

etc., and has, for any cause, been discharged, has become at once a bitter opponent of our Church, proving thereby that his or her motive in uniting with us was a mercenary one.*

As to the charge of violating the seal of the Confessional—which has evidently been conclusively disproven in the present case—it is a remarkable thing that history furnishes us with no instance, all down the ages, in which a confessor has proved unfaithful to his sacred trust. On the contrary, it has furnished many instances in which priests have faced imprisonment, and even death, when the occasion demanded it, rather than violate the obligation of perpetual secrecy; and there is a long and glorious roll of sufferers for the seal. We cite two specimen cases, in which the sufferings of the heroic victims were attended with circumstances of tragic interest. The story of Father Kobylowicz was told in 1873, by the *Reichzeitung* of Bonn. He was parish priest of Oranon, in Kiev (Russian Poland), and bore a high reputation for piety and zeal. A murder was committed in his parish; and his gun, recently discharged, was found concealed under the altar. He was tried, found guilty, and condemned to penal servitude for life in the mines of Siberia. Twenty years later—in 1873—the organist of the Church at Oranon lay dying. He summoned the authorities, and confessed that he was the murderer. He had used the priest's gun, hastily concealed it beneath the altar, and in the search which ensued had contrived to cast suspicion on Father Kobylowicz. In a remorseful mood he soon afterwards confessed to the priest, but had not the courage to surrender himself to the hands of justice. After his dying confession, orders were sent to Siberia for the immediate release of Father Kobylowicz. He had died a short time previously. He had endured the slow martyrdom of Siberian mines for twenty years. He had borne that far keener agony—the fearful ceremony of public degradation at Zhitomcer. He bore his heavy cross in silence with him to the grave.*

The other case is still more recent, and the victim served his sentence almost at our doors. It is the case of the French priest, the Abbé Dumoulin, which aroused the attention of even the secular press. The facts of the case were thus recorded, at the time (1892), by the *Sydney Morning Herald*:—“The Abbé Dumoulin, a priest of the archdiocese of Aix, in France, was three years ago convicted of the robbery and murder of a wealthy lady. She had come to him for a sum equivalent to £400 of trust funds belonging to a religious society with which she was connected, and four days after her dead body was found in a cell in a deserted monastery, attached to the presbytery buildings, through which she had to pass. The money was gone, and a large table knife and handkerchief, stained with blood, were found near, both having belonged to a relative of the Abbé. On circumstantial evidence the Abbé was convicted and sentenced to transportation for life, and for three years he had been serving his sentence in New Caledonia. But the truth has come to light, and it is as thrilling as fiction for, some months ago, the sexton of the church confessed that it was he that had committed the murder, and that on the day on which the body was discovered he had gone to the Abbé himself and confessed the crime. He had not the courage to give himself up to the law, and the Abbé, with the secret of the confessional hidden in his breast, allowed himself to be tried, and convicted and sentenced for murder.” Father Dumoulin wore the prison garb, and toiled for three years under a tropical sun, herding day and night, as the *S.M. Herald* said, with ‘the basest of the outcasts of society.’ Even that secular journal declared that his ‘heroic devotion to a sense of duty constituted an act of heroism to which it would be hard to find a parallel.’

Weighed and Found Wanting

A little more than a year ago, Milwaukee, one of the largest cities in America, elected a Socialist Mayor by a large majority; and the administration of local affairs was definitely placed in the hands of the Socialists. The result of the elections—unexpected even by the Socialists themselves—naturally gave rise to much jubilation in Socialistic circles; and the incident was hailed by the Socialistic press throughout the world as the prelude to many greater victories, and as the inauguration of a new and glorious era for humanity. Special interest attached to the contest by reason of the fact that there is a very considerable Catholic vote—the city being a large Polish centre—and the Socialist victory was advanced as conclusive evidence of the extent to which Socialism had succeeded in capturing even the Catholic body. Both the general significance of the Milwaukee election, and its special relation to the Catholic voters appear to have been greatly misjudged. The citizens generally voted the Socialist ticket mainly as a protest against a political administration that had long

become distasteful and unpopular. Catholic voters acted on precisely the same principle. Socialist doctrines, as such, were not considered. There was a universal desire for local reform; the Socialists promised this in large measure; and the people—on the principle that things could hardly be worse than they were—decided to give them a chance. It was noticeable that during the election, and for a short time afterwards, not a word of vituperation was uttered by the Socialist leaders either against individual Catholics, or against the Catholic Faith.*

The Socialists have now had over a year of office; and they have been given, by all classes, a fair opportunity to ‘make good.’ So far as can be judged at this distance, they appear to have utterly failed; and there is a notable reaction and revulsion of feeling against them. The *Milwaukee Catholic Citizen* of April 22, in a dispassionate discussion of Milwaukee's Socialist experiment, gives the following summary of the short-comings of the Socialist administration: ‘The Milwaukee Socialists,’ it says, ‘had a good opportunity. And they actually gave some indications of improvement in such matters as better public accounting, and at least in the proclamation of better methods of conducting public works, involving the breaking down of contractors’ rings. They also turned in a right direction when they developed an interest in public welfare conditions and amusements. But along with these good intentions, there cropped out some bad traits, which turned public opinion decidedly against the Socialists. We mention: (1) Incivism (i.e., bad citizenship). Especially manifested in a disposition to consider exclusively the wishes of their own class, to consult the decision of an inside ring of their party and to contemn and flout and even insult merchants and manufacturers, judges and clergy and other elements of the community. (2) Extravagance. The increase of taxes (due to the previous administration, but credited up to the party in office, as is the way in politics), together with proposed vast bond issues, championed by the Socialists, and special legislation sought for by them at the State capital, alarmed and exasperated the tax-paying element, which still commands two-thirds of the voting strength in Milwaukee. (3) Blunders and Impolitics. The Milwaukee Socialist party showed itself as mal-adroit as any of the old parties, in not a few matters. It was careless about the regularity and legality of its proceedings. The possession of patronage (something which an aggressive party can better do without), proved a positive injury to the Socialists. Finally, as towards the argumentative attacks of Catholic critics, the Milwaukee Socialists gave the task of reply to their A.P.A. contingent, who handled the matter about as uncleverly and tactlessly as possible—permanently alienating an element from which Victor Berger declared the party drew a third of its vote, (“one-fifth” would be a more accurate estimate). Instead of attempting to meet the issues raised the blunder was committed of aspersing, in a wholesale manner, the citizenship of Catholics as fundamentally dangerous to American institutions.’*

The extent to which local opinion in Milwaukee has turned against the Socialists is shown by the following election statistics:—

	Total City Vote.	Socialist Vote.	Per Cent. Socialist.
April, 1910	59,484	27,608	46½
Nov., 1910	52,785	20,883	39½
April, 1911	36,235	12,254	31

It is shown still more in the actual results of the elections in April last. In that month the citizens elected judges and school directors. Of ten candidates for positions on the school directorate four were Catholics. The Socialists nominated candidates in opposition; and carried on an anti-Catholic campaign reminiscent, in its bitterness, of A.P.A.-ism at its worst. One of their cartoons represented a tiger, labelled ‘The Jesuit,’ barring the way to the public school, and the Catholics were warned that they ‘might force another “Reformation” which would do a more thorough job because it would have a vein of the French revolution running through it.’ The Milwaukee citizens—Catholic and non-Catholic—resented such intolerance; and in the result, three of the four Catholic candidates were placed at the head of the poll, and not one Socialist candidate either for the school directorate or the judicial appointments was successful. Milwaukee's abandoned experiment has thus to be added to the already fairly long list of unsuccessful attempts to give the Socialist programme a local habitation and a name. Incidentally, it has also served to show how Socialism, in its ultimate development, in practice as well as in theory, ranges itself against Catholicism.

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