The Church and Socialism.

Interesting Report by Committee of New York Chapter, Knights of Columbus.

Socialism has been making great progress in various quarters throughout the world. Throughout the United States and Canada the captious doctrines of the fraternity have recruited a number of adepts. The professions and arguments put forth appeal to many people, who fail to dig into the motives which actuate the founders of the system.

Alive to the dangers of the Socialistic propaganda, the New York Chapter of the Knights of Columbus appointed a committee to etudy the whole question of Socialis, and analize the remedies which it offers for human ills.

Mr. Thomas S. Lonergan, chairman of this committee, presented the report which appeared in the official organ of the Knights, the Columbiad, as follows:

"We have confined this report to a brief exposition of modern or scientific socialism—a world movement which has undertaken to reconstruct human society. We do not question the right of any Knight of Columbus to hold any economic or political opinion he pleases, but we do believe that no man can be a practical Catholic and a full-fledged Socialist at the same time.

The founders of Modern Socialism were Marx, Engels, Bebel and Liebknecht.

About 40 years ago Karl Marx published his famous work entitled "Capital," which is the Bible, of American Socialists, both foreign and native. That book was based on the materialistic conception of history. It is a well established fact, that the literature and philosophy of Socialism, are thoroughly saturated with the spirit of materialism and atheism.

The following definition of Socialism is the best, the fairest and the most comprehensive that we have been able to find:

"Socialism is a proposed, international, industrial co-operative, social Democracy, aiming at the seizure of universal political power, in order to substitute public for private ownership of land and capital, so as to bring about public production and equal distribution of all income."

What is the Socialist program? First—Revolution; second—public ownership of land and capital, third—Forced equal distribution of goods and social conditions.

There are many planks in the socialistic platform, to which Catholics can subscribe, but the fundamental principles of modern Socialism are revolutionary, impossible and undesirable.

Socialists claim that all capital is robbery, and consequently that strife must always exist between capital and labor. They are continually railing against capitalism and arraying the classes against the masses. Capital and labor should work hand in hand. One is the complement of the other. We believe that the labor question can never be settled and settled right, except in accordance with the teachings and philosophy of the Christian religion as expounded by Pope Leo XIII., in his famous encyclical on "The Condition of Labor."

Socialists have a false notion of the relations between labor and capital. John Mitchell in his new book on the "Labor Problem" says: "There is no necessary hostility between capital and labor. Neither can do without the other. The laborer and capitalist are both men with the virtues and vices of men, and each wishes at times more than his share. Yet broadly considered, the interest of one is the interest of the other."

We are told that the influence of Socialism on economic, social and religious thought especially in Germany, has been very great, and has helped to spread broadcast the historical conception of political economy and the materialistic conception of history, yet we know that nearly all the famous writers on political enonomy, from Adam Smith to Henry George opposed Socialism, because well they knew that Socialism could not solve the problem of poverty or "man's inhumanity to man," and we are fully satisfied that the Catholic Church will never accept the doctrine, called the "materialistic conception of history."

It has been well, said that modern Socialism is economically unsound, socially wrong and industrially impossible. Socialism and atheism are twin sisters. We Catholics are taught to believe that man is a threefold being, possessing spiritual, intellectual and physical desires. The whole socialistic scheme ignores the spiritual and moral elements of man.

We favor co-operation, because co-operation is voluntary and does not require State action. It stimulates prudence and thrift. It encourages some of the best characteristics of individualism. Co-operation played a glorious part in the Labor Guilds of the Middle Ages. Socialism is compulsory and would make every man a cog in the socialistic machine and reduce us all to a "dead level."

Our system of government is founded on individualism. The fathers of the Republic were individualists and every patriot and statesman from Washington and Jefferson down to the present day were individualists. If the Gospel of Christ and the genius of Democracy cannot solve the industrial, social and political problems of our time, nothing can. We need Christian Democracy, not atheistic socialism.

Socialists sneer at patriotism, deride virtue, ridicule the Christian religion and deny the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. Bebel, one of the canonized saints of socialism, exclaims, "Leave heaven to the angels and the sparrows," and Liebknecht says: "Stupidity reveals itself in religious forms and dogmas." Marx himself wrote: "The abolition of religion as a deceptive happiness of the people, is a necessary condition for their true happiness."

The leaders of Socialism recommend their followers to support every revolutionary movement against the existing social, religious and political order of things. Socialists have no respect for constituted authority.

Money is a measure of value and a medium of exchange. Under Socialism we would have no real money. The Socialistic measure of value would be the labor hour, and that is the pivot of the socialist scheme. Neither Marx's social unit nor Bebel's measurement hour make allowance for skill or experience.

During the past century socialist communities were established in several places in the United States and all failed miserably. The Brook Farm experiment was a signal failure, although it possessed the genius and learning of Thoreau, Hecker, Dana, Emerson, Brisbane and others. New Harmony in Indiana, founded by Robert Owen, was also a dismal failure.

We believe in the marriage tie and we recognize that the family is the unit of society—but Socialism would abolish Christian marriage and destroy the family life.

In 1884, Frederic Engels published his book on "The Origin of the Family," which is considered a classic by socialists. That book advocates free love pure and simple. Under Socialism, children would be the offspring, not of true marriage, but of free love, and would be reared like foundlings in communal schools.

Karl Marx, the founder and father of modern scientific, international socialism, sounded the tocsin for universal revolt in these words: "We shall do well if we stir hatred and contempt against all existing institutions; we make war against all prevailing ideas of religion, of the State, of the country, of patriotism. The idea of God is the keystone of perverted civilization; the true root of civilization is atheism." Comment on such language is unnecessary.

Socialists of the Marx school claim that "all wealth comes from labor." That statement is misleading. As a matter of fact, all legitimate wealth nowadays is largely produced by machinery. Three elements enter into that production: 1st, Invention; 2nd Capital; 3rd Muscle labor.

"Private property," exclaims the modern socialist, "is public robbery." That is a good epigram and nothing more. It is self-evident that man has a natural right to private property. Man is older than the State and possesses inherent rights.

In the language of Leo XIII: "To say that God has given the earth to the use and enjoyment of the universal human race is not to deny that there can be private property. For God has granted the earth to mankind in general, not in the sense, that all without distinction can deal with it as they please, but rather that no part of it has been assigned to any one in particular."

Socialism might work well if men and women were saints and angels, but they are not. We must take human nature as we find it. The best of us have some bad qualities, and the very worst of us have some good qualities.

There seems to be an irrepressible conflict between Socialism and Catholicism. They cannot be harmonized. The Catholic Church is a spiritual Democracy. Socialism is a materialistic bureaucracy. Socialists claim that religion is a private affair. Catholics can never accept that principle.

The Catholic Church to-day as of old, is the friend and champion of the toiling masses everywhere, but she cannot countenance Socialism, communism or materialism—a trinity of pernicious doctrines, dangerous to Church and State alike.

In conclusion, if Socialism were put into operation, we are satisfied that it would paralyze human progress, stifle inventive genius, crush individual liberty, destroy the family life, create a bureaucracy instead of a democracy and establish on the ruins of our Christian civilization a socialistic Utopia founded on the materialistic conception of human history.

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Ireland's Depopulation

And Our Iniquitous Land Laws.

To the Editor of the Irish News:

Dear Sir,—In the North Atlantic Ocean, enjoying a mild and healthy climate, is situated what might have been called, at least some centuries ago, the Ultima Thule of the great Celtic race. It was called the Island of Saints and Scholars before her churches, her monasteries, and her schools were razed to the ground by inhuman and barbarous neighbors. And it has been always known as a land of sons heroically brave. But now for 63 years a merciless war of extermination is carried on by the landlord garrison, placed there and supported by the civil and military powers at their command. Their deeds of cruelty and extermination, as far as the civilized and outer world is concerned, may with fair accuracy be described as performed behind the screen. I shall endeavor to raise the curtain so that the civilized world may have an opportunity of viewing and photographing the sad scenes.

Ireland's total population has decreased by one half within the last 63 years, and her rural population by some two-thirds within the same period, and as this is a matter that cannot be disputed, even by the most barefaced effrontery, it follows as a necessary consequence that there must be some screw loose in the methods of Irish legislation, particularly land law legislation, or in the administration of those laws, or in both. Some 63 years ago Ireland's population was 8 1-2 millions, and England's population was then 15 millions; that is, for every 17 of a population Ireland had then England had 20. But for every 17 of a population now in Ireland, England has 136. What a contrast? Seventeen to 30 63 years ago; to-day, 17 to 136.

We in Ireland, now in the 20th century, located on the high road of civilization, so to speak, at the end of the Old World and at the beginning of the New; and on the highway to Australia; passing by South Africa, if persecuted at all for very appearance sake, must be

PERSECUTED IN AN UP-TO-DATE FASHION.

The up-to-date method adopted now in Ireland is by depriving the peasantry of security in the fruits of their labors and by financial burdens, such as rack-rents, non-judicial and judicial rack-rents, not only retarding Ireland's progress, but even driving her back in a retrograde course.

Perhaps it is a debatable question but Ireland to-day as a nation seems as much crushed and persecuted as she was under Cromwell or Elizabeth, the periods of open hostilities perhaps ~~being~~ excepted; but, of course, as has been said, in a different fashion, and this seems evident, as shown above, by contrasting the relative population of Ireland and England for the last 60 years. Cromwell was a savage fanatic in matters pertaining to religion, but not so jealous or cruelly apprehensive of Ireland's prosperity and of Ireland's increasing population as modern British statesmen seem to be. Cromwell, with all his faults—and they were black and many and revolting, too—restored to Ireland the rights of commercial equality, and with those restored rights the Irish woollen trade at once revived Irish shipping and other commercial pursuits sprang up and prospered, until other malevolent English statesmen killed those industries, and like our churches and schools, they overturned our factories, too. The object of these remarks, as is clear to all, is not in any way to excuse Cromwell, nor his prototype, Elizabeth, but, by contrast and comparison, to exhibit landlord oppression and cruelties on the one hand, and British Government injustice and tyranny in this country on the other.

Surely such a remarkable decrease in the population of our country, as is shown, could not possibly have occurred if Ireland were not handicapped in some exceedingly unjust and extraordinary manner. What has occurred to bring about such a lamentable decrease in our rural population from 6 1-2 millions in 1846 to 2 1-4 millions in 1909? We here on the ground cannot avoid seeing what is occurring. Poverty and eviction have brought about this, our country's sad depopulation. But why is rural Ireland so poverty-stricken? Because of rack-rents and insecurity. But has not Gladstone's Land Act put a stop to rack-rents, and established security for the Irish farmers? No; neither the one nor the other, unless to a limited extent. If that be so, would it not be better to draw public attention to this sad condition of the Irish farmers? The public must see numberless cases of such rack-rents and of such insecurity, but like a person who, standing on the bank of some large river, and observing it flowing by, and yet does not advert to the huge volume of water passing on to the sea, day after day, so the universal ruin brought about by the Irish rack-rents and insecurity escapes that attention which it deserves. Of the hundreds of thousands of holdings yet to be purchased here in Ireland, nearly one-third of the occupiers are future tenants who are outside the pale of Gladstone's act. Moreover, a pretty large number of present tenants who are supposed to be protected by Gladstone's Land Act, and who specially need protection, are, because of their poverty, practically shut out from the Irish Land Courts because of arrears arising from their destitute condition.

Just a few days ago not many furlongs from where this letter is being written,

A POVERTY-STRICKEN FARMER

with his helpess wife and small children, even in such a season, was evicted and left on the roadside by officers of the law, the local representatives of our Irish civil and military authorities, because he, being unavoidably in arrears, presumed to seek the protection of Gladstone's Land Act. And this is but one case out of the thousands of the evicted Irish peasantry. In this way about half the tenants yet to purchase, consisting of future tenants and others almost similarly circumstanced, including a considerable number of statutory tenants who, having been in arrears, were not permitted by the landlords (as they can prevent them) to get their judicial rents fixed by the law courts, and who had to accept the pittance offered or continue to put up with their present rack-rents, and who are even in a worse condition than the future tenants, because they are ensnared by the land purchase zones, in all, about half a million of Irish peasantry, including the younger members of the families, are still held in Egyptian bondage, notwithstanding Gladstone's Land Act of 1881—poor, ill-treated people, whose rents for the most part cannot be paid until they are received from the members of their families in foreign lands.

The Irish landlords and their friends the "Carrion Crows," for instance, are constantly maligning the Irish peasantry as dishonest because they cannot pay impossible rack-rents; and the British Government, too, by implication, proclaims them dishonest by their courts and through civil and military compulsion, whereas the one and the other know that those future tenants and present tenants, who on account of their poverty have the Land Courts closed against them, are still bound by the civil law to pay the rack-rents of thirty years ago—that is, to pay £100 where in justice only £60 only is due, as the £100 by universal consent should be reduced to £60 to reach a fair rent. In other words, the civil law here compels those poverty-stricken peasantry to pay 66 per cent. to the wealthy, Irish landlords more than is honestly due, and the Government know that said 66 per cent. is the dishonest fruit of the unjust Irish agrarian laws. And, moreover, here lies one of the greatest obstacles to land sales at fair prices. When the law of the land secures those unjust landlords 66 per cent. above fair rents, to be paid by the Irish in exile, how can they who are so unreasonably grasping and so wise in their generation voluntarily consent to sell at fair prices?

Considering all this suffering and depopulation of our country, it is surprising that the Irish peasantry, or rather the remnant still remaining, are not reconciled to the treatment they receive from the hands of the English Government and the English garrison in this country, the Irish landlords. From what we know of human nature and of the character of even the most upright of men, how can it reasonably be expected, as long as the Irish land question remains as it it, bringing so much suffering and injustice to the Irish peasantry, that they will become contented? If English statesmen were really far-seeing, and at the same time really anxious to have the Irish people contented, they would

BY ONE HEROIC EFFORT,

—if necessary by compulsion—settle the Irish land purchase question at once on terms fair to all, and not have it hanging on for ever torturing our people and depopulating our country. There are many who lack neither intelligence nor honesty who fear that English statesmen are not anxious to have the Irish people contented, or, at least, that they are unwilling to give them what is fit to make them contented.

Whilst our country is thus suffering and thus depopulated, we have an undeniable right, which we will not surrender, in clear, in firm, and in calm language to paint our treatment at the hands of England, and to place it before the nations and Governments of the civilized world. The mercilessly treated subjects of the barbarous Turks and of the cruel Russians have been attracting the attention of the civilized world—sometimes even the active attention; and yet Russian Poland, for instance, has doubled her population within the last 63 years, whilst Ireland has lost half her population within the same period. For every hundred of population that Ireland and Poland respectively possessed 63 years ago, Ireland has to-day 50, whilst Poland has 200; thus Poland is fourfold, at least 300 per cent., better off from the population standpoint than Ireland, both being contrasted with each other at the beginning, and now at the end of 63 years—if, indeed, it be permissible to contrast on the same plane a declining and negative with an increasing and positive quantity at all.

Up till eleven years ago the cruel Turks for centuries ruled over the island of Crete. Crete has some 200,000 inhabitants. If the barbarous Turk before his departure from the island had, by his cruelties, misgovernment, and injustice, and consequent poverty and other sufferings, practically depopulated the historic island, surely the civilized nations of the world would have extended their deepest sympathy to the tortured and suffering people.

During the last 63 years England's cruel garrison, the Irish landlords, with the connivance, even with the authority, of the English Government, have

IMPOVERISHED, STARVED AND BANISHED

from rural Ireland not only 200,000 but more than 21 times 200,000—that is, four and a quarter millions.

In order that our brave and worthy peasantry be protected from further ruin it is necessary to keep as in a mirror before the gaze of the civilized world how they have been treated, how they have been ruined, how they are being treated, and how they are likely to be treated unless some competent restraining influence be immediately put in force. The Irish peasantry and the Irish people with one voice cry aloud for protection, for immediate protection, from unjust and merciless Irish landlordism, that has impoverished and banished the Irish peasantry, desolated their homesteads, and made a solitude of our country.

Yours very faithfully,

EUGENE (CANON) M'KENNA, P.P.
Shantonagh, Castleblayney,
January, 1909.

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PUBLIC NOTICE.

The Town of Maisonneuve will apply at the Legislature of the Province of Quebec, at its next session, to amend its charter and obtain the following powers: To change the name of The Town of Maisonneuve, to that of "The City of Maisonneuve"; power for the town to take away the snow from the sidewalks and to levy the cost of it by repartition; enactiments relating to the construction of permanent sidewalks and concerning the vote of electors who are proprietors; to amend section 47 of 61st Victoria, ch. 57, to reduce the borrowing power of the town to 20 per cent. of the valuation of assessable properties, and for other ends; enactments to borrow on municipal debentures by by-law of the Council, to execute works of a permanent character up to 20 per cent. of the assessable immoveables and also to consolidate by by-law of the Council, the floating debt of the Town; to ratify the by-laws to borrow money issued by the Council; power to acquire the land for a park and a post office; enactments concerning the valuation of properties, the valuation roll and the perception roll of general and special taxes and their collection; to rasify other resolutions, contracts and by-laws made since 1907; to abrogate section 29 of 61st Victoria, ch. 57; to amend section 48 of 61st Victoria, ch. 57; enactments concerning the Recorder's Court and the powers of the Recorder; power for the Town to annex outside municipalities and procedure to that end; enactments concerning the general election of the Councillors every two years, and concerning the administration and the general welfare of the Town; to organize a Board of Control.

Montreal,

L. J. S. MORIN,
Attorney for the Town of Maisonneuve.

NOTICE is hereby given that application will be made to the Legislature of the Province of Quebec, at its next session, by the Estate of the late John Henry Wilson, of the City of Montreal, for the passing of a law authorizing the testamentary executors of said J. H. Wilson to increase the annual rent payable to each of the latter's children under his last will.

Montreal, this 2nd February, 1909.

L. LYMAN,
Attorney for Petitioner.