

a group of children at play, killing six, and wounding some fifteen more. Or again when men called at a doctor's house, and finding him out sprayed his housekeeper with petrol and set fire to her dress, the only parallel civilized history affords is the playful Neronian trick of making torches of the early Christians.

DECLINE OF SEXUAL MORALITY

"The Sixth and Ninth Commandments had been undermined perhaps before all others. Indeed moral degeneracy most commonly begins in the relations between the sexes. And sexual morality has declined in the last half century more than is commonly recognized. Immorality has always been pretty widespread. It is one of the incurable diseases of life. What makes libertinism of recent years something novel, in Christian times at least, is that it is no longer the mere revolt of passion, struggling against a temptation and acknowledged as a sin when yielded to, but is defended philosophically upon physiological, humanitarian, eugenic or economic grounds. The aid of science has been invoked to make it less dangerous to the health and to frustrate the very purposes of nature. Apologies are made for it now for which our forefathers would have stoned the apologists. Indeed it is hardly too much to say that outside the Catholic Church traditional views on this point have almost disappeared."

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Joseph Hunsley, S. J., in America

Pope Leo XIII. firmly laid the foundation of our modern Christian social system when in his Encyclical "On the Condition of the Working Classes" he wrote the few brief words which may be considered as the most far-reaching of all his social utterances: "The law should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the humbler classes to become owners." The ownership in question is that of productive property. Not the abolition of private capital but its widest diffusion among the masses is the Catholic ideal. This is to be brought about not merely by the unaided efforts of the workers, nor solely by private initiative, in which all classes are to cooperate, but by legal enactments as well. Such is the great constructive doctrine of Catholic social policy.

Social legislation is to be formulated in a spirit of determined opposition to the exclusive accumulation of capital in the hands of a few. It is to show a pronounced partiality for all reasonable measures that enable as many as possible to participate, not merely but effectively, in the ownership of the productive property. More than this, definite inducements are to be held out by our legislators to arouse in the worker a desire for such ownership as well as to enable him to realize it in every just and prudent way.

The special aspect of the social problem that naturally called for most urgent consideration by Pope Leo XIII. was the ownership of the soil. For this reason insistence was primarily placed by him upon legal measures encouraging the laborer "to look forward to obtaining a share in the land," as a means of bridging over the gulf between vast wealth and sheer poverty. But the same principle is evidently to be applied to the industrial situation as far as possible. In this sphere too, in Pope Leo's own words, property must "be more equitably divided." Christians are called upon to unite, employers and employed alike, for a great crusade against the social conditions as Leo found them in his day.

"On the one side there is the party which holds power because it holds wealth; which has in its grasp the whole of labor and trade; which manipulates for its own benefit and its own purposes all the sources of supply, and which is even represented in the councils of the State itself. On the other side there is the needy and powerless multitude, broken down and suffering, and ever ready for disturbances."

In this vigorous denunciation of the false social system of restrictive ownership Pope Leo XIII. merely echoed the Catholic traditions of the Ages of Faith. Pope Pius X. strongly reaffirmed in every particular the social doctrine of his predecessor, laying additional stress upon a sane traditionalism, which should apply the ideal of the medieval guilds to modern industrial conditions. Then, with the close of the World War, came Cardinal Bourne, who sounded anew for his countrymen the first clear call for a social awakening in the spirit of those same Catholic traditions which had been swept away by the religious individualism and indifference of the sixteenth century. Through the economic individualism that then naturally followed, England, he tells his countrymen, fell "under the domination of a capitalist and oligarchic regime" whose existence would have been unthinkable had Catholic ideals prevailed.

"Capitalism began with the robbery of church property in the sixteenth century, which threw the economic and social advantage into the hands of the land-holding and trading classes. The industrial revolution of the eighteenth century found England already in the hands of the well-to-do classes. Since

then the effect of competition uncontrolled by morals has been to segregate more and more the capitalist from the wage-earning classes, and to form the latter into a 'proletariat,' a people owning nothing but their labor-power and tending to shrink more and more from the responsibilities of both ownership and freedom."

Abundance of social "reform" legislation had been passed in England; but it was not legislation in the spirit of Pope Leo XIII. educating, inducing and enabling "as many as possible of the humbler classes to become owners." Its tendency, in the trenchant words of the English Cardinal, was "to mark off all wage-earners as a definitely servile class." By merely improving the workers' present condition, and leaving unchanged the existing system of restrictive ownership, it was calculated to strengthen and perpetuate, instead of lessening and destroying what Pope Leo so accurately described as "the grasp of wealth on the whole of labor and trade." While this lasts Christian democracy is impossible, and we must expect to find in the very councils of the State "the party which holds power because it holds wealth." Political democracy, however, is absolutely no pledge of industrial democracy. As Cardinal Bourne bluntly states the case against English oligarchy and industrialism: "While the Constitution has increasingly taken on democratic forms, the reality underlying these forms has become increasingly plutocratic."

In America, the Committee of Bishops, empowered to act as spokesmen of the American Hierarchy, at the close of the World War, with true social insight singled out for special emphasis the culminating thought of Pope Leo's Encyclical. To this they merely gave a definite determination and a more explicit industrial application when in their "Social Reconstruction" they proclaimed the ultimate aim of all Catholic social endeavors to be: "The majority must somehow become owners, at least in part, of the instruments of production." Without excluding the legal measures insisted upon by the great social Pontiff, "to induce as many as possible of the humbler classes to become owners," the American Bishops concentrated their advice upon copartnership and cooperation as the special means to be adopted towards this end. In the light of contemporary developments this counsel was logically to be expected. In any case there would be question only of a peaceful evolution, from restrictive to distributive ownership, fostered by methods equally just and prudent.

Attention however must be called to the fact that the mere existence of thousands of small investors in our large modern corporations does not necessarily imply a change in the essentials of the system of restrictive ownership against which Pope Leo's Encyclical was directed. The wealth of these corporations may still go to a restricted circle of industrial magnates, while the watered stock is distributed among the many, often at great risk to the latter. The voting power of the financially insignificant investor cannot seriously be matched against the control exercised by the great "captains of industry."

In addition to the numerous directorates often held by these men, giving them an economic preponderance that saints or angels could be safely entrusted with, the banking interests are not seldom equally dominated by them. This arms them with the power of withholding or extending credits, and of thus producing for their own advantage periods of national panic or prosperity. By purchasing and manipulating the very sources of popular information, the daily papers, they can also influence public opinion to their own financial purposes, even in matters so profoundly affecting the general welfare as the choice between peace or war. While such conditions exist there surely remains in the strong words of Pope Leo XIII:

"The party which holds power because it holds wealth; which has in its grasp the whole of labor and trade; which manipulates for its own benefit and its own purpose all the sources of supply, and which is even represented in the councils of the State."

I have so far purposely avoided personal use of the terms capitalist and capitalism. In themselves they are perfectly innocuous words. In their root-meaning they can apply to any social system. But in the popular mind capital is likely to have a definite association. As an editorial writer recently remarked in an English journal, it is not necessarily applied to every man of business who happens to be an employer, but rather to a small ring, not of the rich, but of the very rich. So the cartoonist invariably represents it in the labor press, so the ordinary man unconsciously views it.

The rank and file of employers often struggle hard to obtain a legitimate profit. In spite of all their best efforts they may find themselves ground at times between the upper and the nether millstone of greedy capital and unreasonable labor. Small employers may even be less favorably situated than the skilled mechanic in a highly and perhaps very exclusively organized union that relentlessly dictates its terms. Under a system of restrictive ownership it is no marvel if labor, when it holds the winning

cards, often shows no more consideration than capital had displayed before it.

But there is no reason to believe that this system will not in time yield place, partly or entirely, to a new order, differing as completely from it as capitalism differed from the immeasurably superior social system which preceded in the best centuries of the Middle Ages. How quickly such a change can come about depends largely on ourselves. Capitalism, in fact, would have been introduced at the very beginning of the Middle Ages had it not been for the sturdy opposition of the organized Christian workers. The efforts of small groups of wealthy and influential men to subject even then to their economic control the working classes, led to bitter and often bloody struggles upon the continent of Europe. But when the craft guilds finally emerged triumphant, and under the guidance and inspiration of the Church developed their system of a wise distributive ownership, capitalism was doomed for centuries to come. There is no doubt that under the leadership of the same Church the same glorious results could again be accomplished.

EASY AND CHEAP DIVORCE

An English peer in a letter to the London Times decries the divorce laws of his country as "immoral," "unjust," and productive of the "most insulting inequality," and consequently comes forward to announce that he will appeal to Parliament to cleanse the laws from this disgrace. That any right-thinking publicist should thus condemn divorce is simply acting according to the traditional standards of orthodoxy. It is the reason he gives for his scathing condemnation of divorce laws that has caused even his stolid fellow-countrymen to rub their eyes in wonder. For, strange to say, this worthy peer is up in arms not because there is too much divorce, but because there is not enough of it. "Family life reaches a low ebb, ethical character decays, and the nation suffers," according to Lord Buckmaster, because a large preponderance of the poor have not the facilities and the means of the rich to obtain divorces. So he would have easier and cheaper divorce.

While the divorce mills are operating as never before, while extra judges are being called in, and while the number of divorces is reaching startling figures all over the world, we are told that we must have easier and cheaper divorces. The human mind is subject to strange quips and turns, when anyone in public position can advocate such a further relaxation of divorce legislation on the ground that present laws are injurious to individual, social and national morality. Why does he not go further and abolish legal marriage altogether? Then the human race could marry, unmarried, and remarry at their own sweet will.

But would family morality be higher, would ethical character improve, and would national greatness be enhanced? Read the pages of history and see the answer in the monuments of Rome, which fell from the heights to the depths through easy and cheap divorce. Glance back over the developments of the last half century in countries that have let down the bars to easy and cheap divorce, and scan the broken homes, the scattered children, the lower ideals of family life, the increase of immorality, and the disregard of God's holy laws that have been the inevitable consequences. Listen to the voice of the Church reiterating the words of Her Founder, and speaking with the accumulated wisdom of the centuries, commanding rigid obedience to Christ's clear teaching on the sanctity and indissolubility of matrimony, as the only course.

The difference between the pagan and the Christian ideal life is shown in nothing so clearly as in this very attitude towards divorce. Lord Buckmaster has stated the pagan materialistic viewpoint that regards matrimony as a human and not a divine institution. He was answered by Canon Moyes who gave the following explanation of the Catholic solution of the problem that he so startlingly puts forth. "If I am asked," he wrote, "what is the mind of the Roman Catholic Church towards the problem, I would say that the Church is more than ever convinced that the solution lies not in increasing the opportunities for divorce but in the refusal of divorce altogether. The Roman Catholic Church when confronted with such cases as those mentioned by Lord Buckmaster, does not read from them the moral that indissoluble marriage is a failure, but rather that it is the married parties, one or the other or both, who are the failure, and that the remedy lies in their own hands, in reforming themselves, and in adopting towards each other, the Christian methods of bearing and forbearing; and the discipline of Christian patience that works to mutual forgiveness; or at the worst in having recourse to that judicial separation which with prayer and self-denial and the graces given to them may enable them to lead a chaste life, and thus keep the door open for eventual reconciliation. It is thus alone that we can safeguard the higher interests of society from

the scandal of an expanding divorce system leading to the menace of promiscuity."—The Pilot.

A WISTFUL LOOK OVER THE FENCE

To the Anglican Rural Dean of Oswestry, the Rev. E. Pell Edmunds, as to many others in what we may call the upper reaches of the Establishment, signs are not wanting that Protestantism as such has had its day, and that religious security must be sought and found elsewhere. Writing in the *Deanery Magazine* on "The Old Religion," he says that "the only form of Christian religion that will survive and face the future is that religion which has stood the test of the past—the old religion, historical Christianity, the faith of the Catholic Church. Protestantism seems to be passing; it has served, he thinks, a useful purpose, but 'men cannot live on protest.' It is only the Catholic religion, the religion of the whole rather than of the part, that can meet the spiritual needs of the average man at every time and in every clime. Men are calling for a mystic, supernatural, God-given religion, and a worship linked with the worship of heaven itself." Mr. Pell Edmunds does not ignore the likelihood that readers of such views as he sets forth may say:—"If this is the religion that is wanted, then we may as well submit to the Pope and become Roman Catholics;" and he answers, startling as coming from a Rural Dean, that "possibly that is the right course." It is true he qualifies this by further thought that "it is a matter of controversy," but at least he leaves his readers to ponder with him the possibility that the path to Rome is, after all, the divinely appointed way.—The Tablet.

BELFAST'S BAD REPUTATION

There is just a chance that some of the expelled Catholic workers in Belfast may regain their employment. It is being realized gradually that the explosions injured very seriously the reputation of Belfast. Speaking at a meeting of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce Sir James Craig hoped that the men in the shipyards would work together in friendly co-operation regardless of hostile-held religious and political differences.

At present the shipyard workers are all of one persuasion. Sir James should have advocated the re-employment of the expelled Catholics. Bishop MacRory stated at a meeting of the Belfast Association of Ladies of Charity that the Northern Government had done nothing to secure justice for the expelled Catholics. These unfortunate victims are now at the end of their resources. No more grants are available from the Irish White Cross Association.

A member of the principal shipbuilding firm made the following statement: "In this city we have had very serious differences, with the result that there are a great many men out of employment owing to their not being of the same religion as ourselves. We have had a meeting of the federated trades to try to bring a better feeling into the city and to spread the importance of sinking all our differences." Here at last is an admission that Catholics were driven from their employment owing to their religion.

FAMOUS BIBLE PLACED ON SALE

Leipzig, Dec. 14.—The Leipzig copy of the famous Gutenberg Bible has been placed on the market. It is one of the eight surviving copies of the so-called "forty-two line" on parchment, of which thirty are believed to have been printed as the first products of the Gutenberg press six hundred years ago. One copy was sold to an American collector in 1911 for \$500,000 but the Bible that will go on sale now is admittedly the finest example extant of the line and is considered beyond appraisal, the other copies being more or less damaged or incomplete.

The Leipzig copy was presented to the Saxon state many years ago by a Dresden collector, and the title is vested in the Leipzig Museum of Books and Manuscripts. The museum is now so hard hit by Germany's financial calamity that it proposes to sell the Bible to raise money to continue its existence. A score of German art lovers, including Max Liebermann and Lovis Corinth are trying to save the manuscript for Germany by raising a fund through the sale of their own works and through appeals to wealthy Germans.

COLORED BAPTISTS

Washington, D. C., Dec. 23.—Announcement is made here by the National Colored Baptist Board that at the recent convention in St. Louis plans were considered for the erection of a \$250,000 administrative building in this city as a national headquarters. Another \$250,000 will be sought as a defense fund to carry out the objects of the national board.

See Velvetex Announcement on page 8.

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Toronto Globe

"This charming idyll of Gascony falls to become a classic it will be because the love of literature has perished from the land."

Ida M. Tarbell

Abbe Pierre is delightful. It has left me a whole gallery of pleasant portraits and a tremendous determination to find my way to Gascony one of these days.

Gertrude Atherton

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The New York World

We need a state of thanks for Mr. Hudson's book, and so far as we are concerned it is unanimously carried.

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Marie Conway Comier

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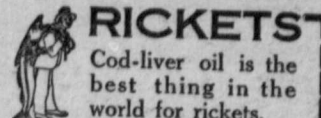
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