

The next place, although it is not customary to confide what is most criminal "or compromising to persons in the inferior grades, it is nevertheless manifest that the power and audacity of these societies are increased in proportion to the number and the union of their members. So persons in the lower ranks ought to be considered as accomplices of all the crimes that are committed by the society." (*Apostolic letter of Leo XII, 13th March 1826.*)

Keep away also from other societies, not so secret, it is true, but still too dangerous for you. On the pretext of protecting poor workmen against the rich and the powerful, who might wish to oppress them, the chiefs and propagators of these societies seek to raise and enrich themselves at the expense of the workmen, often too credulous. They proclaim aloud the fair names of *mutual protection* and of *charity*, in order to keep their dupes in continual agitation and to foment troubles, disorder and injustice. Hence result, for the poor workmen, two great evils. Firstly, they expose themselves to the danger of losing their faith, their morals, and every feeling of honesty and justice, by joining unknown men who, unfortunately, are too clever in communicating their own wickedness. In the second place, the sad results of these associations have been, in this country, as in the United States, in England, in France, and every where, most detrimental to public peace and order. The working classes have been plunged into deeper misery by them; the trades by which they earned their livelihood have in some cases been totally ruined; and human justice has not unfrequently been obliged to add its rigors to these chastisements already too great.

Be then persuaded, Dearest Brethren, that when your pastors and confessors warn you against these societies, they do so through motives of real friendship; great would be your blindness if, despising their admonitions, you hearkened to the voice of strangers and unknown men, who flatter you the better to despoil you; who hold forth seductive promises, the more easily to draw you into the abyss of misery from which they care not to lift you up.

#### VIII.

##### OF INTEMPERANCE.

We must also forewarn you, Dearest Brethren, against an enemy, who under the most seductive outward forms, conspires against your peace, your fortunes, your health, your families and your eternal salvation. Oh! what hideous ruin follows in the wake of that infernal monster called *drunkenness*! How many bitter tears has it not caused to be shed! Of how many crimes has it not been