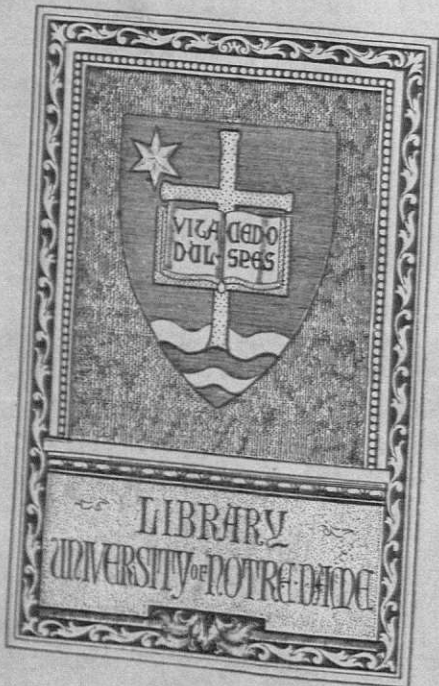


HX
536
R955c

Ryan, Rev. John Augustine.
The Catholic church vs. socialism.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME LIBRARY



LIBRARY
UNIV. OF NOTRE DAME

The
Catholic Church
vs.
Socialism

By
THE REV. JOHN A. RYAN, D. D., LL. D.,
OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA.

WITH A FOREWORD BY
CARDINAL GIBBONS

REPUBLISHED FROM
THE NEW YORK EVENING MAIL

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME LIBRARY

BX
1396.3
.R93
1918a

IX
536
P. 55a

Copyright, 1918
Mail & Express Co.

WARRANT
TO MAIL

Cardinal's Residence,
408 N. Charles St.
Baltimore.

137585

February 16, 1918.

My dear Mr. Cullen:

I beg to present to you The Reverend John A. Ryan, D.D., Professor of the Catholic University, Washington, D.C., who has consented to prepare a series of three articles on the subject of Socialism, for the pages of The Evening Mail. I feel that you are fortunate in having Dr. Ryan write for you as he is well versed in the matter, having studied it from every angle, and is a clear, concise, strong writer. It is my earnest hope that these articles will accomplish much good in influencing men towards a better understanding of social and economic problems.

With kind regards, I am,

Very faithfully yours,

J. Carr. Gibbons

Archbishop of Baltimore.

Mr. John Cullen,
The New York Evening Mail,
New York.

PREFACE.

The following articles appeared in *The New York Evening Mail* during February, 1918, and are reprinted in pamphlet form by that paper as an appreciation of the labors of Dr. Ryan.

It is the belief of the editors that they have been allowed to present one of the most important contributions to a discussion of great moment.

The author of this series was selected by Cardinal Gibbons, who when asked to restate the attitude of the Catholic Church on socialism, delegated Dr. Ryan to prepare the series and personally approved it.

The Catholic Church and Socialism

In the course of the present war all the belligerent governments have extended enormously their control and operation of industry. Here in the United States we behold the public authorities fixing the price of coal and food, regulating the kinds of bread that we shall eat, operating the railroads, building and sailing ships, and erecting houses for workingmen. Competent students of the subject fully expect that many of the new forms of state intervention will be continued for some considerable time, if not indefinitely, after the arrival of peace. While none of these activities, nor all of them together, constitute socialism in the true sense, they look like installments of or an approach to a socialistic reorganization of industry. Therefore, the time seems fit for a brief restatement of the attitude of the Catholic Church toward socialism, and toward certain industrial proposals which are improperly called socialism.

The authoritative and precise doctrine of the church on these subjects is found in certain encyclicals and instructions of Popes Leo XIII. and Pius X. In his encyclical, "On the Condition of Labor" (May 15, 1891), the former pontiff condemned socialism explicitly as injurious to the workingman, destructive of the individual's natural rights, and perverse of the sphere of the state. The proposals of the socialists, said Pope Leo, are harmful to the laborer, inasmuch as they would deprive him of the opportunity to invest his savings in land for the increase of his resources and the betterment of his condition in life. They violate natural justice, since they would prevent men from safeguarding the future of themselves and their families through the possession of durable and lucrative property in the

earth's unfailling storehouse. They tend to a social condition of manifold disorder and dissatisfaction; for the state ownership and management of productive property would destroy individual incentive, cause "the sources of wealth to run dry" and "level down all to a like condition of misery and degradation."

In his encyclical on "Christian Social Action" (December 18, 1903,) Pope Pius X. explicitly reaffirmed the main propositions of his distinguished predecessor's defense of private property and denunciation of socialism.

Two objections have been raised to these papal pronouncements: First, that Pope Leo spoke only of land, not of capital; second, that the socialists no longer demand that degree of state ownership of land that the Pope condemned.

PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND MACHINERY

To the first objection the sufficient reply is that all the principles and arguments set forth by Pope Leo in defense of private ownership of land apply with substantially equal force to the artificial instruments of production. And they have been so interpreted and applied by all Catholic authorities. With regard to the second objection, it is not possible to speak quite so definitely, since the socialist position on land tenure and management has been somewhat modified since the publication of Pope Leo's encyclical. Many European socialists of authority concede that the operation of small farms would better be left to individuals, while the Socialist party of the United States has gone so far as to declare that it is not opposed to the "occupation and possession" of land by actual cultivators. In the matter of urban land it is probable that the majority of present-day socialists would permit a person to own the site upon which his home was erected, together with a small garden. It seems certain, however, that they would not allow any one to draw profit from land which he did not himself cultivate or occupy.

A less extensive modification seems to have taken

place during the last twenty-five years in the socialist proposals concerning capital. The authoritative spokesmen of the party to-day would permit an individual to own those tools and machines that he could operate by himself or with the assistance of one or two other workers. Apparently they would not prevent the ownership and management of some of the larger productive establishments by the workers themselves organized in co-operative associations.

Making due allowance for all these mitigations of the ancient rigor of socialist doctrine, we still find the scheme liable to substantially all the objections brought against it by Pope Leo XIII. Socialism still contemplates government ownership and management of all land used for commercial and industrial purposes, of all mines, of all but the smallest farms, and of substantially all but the very small artificial instruments of production and distribution. And it still calls for the abolition of all rent and interest, and of all incomes derived merely from the possession of property.

PAUPERIZATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

Therefore, the worker would not be permitted to become the owner of anything from which he could derive an income when he became disabled. He could not put his money into savings banks, nor stocks, nor bonds, nor any other kind of interest-bearing wealth. Inasmuch as only a slight proportion of the workers could be self-employed on the small farms, in the small hand industries, and in the few co-operative establishments that the socialist state could afford to permit, the great majority would be deprived of that sense of independence, manliness, self-reliance, self-respect and economic power which can come only from property.

It is true that revenue-bearing property is not an indispensable means to adequate provision for the future of the worker and his family. A system of state insurance might, in theory at least, be a satisfactory substitute; that is, so far as concerns the things that

can be bought with money. But no system of insurance, nor any scale of wages, can provide a man with those psychic goods which are an integral element of normal life, and which are only second in importance to food, clothing and shelter. Under socialism the worker would be directly and constantly dependent upon the state, from the cradle to the grave. All his life he would be merely a hired man. He could become contented with this degenerate status only after he had lost all of that initiative, that self-respect and that ambition which are essential to an efficient and worthy human existence.

To retort that the majority of the workers are even now deprived of any solid hope of becoming property owners is to miss the point of the issue entirely. This sad condition is no necessary part of the present system. Not the abolition but the reformation of the existing social and industrial order is the proper and adequate remedy. We shall discuss this specifically in a later article.

WORKER'S LIBERTY INVADED.

The liberty and opportunity of the worker would be further diminished by his inability to control the most important details of his own life. Under socialism the state would be the only buyer of labor and the only seller of goods. No matter what the provocation, the worker would have no choice of employers. He must work for the state or starve. Likewise he must buy the necessaries and comforts of life from the state, and be content with what the state sees fit to produce. Instead of the wide variety of choice now offered by competing dealers he would find only the few standard types of goods regarded as sufficient by the state. It is no answer to these objections to prophesy that the state would prove a more generous and humane employer than the majority of existing captains of industry, and that it would provide all the variety of goods that is really required by genuine human needs. The point is

that in these vital matters the worker would be denied all *liberty of choice*. This sort of freedom is a valuable possession in itself, on its own account. The mere provision of abundant material goods is not an adequate substitute or compensation.

Another grave injury to individual liberty would proceed from the unlimited power of oppression possessed by bureaucrats and majorities. The officials of the socialist state would have not merely political power but unlimited economic power. While they could in time be dislodged by a majority of the voters, the majority itself would enjoy the same power of unlimited tyranny. For example, the workers in the principal industries could effectively combine for the purpose of making their own remuneration exorbitantly high, and the remuneration of all other workers inhumanly low. Indeed, there is no practical limit to the economic oppression that a majority might inflict upon a minority.

Even if we could bring ourselves to put up with a regime of industrial and social servitude, we cannot welcome a system that would inevitably lead to industrial and social bankruptcy. When we turn from individual to social considerations, we find that a socialist organization of industry would, as Pope Leo said, end in universal "misery and degradation." It would not work, for the simple reason that it could not command the motives that are required for efficient and sufficient production. The salaried directors of industry would not have the indispensable incentive that is to-day provided by the prospect of indefinite gain. Even if they had the incentive, they would lack the power; for their positions would be dependent upon the masses who worked under their direction. They would not endanger their place of authority by reprimanding or discharging men who refused to do a normal day's work. That the majority would shirk, would work only as much and as long as they liked, is as certain as the certainty that the majority of industrial tasks will remain forever inherently unpleasant. The average man will work hard

at them only when compelled by sheer necessity, such as the fear of losing his job. Make the workers masters of the industrial establishment, and this fear would be ended. Therefore, the only possible outcome would be an immense reduction in the social product, with the resultant universal "misery and degradation."

SOCIALISTS IGNORE HUMAN NATURE.

The naive expectation of the socialists that men would work as hard for the common weal as they now do through love of gain or fear of loss is a futile and pitiable act of faith. It has no basis in experience. The assumption that the socialist mechanism would effect a revolutionary transformation in human motives and inclinations, and convert men at one stroke from egoists into altruists, indicates that the socialist believers are in the habit of using their emotions instead of their intellects for the business of thinking, and are unable to distinguish between aspirations and facts. They ask us to accept hope and prophecy in place of the uncomfortable conclusions of history.

So far as the economic proposals of socialism are concerned, the condemnation pronounced by Pope Leo XIII. and Pope Pius X. remains in full vigor, and the reasons for the condemnation are still substantially applicable and conclusive. In the next article we shall consider socialism in its moral and religious aspects.

In the preceding article we showed that the economic proposals of socialism have fallen under the ban of the Church, because they are a menace to individual and social welfare, and therefore to individual and social justice. In the present paper we shall try to show that the socialist movement is antagonistic and harmful to Christian morals and the Christian religion.

By the socialist movement we mean the organized association of socialists that exists to-day, with its writers, speakers, books, journals and other methods of propaganda. It is the means by which socialist prin-

ciples are explained, defended and diffused. Now the socialist movement advocates not merely the collective ownership and management of the instruments of production but certain theories of philosophy and ethics and a certain attitude toward religion.

It professes not merely an economic theory but a philosophy of social evolution and of life. This philosophy is directly opposed to the doctrines of Christianity.

The main tenet of this philosophy, and the main reason of this hostility to Christian principles, is the theory of economic determinism. While this phase is formidable, it is as intelligible as its synonyms, "the economic interpretation of history," "the materialistic conception of history," "historical materialism," etc.

According to the theory of economic determinism, all social institutions and social beliefs are at bottom *determined*, caused to be what they are, by economic factors and conditions, by the methods of production and distribution. At any given time the existing sex relations, governments, laws, forms of religion and education, and the corresponding beliefs, doctrines and opinions, are what they are rather than something else, because the prevailing industrial system is what it is rather than something else.

As the economic factor is dominant and determining among the social phenomena of any particular epoch, so it has produced and determined the social *changes* that have taken place throughout history. The evolution and variations in domestic, governmental and educational institutions, and in the ethical, religious and political beliefs of men, have all been brought about by changes in economic factors and conditions, by changes in the way men got their living.

MARRIAGE AND PRIVATE PROPERTY.

A few illustrations, taken from standard socialist writers, will help make clear the meaning of the theory:

When all goods were owned in common sexual promiscuity prevailed, because there was no economic rea-

son for stable unions. When private property was introduced the monogamic family came into existence because men wanted their wealth to go to their own children exclusively.

Primitive Christianity was mainly a revolutionary movement of the slaves and proletariat of the Roman empire; medieval Catholicism was the outcome of the feudal economic organization; Protestantism was a revolt against the economic tyranny of the church as regards tithes and indulgences. Slavery gave way to serfdom and serfdom to individual liberty when the economic masters of society found that these institutions were no longer profitable.

To-day the prevailing morality sanctions all ethical notions and all practices which tend to increase the profits of the capitalist. Thus for the determinist.

It is now universally recognized by competent students of the subject that economic conditions do exert a considerable influence upon other social conditions, and even upon men's practical notions of right and wrong.

If economic determinism meant no more than this, it would not necessarily make the socialist movement hostile to Christianity. As understood by its leading exponents, however, the theory goes far beyond this moderate conception. These men have been, with scarcely an exception, believers in philosophical materialism. That is, they hold that all existing things are matter, that there is no such thing as spirit. Hence they deny that the will of man is free, and assert that the economic factors in society produce all the aforementioned effects and changes *necessarily*, as heat melts ice and rain wets the ground.

Some of the more important conclusions regarding morality which flow from this theory may be briefly set forth. Since men have not free wills, they cannot properly be blamed for the evil nor praised for the good that they do. They are no more responsible for their actions than are dogs and earthquakes. The tyranny of the capitalist and the dishonesty of the

laborer are alike caused by forces over which they have no genuine control.

Hence the frequent assertion in socialist writings that the evils of our economic order are due to the system and not at all to the individuals. Obviously this rejection of the human soul, of free will, and of human responsibility is directly contrary to Christian principles.

MARRIAGE A TEMPORARY CONTRACT, BREAKABLE AT WILL.

As indicated above, the economic determinist holds that the present form of domestic society is an effect of the present form of industrial society. When the system of private ownership of the means of production has been supplanted by collective ownership, the relations between the sexes will change correspondingly. Woman will then be "economically independent," and therefore will bind herself to a man only when moved by love, and will remain with him only as long as love remains. The union of man and woman under socialism will be subject to dissolution at the will of either party.

In the words of Morris Hillquit, "most socialists favor dissolubility of the marriage ties at the pleasure of the contracting parties." (*Socialism; Promise or Menace*, p. 163.) The antagonism between this view and the Christian principle of marriage is patent.

Other anti-Christian implications of the theory of economic determinism are: The child belongs primarily to the state; all actions which are truly conducive to the establishment of socialism are morally justifiable; the welfare of the socialist state is the supreme principle and determinant of right and wrong; and against the state the individual has no rights.

The attitude of the socialist movement toward religion is explained as well as stated by the socialist daily, the New York "Call": "The theory of economic determinism alone, if thoroughly grasped, leaves no

room for a belief in the supernatural." (March 2, 1911.)

Assuredly so. If all that exists be matter, and if all social institutions, changes and beliefs be produced by economic forces, there is no place in the universe for God or a responsible human soul. The economic determinist cannot consistently be a religious believer. And he must logically expect the disappearance of religion in the socialist state. For if religious ideas be determined and caused by the prevailing mode of production, they must pass out with the passing of the present system. Christianity cannot survive the destruction of its capitalistic basis.

Such is the attitude toward religion that we should expect intelligent socialists to take if they were logical. When we examine their utterances we find this expectation fulfilled. Speaking summarily, we assert that all the great leaders, most of the important books and journals and a very large proportion of the oratorical productions of the socialist movement are in greater or less degree opposed to Christianity; and that the number of socialist leaders, journalists and oratorical utterances that avow a belief in any form of supernatural religion is negligible. We have not the space to prove these assertions by adequate citations, but we submit three which may arouse sufficient interest to induce further investigation.

SOCIALISM INCOMPATIBLE WITH RELIGION.

James Leatham, a prominent English Socialist, declared that he could not recall "a single instance of a person who is at one and the same time a really earnest socialist and an orthodox Christian." ("Socialism and Character," pp. 2, 3.)

William English Walling, an able and well-known American socialist, tells us that the majority of socialists are firmly convinced that socialism and modern science must finally lead to a state of society where there will be no room whatever for religion in any form. ("The Larger Aspects of Socialism," p. 381.)

Morris Hillquit, whose competency to represent the mind of the socialist movement will not be questioned, is "inclined to believe that the majority of socialists find it difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile their general philosophic views with the doctrines and practices of dogmatic religious creeds." ("Socialism: Promise or Menace?" p. 204. Chapter VI. of this work contains an abundance of quotations from, and references to, other socialists on this subject.)

Some of our readers will object that they can believe in the economic proposals of socialism without accepting the immoral and irreligious theories outlined in the foregoing paragraphs.

We reply by agreeing with them. Economic determinism is not essential to a belief in economic socialism. Moreover, there exist socialists who have made and do make this distinction. Neither the little band of so-called Christian Socialists, nor the select coterie of Fabian Socialists have subscribed to this materialistic and anti-Christian philosophy.

But these groups are relatively unimportant elements in the socialist movement as a whole. The vast majority of the socialists of the world are adherents of what is known as Marxian or International Socialism, which does profess this attitude of hostility to Christian ethics and the Christian religion.

The few followers of the international movement who still retain their Christian faith belong for the most part to that element of the rank and file that has not had the opportunity or the capacity to become acquainted with the underlying socialist philosophy.

ONLY ONE ATTITUDE POSSIBLE FOR CHURCH.

According as they make progress in the study of the fundamental principles, they will imitate the great majority by yielding to the anti-religious theories and influences that permeate the leadership, the literature and the entire atmosphere of the organization. Such has been the unvarying lesson of experience.

In this situation there is but one possible attitude to be taken by the Catholic church. It is that of vigilant and ceaseless opposition to the concrete, living institution called the Socialist movement.

Even if the movement were aiming at the holiest and most beneficent social order that can be conceived, it would necessarily fall under the ban of the Church. An organization and movement that is saturated with materialism and irreligion, that constantly propagates an un-Christian philosophy of life, that sooner or later makes atheists or rationalists of all, Catholics included, who remain within its ranks—cannot reasonably expect to escape the active opposition of the divinely appointed custodian of Christian morals and Christian faith.

When this movement aims, as it does aim, at a social and economic order which would be destructive of individual rights and disastrous to human welfare, it is doubly damned. Both as a movement and as an economic goal, both as a means and as an end, socialism deserves the condemnation of the Catholic Church.

In the two following articles we shall show that the church not only does not oppose but sanctions all the reforms that are necessary and desirable in the present economic system.

In the presidential election of 1912 the Socialist candidate received about 900,000 votes, of whom not more than one-sixth were members of the Socialist organization. A very large proportion of the other five-sixths did not accept the complete Socialist programme. They voted the Socialist ticket mainly as a protest against economic abuses and to indicate their desire for radical improvements. They identified socialism with social reform.

This attitude is still held by thousands among the working classes, who do not realize the full meaning of the socialist programme, and who think that the socialist party is the only agency that is striving for the abolition of present economic wrongs.

Hence a great number of them assumes that all opponents of socialism must also be antagonists of social reform and defenders of the evils of capitalism. To all who hold this opinion, and to all other persons whose minds are open to evidence, we say that all the necessary reforms of our industrial system are either explicitly set down or implicitly authorized in the official teaching of the Catholic church.

These propositions we shall prove from that same encyclical, "On the Condition of Labor," which condemns socialism. Indeed, the discussion of socialism occupies only one-fifth of that document, the other four-fifths being devoted to remedies and reforms. (Copies of the encyclical can be obtained for ten cents each from the International Catholic Trust Society, 408 Bergen street, Brooklyn, or from any Catholic book store.)

The language in which Pope Leo characterizes the evils of the existing system and the need of reform is worth noting for its vigor, insight and sympathy. He declares that "some remedy must be found, and quickly found, for the misery and the wretchedness pressing so heavily and unjustly on the vast majority of the working classes;" that "workingmen have been surrendered, all isolated and helpless, to the hard heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition;" that "a small number of very rich men has been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke that is little better than slavery."

These sentences are found in the opening paragraphs of the encyclical; near the close we find this statement: "The condition of the working classes is the pressing question of the hour, and nothing can be of higher interest to all classes of the state than that it should be rightly and reasonably adjusted." The encyclical was published May, 1891.

The principles and proposals laid down by Pope Leo may be conveniently presented under four heads: Religion; Individual Action; Private Associations; the

State. The first three will be dealt with in the present paper.

THE PART OF RELIGION.

The Pope repudiates the assumption that the church is so preoccupied with spiritual things that she has no care for men's temporal interests. "Her desire is that the poor should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and better their condition in life." "While the chief treasure of society is virtue, it is by no means a matter of small moment to provide those bodily and external commodities the use of which is necessary to virtuous action."

In these two sentences are summarily stated the church's attitude toward the material wellbeing of the masses, and the rational basis of that attitude. The church is not a social reform organization, nor is social betterment her main function. Her mission is to bring men to religion and to make them virtuous. But they cannot be virtuous without a certain decent amount of material goods. Furthermore, they cannot be virtuous unless they practice justice and charity in *all* the relations of life, including those of an economic character; therefore, the church must lay down and insist upon observance of all moral principles.

"No practical solution of the social question," says Pope Leo, "will be found apart from religion and the church."

This statement will not be denied by any person who is acquainted with the facts of history, human nature and present conditions. When we consult history we learn that the Christian principles concerning the dignity and sacredness of the individual human person, the essential equality of all persons, the brotherhood of all men in Christ, and the dominion of the moral law over the industrial as well as the other actions of men, brought about the abolition of slavery, the establishment of innumerable works and institutions of compassion and beneficence, the prohibition of usury and

the rise of political democracy. None of these reforms and institutions originated in a non-Christian land.

When we study honestly the tendencies and limitations of human nature we are forced to the conclusion that men will never set up and maintain a regime of social justice until they become convinced that the supreme law of life is the moral law. The most cunningly devised social statutes will not be able to compel men to act justly in their economic relations, unless they are impelled by a living and enlightened conscience. And the voice of conscience will ordinarily have little effect if it be not recognized as the voice of God.

This means that an effective conscience cannot be developed or maintained without the assistance and direction of religion. When we consider the profoundly immoral maxims that have ruled economic practices and relations for more than a century, such as that every free contract is a fair contract, that all gain is lawful that can be obtained without the use of physical force or flagrant deception, that power and cunning may with impunity exploit weakness and ignorance, we see no hope of permanent remedies until these perverse principles are dislodged by religion and religious morality.

Neither legal ordinances nor humanitarian appeals will be effective. The determining mass of men must first become convinced that these maxims are contrary to the law of morality and the law of God. They cannot be brought to such a conviction by any social agency except organized religion.

But religion will never succeed in this work of moral conversion by the mere preaching of generalities. To proclaim that men must obey God, practice virtue and observe the Golden Rule will not suffice. What is needed is specific moral instruction, specific application of moral principles to the current industrial practices. This was precisely what Pope Leo did, in so far as it was possible in a brief document that had to be adapted to the varying economic conditions of the entire world. Let us glance first at his statements under the head of

INDIVIDUAL ACTION.

Christian morality, says Pope Leo, teaches that the laborer should carry out fully and honestly all equitable agreements, and should abstain from all forms of violence against persons and property. Here we have a direct condemnation of labor-loafing and the use of physical force in industrial disputes.

On the other hand, employers, continues the Pope, must respect their employes as human beings instead of treating them as bondsmen, or "merely as so much muscle or physical power"; must not tax work people beyond their strength, nor employ them at tasks unsuited to age or sex; must give them rest from toil on the Sabbath and opportunity for the practice of religion; and, above all, must pay fair wages, instead of exploiting the worker's needs for the sake of profit.

Finally, the Pope declares that property owners have not the right to do what they please with what they call their own, for they are only stewards of their possessions; hence, when they have made reasonable provision for their own needs, they are obliged to use what remains for the benefit of the neighbor.

All these directions are proclaimed by Pope Leo to be matters of strict moral obligation, most of them being required by the law of strict justice. Yet they are openly ignored by thousands upon thousands of employers.

PRIVATE ASSOCIATIONS.

The Pope points out that the right of men to unite in private associations, such as a labor union, is a right granted by nature, and therefore may not be denied by the state. In our day and country this right is practically never hindered by the public authorities, but it is openly ignored by those employers who refuse to permit their employes to organize, or who refuse to deal with the representatives of labor organizations.

The aim of labor unions, says the Pope, should be

"to help each individual member to better his condition to the utmost in body, mind and property." He also recommends associations composed of both employers and employes to deal with matters that are of common interest, and to prevent discord and strikes. This is a justification of those periodical trade conferences that have been fostered by the labor unions and the more enlightened groups of employers.

Pope Leo refers to and praises highly the work of the medieval guilds. As we know, the guilds were not merely associations of workingmen in the ordinary sense, but to a great extent were co-operative societies in which the workers were the owners of the tools of production, and had common rules for carrying on the business of their craft. The modern counterpart of the guild is not the labor union, but the co-operative productive association.

It should be noted that a co-operative system of production is quite another thing than socialism. In the former the workers of a given industrial establishment individually own particular and definite amounts of property in that establishment; under socialism the whole community would own all the industries in general, no individual being able to say that a definite portion thereof was his private property.

The co-operative establishment is managed exclusively by the workers engaged in it; under socialism every establishment would be managed by the nation or the city.

Up to the present the co-operative movement has achieved practically all its successes in agriculture, banking and merchandising. Industrial justice and industrial democracy demand that it should become widely extended in the field of production.

A social order in which the majority of the wage earners do not own the tools with which they work, nor any important amount of other productive property, is abnormal and cannot endure permanently. The majority of the workers must be enabled to become in

some degree capitalists as well as wage earners, owners in part at least of the instruments of production in their respective industries.

The frequency with which Pope Leo speaks of the necessity of making the workers property owners, together with his sympathetic references to the guilds, renders it very probable that he would have favored the principles of co-operative production. Indeed, such an attitude would have been in the direct line of Catholic tradition; for, as Cardinal Gasquet observes, the basis of property in pre-Reformation times was not individualism, but "Christian collectivism."

Thank God, we Catholics are in no degree responsible for the invention of the cold, ugly, soulless thing called modern capitalism, with its industrial autocracy at one extreme and its proletarian masses at the other. Without the Reformation the capitalism that we now know would have been humanly speaking impossible.

Pope Leo praises and recommends for imitation the action of those persons, not themselves members of the wage-earning classes, who unite in various associations for the benefit of the laboring people. In our own country are many such organizations; for example, the American Association for Labor Legislation, the National Child Labor Committee and the National Consumers' League, all of which have produced splendid results. It is regrettable that the Catholics of the United States have not taken a more prominent part in such associations.

Indeed, it must be admitted that we have as yet given but a feeble and ineffective response to the injunction that Pope Leo lays down toward the close of the encyclical, namely, that Catholics "are not free to choose whether they will take up the cause of the poor or not; it is a matter of simple duty." This declaration was repeated in even stronger and more specific terms by Pope Pius X.

In the next and final article of the series we shall

consider Pope Leo's teaching on the part in social reform that should be taken by the state.

II. THE FUNCTION OF THE STATE.

While Catholic teaching rejects the complete domination of industry by the state, as proposed in the socialist scheme, it is very far from advocating the opposite extreme of individualism and *laissez faire*.

Those who believe that the government should pursue an industrial policy of non-intervention will find no comfort in the traditional attitude of the church. And they will be grievously disappointed with the encyclical, "On the Condition of Labor." Of the space devoted by that document to methods of betterment fully one-third deals with the positive duties incumbent on the state.

Among the general propositions which the encyclical sets forth under this head are the following: Public laws, institutions and administration should "be such of themselves as to realize public wellbeing and private prosperity;" the state should especially "provide for the welfare and comfort of the working classes;" this is simple justice, for "it may be truly said that it is only by the labor of workmen that the states grow rich;" while the rights of all persons should be protected, "the poor and helpless have a claim to especial consideration."

The general principle of state intervention is this:

"Whenever the general interest or any particular class suffers, or is threatened with mischief which can in no other way be met or prevented, the public authority must step in and deal with it."

The last sentence contains an implicit indorsement of all legislation for the regulation and control of industry that is genuinely necessary. In any particular case the question of state action is to be determined by the facts; is such action the only adequate remedy? If it is it should be utilized. Pope Leo's principle is empirical and scientific, avoiding both the *a priori* demand

of the socialist for universal state control, and the *a priori* demand of the individualist for the complete absence of state control.

Another significant fact of the foregoing quotations from Pope Leo is his frank acceptance of the principle that the state has the right and duty of legislating for the benefit of particular classes, more especially those that are incapable of defending their own interests. In taking this position the Pope merely restated the traditional doctrine of the church. According to that doctrine, the object of the state is not self-glorification, nor merely the common welfare as such, but the good of all individuals and all classes of individuals. The hypocritical opposition to labor laws on the ground that they constitute class legislation finds no sanction in the Catholic doctrine of the functions of the state.

The specific applications which Pope Leo makes of his general principles to labor conditions are worthy of brief notice.

TO REMOVE CAUSE OF STRIKES.

(A)—Strikes. When the workers go on strike, says the Holy Father, "it is frequently because the hours of labor are too long, or the work too hard, or because they consider their wages insufficient." The law should prevent such trouble by "removing in good time the causes which lead to conflicts between employers and employed."

(B)—Religion and Rest. The laborer should be protected in that most precious form of property, "his soul and mind," for "no man may with impunity outrage that human dignity which God himself treats with reverence, nor stand in the way of that higher life which is the preparation for the eternal life of heaven," hence the laborer must be guaranteed "rest from work on Sundays and certain holy days." In general, "he ought to have leisure and rest in proportion to the wear and tear of his strength," for "it is neither just nor human

to grind men down with excessive labor so as to stupefy their minds and wear out their bodies."

(C)—Hours of Labor. The proper length of the working day depends on "the nature of the work, on circumstances of time and place, and on the health and strength of the workman." The general rule is that labor should not be "protracted over longer hours than strength admits."

(D)—Woman and Child Labor. "Women are not suited for certain occupations; by nature they are fitted for home work." Children should not be placed "in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed," for "too early experience of life's hard toil blights the young promise of a child's faculties, and renders true education impossible."

(E)—A Living Wage. "Wages, we are told, are regulated by free consent, and therefore the employer, when he pays what was agreed upon, has done his part, and seemingly is not called upon to do anything beyond. The only way, it is said, in which injustice might occur would be if the master refused to pay the whole of the wages, or if the workman should not complete the work undertaken; in such cases the state should intervene to see that each obtains his due—but not under any other circumstances."

POOR MAN'S RIGHT TO LIVING.

"This mode of reasoning is to a fair-minded man by no means convincing, for there are important considerations which it leaves out of account altogether * * * "Every man has a right to procure what is required in order to live, and the poor can procure it in no other way than through work and wages."

"Let it be taken for granted that workman and employer should as a rule make free agreements, and in particular should agree freely as to the wages; nevertheless there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that remuneration ought to be suffi-

cient to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort. If, through necessity or fear of a worse evil, the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice."

The claim of the worker to a living wage is here declared by a strict moral right. Although this principle had been for centuries an integral part of Catholic moral teaching, and had received some specific recognition in the demands of labor unions during the years immediately preceding Pope Leo's encyclical, the doctrine itself had never before received such precise, positive and authoritative expression. If the doctrine is all but universally accepted to-day a great part of the credit is due to Pope Leo XIII.

Two points concerning the Pope's statement of this doctrine require a word of comment and explanation. They are: the meaning and scope of "reasonable and frugal comfort," and the part which Pope Leo would accord to the state in the enforcement of the living wage.

As to the first, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the Pope intended the wage to be understood as comprising not merely the means of keeping body and soul together and continuing at work, but as including all things required for the reasonable maintenance and development of the human faculties, physical, mental, moral and religious.

No fair-minded person can read the encyclical through and escape the conclusion that the Pope had not only a warm sympathy with the condition and aspirations of the laboring classes, but a reasoned and profound conviction of the intrinsic worth, dignity, sacredness and rights of the worker as a person, as a human being with an inviolable claim to a normal and human life.

Again, while the Pope did not specifically say in the passage quoted above that the living wage should be

sufficient for the worker's family as well as himself, other parts of the encyclical make the fact clear beyond any reasonable doubt. In the second paragraph following he declares: "If a workman's wages be sufficient to enable him to maintain himself, his wife, and his children in reasonable comfort, he will not find it difficult * * * to put by some little savings and thus secure a small income." Evidently the "reasonable comfort" and the "natural wage" which Pope Leo has in mind is not the mere equivalent of personal sustenance.

STATE ACTION AS LAST RESORT.

The second question is whether the Pope would have the living wage enforced by civil law. Our only reason for hesitating to give an affirmative answer arises from his explicit statement that recourse should be had to societies and boards, or some other method, "in order to supersede undue interference on the part of the state." Should circumstances require, he says, "the state should be appealed to for its sanction and protection."

In other words, he would have the state called in only as a last resort. He does not say that the state should never enter this province. All the declarations quoted above, including that regarding a living wage, are found in that section of the encyclical which he himself specifies as the discussion of the functions of the state. And the second of the longest paragraphs quoted above shows that the Pope explicitly rejects the theory that the state should not interfere with the terms of the wage contract, and clearly implies that it may fix the terms and enforce a living wage.

Those few Catholics who still oppose the movement for a living wage by law can get little comfort from the encyclical. Before they can appeal to it with any show of reason they will have to prove that the evil of insufficient wages can be "met or prevented" by

some other means. That task will keep them busy for a long time; so long, in fact, that they will all be dead before it is finished.

In the meantime, Catholics who read Pope Leo's statements without bias, and who are not afraid to face the deplorable facts of the wage situation, rejoice that the man whose name is written in the annals of the United States Supreme Court as the official upholder of the first minimum wage law in the United States is a priest, the Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara.

(F)—Private Property. Pope Leo condemns the inequitable division of property which enables one party to "grasp the whole of labor and trade, to manipulate for its own benefit and its own purposes all the sources of supply, and which is even represented in the councils of the state itself."

Therefore, he says, "the law should favor ownership and its policy should be to induce as many as possible of the humbler class to become owners." By this means "the gulf between vast wealth and sheer poverty will be bridged over."

POPE'S REMEDY FOR OUR LAND PROBLEM.

The Pope is speaking of ownership of land, and his words are strictly applicable to the rural portion of the United States. All observing students are becoming alarmed at the growth of tenancy in our agricultural sections, and realize that systematic and far-reaching assistance will have to be given by the government to convert the masses of tenant farmers into farm owners.

The principle of Pope Leo's statements can be applied quite as well to conditions in the cities. As pointed out in our last article, no permanent solution of the social question will be obtained until the majority of the wage earners become owners of productive property, preferably and so far as possible in the industries in which they work. Neither high wages, nor comfortable working conditions, nor security of employment, nor provision against all the unfavorable contingencies of

life, nor all of these together, will render the position of the working classes satisfactory if they must continue in that status of dependence which marks the mere wage earner. Like the tenant farmers, the urban workers must be aided by the state to become property owners.

Such are the doctrines and proposals which Pope Leo would have the state put into operation for the benefit of the working classes. They do not constitute a complete and formal programme of labor legislation, for that was beyond the scope of the encyclical. In a document of that kind the Pope could do no more than lay down certain fundamental principles of state action, and by applying these to some of the foremost needs of labor indicate the broad outlines of a comprehensive system of betterment. The details can easily be filled in by the specialists of each country.

As a matter of fact, the concrete methods and reforms that are mentioned by Pope Leo are in the main strikingly similar to the "platform of minimums" formulated in 1912 by one of the committees of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections (Proceedings, pp. 376-394). Under the head of wages, hours, safety and health, housing, term of working life, compensation or insurance, the committee endeavored to define the minimum decent standards of life and labor for the working people of America.

Naturally this programme covers the ground in much greater detail than the encyclical, and it includes certain important topics which Pope Leo does not touch; for example, housing and insurance. But it embodies no principle that is not found in Pope Leo's proposals; for example, the question of housing is implicitly met by the Pope in his declarations on a living wage, and the question of insurance by his demand that the worker be enabled to become the owner of property from which he can derive an income.

All things considered, we are justified in claiming that the principles and proposals set forth by Pope Leo

concerning the function of the state in relation to labor constitute an adequate scheme of amelioration. Were they but reduced to practice, the workers would not only find their condition immensely improved but would be able of themselves to obtain all the further advantages that are feasible and just.

THE TWO SUPREME EVILS.

The two supreme evils of our industrial system are the unreasonably small share of the national income obtained by the majority of wage earners, and the unreasonably large share that goes to a small minority of capitalists. The remedies which Pope Leo offers for the former evil are, as we have just said, sufficient. The second evil he does not directly touch in the encyclical. His subject was the "Condition of Labor," not the wider topic of social reform, or social justice. Nevertheless, he makes two or three references to the evil of excessive gain that are not without significance when taken in connection with the traditional teaching of the Church.

He declares that the hard condition of the working classes "has been increased by rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the church, is nevertheless under a different guise but with the like injustice still practiced by covetous and grasping men." Again, he enjoins the rich to "refrain from cutting down the workmen's earnings, whether by force, fraud or by usurious dealing."

There can be little doubt that the new form of usury stigmatized in these sentences refers to the extortionate prices exacted from the working classes for the necessities of life by the monopolists. A certain great meat packing industry last year obtained dividends of 35 per cent. During the same period this concern helped to promote an artificial shortage of hides, with the result that the price of shoes was kept at a much higher level than was required by the relation between supply and demand. Were Pope Leo alive, he would probably

have little hesitation in classifying this coarse injustice as "usurious."

THE CHURCH A FOE OF MONOPOLY.

For centuries the Catholic teaching on monopoly has been that a combination which artificially raises the price of products above the market or competitive level is guilty of unjust dealing, and that such practices ought to be prevented by law. Taken in conjunction with the general principle of state intervention enunciated by Pope Leo, these doctrines constitute a sanction for the use of any legislative method that is necessary to meet the evil of monopoly.

Let us recall Pope Leo's general principle: "Whenever the general interest or any particular class suffers, or is threatened with mischief which can in no other way be met or prevented, the public authority must step in and deal with it." Therefore, if that "usurious dealing" which is practiced by monopolistic concerns for the sake of extortionate profits can "in no other way be met or prevented" than by the destruction of the monopoly, or by fixing maximum prices for its products, or by state ownership of the industry, in whole or in part, or by all these methods combined, the state will have not only the right but the duty to intervene in any or all of these ways.

Did space permit, it would be easy to show that all the other social questions, such for example as those of land tenure and taxation, and taxes on incomes and inheritances, can be adequately solved in conformity with the social and moral teachings of the Catholic Church. All the evils of our industrial system can be abolished by sane and progressive measures of social reform, against which the Church has not a word to say. There is no need to resort to socialism, even if that scheme would not leave the last state of society worse than the first. (Elsewhere I have tried to set forth in detail a comprehensive programme of reforms, "Distributive Justice," The Macmillan Company.)