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Against Religion

It would not seem necessary to repeat that Socialism, as an ism, is utterly and absolutely opposed to not only the Catholic religion but against everything that savors of belief in and submission to anything that savors of higher or supernatural authority. But the fact remains that the smooth-tongued Socialist who is never so happy as when he can win over an unsuspecting Catholic to espouse his cause, invariably claims to the Catholic that Socialism is purely a political proposition and, in no way seeks to antagonize the Catholic faith or any religious tenets of any one of its members. "To be sure," he argues, "we would reform some of what may be called the human machinery of the Catholic Church but to break down the Catholic faith, never! Perish the thought!"

Such specious argument lulls the suspicions of the Catholic, who does not search deep into the why and wherefore of new doctrines and he enters into the new idea. As days go on, his faith is assailed insidiously and, little by little, it is sapped until lost entirely.

Inasmuch as Milwaukee has had for a year a distinctively Socialist city administration, its example may be illuminating. The Milwaukee "Catholic Citizen," in a recent issue, had this striking editorial:

Scratch a Russian (said Napoleon) and you find a Tartar. Scratch a Socialist (it may now be said), and you will find a full-blown A. P. A.

Developments during the past few days make a startling demonstration in this matter—of interest to Catholics nationally.

Things were drifting rather against the "comrades" lately in Milwaukee politics. An uprising of taxpayers over such matters as the million dollar park purchase and the discontent of thousands of unemployed were playing the deuce with Socialist prospects. A new cry was needed to keep the "comrades" in line. This, in desperation, was found in an appeal to the A. P. A. sentiment and the circumstances which furnished the opportunity were as follows:

Milwaukee has a school board of fifteen members, one-third of whom are renewed every two years. This year, owing to two vacancies, seven members are to be chosen. Some twenty-three persons showed their willingness to serve by entering the primaries as candidates—among them four Catholics and four avowed Socialists.

When the returns were counted, it appeared that the four Catholics led the poll, getting twice as many votes as the Socialists.

Under the law these four and ten others (only two of whom are Socialists) were put on the official ballot.

In a city like Milwaukee where one-third the population are Catholics, there should seem nothing exceptional in one out of every three members of the school

board happening to be a Catholic. It was true, however, that owing to the present entire absence of Catholics from the board, owing to certain Socialistic propaganda in the school buildings, etc., there was a special effort made according to methods that seemed good to those busy in the premises.

Irrespective of the result of the election, this episode is important as showing the latent spirit of Socialism. And as Milwaukee is to a certain extent an "experiment station" on the subject, this analysis is advisory to Catholic Americans generally in every section of the country. It is monitory. It is illuminating.

Well Done, Mr. Barrett

The Catholic Journal wishes to extend its congratulations to District Attorney John Barrett upon his conduct of the first important criminal case he has been called upon to try in his term of office. From the way Mr. Barrett handled the murder case of Ralph Friedman, we feel sure that Monroe county has a prosecuting officer whose sole aim is to do rigid justice, not to strive merely for a conviction in order that the grand jury's indictment may be justified.

Moreover, Mr. Barrett did not restore to the cheap theatricals so much affected these days by lawyers on both sides of a criminal trial. The evidence of the people was presented rapidly in clear and concise manner and cheap oratory and gallery plays were eliminated. When the district attorney leads the way, the opposing counsel has little excuse for "dress-parade tactics."

Hon. John Barrett has made a good start. Keep it up!

Chain Prayers

While the question of "chain prayers" has been gone into and over quite thoroughly, the "True Voice" states it so concisely in the following paragraph that we have reproduced it in full as follows:—

A correspondent asks: "Are Catholics allowed to take part in an endless chain of prayers?" Provided the prayers be of the right kind, we see no objection. But the sample of "chain prayers" that have come to this office from time to time are far from being the right kind. They either promise some favor to be infallibly gained by recitation of the prayer, or threaten some evil which is to befall the one who neglects the prayer. This, of course, is superstition pure and simple.

We don't know who originally composed the prayers we have seen, but certainly no Catholic bishop ever lent his approval to them. Coming from nobody-knows-what-source and "passed on" by silly recipients, some of these "chain prayers" are little less than blasphemous in wording. It is a safe rule to confine yourself to the authorized prayers of the Church, without looking for silly novelties in "chain prayers." Say the Our Father well, and consign the chain nonsense to the waste basket or the kitchen stove.

From Czar to "Bad Boy of the House" is the way a newspaper chronicles a recent change in the status of "Uncle Joe" Cannon.

What a number of political has-beens made their appearance when congress reconvened in Washington.

They do say that the laundrymen are not so very much worked up about the "smoke nuisance." Out in Chicago the soft coal smoke is figured to account for \$17,000,000 worth of laundry work.

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