

CATHOLICS AND SOCIALISTS

Like Mr. James Murphy, of Liverpool, I am an Irishman and a Catholic, writes the brilliant author, the Rev. D. William Barry, of London. It happens also that I am a priest, and by Roman diploma may term myself a theologian. All these words in common use are clearly defined. But what is Socialism? What, again, is Democracy? These, the shibboleths of a "new dispensation," bear many meanings. To Mr. Murphy, one article which they cover, is, I conclude, that "private" property was never intended to exist. But in Mr. Bellamy's "Looking Backward" every citizen has a large private income which he can spend as he chooses. Yet "Looking Backward" expressed the convictions of many Socialists and Democrats. Moreover, the scheme which is technically described as "Collectivism" does not propose to do away with individual possessions. It would abolish private capital, not private property. Under it I may hold movable goods to any extent, so long as I do not use them as my stock-in-trade. Will Mr. Murphy draw up a series of propositions on which all who march under the flag of Socialism are agreed? Until that is done, we cannot from the name itself get any light on its relation to Catholic doctrine. For we know that there are Christian Socialists in England, who quote Holy Scripture as he does. And there are anti-Christian Socialists here and abroad to whom the Catholic Church is an abomination, the Bible a parcel of legends, the supernatural a myth, and religion a disease. Which of all the kinds now going about are we to welcome as Catholics and Irishmen?

I will put a few more questions to Mr. Murphy. How does he propose to secure freedom of conscience in a State which owns everything? Under officials who control the resources of wealth, every foot of land, every brick and stone and tree, every machine, every book, and the services of every human being that is able to work? These bureaucrats, elected by ballot if you please, will be masters of the food, clothing, shelter due to citizens. They will lay down laws for education, labor, marriage, divorce—possibly Malthusian limits to the birth-rate, quite conceivably on limits to "free love." Where is the guarantee of the citizen's freedom? He will own nothing whatever, least of all himself. Let Mr. Murphy answer this one note of interrogation. How am I to be free, in a country where I possess neither house nor lands nor money; where I must submit to the government mould in the school, the field, the mine, the workshop, the playground, the camp, and even the church? For the church belongs to the State and can be shut up any moment as being public property. Where, I ask, will freedom be when it has no weapons of assault or defence against an all-pervading, all-embracing tyranny such as this? Now we groan under many masters; then we should be throttled by one master, the Socialist Nero or Caligula, omnipotent over mind and body.

Socialists, yes, we have heard of them before. But how about Anarchists? The considerations on which I have been touching are so patent that revolutionaries as determined as Prince Kropotkin and his predecessor Bakounin have set up their cry against the State which Mr. Murphy seems to contemplate with satisfaction. They declare it to be the least endurable of tyrannies. I have spoken with philosophic adherents of this "new dispensation." To the ablest among them—for example, Mr. G. B. Shaw—it would appear that all these Collective schemes are so many stages of transition, ending in some Utopia where the State has ceased to govern. I do not feel by any means clear that Mr. Murphy is not, in the long run, a Supersocialist. If he is, let him say so. But, then, what becomes of his logic and his labels? Whenever, in conversation, I have raised these difficulties which the notion of an absolute state brings with it, my Socialist friends have encouraged me with an assurance that it would not be so absolute after all. This, being interpreted, can but mean that a certain degree of independence, founded on possession, would be left to the individual and to groups. In plain terms, private property, after it had all been confiscated, would spring up again. So hard is it to escape from the nature of things.

I strongly advise our Irish brethren to stand by liberty and the Catholic Church. We do not require to be taught the meaning of brotherly love by strangers to our faith, our ideals, and our creed. The Church

risks far above Socialism, far above Anarchism. She denies no rights, she inculcates all duties. She did not create the social misery which drives men mad to see it. She condemns all sweating, usurious bargains, sacrifices to Mammon of the mother and the child. She declares that covetousness is the root of all evil. But she believes in the life to come. Therefore she cannot agree with revolutionaries who bound their horizon by the grave. She fears nothing; she hopes all good things. And she knows the heart of man, as they do not who flatter him with pernicious dreams. I commend to Mr. Murphy these words, written by the great American, Lowell: "We have begun obscurely to recognize that popular government is not in itself a panacea—is no better than any other form except as the virtue and wisdom of the people make it so."

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Catholicity's Conquests in a Century.

The well-known Jesuit, Father Forbes, of Paris, a member of a distinguished Scottish Highland family, has erected a monument to his Church and his family in his admirable work, "The Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century," a review of which in the pages of the Civiltà Cattolica (Rome), is sufficient to revive the faith of the most lukewarm member of the Church, inasmuch as it places succinctly before the reader the magnificent progress made by Catholicity within the past century. The work is practically a reprint with notes, addenda and introductions of a series of lectures delivered in Paris in various churches. Says the Civiltà reviewer: "Father Forbes contrasts the state of the Church in the beginning of the Nineteenth Century with its condition now. The earlier picture was not a pleasing one: Plus VI. died a prisoner at Valence and the present Pope is a prisoner in the Vatican. But what a tremendous difference in the Church itself! Turkey has lost 25,000,000 inhabitants to its 40,000,000 in 1800. From Afghanistan to China, liberty has made it possible for Catholic missionaries to spread the faith among 300,000,000. The Catholic natives now numbering 2,500,000, as against 500,000 in 1800. In Indo-China alone the indigenous Catholic population

has risen from 300,000 to nearly 1,000,000. Australia and New Zealand, which were without priests in 1800, are now the home of 1,000,000 Catholics, and the islands of Oceania can boast 100,000 members of the faith in their population of 5,000,000. Japan, since 1879, has added 50,000 to her original number of 4,000 Catholics, and China proper boasts nearly 2,000,000 members of the Catholic Church. Africa, which was almost entirely Moslem in 1800, except where it had come under English influences, and here the Catholics were persecuted, has now a following of the Church numbering 2,000,000, with six vicars apostolic and a splendid hierarchy.

"Marvelous are the progressive results in both Americas. The Catholic churches of South America, with their 40,000,000 members, have awakened from their torpor and give promise of a splendid increase. The Catholics in the United States numbered in 1800 one bishop, forty priests and 40,000 Catholics. Today there are 94 bishops, 11,817 priests and some 14,000,000 confessed members of the Catholic Church. Finally, in Europe, there is Germany with its 18,000,000 of Catholics strongly organized; Belgium, almost Catholic to an individual; Holland, which banished priests and persecuted Catholics in 1800, with 1,500,000 Catholics entirely free and a rapidly growing increase of Catholicity in Scandinavia and Switzerland. Even in the Balkan States in the last century, the Church gained many new adherents; in Roumania, nearly 150,000; Bosnia and Herzegovina, over 275,000; Bulgaria, 26,000; Greece, some 15,000."

The Catholic Church in Germany, Father Forbes states, was long retarded in its advance by the hatred and persecution of Bismarck. "Without Windthorst," he says, "the Central Party in Germany could never have become what it is. He was a man of Providence and all modern German-Catholicity and her grand organization moves practically on plans conceived by that great man."

According to the great Jesuit, the young Catholic Church of the United States will, in the near future, the principle role in the destinies of the world's Catholicity. America, he says, has disproved the maxim that "the law is atheistic;" by declaring that she would stand for religious liberty, she by no means declared for atheism, as certain European nations have done. Her wondrous religious progress is evidence of her good spirit. He recalls, however, what Leo XIII. said of the American Catholic Church in his Encyclical of January, 1895, that "however worthy the Catholic Church in America was of ecumenism it did not respond to the exact conception of the Church and it could not be held up as a model of the best kind of Church. He goes as far as to express a great fear for the future of the Catholic Church in America. He says:

"There are 800,000 Free Masons and millions of Spiritualists in the United States. Their hatred of Catholicity is intense and the energy they display in throwing obstacles in the way of its advance is equally great. Add to the fact that agnosticism is rife, the corollary that Catholic emigrants, influenced by this agnosticism, rapidly fall into apostasy, and one sees the reason why the numerical strength of the Catholic Church in America is much less than it might have been."

In regard to England, Father Forbes expresses his belief that the Anglican Church is only waiting for the opportune moment to pass over to Rome. "In seventy years more than 16,000 conversions to the Catholic faith have taken place among the Anglican clergy." As to France, he refuses to believe that she is "lost territory." "She is," he says, "certainly full of religious vitality even to-day, and will do greater things in the twentieth century than she did in the nineteenth."

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SOLITA

BY REV. JO

CHAPTER XL.—Continued.

"There, that will do," said Paul, "that's not a sensible thought. I don't know as I've had a whole thought about this whole thing. I think I'll turn the whole thing over for a change." "What can we do?" was Frank's reply. "I can go to Clayburg," he said, "almost with a blush. 'I have' by idea that perhaps great misfortune has made him penitent, and has gone to do penance over father's grave." "That is it," said Frances, "I knew it would come to Paul. Mercy is not beyond him. Paul, go, like his good angel." "I feel it is a nonsensical thing to do," said he, "but I suppose must be done. And if I find anything should be favorable, and everything should be favorable, what could we say to him about well, your mother and father, I instance?" He examined the paper on the attentively, while she looked at with a puzzled face. "If he is safe, that is enough," answered simply. "Well, let it go," said Paul, "He doesn't care very much for any of us, I fear, much as we are interested in him. And, Frances, as long as you live let no one know that I made myself such a good for your sake and his father's." The post proposed a trip to Clayburg that evening to his friend for the mere pleasure of the journey, the company, and Peter read it with enthusiasm. "I'll go inco," said he, "stop at the hotel; and when I find Penitence, dearest of old idiots, I'll not pay him the slightest attention, the poor old simpleton. 'That suits me very well,' Paul. 'I'll travel inco, also, we'll arrive there in the evening. Next day we'll bloom on them roses or turnips in the snow.' They started the next morning went by way of Utica, reaching destination at a late hour in the evening, when rheumatism kept sturdy squire in his warm par. Peter was weary enough to retire immediately after fitting on nightcap of hot punch, and, coast thus cleared, Paul went quietly to the priest's residence, and, after the disappointment of not finding him at home; but his knowledge of the people of Clayburg was enough to make this mishap a rather a close-mouthed fisher after a few minutes' search, where a reasonable sum agreed not to take him to Solitary Island, also to keep his mouth shut about until eternity, and the journey made in successful secrecy. At a spot overlooking the well-known cabin. Paul dismissed his guide crossed the ice on foot to the posse beneath. It was now night. The lonely island lay beneath the snow, and was regularly tranquil under the dim light of a faint wind added to the loneliness, and stirring the trees of the hill, brought Paul's eyes to grave beneath them. No light sign of human presence anywhere. No tracks in the snow save his until he reached the cabin-door, there began a pathway which down the slope and up the opposite to the grave—the path marked out by the funeral procession! while he looked a figure came getting from the grave and along path to where he stood—a figure stooped, uncertain in its gait, looking less like a man than an animal, without words or prayer, and plugging rarely to swing its arms in impotent despair. Trembled with dread, and the sprang to his eyes. Was he to the mental wreck he had once turned? Florian gave no sign of surprise when he saw him, but at once his usual reserve. "Te not insane." "You here?" he said calmly, the voice quavered. "I believe were there that night, and I remember you said you had a message. Will you come in, if you to?" A cheerful fire burned in heart of the single room, and tallow candle showed Isaac Walsh in his usual place, with every circumstance of the room undisturbed. Paul said nothing until he scanned his old friend keenly. Great man sat down before the fireplace and submitted to the inspection with an indifference as his father's own that Paul's breath of delight. In ten days