptized by Presbyterian ministers, pass over to the Catholic Church, simply because no provision was made by the Presbyterian Church to assist in their helplessness during infancy."

Catholic parents can not exercise too much care about what their children read.