

the characteristics of secret societies. For many things done in them have the nature of strict secrecy, to conceal which with the utmost care, not only from those outside, but from very many of their own associates, is a primary law; for instance, their secret and important resolutions, the names and persons of their chief leaders, certain secret and clandestine meetings, as well as their decrees and the ways and means to be employed in carrying them out. To the same end is the complicated distinction of the members in grades and duties and employment; not less than the established difference in their ranks and degrees, and the severity and discipline by which all are ruled; while the candidates for enrolment are bound by promise—may more, by a special oath—to swear, as in most cases they are required never in any way to divulge their associates, their signs, or their doctrines. Thus by a feigned appearance, and the same style of pretence, the Masons, as of old the Manicheans, try by every possible means to hide themselves, and to have no witnesses of their actions but members of their own sect. They seek hiding-places as most convenient, having assumed to themselves the character of learned men and philosophers for the sake of training their associates; in their language they cultivate most strictly politeness of speech, and charity towards the lower classes; they profess only to desire a better state of things for the masses, and to make the greater number participate in the conveniences of civilised life; but even suppose these principles were their true ones, they would by no means represent all their objects. Besides, those who are admitted into the society must promise and engage that they will render implicit obedience and fidelity to the dictates of their leaders and teachers; that they will carry out their commands at the least sign and indication of their will; otherwise they will have to meet the most dire consequences, and even death itself. And, moreover, if any one shall be judged to have betrayed the discipline, or resisted the commands of the superiors, extreme punishment is often inflicted upon them, and that indeed with such boldness and dexterity that very frequently the police fail in discovering or in bringing the criminals to justice. Moreover, to practice deceit and to conceal themselves, to bind men to themselves, as slaves with iron fetters, without alleging any reason; to employ for any crime these slaves of another's will, to bare their arm to slaughter, whilst guarding themselves as much as possible from punishment, is an enormity at which nature revolts. Wherefore against this association reason and truth itself compel one, in justice and natural virtue, to fight.

And the more so because other most cogent reasons condemn the nature of the society, being as it is the enemy of all virtuous living. For however great may be in men the power of skilful deceit, and the habit of lying, it is impossible that the cause of things should not, to a certain extent, be discovered in its consequences. "A good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit, neither can a bad tree bring forth good fruit" (St. Matt. vii, 18). Now this sect of Masons does produce most pernicious fruit, mingled with the greatest bitterness. For, by the most certain evidence which we have already mentioned, it comes to light what is its ultimate end, viz., utterly to overthrow that discipline of religion and social order which Christianity has founded, and to erect upon its ruins a new one after its own mind, on the principles and foundations of mere naturalism.

What we have said and what we are going to say, must be understood of the Masonic sect, viewed as a genus, and as it embraces cognate and affiliated societies, not, however, of the individual members of the sects, among whom indeed there can be those, and not a few, who, although they are not free from the fault, that they have allowed themselves to be implicated in such societies, nevertheless are neither themselves criminal participants in their doings, nor are aware of what they really aim at. In like manner some of these associations do not perhaps endorse certain extreme conclusions, which, as they necessarily follow from their common principles it may be taken for granted that they embrace, unless the baseness itself of the action should deter them by its hideous sight. Likewise, the circumstances of time and place persuade some of them to aim at less than either they themselves desire, or the rest are wont to aim at; still they are not on that account to be reckoned free from the Masonic bond; because this bond is not to be judged so much from its acts and accomplished facts as from its declared principles.

It is the first principle of those who call themselves Naturalists, since by their very name they declare it, that human nature and human reason should be in all things the teacher and ruler, and this laid down, they either pay less attention to duties towards God, or they pervert them by indefinite and erroneous opinions. For they deny that anything has been revealed to us by God Himself; they admit no dogmas of religion, that nothing is true but what human intelligence can understand; that there is no teacher whom we are to believe on account of the authority of his office; but since it is the special office of the Catholic Church to embrace fully, and to maintain in their most complete integrity the doctrines which have been committed to her alone, received from God Himself as well as her authority as teacher, and everything else in the way of heavenly help towards salvation, therefore against her is the attack of her enemies with the utmost hatred, directed.

Now let us just look at the sect of Masons, and see what it does in those matters which concern religion; especially where it has the most liberty of action; and let us determine whether it does not plainly appear to carry out the decrees of these Naturalists. For long and laboriously has it endeavoured to bring it to pass that the teaching of the Church and her authority shall be rendered impotent in States, alleging and maintaining that religion and civil polity are altogether to be separated; and this done, they exclude the most wholesome influence of the Catholic religion on the

laws and administration of States; and hence it results that they determine that States are to be regulated entirely without the influence and teaching of the Church. Nor are they satisfied with merely setting the Church, that best of all leaders, aside, but they must injure her by hostile action. And, indeed, they allow men with impunity to attack the very foundations of the Catholic religion in speaking, writing, and teaching; the rights of the Church are not spared, and the gifts with which, by God's providence she has been endowed, are not safe. The least possible liberty of action is allowed her, and that by means of laws which apparently are not very severe, but which in reality are framed for the very purpose of hampering her action. We also see special and grievous laws imposed upon the clergy in order that both their numbers may be diminished and the daily necessities of life denied them; what remains of ecclesiastical property, though bound to her by the most stringent ties, handed over to the will of the State executive; communities of the religious orders rooted up and scattered to the winds. And, besides, war has been stirred up against the Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff by his enemies. And, in the first place, he has been, for fictitious reasons, deprived of his civil principedom, which is the guarantee of his liberty, and the defence of his right: next, driven into a condition which is more unjust, and made intolerable by difficulties and hindrances, until at last we have come to the time when, the supporters of these sects openly proclaim what they have for a long time agitated in secret, viz., that the Sacred power of the Pontiff is to be abolished, and his Apostolic office, founded by Divine right, is to be utterly destroyed. And this determination, even if other proofs were wanting, is made sufficiently clear by the testimony of members of that society, many of whom have often in the past, and also recently, declared this to be the object of Masonry to harass the Catholic name with the utmost and unrelenting hatred, not to cease until they see everything abolished which the Roman Pontiffs have established for the sake of religion. Now, even if those who are enrolled in this sect are not required in so many words to renounce the Catholic religion, it is because such a line, so far from being repugnant to the interests of Masonry, rather serves the cause. For first, they thus easily deceive the simple and unwary, and are able to invite many more to join them. Then, besides, by their adopting certain well-known practices of religious rite, they succeed in establishing the great error of these times, that the care of religion is a matter of little or no importance, and that there is no difference of worth between them. This view is well fitted to destroy all religions, and especially the Catholic, which, as it is the only true one of all, cannot be treated on equal grounds with the rest without the greatest injury done to it.

But the Naturalists go further, for in things of the highest importance, having boldly entered on the career of universal wandering, with a headlong course they hurry on to destruction, either through the weakness of human nature or through the act of God, demanding the just punishment of their pride; hence it happens that they cannot even grasp firmly those things which are known by the natural use of reason, as certainly are, that God exists, that the souls of men are free from all admixture of matter, and are immortal. Now the sect of the Masons is founded upon these same rocks with like aberration. For although they in a general way confess that God exists, nevertheless they themselves attest that this belief does not exist in the minds of certain individuals among them, with a firm assent and steadfast judgment. For they do not attempt to hide the fact that this question about God is the greatest cause of dissension among them; and, moreover, that on this very point there has been quite lately no small contention in their ranks. For indeed the sect allows great liberty to its members, that each may claim its right to say that there is a God or to say that there is no God; and those who pertinaciously maintain that there is no God, should be as readily initiated as those who believe indeed that there is a God, but think erroneously about His nature, as the pantheists do: all which, however, is nothing more nor less than to retain a certain absurd view of the Divine Nature, while denying its truth. Now when this chief foundation is weakened or uprooted, it follows that those truths also totter which are known even by the suggestion of nature, viz., that all things exist only by the will of God creating them, that the world is ruled by His providence, that there is no annihilation of the soul, and that there is another life, and that eternal, to follow upon this earthly one.

Now if these, which are, as it were, the principles of nature specially designed for the instruction and practice of men, are in ruins, we can easily judge what will be the state of public and private morals. We pass over in silence those more divine virtues which no one without the special grace and gift of God can practice or attain to, no trace of which can, of course, be found in those who treat as idle fables the redemption of the human race, heavenly grace, the sacraments, and the attaining of felicity in heaven: for we are speaking now only of those duties which are the result of natural virtue; for God the creator of the world, who is also its provident ruler; the eternal law, ordering the natural law to be observed and forbidding it to be violated; the final end of man, placed as it is far higher than human affairs above his merely dwelling here for a time; these are the first principles of all justice and morality, and if these are taken away, which the Naturalist and the Freemason are wont to do, forthwith the knowledge of right and wrong will not be able to exist anywhere, and would have no means of defending itself; and, indeed, the moral discipline which alone finds favor with the Masonic confraternity, and with which they maintain that the rising generation should be imbued, is what they call civic, unfettered, and free: viz. in which no idea of religion is included. But how fruitless this is, how wanting in strength, how liable to be carried about

with every motion of mere desire, is clearly seen from the lamentable fruits which already partly appear. For where this liberty has begun to reign unmoled and has displaced Christianity, there, quickly enough, uprightness and morality have perished. Monstrous doctrines have gained in strength, and the boldness of the wicked have stalked abroad. These things are generally complained of and deplored, and not few of them most unwillingly and not seldom testily, being convinced by the evidence of facts.

Besides, as the nature of man is defiled by original sin, and, therefore, much more prone to vice than inclined to virtue, it is absolutely required for all virtue that he should restrain the turbid movements of the soul, and make the appetite obedient to reason; in which struggle the contempt of human things must constantly be maintained, and great labour and suffering must be borne in order that reason may always gain the victory. But the Naturalists and Masons, giving no credence to those things that we know by God's revelation, deny that our first father fell away; whence they maintain that the human will is not weakened nor bowed down. (Conc. Trid., Sess. vi., D. Justif. c. i.). And besides, in exaggerating the virtue and excellency of human nature, and placing the principle and rule of justice only in it, they cannot even imagine that constant struggle and perseverance are necessary for calming and ruling its appetites, while we see that many incitements to desire are supplied to men, that newspapers and articles are written with an utter neglect of temperance and modesty, theatrical representations noted for the utmost license; works of art are exhibited which reveals, with revolting cynicism the principles of what is now known as *realism*; no pains spared to add to the delicacies and refinements of artificial life; everything indeed alluring to pleasure whereby virtue thus lulled to torpor may sink to the lowest level, in which indeed they are somewhat wickedly, but are nevertheless somewhat consistent, since they take away all hope of heavenly good and bring down the idea of felicity to the enjoyment of mere sensual things, and degrade it to the earthly. In confirmation of this, we may adduce a thing most surprising when stated, but actual in fact: for since no one scarcely is wont to be such a slave to clever and designing men as those whose mind is enervated and broken by the dominion of passion, there are forced in the sect of Masons those who maintain that the masses by every art and design are to be saturated with an unlimited license for vice; for this being secured, they will be in the power of the sect to attempt anything and everything at its bidding.

And, as to domestic society, almost the whole doctrine of the Naturalists is contained in the following: That matrimony belongs to the class of business engagements; that it can be broken off at the will of those who have contracted it, and that by right; that secular rulers have power over the marriage bond; that in the education of children nothing is to be taught about religion as certain and undeniable; that each is to be allowed that which pleases him when he arrives at a certain age. Now all these doctrines the Freemasons evidently endorse, and not only endorse, but for a long time have desired to reduce to practice. For already in many countries, and even professedly Catholic, it is law that no marriage shall be held valid unless celebrated with civil rites; in others, divorces are sanctioned by the law; in others, it is determined to carry this out as soon as possible. And thus things are hastening on to change the nature of matrimony altogether, viz., into unstable and fluctuating unions which, as mere lust has formed, lust also can dissolve. Besides, with the utmost unanimity, the sect of Freemasons looks to securing to itself the education of youth. For they feel that they can easily bend at pleasure that soft and flexible age, and twist it into any shape; and therefore they think nothing is more to their purpose in order to mould the children of the citizen, and make it such as they require for the State. Hence, in the educating and teaching of children, they exclude the ministers of the Church from all supervision and instruction; and in many places they have obtained that the whole of education should be in the hands of laymen, and that in moral instruction nothing is to be taught in which to bind man to God by the great and holy sanction of religion.

They follow the decrees of civil prudence, whereby the Naturalists maintain that all men are equal, and in exactly the same conditions in all respects; that every one is by nature free; that no one has the right of commanding another; that to wish men to obey any authority beyond what they wish themselves is to do them violence. Therefore everything is in the power of a free people; that Government is held by the command or the concession of the people, so that when the popular will is changed, their rulers, even though resisting, may be deposed; that the origin of all rights and civil duties is either in the masses or in the existing civil government, and that enlightened by the newest-fangled doctrines. Besides, the State should be without belief in God; in the various forms of religion there is no reason why one should be preferred before another; that all may exist together.

Now that all these doctrines are equally pleasing to the Freemasons, and that they wish to order States on this model is so well known, that it needs no proof, for, for a long time, they have with all their power and in every way, been openly striving for it; and by this method they prepare the way for the bolder ones, not few of whom are going headlong into worse things, inasmuch as they are teaching equality and common property in goods by destroying all distinction of ranks and fortunes. Now what the nature of the sect of the Freemasons is, and how it sets to work to secure those things which we have summarily touched upon, is perfectly clear. Their chief doctrines are so discordant with reason and with their perversion, that nothing can be more perverse. For it is the

greatest folly and the most audacious impiety to wish to destroy the Religion and the Church which God Himself has founded, and also to wish to preserve for ever, and to recall the manners and morals of the heathen after a break of eighteen centuries. Nor is that less horrible, or less patiently to be endured that the benefits mercifully obtained through Jesus Christ not for individual men only, nor even for those associated in families and civil communities, shall only be cast aside; which benefits, by the very testimony of our enemies, are considered most signal. Now in this mad and Satanic will we can almost recognize that that inextinguishable hatred and desire of revenge, which burns in Satan against Jesus Christ, and in like manner that other attempt which the Freemasons are vehemently making to destroy the chief foundations of right and virtue, and offer themselves to help those who, after the manner of beasts, wish everything to be lawful which they may desire, is nothing else than to drive on to destruction the human race with dishonor and ignominy. Besides, the dangers which threaten the civil and domestic life increase the evil. As we have above explained, there is, with the consent of all men in all ages, something sacred in matrimony; and, besides, it is forbidden by the Divine Law that marriage should be dissolved. Now, if marriage is treated as profane, or is allowed to be dissolved, disturbance and confusion must necessarily result in families by the women losing their dignity, their offspring being uncertain of provision and safety. To take no care publicly for religion, and in arranging and conducting civil affairs to have no more regard for God than if He did not exist, is a temerity unheard of even among the heathen, in whose mind and conviction not only was belief in the gods so thoroughly fixed, but also the necessity of public religion, that they considered it easier to find a city without a territory than one without a god. In truth, human society, for which by nature we are fitted, is constituted thus by God, who is the author of our nature; and from Him, as from the first principle and spring, the whole force and continuance of innumerable goods, with which life abounds, flow. Therefore, as each of us is admonished by the voice of nature itself piously and holily to worship God because we have received from Him both life and its accompanying benefits, so for the same cause should peoples and States do likewise. Wherefore those who wish the civil community to be free from the duty of religion, clearly, act not only unjustly, but foolishly and absurdly. Now, that men are born by God's ordinance for civil society and union, the power of ruling is so necessary a bond for Christian society, that when it is taken away that society must speedily be dissolved; it follows that the same power which has produced society also produces the power of ruling. Hence we understand that in whose hands the power is, he is the minister of God. Wherefore, so far as the end and nature of human society can require it, it is the duty of every one to obey the legitimate authority in its just commands, as he would God Himself, and it is in the first place repugnant to truth that obedience is in the power of people to cast it away when they will. Likewise that all men are equal; no one doubts if the race and common nature, if the final end proposed to each one to be obtained, if the rights and duties which flow spontaneously from that principle, are considered. But because the capacities of all are not the same, and one differs from another both in powers of body and mind, and there are very many differences of character, will, and nature, therefore nothing is so repugnant to nature as to wish to embrace all things in one category, and to press this complete equalisation of men and things into the institutions of civil life. As the perfect state of body consists in the composition and joining of the different limbs together, which differ in form and in use, nevertheless when joined together and each put in its proper place make a whole beautiful in appearance, firm in strength, fit for action, so also in the republic of men there is likewise an almost infinite dissimilitude of parts, which, if they are tested as if they were the same, and each allowed to follow its own judgment, no state would be found more deformed; whereas if they, with the distinct grades of dignity, profession and pursuits, they properly harmonize together for the common good, they then fitly represent a well constituted state, harmonious with nature.

But the greatest cause of anxiety is to be apprehended from those disturbing errors which we have noticed; for the fear of God and respect for the Divine Law being taken away, the authority of rulers being despised, the desire of rebellion being permitted and approved of, popular desires being allowed free rein for license, only to be restrained by the fear of punishment, there necessarily follows the disturbance, and even upsetting, of all things. This disturbance and upsetting of things, many of the communistic and socialistic societies professedly intend and boast of doing; from whose undertakings let not the sect of Freemasons say that they are averse, because they sufficiently favor their determinations and hold their chief principles in common. But even if they do not at once, or in every place, rush to extremes in action, this is not owing to their good discipline, nor their good will, but rather to the divine virtue of religion, which cannot be extinguished, and to the more sane part of men, who, rejecting the slavery of secret societies, courageously oppose their insane attempts.

And would to God that all would judge of the root from the fruits, and would recognize the seed and first beginnings of evils which press, and dangers which are impending! We have to do with a deceitful and cunning enemy, who, servilely whispering in the ears of both peoples and rulers, has caught both by flattering opinions and seeming compliance. For by ingratiating themselves with rulers by an affected friendship, the Freemasons have had in view the securing them as their associates and powerful helpers in oppressing Catholicism. And in order to stimulate them the more to action, they have charged

the Church in the most barefaced way of contending with rulers for the civil power and rights. Meanwhile, having sought security and acquired audacity by these acts, they have begun by gaining great influence in the ruling of the State, but really being prepared to shake the foundations of Government and to persecute the rulers of the State, to calumniate and even to expel them whenever they are found to act differently from what they desire. In a somewhat similar way they are cajoled by a feigned compliance, for they prate continually of liberty and public prosperity; they pretend that it is owing to the Church and their chief rulers that the masses are not delivered from unjust servitude and want: they have imposed upon the people, and have incited them, tempted by the thirst for revolution, to rise up against both temporal and spiritual rulers. However, in spite of all this, the expectation of good things in the future always exceeds the realisation. Besides, the people, worse oppressed, are compelled to a very great extent to do without those alleviations of their miseries which, if public affairs had been regulated according to Christian principles, they would have easily and abundantly procured. Whoever strives against the order constituted by Divine providence, are sure to receive this punishment of their pride, that there they meet with the wretched and painful lot whence they rashly hoped to have a fortune overflowing with good things.

But the Church, because it specially enjoins upon men obedience to God as the sovereign ruler of all things, injuriously and falsely should be thought to either envy the civil power or to arrogate to itself any of the rights of rulers. Besides, what it is just to render to the civil power, that certainly by its decision and knowledge of its office, it decrees is to be rendered. That right of ruling which comes from God Himself is a great accession of dignity to the civil power and no small help for conciliating the obedience and goodwill of citizens. She being the friend of peace and the fosterer of concord, embraces all with maternal charity; and being solely intent upon helping men, teaches them to join justice with clemency, ruling with equity, and laws with moderation; that the rights of no one are to be violated, that the public order and tranquillity is to be preserved, the needs of the poor are to be alleviated, publicly and privately, by all possible means. But to use the words of St. Augustine, "they, therefore, think, or rather wish it to be thought, that the Christian doctrine does not tend to the good of the State, because they are unwilling that the State should rest on the foundation of virtue, but rather on the impunity of vice, 10 which, being the plain truth, it would be the part of civil prudence, and well for the common safety, if rulers and people would not conspire with Freemasons to subvert the Church, but rather with the Church to break the force of Masonic attacks."

However the issue may be, in this so great and already too widely-spread evil, it is our duty, Venerable Brethren, to apply our mind to seek for remedies. But now, since we believe as the best and surest hope of remedy is to be found in the efficacy of religion, which the Freemasons hate the more because they fear it so much, therefore we think the best thing to do is to appeal to its most wholesome virtue against the common enemy. Therefore, whatever the Roman Pontiffs, our predecessors, have decreed for hindering the undertakings and attempts of the sect of the Freemasons, whatsoever they have sanctioned, either for the purpose of deterring men from, or calling back after they have entered those societies, all these, each and every one, we hereby notify, and with Our Apostolic authority confirm; in which, indeed, trusting especially to the goodwill of Christian people, we beg each by his own salvation that they will make it a matter of conscience not in the smallest way to depart from the previous commands of Apostolic authority in this matter.

You, Venerable Brethren, we beg and entreat, joining your labour with Ours, strenuously to strive to extirpate this impure plague, which is creeping through all the veins of the State. The glory of God and the salvation of your neighbour are to be defended by you; and, in fighting in such a cause, neither courage nor fortitude will fail you. It will rest with your prudence to judge by what means especially those things which oppose and stand in the way are to be met. But, since, according to the authority of Our office, it is right that we should point out a likely mode of action, we therefore determine that the first thing to be done is to strip the Freemasons of their mask, and show them in their proper character, and that the people are to be instructed, both by word and by pastoral letters, what are the artifices employed by these societies in coaxing and alluring, and what is the gravity of their opinions and iniquity of their actions. And what often Our predecessors have confirmed, let no one think it lawful for any reason to enrol himself in the sect of the Freemasons if his Catholic profession and salvation are of such worth to him as they should be. Let not their pretended virtuousness deceive anybody; for it may appear to some that the Freemasons require nothing of them which is openly contrary to religion and morality; but since the very nature and character of the sect itself is wholly vicious and flagitious, it is not lawful for any one to join them, or help them in any way.

Then it is your duty, by the assiduity of your preaching and exhortations, to draw the masses diligently to learn the precepts of religion, to which end we greatly exhort you, that both in writing and seasonable sermons, the elements of those most sacred principles contained in Christian philosophy should be explained. To this it belongs that the minds of men should be held by instruction, and that they should be fortified against the manifold forms of error and various incitements to vice, specially in this licence of writing and unsatisfiable greed of learning. A great work indeed in which, however, the clergy will chiefly be of your fellow-labourers and helpers, if it is by your endeavors, thor-

oughly instructed in virtue of life and sound learning. But so honorable and serious a cause requires the industry of laymen to be invoked in its favor, who associate the love of religion and country with virtuousness and learning. The forces then, of both these orders being joined together, take pains that men may know and love thoroughly the Church of God; for the greater is the knowledge and love of her, the more marked will be the hatred and aversion to these secret societies. Wherefore, not without cause, having embraced this favorable occasion, we repeat that which we have made known, that we ought most diligently to propagate and foster the Third Order of St. Francis, the rule of which we have tempered a little while ago with a prudent lenity. For the nature of that society, as constituted by its founder, is simply this: to call men to imitate Jesus Christ, to love His Church, and to practice all Christian virtues. Therefore it ought to be very powerful in suppressing the contagion of these most wicked societies. May this holy society, therefore, be renewed with daily increase, whence much fruit may be expected, and especially that men's minds may be drawn to real liberty, fraternity, and equality. Not, indeed, such as the Freemasons absurdly think, but such as Jesus Christ purchased for the human race and St. Francis followed after. We call that the "liberty of the children of God," by which we serve neither Satan nor our lusts, those most wicked masters; that fraternity which deserves its origin from God, the Creator and Father of all men; that equality which, founded in justice and charity, does not destroy all distinctions among men, but by the very variety of life, its duties and pursuits produces that wonderful combination and harmony which naturally tends to the profit and dignity of citizens.

In the third place, there are certain institutions wisely established by our forefathers, and which in the course of time have been dropped, which may become at the present time the type and model, as it were, of similar institutions. We speak of those guilds or associations of working-men which aim at protecting, with the guidance of religion, their worldly interests and morality. And if our ancestors, after the experience of ages, appreciated so fully the utility of such institutions, our age perhaps will value it even more highly on account of the peculiar power they afford of crushing the strength of the sects. Those who gain a bare subsistence by the labour of their hands, besides that they specially by their very state of life are most worthy of charity and aid, but also the most easily led astray by the deceits and wiles of the propagators of evil. They should, therefore, be induced all the more kindly to join worthy societies, to save themselves from being led into crime. For these reasons, and for the common welfare, we fervently wish to see these guilds, so suited to the times, re-established under the auspices and patronage of the bishops. We are greatly rejoiced that similar associations and also guilds of masters have already been founded in various parts, both aiming at the relief and aid of the worthy members of the working classes, to insure to them and their families the benefits of a titular patronage, and to supply them with the means of preserving, not only their morality, but the knowledge of religion and the love of piety. We cannot here pass over in silence one society which has given so many admirable examples, and which has deserved so well of the lower classes. We speak of the society which took the name of its father, St. Vincent de Paul. The work it has done, and the object it sets before itself, are sufficiently well known. The efforts of its members, prompted by charity, are solely directed to the relief of the poor and distressed—a work which they carry out with wonderful wisdom, and a modesty no less rare. But the more this society conceals the good it effects, the more is it fitted to the practice of charity and the alleviation of mankind's miseries.

Fourthly, that the object of our desires may be the more easily obtained, we once more urgently commend to your fidelity and watchfulness the care of youth, as the hope of human society. To its formation give your greatest care; and be sure that, however great may have been previous zeal and foresight, you can never do too much to withdraw the young generation from the schools and teachers whence there is cause to fear the pestilential breath of the sects. Among the precepts of Christian doctrine there is one on which, urged by their Bishops, parents, spiritual directors, and parish priests should lay stress. We speak of the need of warning their children or their pupils of the criminal nature of these secret societies, and that they may thoroughly be on their guard, of letting them learn by what peridious and varied artifices their propagators have been in the habit of using them to ensnare other men. Those who are entrusted with the duty of preparing young people for properly receiving the Sacraments, would do wisely if they induced all to make a firm resolution never to join any society without the knowledge of their parents, or without the advice of their confessor.

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PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

THE FIRST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH, Consecrated to the Devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Also, The Exercises of a Monthly Retreat. By Father F. X. Gautrelet, of the Society of Jesus. Translated from the French by P. P. S. Baltimore: John Murphy & Co.

THE CATHOLIC CHILD'S BIBLE HISTORY. A Text Book for Schools. Old and New Testament. Compiled by the Sisters of Mercy. Boston, 15 Bromfield street; John A. Boyle, Publishers.

On Sunday, March 23d, over a thousand workmen met in the Cathedral of Blois, France, to hear Mass in honor of St. Joseph, special patron of workmen and of the Catholic clubs of French workmen. A Capuchin, Father Ubald, preached the sermon. "Behold," says L'Avenir, of Blois, "the first answer to the question of Socialism."