

prayers and supplications that are unceasingly going up to heaven from these innumerable centres of intercession, human society would soon become smothered by the material preoccupations that absorb all its thoughts and energies. When a man ceases to pray, his soul gets out of focus; his reason becomes darkened; his heart is closed against the influence of grace; his whole ambition turns in the direction of worldly greatness, and he ceases to take an interest in the things that are eternal. It is precisely because we are living in a century of extraordinary material and mental activity, and because there is a danger of this spiritual asphyxiation that Contemplative Orders are necessary. Look at our large cities, with their tens of thousands of white slaves, faint, exhausted, chafing under the pressure of what is next to tyranny; see our newspaper presses, fearful sources of moral pestilence, daily belching forth tons of paper, rank with all manner of error to defile the minds of men and sow corruption in their hearts.

Is there no need of some influence to soothe these discontented souls and to counteract this baneful source of contagion? Is there no need of a reminder that others are thinking of us and our souls when we are not? The convent bell, heard above the din of factories, calling its cloistered inmates to prayer, is a welcome sound to those who have the faith but not the leisure to give themselves over to such heavenly communings. They know, however, that others are performing in their stead this sublimest task on earth. So that even in this mercenary age, nations, that have their interests at heart, should not merely respect and love Contemplative Orders, whose cloisters are peopled with lovers of prayer and sacrifice, but they should willingly harbor them within