

“ And the Lord God took man and put him into the paradise of pleasure to dress it and to keep it.” (Gen. ii, 15.) It would seem that God coupled the right of enjoying the fruits of that culture with the labour which produced them, for the author of Genesis adds immediately : “ And He commended him saying : Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat.” But lest man should fancy that he was now independent of his Maker, and that the earth, and its products, and his very faculties and being were his own irrespective of any higher authority, God made clear his state of subjection by imposing on him a prohibitory command : “ But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat.” (17.)

The Holy Father Leo XIII., in his admirable Encyclical (May 15, 1891) on the *Condition of Labour*, points out this same truth, that man even in the Garden of Eden, before the fall, was not exempt from the law of labour : “ As for what concerns labour in particular, man, even in the state of innocence was not destined to live in idleness ; but that which his will would have then undertaken freely as an agreeable pastime, became compulsory after his sin, and bore with it the sense of a painful expiation.”

The sentence which preceded Adam's expulsion from paradise made this penalty but too clear for him and his race : “ Cursed is the earth in thy work ; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” (Gen. iii, 17-19).

After alluding to this sentence of the Almighty Judge, from which, during the many thousand years that generation has succeeded generation here below, man has found no escape, the Holy Father proceeds to dispel any illusion as to the possibility of reversing God's decree, or of legislating it,