

**IS THE CHURCH OPPOSED TO PROGRESS?**

The question answered by the present Pontiff.

The following is an synopsis by the late Rev. Joseph E. Keller, S. J., of the last pastoral which Cardinal Pecci, Archbishop of Perugia, issued to the clergy and faithful of his diocese, a document that would have been considered remarkable even if within a year and a week its author had not been raised to the papacy as Leo XIII. He took up the question, "Is the Catholic Church hostile to the progress of industry, art and science? Is there as her adversaries declare, a natural and irremediable incompatibility between the church and civilization?" These were the questions which the Cardinal set himself to answer, and his answer was, "No; the Catholic Church is hostile to no phase of progress; is not incompatible with civilization even in its purely material aspect." He went even further, he took pains to explain to his flock what civilization is, its merits, and advantages, and these explanations were not given as a theologian but as a political economist. He said: "A celebrated French economist, Bastiat, has grouped and shown, as in a picture, the multiplied benefits man finds in society, and it is a wonder worthy of admiration.

Consider the humblest of men, the poorest laborer—he has wherewith to clothe himself, well or ill, and shoes for his feet. Think how many persons, how many agencies, had to be put in motion to furnish this clothing or these shoes. Daily every man places a morsel of bread to his lips; behold here what labor; how many hands it has taken to reach that end, from that husbandman who painfully turned the furrow to confide to it the seed to the baker, who converted the flour into bread. Every man has rights; he finds in society lawyers to defend them, magistrates to make them sacred by their sentence, soldiers to compel respect for them. Is he ignorant? He finds schools, men to write books for him, others to print and publish them. To satisfy his religious instincts, his aspirations towards God; he finds those of his brethren who, laying aside all other occupation, give themselves up to the study of sacred love, renouncing business pleasure, home, the better to discharge those lofty duties. But this is enough to prove to you clearly that society is indispensable in order that our wants which are as urgent as they are varied, may be satisfied.

Having thus pointed out the advantages of association and the division of labor, Mgr. Pecci, went on to explain progress and civilization as follows: "Society, being made up of men essentially defective, cannot remain at a standstill; it makes progress and perfects itself. One century inherits and inventions, discoveries, improvements of its predecessors, and thus the sum of physical, moral and political benefits grow marvellously.

Who would compare the miserable huts of primitive people, their rude utensils, their imperfect tools, with all that we of the 19th century possess. Nor is there any more comparison between the articles produced by our ingeniously constructed machinery and those so lately wrought by the hands of men. There can be no doubt that the old high ways, unsafe bridges, and long and disagreeable journeyings of the old times were not the equals in value of our railroads which, as it were, fasten wings to our shoulders and have made our globe smaller, so near to each other have they brought its nations. Is not our era, by the gentleness of its manners, superior to the rude and brutal days of barbarism are not reciprocal relations on a more friendly footing. From certain standpoints, has not the political system been improved under influence of time and experience! No longer is private vengeance tolerated or tortured; and the petty, feudal tyrants, the wrangling communities, the wandering bands of free companions—have they not all disappeared. It is, then, true that man in society goes on perfecting himself in his physical comfort, his moral relations with his fellows, and political condition. And the different degrees of this successive development to which man in society attains are civilization; this civilization is new born and rudimentary when the condition under which man grows more perfect in this threefold sense are but partially developed; it is great and high when they attain a larger development; it would be complete were all the conditions satisfied. After this passage of which G. de Molinari says in the debate that it makes the reader fancy he is listening to one of Michael Chevalier's lectures at the college de France, the Cardinal goes on to ask when proceed progress and civilization. They come above all from labor. Labor was despised by the most illustrious philosophers, but "Christianity elevated, honored and sanctified it. Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, submitted Himself to a poor artisan of Galilee, and in the carpenter's shop of Nazareth did not disdain to set His blessed hand to labor." The Apostles supported themselves by their labor, and later, when the barbarian hordes swept over Europe, the monk had tilled the soil the ravaged, and rescued industry. Still later the Catholic republics of Italy became the splendid centres of trade, commerce and arts, the Black sea, Africa and Asia were the commercial relations and military expeditions of our ancestors; there they made important and found conquests, and while abroad their flags floated, wreathed with glory and terror, at home they did not remain idle. They cultivated the arts, and their traders, by every honest means, added to private and public wealth. Manufacturers of wool silk, jewelry, colored glass, paper at Florence, Pisa, Bologna, Milan, Venice, Naples, gave lucrative employment to thousands of workmen and attracted to those markets the gold and the competition of strangers. Of course the

church does not believe that all should be sacrificed to the multiplication of riches, the health and lives of men, the feeble strength of childhood, and Cardinal Pecci protested against the "modern schools of political economy interested with unbelief, that regard labor as the supreme end of man and man himself is a machine more or less valuable as it is more or less productive." (E. De Molinari, commenting on this, points out that economists do not regard labor as an end but as a means, and that they are thoroughly in accord with their eminent confrere of Perugia) as to the necessity of limiting the hours of labor and securing days of rest for the artisan as well as of avoiding the exhaustion of children; they, like the present Pope, believe that charity is necessary; they favor the widest possible spread of education, detest war and uphold freedom of commerce, and with sorrow contemplate "the enormous number of the victims made by the privation of education, by physical infirmities, by war, and the convulsions of trade."

After repelling as an odious calumny the accusation against the church that she instills into the heart a mystical contempt of earthly things, and commends an asceticism which would exclude all the Cardinal sets himself to refute and still more venomous calumny which causes the church to be considered the enemy of science. The pretended enmity, he says, is not only absurd but impious, for it involves the supposition that the Church fears least science may succeed in dethroning God. So far from dethroning Him, science can only make manifest His power and redouble the love He inspires by the full harmony and magnificence of His works. See and judge for yourselves. What is there that the church can desire more ardently than the glory of God and the more intimate acquaintance with the divine workmen which is acquired by the study of His works. If the universe is indeed a book, on every page of which are inscribed the name and wisdom of God, it is certain that he will be the most filled with love for God, will come the nearest to God, who will have studied this book most deeply and most attentively.

What reason can there be that the church should be jealous of the marvelous progress our age has made by its studies and discoveries. Is there in them anything in them which, looked at from near or far, can do harm to the ideas of God and of faith, whereof the church is the guardian and infallible mistress. Bacon, so distinguished in the walks of physical science, has written that a little knowledge leads away from God. This golden saying is always true, and if the church is afraid of the ruin that might be wrought by the vain ones who think they understand everything because they have a slight smattering of everything, she has full confidence in those who apply zealously and profoundly to the study of nature for she knows that at the bottom of their researches they will find God, who in all his works displays Himself with the definite attributes of his power. His wisdom and His goodness. Then the pastoral letter brings to the support of its author's position the evidence of Copernicus, of Kepler, of Voltaire, of Galileo even of the Protestant Faraday, who saw in the science to which he applied himself with such passion an "agency whereby to reach God." Finally it pays homage to the marvellous efforts of science, and the sublime spectacle of offers in rendering man master of the forces of nature, in kindling within him a spark of the fire of the Godhead. "How splendid and majestic does man seem when he reaches after the thunderbolt and lets it fall harmless at his feet; when he summons the electric spark; and sends it, the messenger of his will, through the abasces of the ocean, over the precipitous mountains, across the interminable plains. How glorious when he bids steam fasten pinions to his shoulders and bear him with the rapidity of lightning over land and sea. How powerful then, by his ingenuity, he seizes upon this force, imprisons it, and conveys it by ways marvellously combined and adapted to give motion—we might almost say intelligence—to a brute matter, which thus takes the place of man and spares him his most exhausting toil. Tell me if there is not in man the semblance of the spark of the Creator when he invokes light and bids it scatter the shades of darkness. But the Syllabus. Has not he Syllabus condemned science and civilization. No; it has not condemned true civilization—that civilization where by man perfects himself—but it does condemn "the civilization which would supplant Christianity and destroy with it all wherewith Christianity has enriched us." It is not directed against civilization and science, but against atheism and materialism. Having dealt with the material amelioration of the condition of man, he says: "It would be an agreeable task to cast the same light on those things which concern the amelioration of man's moral and political condition, if, instead of writing a pastoral letter, we had set ourselves to composing a long treatise, and if we did not intend, if life permits it, to return at a future day to this subject."

The Pope of 1878 will conclude the essay begun by the Cardinal of 1877.

**THE LANDLORD'S SIDE OF THE QUESTION**

The Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union has issued a pamphlet on the Irish question for the use of members of the House of Commons and the Press. "The status of the Irish tenant farmer," says the pamphlet, "has within the past six years undergone a marked amelioration; owing to various remedial statutes. There has certainly been a fall in prices but, everything considered there is nothing

especially bad in Irish agriculture." The Irish enjoy greater advantages of Tenure than other people. With improved methods there is reason to look to the future with confidence. Her figures are quoted showing that full advantage is taken of the right to sell interest in holdings. The pamphlet continues: "Laying aside rhetorical base, it is necessary to state succinctly the actual fact regarding evictions. By the Land Act of 1881 a tenant cannot possibly be evicted unless he refuses to pay rent or does not comply with certain statutory conditions not forming an imaginary grievance. Ejectment for non-payment of rent cannot be brought for less than a year's rent actually due. If an ejectment be brought the tenant may redeem the property at any time within six months after the execution of the writ or may within the same period, sell the tenancy, after the writ has been executed, to anybody, and the purchaser may redeem the property. Many other advantages are possessed by tenants. Therefore an eviction is dangerous and costly to the landlord, and is practised only in extreme cases. If a year's rent should fall during September or November, the landlord does not get a decree until the January session, and six months more must elapse before he can gain possession of the land. The landlord is then liable to the tenant for the crops, so that two years must elapse before he fully recovers his tenancy.

It is of great importance that the question of the rights of laboring people should be dissociated from the ruinous theories of Communists whose theories would end in confusion and despotism. The interests of honest labor, looking to the acquisition of some little property as the reward of industry, has a deadly enemy in Communism, that would destroy all independent organizations of rights, and leave nothing but the weak-armed individual in the face of "the State," organized, as ever, by the most unscrupulous and grasping of its most adroit members.

The Christian organization of society grants the State only the powers of a 'high police', to protect the law abiding and punish law breakers. It is of pagan origin, promoted by the system of pagan Rome, and reproduced by the legists that destroyed liberty in Europe in later centuries, that the entire property of the people belong to the State.

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