

The Catholic Record.

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

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SOCIALISM IN FRANCE.

Despite the fact that Socialism has failed in small communistic societies, there is no abatement of the propaganda in its favor. The men who condition themselves by the facts of human nature are willing to work for the improvement of social conditions, but not with the aid of Socialism. The picture of the Socialist state is but a picture, and however we admire the self-sacrifice of its painters, we must say that their energy could be directed, and to much better purpose, into other channels. Beside the picture they should put facts which should give them food for thought. For instance, a recent despatch from France says that the town of St. Denis, governed on Socialist lines for the past three years, has been brought to the verge of financial ruin. Brest, after three years dallying with Socialism, is in financial straits. In Roubaix, Marseilles and Limoges, similar disaster is reported.

THE CATECHISM.

The catechism is the compendium of the whole revelation of God. Truths beyond the ken of the philosopher are here defined: all that a Christian needs to know is found within its covers. Concise and comprehensive, it needs the light of explanation to reveal its beauty to the little ones. It brings the children into the presence of the Divine Lord and His Mother, and in the hands of a competent teacher, who can appeal to their imagination and will and affections, it becomes for them not something to be learned somehow, dry and tedious, but one of the most interesting of books. But it is not our intention to dwell upon catechetical methods. What we wish to point out is that some parents, and we speak from experience, deem the catechism of little importance. They insist upon due attention to secular studies, but the catechism, which can be for a Catholic the source of happiness here and hereafter, is treated with neglect. The result is that many of us do not know enough of our religion to care much about it. We believe, of course, in eternity, but it exercises little influence on our lives. When we should say a word in defence of the Church we are either silent or vituperative. Negligent parents have much to answer for. In their eagerness for the goods of this world they lose sight of the reason why they have children at all. We wonder how many of them would say what the great orator, McGee, said in the course of a debate upon the above question: "I have but one son whom I dearly love," he said, "whose future I have deeply at heart, and if, on one hand, I could secure him all the knowledge our best universities could impart, without that of the 5 cent catechism, and on the other, have him thoroughly instructed in the latter to the neglect of all the rest, I would give him the catechism and my blessing and think I had best equipped him for his future career."

A VALUABLE WORK.

The Catholic Encyclopedia is making its way. When it was announced two years ago that such a work had been undertaken there were not a few who had dismal visions of the financial straits in which its promoters would find themselves. They pointed out that Catholics are not enthusiastic supporters of publications devoted to their interests, and that works having for object the history and constitution, discipline and doctrine of the Catholic Church would not find a market. Happily, however, these predictions are unfulfilled. The Encyclopedia has found, and is finding, friends. Approved by the highest authorities in America, commended by scholars, and with contributors, many of them of acknowledged prowess in the field of science and literature, and all of them with a thorough knowledge of their subjects, it must be an invaluable aid to all who wish to study the influence of the Church on the social, educational and religious development of the human race. It is a storehouse of information. The non-Catholic can find in it a fund of useful knowledge which may serve to remove misconceptions in regard to us, and the Catholic can, by means of it, enlarge his intellectual vision and strengthen his grip on his beliefs.

PAYMENT OF DEBTS.

In the second volume, which is now ready, the well-known Rev. Thomas Slater, S. J., sets forth the teaching of the Church in regard to the moral obligation of paying one's just debts. "If," he says, "discussing the moral aspect of bankruptcy, 'the creditors only receive a portion of what is due to them, they have suffered loss through the action of the bankrupt, and if he is morally to blame as the cause of injury to his neighbor. There is no moral blame attributable to a man, who, through misfortune and by no fault of his own, has become bankrupt and unable to pay his debts. But if bankruptcy has been brought about by the debtor's own fault he must be condemned in the court of morals, even if he escapes without punishment in a court of law. Living beyond one's means, negligence, or imprudence in the conduct of business, spending money which is due to creditors in betting or gambling, are frequent causes of debtors appearing in the bankruptcy court. It is obvious that it is against the rights of creditors and against justice for an insolvent debtor to transfer some of his property to his wife or to a friend who will keep it for him so that the creditors cannot get at it. In the same way a debtor is guilty of dishonesty if he hides or removes some of his property, or if he allows a fictitious debt to be proved against the state. Loss is caused the creditors and injustice is committed by an insolvent debtor who continues to trade after the time when he fully recognizes that he is insolvent, and that there is no reasonable hope of recovering himself.'"

THE MORAL OBLIGATION OF A BANKRUPT.

WHAT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES IN REGARD TO THE PAYMENT OF ONE'S JUST DEBTS.

In the present agitated state of the financial and commercial world the moral aspect of bankruptcy takes on a special interest. The subject is treated most instructively and interestingly by the well-known English Jesuit, Rev. Thomas Slater, of St. Beuno's College, in the second volume of the Catholic Encyclopedia, which is now ready. In this article, which sets forth what the Catholic Church teaches in regard to the moral obligation of paying one's just debts, Father Slater says, among other things: "If, as is usually the case, the creditors only receive a portion of what is due them, they have suffered loss through the action of the bankrupt; and if he is the voluntary cause of that loss, he is morally to blame as the cause of injury to his neighbor. There is no moral blame attributable to a man who through misfortune and by no fault of his own has become a bankrupt and unable to pay his debts. But if bankruptcy has been brought about by the debtor's own fault, he must be condemned in the court of morals, even if he escapes without punishment in a court of law. Bankruptcy may be the result of one's own fault in a great variety of ways. Living beyond one's means, negligence or imprudence in the conduct of business, spending money which is due to creditors in betting and gambling, are frequent causes of debtors appearing in the bankruptcy court. All such causes are accompanied with more or less moral guilt, in proportion to the bankrupt's adherence to their probable consequences and the voluntariness of his action. 'Breaches of the moral law are also committed in a great variety of ways in connection with the bankruptcy itself. The benefits of the law is extended to the bankrupt debtor if he faithfully complies with all its just requirements. To do this, then, is a matter of conscience. He is bound to make a full disclosure of all his property, and to surrender it all for the benefit of his creditors. He may indeed retain what the law allows him to retain, but nothing else, unless the law makes no provision at all for him and the results of surrendering everything would be to reduce himself and those dependent on him to destitution. Such a result, however, must not be readily presumed in the case of modern bankruptcy law, which is humane in its treatment of the unfortunate debtor, and makes what provision is necessary for him. It is obvious that it is against the rights of creditors and against justice for an insolvent debtor to transfer some of his property to his wife or to a friend who will keep it for him till the storm blows over, so that the creditors cannot get at it. In the same way a debtor is guilty of dishonesty and fraud if he hides or removes some of his property, or if he allows a fictitious debt to be proved against the estate. 'Loss is caused the creditors and injustice is committed by an insolvent debtor who continues to trade after the time when he fully recognizes that he is insolvent, and that there is no reasonable hope of recovering himself. He may continue to pay what debts he can as they become due if payment is demanded by his creditors, and he may make current payments for value received. But if, in contemplation of

bankruptcy, he pays some creditor in full, with a view to giving that creditor a preference over the others, he becomes guilty of a fraudulent preference. 'Lawyers and theologians are agreed that in most countries the effect of a discharge is merely to bar legal proceedings for debt against the bankrupt. His moral obligation to pay all his debts in full when he is able still remains. He may put off payment till such time as he can conveniently fulfill his obligations, and in the meanwhile he is guaranteed freedom from molestation. This seems to be the effect of the national bankruptcy law of the United States. 'Since the discharge is personal to the bankrupt, he may waive it; and since it does not destroy the debt, but merely releases him from liability—that is, removes the legal obligation to pay the debt, leaving the moral obligation unaffected—such moral obligation is a sufficient consideration to support a new promise.' (Bradenburg, 'The Law of Bankruptcy,' 391.) 'On the contrary, an absolute discharge, when granted to the honest bankrupt, according to English law, frees the bankrupt from his debts, with certain exceptions, and makes him a clear man again. This is admitted by English lawyers and by theologians who treat of the effect of the English law of bankruptcy. When, therefore, an honest bankrupt has obtained his absolute discharge in an English court, he is under no strict obligation, legal or moral, to pay his past debts in full, though if he choose to do so, his scrupulous rectitude will be much appreciated. What has been said about bankruptcy applies also to compositions or schemes of arrangement with one's creditors when they have received the sanction of the court.'"

"OVER THE WALL" INTO THE FOLD.

A STUDY IN EVOLUTION BY A DISTINGUISHED JESUIT CONVERT.

The December Messenger publishes under the title "Over the Wall" some reminiscences of the late Rev. Henry Van Kesseler, S. J., the noted convert, whose death occurred in New York recently. The following extracts are of special interest: "By my God have I leaped over the wall," and what a wall it was! A wall that has proved an impassable barrier to millions! This was the wall laid by the leaders of the great revolt against the Church in the sixteenth century, and raised higher and higher in succeeding centuries by the accumulation of false accusations and prejudices. By the powerful help of God alone can one have strength to leap over this wall. And the leap supposes a combined action of man's mind and will with the grace of God. A leap it is, and, owing to the nature of faith, which implies some uncertainty in the evidence, it seems to be a leap in the dark. For there is always a latent apprehension that perhaps the action may be a mistake.

But to become personal. I was born of very religious parents of the strong Protestant type. My father was of Dutch Reformed origin, while my mother was a Protestant Episcopalian. Fifty years ago the distinction between those sects was comparatively unimportant. They were all Protestants and were proud of it. The world false accusations and prejudices would scarcely have been brought to the notice of the day. The term Catholic was a byword. The term priest was not yet usurped by ministers, with the exception of a few who were eyed askance as dangerous characters, secret allies of the Scarlet Woman and in her pay. The evolution of the Episcopal Church into a so-called branch of the Catholic Church is interesting.

Originally an offshoot of the Established Church of England, this American branch was cut off by the Declaration of Independence and had to assume a new corporate existence and title. The staunch Protestants of those days were proud of their new name. But they had Bishops, so-called, and therefore they were Episcopals. So their sect was thenceforth to be known as the Protestant Episcopal Church, a name which suited it admirably. They were on friendly terms with other Protestant denominations, and their Protestantism cannot be supposed errors of Rome. The first ritualistic church in New York was St. Alban's. The name of it was significant. It was meant to insinuate the continuity with the ancient British church, of which St. Alban was the first martyr. Moreover, its nameable in London had been the center of opposition of the officials of the state church.

St. Alban's on this side of the water was an exact imitation of a Catholic church. The minister dubbed himself "father" and donned the habiliments of a priest. It was a novelty, and sightseers frequented the services. The Church of St. Mary the Virgin was the next to follow suit, and offered all the attractions of Rome, without being Roman. St. Ignace was the next in the field, with rival novelties from Rome. These were full-blown ritualistic churches. There were others tending upward. For the tendency of the true Church is truly enough said to be becoming "high." For

Perhaps the most striking way to show this growth is to follow the evolution of the eucharistic service, for this was the axis on which the movement turned. In good old-fashioned Episcopal churches there was a chancel and in the chancel a communion

table—a veritable table with four legs, and when in use, once a month, it was covered with a regulation linen table cloth. Being a table for the Lord's supper, as it was then commonly called, there was ordinarily nothing on it. Then an ornamental cover was placed over it, and this became later a front altar. The empty space between the legs was filled in, and it took on the semblance of an altar. Next a shelf made its appearance at the back of the table. On the shelf a cross of flowers was introduced on a feast day, Christmas or Easter. The flowers withered and were removed, but the wooden cross remained. Next two candlesticks with candles for light in the early morning only flanked the cross. As it was no longer a receptacle for flowers, two vases were substituted. By this time the old-fashioned communion table had blossomed into a simple type of altar. The large flagon of wine, the chalice, and the plate of bread were no more visible on the table. A credence or side table was provided. The elements, as they were called, were covered with a veil, and the bread was in the form of wafers.

The ministers, and they were not ashamed of the name, of old stood at either end of the table, so that the congregation could witness all their actions. This was technically termed the northward position, although north and south would have been more correct. But the eastward position (the altar end of the church theoretically was supposed to face east) became prevalent, and the minister stood with his back to the people, which gave him a chance for various ritualistic practices, which he interpolated unbeknown to the congregation. But the dress of the embryo priest had to keep pace with the development of the altar. First, he donned a cassock reaching to his feet, with a moderately long surplice. The broad black scarf, worn on all occasions, gave way on great feasts to a white one. This done and accepted, the other colors were soon adopted. But the surplice was not an eucharistic vestment. A sort of combination chasuble and surplice served as a go-between, until the regular chasuble was no longer an object of suspicion. For a while the material was linen sometimes handsomely embroidered; silk soon replaced the linen, and a set of silk vestments of all the church colors became a part of every ritualistic establishment. The evolution was well nigh complete; the chancel had become the sanctuary; the table, the altar and all its appurtenances were there. The cross had replaced its figure, and the homely heart; querulous and complaining in our conversation; suspicious and fault-finding towards our fellow-men? Well then, let us resolve, with God's help, to look now on the bright side of things, to rely on God's promised help, and to speak good things of our dear Heavenly Father and of our fellow-creatures.

Are we accustomed to be morose and melancholy, distrustful of God's good news and of His loving and benevolent heart; querulous and complaining in our conversation; suspicious and fault-finding towards our fellow-men? Well then, let us resolve, with God's help, to look now on the bright side of things, to rely on God's promised help, and to speak good things of our dear Heavenly Father and of our fellow-creatures. Are we only too prone to find an excuse for not going to Mass on Sunday, or on holidays of obligation? Let us determine by God's help, never to commit that sin again. Are we apt to gossip, talk scandal, listen to scandal? Let us resolve, by God's grace, to curb our bitter tongues and to speak good things henceforward. One firm resolve let us all make with the new year, namely, to love and serve our Blessed Redeemer with joyful, trustful, loyal hearts, and to rejoice daily in the Lord. Such joy will make us more thoughtful for our neighbor and more firm and steadfast in God's service; it will lighten our burdens and help us to carry our crosses; and it will be a foretaste of the heavenly delights that God has prepared for them that love Him.—S. H. Review.

With all this external growth doctrinal teaching had been in the lead. The "faithful" were forbidden to call themselves Protestants and were Catholics or Anglo-Catholics; whereas Catholics must be contemptuously called Romanists; for, according to the new Gospel, Romanists were only a sect, originating in Italy, while the Anglican Church was the Church, pure and undefiled, conformable to primitive Christianity.

Of course, the ritualists proper were, and still are, a very small minority in the Protestant Episcopal Church. But they had a certain influence in leaving the Protestant lump, and in practices. But by far the more influential party is that known as the Broad Church, which, in reality, is so ritualistic that it rejects such fundamental truths as the Divinity of Christ and consequently the Trinity, and perforce the two commonly accepted sacraments as real means of grace, and denies the inspiration of the Scriptures. The Low Church party contains the old conservative Protestants, and might be characterized as Evangelical or Bible Christians, respectable, but unreasoning. Then come the High Churchmen, holding various attitudes of belief, the greater part being High and Dry, and so considered very safe, with no danger of reaching the height whence a fall Romeward would be likely.

We might here recall two clever remarks: one which styled the low churchmen platitudinarians, the high churchmen latitudinarians; the ritualists attentivarians; the other which called the real Catholics Papists and the pseudo-Catholics Apists.

A miserly millionaire who dressed very shabbily was approached by a friend, who tried to persuade him to dress better. A writer in the Washington Star tells the story to illustrate the wrong kind of content with old-fashioned methods.

"I am surprised," said the friend, "that you should let yourself be so shabby."

"But I am not shabby," said the miser. "Oh, you are," said the family friend. "Remember your father. He was always neatly, even elegantly, dressed. His clothes were very handsome."

THE NEW YEAR.

With the beginning of each year we ought to recall the fact that the venerable Pontiff, Leo XIII., consecrated the entire twentieth century to our Redeemer Jesus Christ. Consequently, should not each New Year's Day of this century be the fitting time to review, in our own way, devoutly and fervently, that consecration? What serious and helpful thoughts should accompany this act? We are not our own, but we are bought with a great price, by our Blessed Saviour Who gave His life for us on Calvary's cross. Love and gratitude should spring up in our hearts and well forth from our lips, as we recall this truth. What can we do for Him, who has given us everything that makes life truly worth living? Adoration, homage, praise, all these are His due; but a further offering should accompany these acts, an occasional of our daily words, deeds and thoughts for His greater glory.

Our Blessed Redeemer does not demand from us magnificent and splendid returns as our mark of gratitude for His inestimable bounty, though true indeed it is that there are men and women, who are able and glad to lavish such great gifts as His pierced and holy feet. But He does wish for our hearts, an occasional of our daily words, deeds and thoughts for His greater glory. A hearty wish to serve our Redeemer Jesus Christ.

Is it pleasing our Lord if we cheat, or lie, or back bite, or wrong our neighbor in any way? Is it pleasing Him if we murmur at the cross He lays upon us? Is it pleasing Him if we stay away from Mass and the sacraments, or if we disobey any other command of God's Holy Church? Let us begin the new year with one distinct and solidly good resolution in honor of our great Redeemer. Let us choose decidedly and prayerfully some one special thing that we will try to overcome during this new year for His glory. Certainly we must try to overcome all our faults, but let us make a particular fight against one of them.

Are we accustomed to be morose and melancholy, distrustful of God's good news and of His loving and benevolent heart; querulous and complaining in our conversation; suspicious and fault-finding towards our fellow-men? Well then, let us resolve, with God's help, to look now on the bright side of things, to rely on God's promised help, and to speak good things of our dear Heavenly Father and of our fellow-creatures. Are we only too prone to find an excuse for not going to Mass on Sunday, or on holidays of obligation? Let us determine by God's help, never to commit that sin again. Are we apt to gossip, talk scandal, listen to scandal? Let us resolve, by God's grace, to curb our bitter tongues and to speak good things henceforward. One firm resolve let us all make with the new year, namely, to love and serve our Blessed Redeemer with joyful, trustful, loyal hearts, and to rejoice daily in the Lord. Such joy will make us more thoughtful for our neighbor and more firm and steadfast in God's service; it will lighten our burdens and help us to carry our crosses; and it will be a foretaste of the heavenly delights that God has prepared for them that love Him.—S. H. Review.

THE SUNDAY PAPER.

INFLUENCE GENERALLY LOWERING—WORTH MORE THAN THE DIME NOVEL.

In a splendidly-written article on "The American Sunday Newspaper," in the Nineteenth Century, Frank Foxcraft says among other things:

The latest development of Sunday journalism is the colored "comic secundo" of the larger Sunday papers. Crudely drawn, dabbed with vivid reds and greens and yellows, and conveying with the very feeblest humor, it is like a "comic valentine" extended, and multiplied by forty or fifty. Here is a specimen from a metropolitan Sunday paper. One page is taken up with fourteen pictures representing a small boy's nightmare; another series of twelve pictures portrays the inconceivable consciousness of "Little Sammy's Sneezes." Another page of twelve pictures describes the pranks of an urethra who puts a dress on his dog and passes it off for a little girl. These are fair specimens of the type. What can be the mental condition of the adult person who thinks them even faintly funny? These gaudy atrocities have now had a run of several years. There are cheerful optimists who look for a reaction against them. They reason that it is impossible that the Sunday paper should remain stationary; that these pictures are as cheap and maudlin as can be conceived of; and that therefore any change must be for the better. This sounds plausible; but there can be no assurance that there are not yet lower depths than have been reached. Ten years ago the present monstrosities would have seemed incredible.

The influence of the Sunday newspaper in dissipating intellectual energy and lowering standards of taste in art and literature is not easily measured. In these respects it works along the same lines as the indefinitely-multiplied ten-cent magazines which strew the counters of the news stands. It reaches a lower level and achieves a wider circulation. The typical American is a more omnivorous

reader than any other national type. He leaves behind him in the street cars and railroad trains a trail of discarded papers and magazines with which he has beguiled his journey. It is a pity that, for his one leisure day of the week, he should find nothing better than what is provided for him by the average Sunday newspaper. And it is deplorable to think of the children in American homes turned loose among the lawdry attractions of these publications.

AN "EPISCOPAL TAP."

From the Ave Marie.

Notwithstanding the lamentable pass to which religion has come in France, there exist here and there in all parts of that country veritable centres of true Christian living, wherein are annually held regular retreats for men. All ranks and conditions—employers and laborers, masters and servants—attend these spiritual exercises. The results are admirable. The men return to their occupations not only better Christians individually, but very often apostles, Catholic knights without fear and without reproach. M. de Bonneval, in the "Messager de Saint Ache," cites the following incident as a rather original case in point.

All the employees in a certain industrial concern, only one had followed the exercises of a man's retreat that had just been concluded. The other workers knew about their companion's "piety," and proposed having some fun with him on the subject when he returned to his work. Among the band there were naturally some free thinkers, and one of them, who set up for a wit, took the lead in rallying the religious laborer. Accordingly, as the latter joined the group of workmen standing about the gate before the bell rang for the beginning of the day's labor, the free-thinking joker saluted him with: "Say, old man, as you are just off retreat I suppose you are a priest now, and so can give me absolution?" A hearty laugh followed this salutation, but it was soon hushed in order that all might hear the "pious one's" answer. It came forthwith, and hardly admitted of a rejoinder. "Priest? No, I'm not; so I can't give you absolution. But, all the same, I can, even without being a Bishop, give you consolation. Here you are." And with that he gave the fellow so vigorous and resounding an "episcopal tap" on the cheek that the joker fell to the ground, amid a roar of applauding laughter that effectively restrained him from future pleasantries toward the pious comrade.

While one cannot approve of what is called "muscular Christianity," one must admit that the "argumentum ad hominem" is sometimes very effective; and its employment in cases like the above is to be condoned rather than condemned. The Holy Man of Tours, we remember, once silenced a blasphemer by a smart slap in the face.

CATHOLIC NOTES.

Very Rev. Bernard O'Reilly P. P., Kilquade, County Wicklow, one of the most popular priests in the archdiocese of Dublin, died at a private hospital in Mountjoy square.

The Rev. Father Dietz of the Sacred Heart Church, Oberlin, Ohio, recently addressed a minister's meeting in that city on "The Late Encyclical of Pius X. on Modernism." He was given a vote of thanks by the ministers for his able address.

Paris, December 25.—A noteworthy feature of the Christmas celebration was the resumption throughout France of midnight Masses, which last year were abandoned by the direction of the higher clergy because the separation law was about to go into effect.

A mitre worn by St. Thomas a Becket has, it is stated, come into the possession of Archbishop Burnes of Westminster. It may be of interest to recall that St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, was born in 1117; was murdered in Canterbury Cathedral in 1170, and was canonized in 1173.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites had before it on November 26 the cause of beatification of Mother Marie Madeleine Sophie Barret, foundress of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. At its next meeting the Congregation will consider the case of Madeleine Pontel, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy.

Detroit, Mich., December 21.—A noticeable feature of the laymen's reception given at the Hotel Pontchartrain to Right Rev. John S. Foley, D. D., Bishop of Detroit, in connection with the celebration yesterday of the golden jubilee of his priesthood, was the appearance of a number of Protestant clergymen in the receiving line.

John Mitchell, the president of the Miners' Union, was taken suddenly ill last Thursday at a conference in Indianapolis, Ind., and a physician and priest were hurriedly sent for. It appears that Mr. Mitchell was received into the Church on what he believed to be his deathbed. His wife and family are Catholics and have never ceased to pray for his conversion.

The conversion of a Russian Archbishop, Father Sergius Verigin, to Catholicism has made a great sensation in ecclesiastical circles in St. Petersburg, although it was not entirely unexpected. The report had arrived in the capital that he was suffering from what is termed in Anglo-Saxon Ritualistic circles "Roman fever." It was even said that it was due to his infatuation with Queen Natalie of Servia because a Catholic, and the conversion of several well-known Russians at Bordeaux was attributed to him.