

at this point we have the Church in the Holy Council of Trent which defines that regard to Mary, the Mother of God, the question of sin is not even to be mentioned.

The great St. Thomas gives three reasons for this. First, Mary must have been made worthy to be the mother of her Son. Now the honor or shame of father or of mother throws its shadow upon the child as is written in the Book of Proverbs. Such dishonor could not have been allowed to fall on God. Second, Christ having received His blood and flesh from her, there arose between the mother and the Child such close affinity such an intimate bond of union as would absolutely forestall and forbid any touch or trace of Satan as it is written (2nd Cor.) "What part can there be between Christ and Belial." Third, Christ, the Son of God, made of Mary, is a most mysterious yet real way. His abode, dwelling not only within her soul, but also within her virginal womb. Now, it is written (Wisdom I) "Wisdom will not enter into a wicked soul nor will it dwell within a body subject to sin." This is why one must simply say that the Blessed Virgin Mary never committed any actual sin, either mortal or venial, that the words of the Cantic should be fulfilled in her: "Thou art all fair my beloved and there is no sin in thee."

All those who have a special function in the service of God, are prepared by Him for it. These are a few of the special charms granted her because of the part she was to perform in the Redemption of the race. She is a special object of Divine care, in an eminent degree, the daughter of the Eternal Father, Spouse of the Holy Ghost, Mother of the Son, full of grace, and blessed amongst women.—The Tablet.

THE STRONG BOX

Austin O'Malley, M. D.

Issacher Ben Ezra, the merchant, had great flocks of sheep on the Plain of Escholon, a camel train that traded between Tyre and Damascus, and many vineyards on the sloping of the hills. An important citizen, grave of speech, with lips that showed thin through his long white beard, and hard brown eyes which never softened even when casting up his steady gaze.

On a street of Nazareth lived the widow Mary, with her only son, Jesus the carpenter. He was a quiet man, with brown Nazarene hair falling upon his shoulders, and a forked red beard. His voice was full of strange musical tones; and his eyes were kind always, but deep, like the eyes of one that converses much with God. Often they had curious humorous wrinkles at their outer edges when He talked to the children who came daily after school to His shop to watch Him at work.

He made shepherd's pipes for them, and the mother's needle would stop, forgotten. Some of the smaller children said they had seen light about His head when He spoke, but their parents laughed at these fancies.

Now and then the mother would sing for them. He would go steadily on with His work, but He would sing with her. The children would catch up the chant with them:

The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing. He hath set me in a place of pasture.

He hath brought me up, on the water of refreshment; He had converted my soul.

He hath led me on the paths of justice, for His name's sake.

For though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I fear no evils, for Thou art with me.

One day the mother sang a strange hymn for them, one they had never heard.

My soul doth magnify the Lord: And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour:

Then the mother broke down and began to cry, and the little ones did not understand.

She went into the house, and straightway Issacher Ben Ezra darkened the doorway. The carpenter ceased working and looked at the man.

Jesus, son of Joseph, said Issacher, "make me a strong box of oak, four cubits by three, and three cubits deep; and bind it well with the iron I have ordered from Tubal the smith, and fit it with drawers wherein I may keep certain things I value. What wilt thou charge me for the work?"

"Four pieces of the silver of Herod," answered Jesus, the carpenter.

"What, man?" cried Issacher. "Four pieces of silver! Art thou mad?"

"Very good," said Jesus, the carpenter. "Go to someone that will make it for two. I will not." And he started his saw, ripping a plank.

Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name.

Issacher went out, and the carpenter began to talk to the children. Presently the merchant returned, and said:

"Here! I need that box straightway, and I will give thee three pieces for it, not a penny more."

The carpenter went on talking to the children: "And the poor woman gave of her meal and oil to the prophet although she was in sore need herself."

"Dost thou hear me speaking?" snarled Issacher. "When I come to a man like thee to give him work I am wont to meet courtesy."

"Even so am I," said the carpenter, and he went on talking to the children: "And God the Father was pleased with the charity of this woman, and He sent her His peace and the oil and meal divinized not."

"I will make the box of three pieces, if thou givest the fourth piece to the poor."

"Bah! The poor! The idlers in the sun! My conscience will not let me paperize them. Let them work as I do. Yet I must have the box made it and I will pay four pieces; but thou art a robber!"

The carpenter answered: "I ask only the due wage for my work, yet thou art spendthrift of speech."

Then he went on ripping the plank and Issacher departed.

The carpenter made the strong box, and clamped it with iron bands and bolts, and Issacher Ben Ezra filled it with gold and precious stones, parchment deeds written by the lawyers, and records of trade. He paid the four pieces of silver, and Jesus gave one to a blind beggar at the Jerusalem gate.

The year went on unto the winter rain, and Mary sat by the shop door, spinning and singing softly; and the carpenter day by day made casks for the vintage, and mended the bullock carts and the yokes, and taught the children seated upon the wood shavings of the floor.

One evening when the rain was falling steadily, and the street before the carpenter shop was purring with the brown water, the son of Issacher Ben Ezra came to the door and said to Jesus:

"My father died today. Make a coffin for him of cedar of Lebanon; and when thou comest to the house I wish thou wouldst show me how to open the strong box thou madest for him."

Mary the mother stopped the droning wheel, and after the young man had gone away with light step, she asked her son, the carpenter:

"Shall I pray for the soul of Issacher Ben Ezra?"

And the carpenter made answer: "It is too late. He locked his strong box and his heart too tightly whilst living."

Then he made the coffin of planks of the cedar of Lebanon, and the priest praised Issacher Ben Ezra in a great funeral oration. Of all his wealth Issacher took away with him a winding sheet. His son opened the strong box as soon as he could empty the house after the funeral, and left at once for Jerusalem. He squandered the gold on a dancing woman of Egypt who lived in the Sion Quarter near David's Gate, and disappeared.

FALLACIES OF SOCIALISM

ARCHBISHOP GLENNON TELLS OF RISKS OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN PAST CENTURY

There has arisen a school of thought which in the last and present century has assumed vast proportions, and exercised great power, whose advocates boast that in it is found a cure for all the social and economic ills that afflict humanity. Nor would their remedy be limited by them to the social or economic ills. Its application would also cure us of our political and religious troubles as well. They tell us, too, that the cure is simple, writes Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis.

Have we trouble with the poor, their children or their housing? Charity or philanthropy furnishes no real help. Only one power is competent; and that is the State. Is there trouble between labor and capital? The simplest solution of it is to have the State settle it by taking over capital. Are the children neglected, let the State become their parent, and nurture them as a mother would. Does crime exist? The reason for it would be a great measure removed if since crimes are committed because of private ownership—by the State taking over the ownership, and becoming the sole possessor. The system for which such extensive claims are made is known under the generic term of "Socialism."

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

Of Socialism it would be difficult to give a popular and adequate definition; for, just like liberty or democracy, it is made to cover the mass of principles, and of systems, the extremes of which sometimes contradict one another. Some of our nervous people think that if a city were to own a trolley line, it would be due to Socialism. If the ownership extended to all public utilities, it would be, in their opinion, advanced Socialism, whereas the Socialists themselves declare it would not be even a beginning. Socialism covers activities promoted by leading statements on one hand; and, on the other, by the Lenin and Trotskys, who claim

that they alone have the courage to put in practice the true Socialism. Marx and Engel have taught. An application so extensive, including principles so varied, makes it a difficult task to discuss the same with intelligence; for a discussion or criticism of one principle or school immediately produces a disclaimer from the Socialist nearest you, who tells you that he belongs to the other school, and that the principles you criticize are also abhorrent to him. Yet, while he rejects the principles criticized, he will be found claiming comradeship with those who profess them.

It is quite true, however, that Socialism differs in different countries. It is one thing in Russia. In Germany it is of that transient character which changes its definition every day. In France and Italy it is made the tool of the Freemasons to attack the Church, their attention and energy being so centered thereon, that their campaign against capitalism goes by default. In America we have samples of them all; or if blended, the blending is mild and chastened because of surrounding conditions.

Whatever be the means taken in its exploitations, all of them are practically agreed on one principle, which may be set as a definition of Socialism, and it is that principle which would substitute a State monopoly instead of private ownership of all the sources of production and means of distribution. Which means, for all practical purposes, all there is of permanent value—lands, industries, factories, transportation—would be taken over by the State and managed for the benefit, and in that process directing the activities, of all the people.

AN ATTRACTIVE IDEA

The idea appears at first sight quite attractive. It speaks of all the people; and it suggests that thereby will come to them, under a state which would be of their own creation, their fullest development of liberty, fraternity and equality. There would be no poor. There could be no rich; or rather, as the prosperity of one would be the prosperity of all, all would be rich. Then all would work for the state, which, in turn, would take care of all. There would be no more poor farms, nor dependent poor, nor idle rich, neither would there be orphans, because the state would take the place of the parent.

Such is the rosy promise held out by the exponents of the system. The dream has never been actualized. On the other hand, to the great majority there is the firm conviction founded upon the experience of the past, the conditions of human nature and of the human character, that the socialized state will ever remain a dream, since its actualization would run counter both to experience, and to our human nature as it is constituted. Or, in other words, we believe that the system even if achieved will not work for, from the moment of its victorious inception, it must move either towards anarchy or tyranny.

RELATION TO CHURCH

It is when we discuss what may be called the tendencies of Socialism, that its true nature becomes apparent—its relation, for instance, to the Church, the home and the family. It may be that the average Socialist that we meet has his own views thereon; but the apostles of the system have theirs also; and we must take into consideration the conclusions they have reached, rather than from the tyro who seeks by his plausibility a sympathetic hearing in a decent community. Both Marx and Engels, the founders, the evangelists and promoters of scientific Socialism, base their entire system upon the materialistic conception of history. That is to say, they originate man from the clay—limit his ambitions to the earth; and deny the interference of a spiritual power, either as existing in his own nature, or from above. With them, marriage has no sanctity, the home no real protection, the parents no responsibilities; and the children being wards of the State shall look to it for their education, and for their moral upbringing.

CATHOLICS AND SOCIALISM

Need I say that such tendencies violate the first principles of Catholic Faith; and, in fact, of human nature itself? We believe that the parent exists before the State—that the State is nothing more than the consensus of families which compose the state of Politia Society today, perhaps those who are most to blame for the lamented demise of modesty would search their hearts and repent. Among the "social sins" now common among "our so-called best people" the writer names:

"Murder in High Life. Feminine Modesty and Manly Chivalry Both Found Dead! Murderer Had Many Accomplices. Coroner's Verdict Proves Modesty to Have Been the First to Die." If a "sorehead," like the foregoing, says the author of an excellent article in the current Atlantic Monthly, were used to describe the state of Politia Society today, perhaps those who are most to blame for the lamented demise of modesty would search their hearts and repent. Among the "social sins" now common among "our so-called best people" the writer names:

The perfect freedom of intercourse between the sexes, the unchaperoned motor-rights by night, the intimacies of modern dancing, the scantiness of modern dress, and the frankness of conversation between young men and girls. There are even whispers concerning the sharing of the smuggled bottle during the early Prohibition days, and the indulgent attitude of some of the most popular girls toward the evident intoxication of their partners.

Responsibility for the existence of the "jazzy" girl of today the Atlantic's anonymous contributor justly lays first of all on her father, who must take up again, if he would save his daughters, the long disused but "trusty sledge-hammer of Parental Authority," saying "This shall be done because I command it!"

development of her socialistic career. I need not tell you the oft-repeated story of Socialism's successes—its crimes, nor of the quick punishment which came to an outraged humanity, which in order to get rid of the monster was willing to bow to the demands of a dictator.

SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXIST

Again, in our own day, we are witnessing its establishment. What, or how soon, will come the end in Russia, we know not. It may be in greater anarchy; or it may be by reversion to czarism and dictatorship.

But what we do know is that if all the crimes imputed to it were true, it deserves the condemnation of the civilized world. If on the other hand, the Socialist depicts the injustices of the world, which he insists must be undone, the wrongs committed by property owners, and exploiters, that must be righted, the sins and crimes that he must be ended, the poor and the broken that should be cared for, that must be helped, we have no difficulty in agreeing with him that these problems do exist. His description of them may be more picturesque than ours, but his desire to right them is not stronger, nor has been the first to call attention to social ills. They are as old as the world. The blessed Christ gave much of His Gospel to the denunciation of wrongs, and wrongdoers—the sins of wealth and capital; but He paralleled the same to give to Caesar only what belonged to him. He taught the blessedness of poverty, the dignity of labor, and the greatness of charity. He never promised the abolition of poverty. His taught that the righting of wrongs would finally obtain only in a better world.

REFORM NOT HOPELESS

But this again does not mean that reform is useless, or hopeless. On the contrary, it is now, and has ever been, the duty of the followers of Christ to approximate their lives, and their laws, and their country to His teaching—to set up the standards of right as also of duty to help the poor and weak, and lowly—to curb the extravagances of wealth—to make for labor a just wage—to compel capital to give fitting employment—to give protection to the man with the home and the family that they, and he, may live and thrive under the laws and protection of the great Father in Heaven; and as a family contribute to the State that obedience and support that properly constituted authority may demand.

There are many desirable reforms which are supposedly socialistic, if not in their origin, at least by appropriation, which we not only may, but should cordially support. Our legislatures are today crowded with measures such as these, many of which, if enacted into law, will help at least in the solution of our troubles. It matters little whether they are called socialistic or not. The question is, are they based on justice? Will they be helpful to the people? Their enactment and progress as well as the philosophy back of them may find their development in the recent field of aeronautics.

Just as with our human nature and the desire to possess inherent in it, so in the problems of the conquest of the air, we know the unchangeable law of gravitation—that what is heavier than air will under normal conditions fall to earth. It does not prevent us, however, from seeking the useful conquest by forces other than the air itself, which for a while may neutralize the law, but when its task is ended, quickly yields.

So, with the social problems there are certain laws we may not set aside. But we have still the reason to struggle day by day lifting ourselves on the wings of charity, looking to the Sun of Justice, and hoping at length for the triumph of right. With us that triumph should be a passion; but a passion controlled by justice—exercised in patience, and all times submissive to the Voice and the Law of God.—St. Paul Bulletin.

THE DEMISE OF MODESTY

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Mothers are then advised to tell their girls "truthfully and simply the effect of some phases of their social laxity on the man whose moral fiber they are weakening." The girls themselves he cautions against using methods to attract suitors which were hitherto confined to a class representing the victims of the social order rather than its makers, and finally the young men of today are blamed for doing "all in their power to make the customs and manners of an unlicensed world the standards of the young ladies they are 'honoring' with their attentions."

"I wonder how many of the social aspirants in our Catholic circles leave unmentioned the question that will naturally occur to the reader. 'Very few,' a cynical observer might answer. 'Catholics seem quite as ready as the rest to accept without protest the prevailing moral standards of our best society.' 'But I find Catholic girls refreshingly different from the others,' his companion might remark. 'See that beautiful maiden over there? Well, she's a Catholic.' 'How can you possibly tell?' the cynic might ask. 'Because she is decently dressed and dances modestly.' That perhaps is a purely 'imaginary conversation,' but the principle underlying it should unquestionably be one of wide practical application. For if Catholics, the salt of the earth, the children of saints, and the clients of the Maiden Mother whose shining virtue is purity, lose their high ideals and let their manners and morals become no better than those of today's 'polite society,' who will be left to protect and hand down that precious heritage of our Christian civilization, a modest, gracious and unswollen womanhood?—America.

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MORE REASON FOR HOPE THAN FOR DESPAIR

Writing in this month's Atlantic Monthly a European observer of world conditions submits a thoughtful summary that challenges the attention of thinking men. Standing in the centre of Europe and casting his eyes about him he sees the world dancing and making merry in the midst of death. A new world disease has broken out, he says, an epidemic that spreads from red Moscow, to grand Vienna, to hectic Paris, to morbid Berlin, to London, even to the Balkans, and to the United States.

The symptoms of this new disease are the crazy seeking after artificial amusements, a love of display, a craze for eccentricities, a wave of criminality, an unscrupulous profiteering, a cynical disregard of suffering, a mad desire to get rich quickly, and a reluctance to do any genuine work. Lackless of consequences, the world has adopted the motto of Lord: "After us the deluge." The obvious cause of this terrible derangement according to this writer is the War.

A pessimistic summary is this. Yet we are loathe to think that conditions are so deplorable and that the outlook is so lugubrious as such writers would have us believe. In the first place the world is not suffering from a new disease. It is a victim of a malady that is as old as the world itself—a disease which drenched the world in bloody wars from the time of Alexander and Caesar down through the ages to the days of Napoleon to our own time, a disease which ground the poor into slavery long before Karl Marx and the pseudo-leaders of the proletariat began their specious plea for reform, a disease which from the day that Cain slew Abel, has murdered, ravished, and starved men, women and children in every country, in every age, and in every clime.

The malady has been called by various names. It is Egoism, human selfishness, worldliness, pride of life—whatever you will, but one small word denominates it truly—and that word is sin. It is an ugly word from which the sensitive temperament of the leaders of the world recoil. Nevertheless from the first Adam's primal offence against His Maker sin has usurped the government of human affairs. The noisome brood of evils which we know today as cruelty, bestiality, egotism, violence, materialism, are the progeny of sin, the effect of the wound human nature received from original sin.

Left to itself human nature could never hope to overcome the handicap that sin has caused. But fortunately the world is not condemned to faster in its own corruption. To redeem the world, to save the hurt that sin has made, to rescue man from degradation and despair, Christ, the Son of God, became Man. For us men and for our salvation He lived a life of suffering and by His vicarious sacrifice atoned for Adam's fault and merited grace for men whereby they might counteract the ravages of sin. "Fear not," said He to His Apostles, "I have overcome the world."

To lapse into despair, to fall supinely upon the "after us the deluge" theory of life, to think that because some men are sinful, bestial, and violent, the whole world must be headed straightway to perdition is unworthy of Christians. God still reigns in the heavens, and His Church still rules the consciences of men.

Divine Providence is still regulating the destinies of men and nations through some leaders with puny minds think they, not God, are supreme. This is the world's crime, that it has severed diplomatic relations with its Creator. Until this

THE AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

In the course of a lecture on the effect of the great War on the position of the Catholic Church in Europe, Hilaire Belloc, the Catholic writer, expressed his opinions on what was likely to be the status of the Church in her contact with society in England and other parts of Europe in the near future. He expressed the belief that there are small chances as yet of any surprising great extension of Catholicism in England.

The greatest thing the War has done in the British Isles, he said, was to produce a small nation called Ireland. It has had the effect of giving Ireland a definite status whether for good or ill he did not know.

As to the fate of Catholicity in Great Britain, he suggested that, although Catholics are now only a handful of the population, and non-Irish Catholics a smaller handful still, nevertheless it was impossible to tell what might happen. Of all the institutions in the world, the Catholic Church has had the most astonishing history, he pointed out, and one never knew from the present status of its curve what its fate would be in the future.

Mr. Belloc suggested that in the place of Protestant Prussia there would be in the future a great Catholic Poland.

Taking up the question of the issue between capital and labor, the lecturer declared that the Catholic Church was the only organized body which was teaching a body of doctrine and philosophy which was applicable to this situation. He expressed the opinion that there would be seen in the near future a great battle, not only between capital and labor, but between the Catholic social solution and the others.—The Tablet.

IDEAS OF YOUTH

If the ideas of youth have not an autumnal mellowness, at least they have all the freshness and elasticity of spring. It is good and wholesome to talk with the young, not for what they may learn, but for what they impart.—Canon Sheehan.

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