

At a meeting of the Board of Studies of the University of Manitoba, on Wednesday, Father Chenier was re-elected Chairman of the Board. This is, we believe, the 25th consecutive year this honor has been conferred by his colleagues on Father Chenier. The Board of Studies is the originator of most of the important measures passed by the council, and might be called the mainspring of the University.

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**SOCIALISM**

By Mr. Charles S. Devas

This paper on Socialism by Mr. Devas was read at the Wednesday morning session of the Catholic Truth Society's Conference, Sept. 27, at Blackburn, England.

Like all others who speak of Socialism, and wish to be clear, I must say at once whom I mean by Socialists—not the Anarchists who oppose all government, not the Communists who would have all things held in common, not the extremists or Dynamiters who would use violence to attain their ends, not any of these whom there is no necessity to confute, but the scientific or moderate Socialists, who would proceed by way of the ballot box, with law and order; and would contrive that sooner or later all capital or means of production or sources of income should be transferred to the hand of the State, whether the central or the local Government. Now the question that may occur to you is whether, after all, this moderate Socialism is an enemy, whether there is any need of fighting, whether, at any rate in Great Britain, we have any complaint against the Socialists. Are they less civil to us than is any other non-Catholic body? Why pick a quarrel?

But Great Britain is not the whole world, and looking outside, wherever the Catholic Church is a strong force and simultaneously the Socialists are a strong force, we see the two in violent antagonism. You have only to cross to Belgium to see them forming two political parties in daily hostility. At least half the blame of the cruel persecution of the Church in France falls on the shoulders of the Socialists. In Germany a strong Government left off persecuting the Church because in her they recognized the only force that could withstand Socialism successfully. In Italy a Government once bitterly anti-clerical is becoming eager for an alliance with the Church as a shield against the Socialists. The same antagonism is seen across the Atlantic. The two rapidly growing and spreading bodies in the United States are the Socialists, who already make up nearly half the voters, and over against them the Catholic Church. Within the last 14 months two books have been published in the United States on the Catholic side, showing the true facts of the momentous case; the earliest by Father Gettelmann, S.J., being an enlarged and adapted translation of Father Cathrein's work on Socialism in its 8th edition; the latter book is by the Right Rev. William Stang, Bishop of Fall River, entitled "Socialism and Christianity"; and in neither book is there any question of conciliation. "Little can be done," writes a Socialist American Magazine, "until men and women face the two curses of our country and our time, the curses of capitalism and Christianity." "The real Socialists," writes Bishop Stang, "have done with God and His eternal laws. Real Socialism means rebellion against God and society." And the Bishop writes from the long personal experience of his pastoral work. "Is there nothing in your way?" he asked a Socialist leader not long ago. "Yes, sir," the man answered slowly, "there is one thing in our way, and that one obstacle is the Catholic Church."

**Three Main Pillars of Socialism**

And yet it seems a pity to be compelled to take up arms against a scheme and a school that gives us so fair a promise. Indeed, what could appear on the surface more reasonable than

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orderly Collectivism? Three principal arguments strike me as the pillars and prop of the Socialist position. The first is the argument that it is just and fair for all men to start alike; and that if a man is to be poor and fill a low station, it is to be his own fault and own doing, and not due to the mere accident that he was born of poor parents, while another is in high station from no personal merit, but from the mere accident that he was born of rich parents. This may be called the argument from justice.

The second argument is from the immense saving to be worked by collectivism, with its joint and orderly system of production, and the avoidance of the incalculable waste of the competitive system, such as the vast sums spent on advertising or on the work of commercial travellers, a large body of the most intelligent men in the country using up their brains and their time chiefly to induce purchasers to buy from one commercial house rather than another. Then there is the waste of things made that no one wants, the waste of the spoilt or unsold goods, the waste of a dozen men doing what a couple could do if they only acted, in delivering goods for example, in combination instead of competition, as letter delivery compared with milk delivery. Now all this waste is ended by Collectivism, which forms the logical conclusion to the great process you see around of producers, production and sale, even retail shops on the largest possible scale. What a vast fund will be in hand from all labour being usefully employed instead of some 25 per cent. being simply thrown away. This may be called the argument from economy.

The third argument is drawn from the evils that in most industrial countries are the lot of so many: ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed, over-worked, under-paid, unemployed, exposed from youth upwards to evil surroundings, moral and physical. A way out of these evils must be found. "We have found the way and the only way," is the glad tidings or gospel of Socialism. "Present conditions are intolerable: your deliverance a necessity: Collectivism the one answer to your most urgent need."

This argument may be called the argument from necessity; and backed up by its comrades, the arguments from justice and from economy, the three appear to offer a formidable front to all opponents; for like ethical considerations, monetary considerations, and humane considerations appear to drive us to the Socialistic conclusion. But then appearance is not always the same as reality.

(Continued on page 6).

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