

The Catholic Record

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LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1922

ANOTHER BOGUS OATH

In the distant future men may laugh at the superstitions of the present generation; though human experience warrants the belief that they will have equally ludicrous superstitions of their own.

Compared with any past age the twentieth century has its full proportion of credulous people swayed by superstitious fears.

From time to time "perils" of various sorts enjoy a certain vogue and give way to others. But there is one peril that is perennial—the Roman Peril. There is always too large a proportion of Protestants who can be made to shudder at the mention of "Rome."

"And the goblins will get you if you don't watch out."

A favorite device of bigots of the meaner sort for scaring these Protestant children of a larger growth is the publication of alleged oaths taken by Catholics to exterminate their Protestant neighbors.

In our own memory there have been such bogies as the Jesuits' oath, the bishops' oath, and the Knights of Columbus oath. Of course they were all blood-curdling. And they all showed that Protestants were in imminent danger of their lives and liberties.

Considering that the proportion of Protestants to Catholics is four or five to one, it might be supposed that the bogus oath vendors would be laughed into a more honest means of livelihood. But that is to ignore the unfathomable credulity of a large class of Protestants where "Rome" is concerned. An incredibly large number of them were hoaxed by the K. of C. "oath."

It became necessary to trace the publication and bring into the courts those responsible therefor. Not only was the "oath" exposed in the courts, but a Committee of Congress thus pronounced on it: "This Committee cannot condemn too strongly the publication of the false and libelous article which was referred to in the paper of Mr. Bonniwell, and which was the spurious Knights of Columbus oath."

Masonic publications in some parts of the States having given currency to the forgery; the whole matter was thoroughly investigated by a committee of 38rd degree Masons of California who thus reported: "We hereby certify that by authority of the highest officer of the Knights of Columbus in the State of California, who acted under instructions from the Supreme Officer of the Order in the United States, we were furnished a complete copy of all the work, ceremonies and pledges used by the Order, and that we carefully read, discussed and examined the same. We found that while the Order is in a sense a secret association, it is not an oath-bound organization and that its ceremonies are comprised in four degrees, which are intended to teach and inculcate principles that lie at the foundation of every great religion and every free State. Our examination of these ceremonies and obligations was made primarily for the purpose of ascertaining whether or not a certain alleged oath of the Knights of Columbus, which has been printed and widely circulated, was in fact used by the Order and whether if it was not used, any oath, obligation or pledge was used which would be offensive to Protestants or

Masons, or those who are engaged in circulating a document of peculiar viciousness and wickedness. We find that neither the alleged oath nor any oath or pledge bearing the remotest resemblance thereto in matter, manner, spirit or purpose is used or forms a part of the ceremonies of any degree of the Knights of Columbus. The alleged oath is scurrilous, wicked and libelous and must be the invention of an impious and venomous mind. We find that the Order of Knights of Columbus, as shown by its ritual, is dedicated to the Catholic religion, charity and patriotism. There is no propaganda proposed or taught against Protestants or Masons or persons not of Catholic faith. Indeed, Protestants and Masons are not referred to directly or indirectly in the ceremonial and pledges. The ceremonial of the Order teaches a high and noble patriotism, instills a love of country, inculcates a reverence for law and order, urges the conscientious and unselfish performance of civic duty and holds up the Constitution of our country as the richest and most precious possession of a Knight of the Order."

All these exposures pretty well killed the bogus oath industry for a time. Yet, we are informed on unquestionable authority, copies of the K. of C. "oath" were in some places distributed to voters in Canada during the election campaign last Fall.

We have before us now "The Sinn Fein oath," a crude appeal to the more ignorant amongst the Orangemen and other superstitiously credulous Protestants. That Sinn Feiners swear "to wade in the blood of Orangemen and Heretics" must be news to Robert Barton, Erskine Childers, Darrel Figgis and hundreds of other Protestant Sinn Feiners who hold their place amongst the trusted leaders of Sinn Fein. They must know nothing of the "good times" to come "when we have a general shower of Protestant and heretic blood!"

And yet a subscriber sends us copies of this clumsy and ridiculous fabrication with the assurance that it is believed to be genuine in parts of Nova Scotia!

Following the oath is this interesting bit of information: "These oaths are furnished at 25 cents per 100, or \$2.00 per 1,000. So long as there are fools there will be knaves.

This bogus oath business originated with the perjurer scoundrel, Titus Oates. The Encyclopedia Britannica thus describes his great success: "The strong feeling against the Roman Catholics had been quickened into a flame by a great imposture. The inventors of the so-called Popish plot charged the leading English Roman Catholics with a design to murder the King. Judges and juries alike were maddened with excitement, and listened greedily to the lies which poured forth from the lips of profligate informers. Innocent blood was shed in abundance. "The capital and the whole nation," says Macaulay, "went mad with fear and hatred. The penal laws, which had begun to lose something of their edge, were sharpened anew. All the goals were filled with Papists. London had the aspect of a city in a state of siege."

Yet there is nothing on which historians are more unanimous than the utter baselessness of the alleged Popish Plot. As Marks, himself a Protestant, wrote a few years ago: "Through all the troublous times when belief in the Popish Plot raged, one searches in vain for one act of violence on the part of Catholics. After the lapse of two hundred years, no single document has come to light establishing in any one particular any single article of the eighty-one."

Under ordinary circumstances, in spite of the violently anti-Catholic upbringing of that generation of Englishmen so flimsy a fabric of grotesque lies would have been brought to the ground by the first breath of criticism. But it was taken up by the Whig party and made into what Echarde calls "a political contrivance." Shaftesbury, their leader, used it for all it was worth. It was commonly called "the Shaftesbury Plot." Chiefly by his influence and that of his party Parliament was incited to declare that "there hath been and still is a damnable and hellish Plot, contrived and carry'd on by Popish recusants, for the assassinating and murdering the King,

and for subverting the government and rooting out and destroying the Protestant religion." And this declaration gave reason for belief in stories otherwise "so monstrously ridiculous that they offer an intolerable affront to the understanding of any man who has but an indifferent account of the affairs of Europe." (Elliott—A Modest Vindication of Titus Oates.)

Not only do these "oaths" make their appearance periodically, but every one of them bears a striking resemblance to the concoctions of the infamous Titus Oates. Indeed not only in the English speaking world but in Germany also have these bogus oaths appeared. And the patient and painstaking research, for which German scholars are world-famed, has traced the genesis of these oaths back to that prince of perjurers who caused so much innocent Catholic blood to flow in England two hundred and fifty years ago. And just as Oates and his crew of profligate perjurers were taken up and used for political purposes so the modern "oath" mongers owe much of their cativited vitality to unscrupulous politicians. But though the meaner sort of modern bigot engaged in this bogus oath business may claim Titus Oates as his patron saint, he cannot hope, even with the aid of our little Shaftesburys, for a like success; he can only play on the superstitious fears of the very ignorant and the very credulous. These we have with us always.

FREE TEXT BOOKS

The Bill making it compulsory on School Boards to provide free text books for the school children of Ontario was defeated in the Legislature last week. The Minister of Education pointed out that his department already paid a large proportion of the cost of school text books, ranging from 15 to 80 per cent; the province footing a bill of about \$150,000 each year for this purpose. Instead of jumping to the conclusion that therefore the School Boards should pay the balance of the cost out of school taxes it might naturally be expected that first it would be well to enquire whether or not any benefit proportionate to the cost has accrued from the policy of the province assuming so large a part of the cost. Now the primer costs only 4 cents. School children at an age when the sense of responsibility is quite rudimentary, we are informed, take far less care of this primer precisely because it is so cheap. Often they wantonly abuse or even destroy it. When parents find it soiled or torn from careless ill-usage, they often remark: well, its only 4 cents, better get a new one. And this is more or less true of all the cheap text books. It is about the only result to be noted.

Now it is not the cost to the province or to the community, or to the family, that we deplore in this tendency; it is the cost to the child; the cost in habits of carelessness, irresponsibility, destructiveness, which will have to be paid for throughout the life time of these children who are wrongly educated in an important matter before they themselves can realize its importance. If parents pay for the text books themselves they will have the ordinary impelling motives for teaching their children the positive habits of responsible ownership. This is a small thing perhaps; but all important things are small in the budding lives of young children.

We should be the last to deny that for poor families the provision of free text books may be a real relief from one of many pressing burdens; but it does seem that such relief could be extended when desirable without the sloppy extravagance of mistaken and harmful generosity.

There may have been better reasons adduced than those reported. But under the heading "Children are Wards of the State" the promoter's arguments are thus summed up in the newspaper before us:

R. L. Brackin (Kent West) mover of the bill, took the ground that the child was being educated for the State, not for the parents in particular. That was the reason education was made compulsory and should also be a reason why the State should make that education absolutely free. He therefore maintained that the text books of the children of any community should be paid for from the taxes of that municipality. He explained that most of the larger cities of the province already provided free

text books and contended it was time the practice was made general throughout the province.

Children are not yet wards of the State in Canada; they are in Bolshevist Russia. Children who have lost their parents, or whose parents are unfortunately deemed unfit to have charge of them, may be made wards of the State in Ontario; but this is not considered ideal, and we are still old-fashioned enough to proceed on the assumption that the Christian family is the unit of Christian society. We do not at any rate openly deny this Christian truth, though we do through muddled-headed thinking often concede to the State rights and duties altogether incompatible with the rights and duties of parents. There is no doubt that the State has an interest in the education of its future citizens; there is consequently no question that the State has a right and a duty to exact a certain standard of education for all children according to their capacity. But the family is anterior to the State and with regard to the children has rights and duties and responsibilities that it is unwise and dangerous for the State to encroach upon. To relieve parents of their duties and responsibilities toward their children may seem to some politicians a measure of generosity not to speak of its vote-getting considerations. It would be well, however, if these well-meaning or self-interested politicians would think through the subject to the principles involved.

A member of the London Board of Education expressed himself in the following vigorous terms and we commend his clear-headed comments to those interested in the subject:

Trustee Clark points out that while the actual cost of supplying text books would be an inconsiderable item compared with other civic expenditures, it is his opinion that unless the Government is prepared to take over the whole cost of text book supply, then every effort should be made to defeat the bill. "No wonder that our taxes are increasing," is the general comment heard. "Children are being nationalized on a more ambitious scale, actually, than is the case in Russia. The municipality is expected to supply them with free education up to 18 years of age, free text books is now demanded, staffs of Public school nurses are constantly growing, we have free dental treatment, it is now proposed to introduce a system of medical examination at regular periods, and this will, of course, involve treatment. "All these things are well enough but they are making parenthood almost irresponsible for the well-being of children. The State is preparing to perform the function of parents and unless a halt is called, then there are no lengths to which this pernicious system may be extended."

A POLITICAL INDEX EXPURGATORIOUS

It used to be charged that the Catholic Church was narrow-minded and intolerant in placing certain books on a prohibited list for Catholics. The consideration in this case was that the books placed on the Index by the Church were likely to injure the faith or morals of her members.

Now, after all the rant about personal freedom in the matter, after the expressions of contempt for Catholic intolerance and the professions of fearless Protestant liberality, the Navy League of Canada asks the Government to place on its political Index Expurgatorius the Hearst publications.

What was contemptible narrowness when done for the sake of faith and morals becomes a highly patriotic action when done for political considerations!

CORPORATIONS AND CO-OPERATION

By THE OBSERVER

The indiscriminate condemnation of industrial and commercial corporations is unjustifiable. The corporation principle is not in itself bad. If the corporation in its present form is drawing within sight of its end, it is not because the corporation principle is bad, but for two other reasons; first, because the corporation has, in practice, abused the powers and confidence given it by the public; and, secondly, because there is a steadily growing public demand for wider and more general individual ownership; and this can only be satisfied by a change from the present corporation system to a co-operative corporation system.

People who indiscriminately condemn corporations forget that all the

co-operative enterprises are corporations. It is necessary to get a clear idea as to what a corporation is. Many years ago, it was found that if business was to be done in a large way, it was necessary to combine the money of individuals; because individuals, acting singly, could not control enough money to do business or to develop industry in a large way. Of course, partnerships have existed at all times in human history; whereby men could join together as partners for business or industry. In England and in Scotland, large undertakings were started into which a considerable number of persons entered as partners. In one notable case, that of a bank in Scotland, the business failed; and all the individuals who had put money into it as partners lost all they had invested in it. But they lost more than that. Each one of them was personally liable for the whole of the debts of the bank; and those of them who had property or money were ruined; for the debts were large.

From this and many other similar cases it appeared that men would not, dared not, become partners in any business unless they could personally supervise it; because if such business failed, the whole of their property or money might be taken from them to pay the debts of the ruined business.

From this experience, the limited liability company arose; in which a number, even a large number of men could put money; could limit their liability to the amount they had thus put in; and then pursue their other business or affairs; knowing that if that enterprise failed, his liability would not be wide enough to ruin him by taking all he had in the world.

This was wise, sound and necessary. Individual effort being plainly insufficient for the conduct of business and industry on a large scale, it was necessary and wise to encourage men to combine their funds in company; and it was plain that men would not commit themselves to company investments, in which all their property might be taken to balance up the liabilities of others in their company who happened to have less property or none.

Thus the company or corporation, as we have it today, came into existence; came into existence upon sound principles. The abuses came later.

In the New World especially, on this side of the Atlantic, the limited liability company was necessary and useful. North America had immense natural resources and a small population. The development of industry was difficult because of the comparative lack of money in large amounts, readily available and controllable for the development of natural resources. Out of that very condition arose a practice which, in later days, has led to some of the abuses with which the corporation is today justly reproached. Projects of development were in many cases hazardous; and likely to be for a long preliminary period, unprofitable. Because of this it became the custom for legislatures to grant to companies powers and advantages greater than were in the best interests of the country.

Excessive capitalization was first authorized by legislatures and parliaments who did not fear that if they did not act generously the companies would not be started at all; and on the formation of companies depended the development of the country. Individuals could not do it, acting singly; they could only do it combined in companies. They would not go into companies unless their liability was limited to the amount they subscribed; and even then they often hesitated unless the chances of losing what they put in were offset by the prospect of a very large gain if the enterprise succeeded. And thus came the custom of overcapitalization and the issue of what is called "watered stock."

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE LATEST accession to the ranks of the Canadian Episcopate, and an interesting one withal, is that of Mgr. Marie Leventoux, who has just been named Vicar Apostolic of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, in succession to Mgr. Chiasson, recently transferred to Chatham, N. B., as Bishop of that See. A native of old France, and a member of the Eudist Community, Mgr. Leventoux came to Canada in 1903, and has ever since been doing important missionary work in the diocese of

Chicoutimi and in the Vicariate over which he has now been called upon to preside. His episcopal residence will be on the Island of Anticosti. Being still in the prime of life the new Bishop should have a long career of usefulness yet before him.

THE EUDISTS, it may be added, are a congregation of secular priests, established at Caen, France, in 1643, for the purpose of training clergy and giving missions. The founder, Ven. John Eudes, after whom the congregation is named, died in 1680, leaving his congregation in a flourishing condition, but not fully recognized by the Holy See until some years thereafter. It has the double distinction of never having been infected by Jansenism, and of having given some ten or twelve martyrs to France under the Revolution. The first fathers came to Canada in 1890, at the instance of the late Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax, and have now houses in that city, in the diocese of Chatham, N. B., and at several points in the Province of Quebec. Bishop Leventoux has been latterly stationed at Anticosti.

LATE CABLE despatches announce that a French scientist of name, Professor Arthur Cousture, in an address before the Paris Academy of Medicine, has given positive denial to the theory of evolution as propounded by Darwin half a century ago and since elaborated by lesser men. Basing his theory on the discovery of prehistoric remains in all parts of the world, the Professor asserts that not only have man and the ape always been distinct types, but that the ape came into existence after man. Whatever reception this deliverance may meet with in scientific circles at large, this at least may be predicted of it that it emphasizes anew the extremely tentative character of scientific theory in the abstract.

ALTHOUGH MAKING no pronouncement on the subject, Dr. J. C. Merriam, president of the Carnegie Institute for Research and vice-president of the University of California, who lectured last week before the Canadian Institute of Toronto, brought out a fact corroborative in its drift of Professor Cousture's finding. The subject of Dr. Merriam's lecture was "Some Ancient Forms of Life on the American Continent," and it was in effect an account of his investigations in the asphalt beds of Southern California. In them are found innumerable pre-historic remains—bones of animals of various kinds, many of them of species long since extinct, and among them a human skull and thighbone of a man very much resembling in type the California Indian of today. Whether it was evidence of the existence of man contemporaneously with pre-historic fauna the Professor would not say but it at least may be taken as adding to the already existing body of proof that as far back as scientific research has yet gone, man is still man, and not an animal.

HOW SLOWLY the world learns of some of its greatest scholars! There is a Jesuit priest in India whose historical investigations, reaching back to the earliest times in India, are as yet scarcely known in Europe. This is Father Hosten of Calcutta, who within the past ten or fifteen years has wandered all over the country, investigating ancient remains and bringing to light the earliest recorded operations of European travellers and missionaries east of the Euphrates. Among those which he has translated and edited are Friar Manrique's "Itinerario," or "Travels in the East," 1629-1642. He has also contributed largely to "Bengal, Past and Present" and in the Journal of the United Provinces Historical Society.

Now, EUROPEAN savants, pursuing similar investigations at home are beginning to hear of Father Hosten, and finding that he has blazed the way for them. Col. C. E. Luard, for example, who had been translating the "Itinerario," heard at the British Museum of Father Hosten's work, and put himself in communication with him. The result was that the Indian missionary with rare self-effacement, turned over all his material and notes to Col. Luard, who, not to be outdone in generosity, has arranged with the Hakluyt Society that their names shall jointly appear as

editors and translators of this important manuscript.

ONE OTHER work of Father Hosten's is his vindication for Italian artists of the mosaic work at the palaces of Agra, Lahore, Delhi and Taj. On this subject,—"European Art at the Moghul Court," he has been invited to lecture before one of the chief learned bodies of India, the United Provinces Historical Society.

BOY LIFE

YOUR BOY'S IMAGINATION

(Adapted from an article by William Heyliger)

Imagination, enlivened by the right stimuli, is what a healthy boy needs to develop mentally. Preaching is the great indoor sport in the home. When little Johnny fractures a few ribs of the code, father or mother, or both, discourse at length on the horror of whatever it was that Johnny had done. They end in quite a glow of self-satisfaction, but nobody has ever yet been able to discover that the preaching accomplished very much so far as Johnny was concerned.

Vision cannot be breathed into the boy through the fervor of exhortation. Idealism—the idealism of his everyday responsibilities can reach him only through absorption. He will be bored by a trite statement of ethical truth; but if he catches a glimpse of this truth through subtle suggestion—feels that he has, in a measure, stumbled upon it himself—he takes it to heart, cherishes it, never quite gets away from the seed it has planted, and quite frequently consciously adopts it as his own code.

A fifteen year old boy came home one day sweaty and dusty from the baseball field. "We won Dad," he cried in glee. It developed that he was the catcher for the team. "Gosh, I discovered a dandy scheme today. I'd just hold out my glove and tip the bat as the batter swung. It threw them off and they couldn't connect with the ball. That was clever, wasn't it?"

The father puffed meditatively at his cigar. "Well," he said, "that all depends on whether your team is going to play the game or just be tricky. Of course, it's up to every team to decide for itself what it's going to do about that."

A few suggestive sentences—nothing more! Yet the boy ate that night in a strange sort of silence. A week later he came home from the field again, whistling softly, a bit subdued but nevertheless at peace with his world.

"Win?" the father asked. "Licked," he said briefly, "they hit our pitcher all over the lot." "Didn't the bat tipping work today?"

The boy flushed faintly. "We didn't try it," he said.

It is this quality of suggestion that makes reading such a tremendous factor in a boy's life. The author who knows his business will weave the ideal into the tale, but never in the bald, flat and tasteless form of open preaching. The boy is not given a moral idea, he finds his own in the story. It is planted there for him of course, but planted so that, when he comes upon it, he will feel the thrill of a discoverer. He makes his own deductions, establishes his own values, because of the emotions that the trials, temptations and struggle of his fictional hero arouses in him. Few adults realize the extent to which a boy places faith and trust in his books. To him the characters actually breathe and live. At one time, trying to implant an ideal of fair play in the minds of boys, I wrote six football and baseball stories of a college I called St. Mary's. I still receive letters from boys asking for the address of the college and inquiring whether the characters of the book are still students.

Charles M. Schwab told the graduating class of Princeton two years ago that the quality that a young man needed in business today if he were to succeed was imagination. He gave the formula as to how imagination might be cultivated: "Listen to good music, study good paintings and fine statues, and read the best things in print." He did not mean that reading would supply a boy or young man with a magic mental picture machine that would throw a picture, full of useful suggestion, before his eyes every time he faced an emergency. What he did mean was that reading would stimulate the imagination so that it would be able to make its own mental pictures.