

At home, thanks to the good principles which shape our laws and direct our government, the crisis is not so acute ; but who will say that the elements are not beginning to gather and the symptoms to manifest themselves ?

The Vicar of Christ, reading as only he can read the signs of the times, and realizing the peril of the situation, has come like the good Samaritan to the rescue of society, to pour into its wounds the oil of a heavenly doctrine, and bandage them by salutary prescriptions. Going to the source of the evil, the Holy Father finds that the misery and wretchedness which press so heavily on the large majority of the very poor are traceable to the rejection of the old church and ancient religion with its guilds and institutions for the workingman and the poor. Whence by degrees it has come to pass, that workingmen have been given over, isolated and defenceless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unrestricted competition. The evil has been increased by a rapacious usury practised under different forms by avaricious and grasping men, to which must be added the custom of working by contract, and the concentration of so many branches of trade in the hands of a few individuals, so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the masses of the poor a yoke little better than slavery itself.

Coming to assign a remedy, the Holy Father does not find one in the system of the *Socialists*, who, working on the poor man's envy of the rich, endeavor to abolish private property and transfer the possessions of individuals to the community, so that whatever there is to enjoy may be distributed in equal shares to all.

Thus they would defeat their own purpose ; for, if every man worked for the common good, nobody would work at all. Nor can a remedy be found in State legislation which cannot invade the natural rights of man either as