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"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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THE ENCYCLICAL.

POPE LEO XIII. ON LABOR'S PROBLEMS.

The Rights of Man and of the State Defined—Wages, Hours of Work and Labor Organizations—Socialism Refuted by Unanswerable Arguments—The Church Pledged to the Cause of the Workingmen.

Pope Leo's Encyclical has been distributed to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic world. It contains the ablest and best exposition of the labor problem that has ever been written. It is not surprising, writes His Holiness, that the spirit of revolutionary change, which has long been predominant in the nations of the world, should have passed beyond politics and made its influence felt in the cognate field of practical economy. The elements of a conflict are unmistakable; the growth of industry, and the surprising discoveries of science, the changes in the relations of masters and workmen; the enormous fortunes of individuals, and the poverty of the masses; the increased self-reliance and the closer mutual combination of the working population; and, finally, a general moral deterioration. The momentous seriousness of the present state of things just now fills every mind with painful apprehension; wise men discuss it; practical men propose schemes; popular meetings, legislatures and sovereign princes, all are occupied with it—and there is nothing which has a deeper hold on public attention. Therefore, venerable brethren, we have thought it useful to speak on the condition of labor. The discussion is not easy, nor is it free from danger. It is not easy to define the relative rights and the mutual duties of the wealthy and of the poor, of capital and of labor. And the danger lies in this, that crafty agitators constantly make use of these disputes to pervert men's judgments and to stir up the people to sedition.

But all agree, and there can be no question whatever, that some remedy must be found, and quickly found, for the misery and wretchedness which press so heavily at this moment on the large majority of the very poor. The ancient workmen's guilds were destroyed in the last century, and no other organization took their place. Public institutions and the laws have repudiated the ancient religion. Hence by degrees it has come to pass that workmen have been given over.

ISOLATED AND DEFENCELESS, to the callousness of employers and the greed of unrestrained competition. The evil has been increased by rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is, nevertheless, under a different form but with the same guilt, still practised by avaricious and grasping men. And to this must be added the custom of working by contract, and the concentration of so many branches of trade in the hands of a few individuals, so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the mass of the poor a yoke little better than slavery itself.

To remedy those evils the Socialists, working on the poor man's envy of the rich, endeavor to destroy private property, and maintain that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or by municipal bodies. But their proposals are so clearly futile for all practical purposes that if they were carried out by the workingman himself would be amongst the first to suffer.

It is surely undeniable that when a man engages in remunerative labor for the very reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and to hold it as his own private possession. If one man hires out to another his strength or his industry, he does this for the purpose of receiving in return what is necessary for food and living; he thereby expressly proposes to acquire a full and real right, not only to the remuneration, but also to the disposal of that remuneration as he pleases money, and invests his savings, for greater security, in land, the land in such a case is only his wages in a workingman's little estate consequently, a workingman's little estate should be completely at his own disposal as the wages he receives for his labor. What is of still greater importance, however, is that the remedy the Socialists propose is manifestly against justice. For every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own. This is one of the chief points of distinction between man and the animal creature. Man alone among the animal possesses reason, and it must be within his right to have things not merely for temporary and momentary use, as other living beings have them, but

IN STABLE AND PERMANENT POSSESSION.

He must have not only things which perish in the using, but also those which, though used, remain for use in the future. Hence, man not only can possess the fruits of the earth, but also the earth itself; for of the products of the earth he can make provision for the future. Nature owes to man a storehouse that shall never fail, the daily supply of his wants. And this he finds only in the inexhaustible fertility of the earth.

Man is older than the state and he holds the right of providing for the life of his body prior to the formation of any state. And to say that God has assigned 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, and the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry and the law of individual peoples. Moreover, the earth, though divided among private owners, ceases not thereby to minister to the needs of all; for there is no one who does not live on what the land brings forth.

We are told that it is right for private persons to have the use of the soil and the fruits of their land, but that it is unjust for any one to possess as owner either the land on which he has built or the estate which he has cultivated. But those who assert this do not perceive that they are robbing man of what his own labor has produced. For the soil which is tilled and cultivated with toil and skill utterly changes its condition; it was barren, and now it brings forth in abundance. That which has thus altered and improved it becomes so truly part of itself as to be in great measure indistinguishable and inseparable from it. Is it just that the fruit of a man's sweat and labor should be enjoyed by another? As effects follow the cause, so is just and right that the results of labor

SHOULD BELONG TO HIM WHO HAS LABORED.

With reason, therefore, the common opinion of mankind, little affected by the few dissentients who have maintained the opposite view, has found in the study of nature, and in the law of nature herself, the foundations of the division of property, and has consecrated by the practice of ages the principle of private ownership, as being pre-eminently in conformity with human nature, and as conducing in the most unmistakable manner to the peace and tranquillity of human life.

It is, it is clear that the main tenet of Socialism—the community of goods—must be utterly rejected; for it would injure those whom it is intended to benefit, it would be contrary to the natural rights of mankind, and it would introduce confusion and disorder into the commonwealth. Our first and most fundamental principle, therefore, when we undertake to alleviate the condition of the masses must be the inviolability of private property. This laid down, we go on to show where we must find the remedy that we seek.

We approach the subject with confidence, and in the exercise of the rights which belong to us. For no practical solution of this question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and of the Church. It is we who are the chief guardian of religion and the chief dispenser of what belongs to the Church, and we must not by silence neglect the duty which lies upon us. Doubtless, the most serious question demands the attention and the efforts of others besides ourselves—the rulers of states, of employers of labor, of the wealthy, and the working population themselves for whom we plead. But we affirm without hesitation that all the striving of men will be vain if they leave out the Church. It is the Church that proclaims from the gospel those teachings by which the conflict can be put an end to, or, at the least, made far less bitter; the Church uses its efforts not only to enlighten the mind, but to direct by its precepts the life and conduct of men; the Church improves and ameliorates the condition of the workingman by

NUMEROUS USEFUL ORGANIZATIONS.

It does its best to enlist the services of all ranks in discussing and endeavoring to meet, in the most practical way, the claims of the working classes; and acts on the decided view that for these purposes recourse should be had, in due measure and degree, to the help of the law and of State authority. Let it be laid down, in the first place, that humanity must remain as it is. It is impossible to reduce human society to a level. The Socialists may do their utmost, but all striving against nature is vain. There naturally exists among mankind innumerable differences of the most important kind; people differ in capability, in diligence, in health, and in strength; and unequal fortune is a necessary result of inequality in condition. Such inequality is far from being disadvantageous either to individuals or to the community; social and public life can only go on by the help of various kinds of capacity and the

playing of many parts; and each man, as a rule, chooses the part which peculiarly suits his case.

The great mistake that is made in the matter now under consideration is to possess oneself of the idea that class is naturally hostile to class; that rich and poor are intended by nature to live at war with one another. So irrational and so false is this view that the exact contrary is the truth. Just as the sympathy of the human body is the result of the disposition of the members of the body, so in a state it is ordained by nature that these two classes should exist in harmony and agreement, and should, as it were, fit into one another, so as to maintain the equilibrium of the body politic. Each requires the other; capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. Mutual agreement results in pleasantness and good order; perpetual conflict necessarily produces confusion and outrage. Now, in preventing such strife as this, and in making it impossible,

THE EFFICACY OF CHRISTIANITY.

First of all, there is nothing more powerful than religion (of which the Church is the interpreter and guardian) in drawing rich and poor together, and reminding each class of its duties to the other, and especially of the duties of justice. Thus religion teaches the laboring man and the workman to carry out honestly and well all equitable agreements freely made; never to injure capital, or to outrage the person of an employer; never to employ violence in representing his own cause, or to engage in riot or disorder; and to have nothing to do with men of evil principles, who work upon the people with artful promises, and raise foolish hopes which usually end in disaster and in repentance when too late. Religion teaches the rich man and the employer that their work people are not their slaves; that they must respect in every man his dignity as a man and as a Christian; that labor is not a thing to be ashamed of, if we listen to right reason and to Christian philosophy; but is an honorable employment, enabling a man to sustain his life in an upright and creditable way; and that it is shameful and inhuman to treat men upon them merely as so much muscle or physical power.

But, if Christian precepts prevail, the two classes will not only be united in the bonds of friendship, but also in those of brotherly love. For they will understand and feel that all men are the children of the common Father, that it is of God that all have the same last end, which is God Himself, who alone can make either men or angels absolutely and perfectly happy; that all and each are redeemed by Jesus Christ and raised to

THE DIGNITY OF CHILDREN OF GOD, and are thus united in brotherly ties and are thus united with Jesus Christ, the first born among many brethren; that the blessings of nature and the gifts of grace belong in common to the whole human race, and that to all, except to those who are unworthy, is promised the inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven. If sons, and heirs also of heirs indeed of God, and co-heirs of Christ.

The desire of the Church is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness and should better their condition in life; and for this it strives. By the very fact that it calls men to virtue and forms them to its practice it promotes this in no slight degree. Christian morality, when it is adequately and completely practiced, conduces of itself to temporal prosperity, for it merits the blessing of that God who is the source of all blessings; it powerfully restrains the lust of possession and the lust of pleasure—two twin plagues which too often make a man without self-restraint miserable in the midst of abundance; it makes men supply by economy for the want of means, teaching them to be content with frugal living, and keeping them out of the reach of those vices which eat up not merely small incomes, but large fortunes, and dissipate many a goodly inheritance.

Moreover, the Church intervenes directly in the interest of the poor, by setting on foot and keeping up many things which it sees to be efficacious in the relief of poverty. Here again it has always succeeded so well that it has always extorted the praise of its enemies. Such was the ardor of brotherly love among the earliest Christians that numbers of those who were better off deprived themselves of their possessions in order to relieve their brethren. Thus by degrees came into existence the patrimony which the Church has guarded with religious care as the inheritance of the poor. Nay, to spare them the shame of begging, the common mother of rich and poor has exerted herself to gather together funds for the support of the needy. The Church has stirred up everywhere

THE HEROISM OF CHARITY.

and has established congregations of religious and many other useful institutions for help and mercy, so that there might be hardly any kind of suffering which was not visited and relieved. At the present day there are many who, like the heathen of old,

blame and condemn the Church for this beautiful charity. They would substitute in its place a system of State-organized relief. But no human methods will ever supply for the devotion and self-sacrifice of Christian charity. Charity, as a virtue, belongs to the Church; for it is no virtue unless it is drawn from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ; and he who turns his back on the Church cannot be near to Christ.

It cannot, however, be doubted that, to attain the purpose of which we treat, not only the Church, but all human means, must conspire. All who are concerned in the matter must be of one mind and must act together. It is in the Providence which governs the world; results do not happen save where all the causes co-operate. Let us now, therefore, inquire what part the state should play in the work of remedy and relief.

If the state we here understand not the particular form of government which prevails in this or that nation, but the state as rightly understood; that is to say, any government conformable in its institutions to right, reason and natural law, and to those dictates of the Divine wisdom which we have expounded in the Encyclical on the Christian constitution of the State.

THE FIRST DUTY.

Therefore, of the rulers of the state should be to make sure that the laws and institutions, the general character and administration of the commonwealth, shall be such as to produce of themselves public well-being and private prosperity. This is the proper office of wise statesmanship and of the heads of the state. Now a state chiefly prospers and flourishes in morality, by well-regulated family life, by moderation and equal distribution of public burdens, by the progress of the arts and of trade, by the abundant yield of the land—by everything which makes the citizens better and happier. Here, then, it is in the power of a ruler to benefit every order of the state, and among the rest to promote in the highest degree the interests of the poor; and this, by virtue of his office, and without being exposed to any suspicion of undue interference—for it is the province of the commonwealth to consult for the common good. And the more that is done for the working population by the general laws of the country the less need will there be to seek for particular means to relieve them.

There is another and a deeper consideration which must not be lost sight of. To the state the interests of all are equal, whether high or low. The poor are equally members of the national community equally with the rich; they are real component parts, living parts, which make up, through the family, the living body; and it need hardly be said that they are by far the majority. It would be irrational to neglect one portion of the citizens and to favor another; and, therefore, the public administration must duly and solicitously provide for the welfare and the comfort of the working people, or else that law of justice will be violated which ordains that each shall have his due.

We have insisted that, since it is the end of society to make men better, the chief good that society can be possessed of is virtue. Nevertheless, in all well-constituted states it is a by no means unimportant matter to provide those bodily and external commodities the use of which is necessary to virtuous action. And in the provision of material well-being,

THE LABOR OF THE POOR.

—the exercise of their skill and the employment of their strength in the culture of the land and the workshops of trade—is most efficacious and altogether indispensable. Indeed, their co-operation in this respect is so important that it may be truly said that it is only by the labor of the workingman that states grow rich. Justice, therefore, demands that the interests of the poorer population be carefully watched over by the administration, so that they who contribute so largely to the advantage of the community may themselves share in the benefit they create—that, being housed, clothed and enabled to support life, they may find their existence less hard and more enduring. It follows that whatever shall appear to be conducive to the well-being of those who work should receive favorable consideration. Let it not be feared that solicitude of this kind will injure any interest; on the contrary, it will be to the advantage of all, for it cannot but be good for the commonwealth to secure from misery those on whom it so largely depends.

We have said that the State must not absorb the individual or the family; both should be allowed free and untrammelled action as far as is consistent with the common good and the interests of others. Nevertheless, rulers should anxiously safeguard the community and all its parts—the community, because the conservation of the community is so emphatically the business of the supreme power that the safety of the commonwealth is not only the first law, but it is a government's whole reason of existence; and the parts, because both philosophy and the gospel agree in laying down that the object of the administration of the State should

be, not the advantage of the ruler, but the benefit of those over whom he rules.

THE GIFT OF AUTHORITY IS FROM GOD, and is, as it were, a participation of and is the highest of all sovereignties; and it should be exercised as the power of God is exercised—with a fatherly solicitude which not only guides the whole, but reaches to details as well.

Rights must be religiously respected wherever they are found; and it is the duty of the public authority to prevent and punish injury, and to protect each one in the possession of his own. Still, when there is a question of protecting the rights of individuals, the poor and helpless have a claim to special consideration. The richer population have many ways of protecting themselves, and stand less in need of help from the state; those who are badly off have no resources of their own to fall back upon, and must chiefly rely upon the assistance of the state. And it is for this reason that wage-earners, who are undoubtedly among the weak and necessitous, should be specially cared for and protected by the commonwealth.

Here, however, it will be advisable to advert expressly to one or two of the more important details. It must be borne in the mind that the chief thing their wages insufficient. The grave inconvenience of this not uncommon occurrence should be obviated by public remedial measures; for such paralysis of labor not only affects the masters and their work-people, but is extremely injurious to trade, and to the general interests of the public; moreover, on such occasions violence and disorder are generally not far off, and thus it frequently happens that the public peace is threatened. The laws should be beforehand, and prevent these troubles from arising; they should lend their influence and authority to the removal in good time of the causes which lead to conflicts between masters and those whom they employ.

But if the owners of property must be made secure, the workingman, too, has property and possessions in which he must be protected; and, first of all, there are his spiritual and mental interests. Life on earth, however good and desirable in itself, is not the final purpose for which man is created; it is only the way and the means to that attainment of truth, and

to be secured is the safeguarding, by legal enactment and policy, of private property. Most of all it is essential in these times of covetous greed to keep the multitude within the line of duty; for if all may justly strive to better their condition, yet neither justice nor the common good allows any one to seize that which belongs to another, or under the pretext of futile and ridiculous equality, to

LAY HANDS ON OTHER PEOPLE'S THINGS.

It is most true that by far the larger part of the people who work prefer to improve themselves by honest labor rather than by doing wrong to others. But there are not a few who are imbued with bad principles and are anxious for revolutionary change, and whose purpose it is to stir up tumult and bring about a policy of violence. The authority of the state should intervene to put restraint upon these disturbers, to save the workmen from their seditious arts, and to protect lawful owners from spoliation.

When work-people have recourse to a strike it is frequently because the hours of labor are too long, or the work too hard, or because they consider

THAT PRACTICE OF GODNESS,

in which the full life of the soul consists. It is the soul which is made after the image and likeness of God; it is in the soul that sovereignty resides, in virtue of which man is commanded to rule the creatures below him, and to use all the earth and the sea, and to fill for his profit and advantage. Fill for the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures which move upon the earth. In this respect all men are equal; there is no difference between rich and poor, master and servant, ruler and ruled, for the same is Lord over all. No man may outrage with impunity that human dignity which God Himself treats with reverence, nor stand in the way of that higher life which is the preparation for the eternal life of heaven. Nay, more; a man has here no power over himself. To consent to any treatment which is calculated to defeat the end and purpose of his being is beyond his right; he cannot give up his soul to servitude; for it is not man's own rights which are here in question, but the rights of God, most sacred and inviolable.

If we turn now to things exterior and corporeal, the first concern of all is to save the poor workers from the cruelty of grasping speculators, who use human beings as mere instruments for making money. It is neither justice nor humanity so to grind men down with excessive labor as to stupefy their minds and wear out their bodies. Man's powers, like his general nature, are limited, and beyond these limits he cannot go. His strength is developed and increased by use and exercise, but only on condition of due intermission and proper rest. Daily labor, therefore, must be so regulated that it may not be protracted during longer hours than strength admits. How many and how long the intervals of rest should

be will depend on the nature of the work, on circumstances of time and place and on the health and strength of the workman.

AND, IN REGARD TO CHILDREN,

great care should be taken not to place them in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently mature. For just as rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so too early an experience of life's hard work blights the young promise of a child's powers, and makes any real education impossible. Women, again, are not suited to certain trades; for a woman is by nature fitted for home work and it is that which is best adapted to once to preserve her modesty and to promote the bringing up of children and the well-being of the family. As a general principle, it may be laid down that a workman ought to have leisure and rest in proportion to the wear and tear of his strength; for the waste of strength must be repaired by the cessation of work.

Wages, we are told, are fixed by free consent; and, therefore, the employer, when he pays what was agreed upon, has done his part, and is not called upon for anything further. The only way, it is said, in which injustice could happen would be if the master refused to pay the whole of the wages, or the workman would not complete the work undertaken; when this happens the State should intervene, to see that each obtains his own—but not under any other circumstances.

Let it be granted, then, that as a rule workman and employer should make free agreements, and in particular should freely agree as to wages. Nevertheless, there is a dictate of nature more imperious and more ancient than any bargain between man and man, that the remuneration must be enough to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If, through necessity or fear of worse evil, the workman accepts harder conditions because an employer or contractor will give him no better, he is the victim of force and injustice. In these and similar questions, however, such as, for example, the hours of labor in different trades, the sanitary precautions to be observed in factories and workshops, etc.—in order to supersede undue interference on the part of the State, especially as circumstances, times, and localities differ so widely, it is advisable that recourse be had to

SOCIETIES OR BOARDS,

or to some other method of safeguarding the interests of wage-earners, the state to be asked for approval and protection.

If a workman's wages be sufficient to enable him to maintain himself, his wife and his children in reasonable comfort, he will not find it difficult, if he is a sensible man, to study economy; and he will not fail by cutting down expenses, to put by a little property; nature and reason would urge him to do this. We have seen that this great labor question cannot be solved except by assuming as a principle that private ownership must be held sacred and inviolable. The law, therefore, should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many of the people as possible to become owners.

Many excellent results will follow from this; and, first of all, property will certainly become more equitably divided. For the effect of civil change and revolution has been to divide society into two widely different castes. On the one side there is the party which holds the power because it holds the wealth; which has in its grasp all labor and all trade, which manipulates for its own benefit and its own purposes all the sources of supply, and which is powerfully represented in the councils of the state itself. On the other side there is the needy and powerless multitude, sore and suffering, and always ready for disturbance. If working people can be encouraged to look forward to obtaining a share in the land the result will be that the gulf between vast wealth and deep poverty will be bridged over and the two orders will be brought nearer together. Another consequence will be the greater abundance of the fruits of the earth. Men always work harder and more readily when they work on that which is their own; they learn to love the very soil which yields in response to the labor of their hands not only food to eat, but an abundance of good things for themselves and those that are dear to them.

THE RIGHT TO POSSESS PRIVATE PROPERTY.

It is from nature, not from man; and the state has only the right to regulate its use in the interests of the public good, but by no means to abolish it altogether. The state is, therefore, unjust and cruel if, in the name of taxation, it deprives the private owner of more than is just. The most important of all social organizations are workmen's associations, for these virtually include all the rest. History attests what excellent results were effected by the artificers' guilds of a former day. They were the means not only of many advantages to the workmen, but in no small degree of the advancement of art, as numerous monuments remain to prove. Such associations should be adapted to the requirements of the age in which we live—an age of greater instruction, of different customs, and of more numerous

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