

LEO XIII. ON SOCIALISM.

[Ament the current discussion of Socialism, it is opportune to refer to the views of the late Leo XIII. on this subject in his encyclical on "The Condition of Labor." Following are some salient extracts.]

To remedy these 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. They hold that, by thus transferring property from private persons to the community, the present evil state of things will be set to rights, because each citizen will then have his equal share of whatever there is to enjoy. But their proposals are so clearly futile for all practical purposes, that if they were carried out the working man himself would be among the first to suffer. Moreover they are emphatically unjust, because they would rob the lawful possessor, bring the State into a sphere that is not its own, and cause complete confusion in the community.

It is surely undeniable that, when a man engages in remunerative labor, 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. Thus, if he lives sparingly, saves money, and invests his savings, for greater security, in land, the land in such a case is only his wages in another form; and consequently, a workingman's little estate thus purchased should be as completely at his own disposal as the wages he receives in this power of disposal that ownership consists, whether the property be land or moveable goods. The Socialists, therefore, in endeavoring to transfer the possessions of individuals to the community, strike at the interests of every wage-earner, for they deprive him of the liberty of disposing of his wages, and thus of all hope and possibility of increasing his stock and of bettering his condition in life.

Nor must we, at this stage, have recourse to the State. 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 given 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 that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry and the laws of individual property. 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. Those who do not possess the soil, contribute their labor; so that it may be truly said that all human subsistence is derived either from labor on one's own land, or from some laborious industry which is paid for either in the produce of the land itself or in that which is exchanged for what the land brings forth.

Here, again, we have another proof that private ownership is according to nature's law. For that which is required for the preservation of life, and for life's well-being, is produced in great abundance by the earth, but not until man has brought it into cultivation and having opened it to his care and skill. Now, when man thus spends the industry of his mind and the strength of his body in procuring the fruits of nature, by that act he makes his own that portion of nature's field which he cultivates—that portion on which he leaves, as it were, the impress of his own personality; and it cannot be just that he should possess that portion as his own, and should have a right to keep it without molestation.

These arguments are so strong and convincing that it seems as if the certain obsolete opinions should now be revived in opposition to what is here laid down. 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 these 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 wild before, it is now fruitful; 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 their cause, so it 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 practices of all 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 tranquility of human life. The same principle is confirmed and enforced by the civil laws—laws which, as long as they are just, derive their binding force from the law of nature. The authority of Divine Law adds its sanction, forbidding us, in the gravest terms, even to covet that which is another's: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor his house, nor his field, nor his man servant, nor his maid,

servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything which is his."

That right of property, therefore, which has been proved to belong naturally to individual persons, must also belong to a man in his capacity of head of a family; nay, such a person must possess this right so much the more clearly in proportion as his position multiplies his duties. For it is a most sacred law of nature that a father must provide food and all necessities for those whom he has begotten; and, similarly, nature dictates that a man's children, who carry on, as it were, and continue his own personality, should be provided by him with all that is needful to enable them honorably to keep themselves from want and misery in the uncertainties of this mortal life. Now, in no other way can a father effect this except by the ownership of profitable property, which he can transmit to his children by inheritance. A family, no less than a state is, as we have said, a true society, governed by a power within itself, that is to say, by the father. Wherefore, provided the limits be not transgressed which are prescribed by the very purposes for which it exists, the family has at least, equal rights with the state in the choice and pursuit of those things which are needful to its preservation and its just liberty.

ARE THEY BLIND?

COMMENT ON RECENT REMARK OF MARQUISE DE MONSTERS.

Commenting upon the alleged remark of Marquise de Monstiers Meriville, "Since I have been living in Europe my eyes have been opened to what that Church really is and to its anything but sanctity," the British Columbian Record aptly says:

Some attention deserves to be paid to the lady's statement that since living in Europe her eyes have been opened to what the Church really is. Very well. Two months ago "Lucas Malet," the famous daughter of the famous Rev. Charles Kingsley, came into the Church. She has lived in Europe quite as long as the Marquise. Marion Crawford, too, is surely as familiar with European Catholicism as the Marquise can claim to be. He came into the Church and remained. Baron Russell, of Killoben, Lord Chief Justice of England, must have been pretty familiar with the Church in Europe; still he lived and died a Catholic. Does the lady know Europe better than did Prince Hohenzollern, the Imperial Chancellor of Germany? He never deserted the faith. Last year Frau Hahn, the famous woman suffrage leader of Germany, became a Catholic. Possibly she knows Europe. Madame Lindborg, "the Madame de Stael of Denmark," became a Catholic last year. Why did not she have her eyes opened? And the internationally famous critic, Ferdinand Brunetiere—is he not as well acquainted with Catholicism in Europe as the Marquise may dare pretend to be? Still he became a Catholic about twenty years ago. So did Huysmans'; so have at least five hundred more eminent in law, philosophy, history, art, literature, theology, science, war and statesmanship. A mere list of their names would fill two pages of this journal.

We do not suppose the Marquise would claim to be an intellectual as Newman, Manning, Wilfrid Ward, Baron Russell, Father Matrin, and great as any, Brunetiere. Her detestation will not injure the Church. Sane people will measure the Marquise by the great thinkers mentioned and wonder why her eyes were opened and theirs remained closed. Hume somewhere says that when certain people try to see ghosts they generally succeed. The Marquise has proved that when people try to see faults they finally lose it. But the world was aware of this fact long before she was born. The story of the Marquise's loss of faith is, however, still incomplete; it will ultimately become known—time brings curious things to light—and when it does, pity for the lady may be increased, but reprobation of others may be even more damning than is at present suspected.

POPE PIUS X. TO THE "DAUGHTERS OF THE FAITH"

New York, February 20.—Pope Pius X. has at last placed the seal of his approbation upon the newly organized society of the Filiae Fidei, better known as the Daughters of the Faith. Miss Eliza O'Brien, Limerick, the founder of the Society, went to Rome last summer, gained an audience with the Holy Father and came home with a papal brief strongly setting forth the views of the reigning Pontiff upon the evils accruing from divorce, social extravagances and the tendency to indulge in the fashionable games of chance.

This translation of the Papal brief has just been made public: To our beloved daughter in Christ, Eliza O'Brien Lummis, Moderator of the S. Filiae Fidei.

PIUS X. P. M. To our beloved daughter in Christ, health and apostolic blessing. It is with a feeling of sweet consolation that we have learned what you have made known to us concerning the society which you have founded, its organization and its excellent results. Indeed, we cannot but rejoice greatly when we see most worthy ladies, in particular those whose position, wealth or name gives them a most powerful influence in society, uniting for the purpose of reviving particularly among those of their own rank, the perfection of Christian morality, and by striving according to resources at their command against naturalism, which is the ever increasing evil of the present day, and which breathing only the love of pleasure and sensuality, weakens and enervates the minds of men, and even in the conscience of Catholics themselves effaces the most sacred obligations.

Among these duties we mention particularly that of protesting Christian marriage against the disgraceful stain of divorce, of providing for proper education within the domestic walls as

well as in the schools, of checking those pests of human society, namely, the shameless license of spectacular representations and immoral books, of idle and wanton conversation and gatherings and the shameful extravagance of dress. Therefore, beloved daughter in Christ, the work you have inaugurated, not without divine inspiration and guidance, and which you have prosecuted with the approbation of the head of your diocese—that work we wish you to continue henceforth with greater ardor while relying on the support of our authority.

At the same time we trust that many more, stirred up by your example and that of your associates, may be led to join your organization, and that your pious association may, under your leadership, be diffused in other dioceses also, and that it may induce even Catholic men to bind themselves by a similar compact and to tend to a similar purpose. In the meantime, as an augury and a surance of divine blessing and a token of our parental benevolence, we very lovingly impart to you, beloved daughter, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to all those who in any way forward the same, our apostolic benediction.

Given from St. Peter's, November 22, 1904, feast of St. Cecilia, Virgin and Martyr, in the second year of our Pontificate. PIUS X. P. M.

The Daughters of the Faith is the outcome of an informal meeting of some of the more prominent Catholic ladies of this city a year ago, at which the topics of the discussion were certain social problems. The central society is to be directed by an executive board, which shall be under the supervision of the Archbishop.

Two things at which the society was to direct its efforts were divorce and low-necked gowns.

The Rev. Thomas F. Myhan, pastor of St. Ann's Church in East Twelfth street, has been appointed the Spiritual Director of the society by the Archbishop.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Archbishop Moeller Against Fairs and Carls.

Cincinnati, O., Jan. 13.—In a pastoral letter sent to the priests of this archdiocese to-day Archbishop Moeller lays down rigid rules regarding church fairs and picnics. He says that fairs, picnics, excursions and euchre parties often give occasion to scenes and acts which are not above reproach.

"We feel disposed peremptorily to forbid them," he adds, "but, fearing less we might thereby embarrass some pastors, we deem it sufficient for the present to make known this, our decided opposition to such proceedings." The letter then repeats former rules governing such matters, particularly emphasizing the prohibition of fairs, picnics and euchre parties Sundays and the prohibition of wheels of fortune and slot machines any day. The elimination of dancing from church entertainments and early closing of fairs Saturday nights are urged.

OUR CHURCH IS BUILT ON A ROCK.

How grateful we Catholics should be to God for having given us the grace of belonging to the One true Church of Christ! It is after reading an article like the one published recently in the Boston Herald in which Dr. Lyman Abbott is criticized, that we realize how much we owe to Mother Church. She made us one and she keeps us one: so that we are not "blown about by every wind of doctrine." To Her alone apply these words of Christ: "Thou art Peter and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

This rock for us is the Divine Authority vested in our visible head, the great White Shepherd of Rome. We Catholics can never go astray, or remain in doubt concerning matters of Faith as do our separated brethren, particularly those mentioned in the article referred to; whose difficult questions arise they are settled by appealing to Rome. We, the simple, poor, weak, human intellects to hear decisions or else we are dashed to pieces figuratively speaking, against this Rock and eventually lose our souls: "He that heareth you heareth me, says Christ, and He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican." How restful it is to meditate on these words of Holy Scripture, perhaps made too common to believe simply what God has revealed: "Seek not the things that are too high for thee and search not into things above thy ability; but the things that God hath commanded thee think on them always, and in many of his works be not curious. 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