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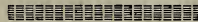
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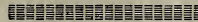
*The Church and  
Labor*



*The Problem of  
Unemployment*



*Social Reform*



**The Catholic Mind**

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# *The Catholic Mind*

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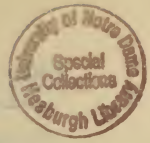
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## The Church and Labor

*An Address Delivered Before the Minnesota State Federation of Labor at its Annual Convention in Austin, Minnesota.*

REV. J. C. HARRINGTON

AS a priest of the Catholic Church, I am very glad of this opportunity to address the Minnesota State Federation of Labor, in convention assembled. The Church has a message for Labor. What that message is will be the subject matter of this address. I have heard it said, and I am sure you have also, that no Catholic or no group of Catholics in this country has any right to pronounce an opinion on the industrial problems of America to-day, on this vexed question of the relations of Capital and Labor, on the ethical relations between employer and employee. Such a statement amounts to this that the Catholic Church in these United States of America has no right to preach the Theological and Moral Virtues of Charity and Justice, social charity and social justice, insofar as these great ethical and Christian virtues touch on the relations of Capital and Labor in this great Republic.

You are all Christian men and women, and I will take you back two thousand years when the Church that is now so great, so glorious, was only a tiny infant, small as a little mustard seed in Galilee. Jesus of Nazareth was there. He gathered the twelve about Him, and He commissioned them to go and teach the whole world. "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever that I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." The Church was, therefore, commissioned by Christ Himself to teach every nation under Heaven. And the Church, therefore, got this divine authority and this divine commission to teach all the things that Jesus of Nazareth commanded her to teach, and certainly among the most important of these things are Charity and Justice, and what is social charity and social justice but the teaching of Christ applied to the industrial relations of human economic society.

Therefore, I take pride to stand here in the name of Christ as a priest of the Catholic Church ordained and sent to preach His message to the men and women who are patiently doing the hard work of this everyday world. I think with the Popes and Bishops of the last half century that social charity and social justice are the greatest need of the world to-day, and woe to us if we do not teach and preach them, and woe to the industrial and social order of the world if it despise the Christian moral message of the Church and her divine founder, for there is no other power under heaven whereby it shall be saved.

There have been in this world in historic times only two civilizations, a pagan and a Christian. They have met and joined in mortal combat, now one is triumphing and now the other. The dominant outstanding note in a pagan civilization is this, that it tries to crowd down and enslave Labor, while a Christian civilization tries to emancipate and elevate the workingman. In historic times the Roman Catholic Church has always been the greatest friend of Labor. Capitalism of the soulless, Godless kind has existed in Pagan times as well as in Christian, and the Catholic Church again and again has joined in deadly battle with this capitalism in its attempts to crowd down and enslave Labor.

The Catholic Church was born into a pagan civilization. The great Roman Empire knew not God or His Law. Like the pagan economists of to-day, the Roman held that ethics had nothing to do with the social question, with the problems of Capital and Labor, and of course logically, for if moral standards do not exist, they cannot be used in judging right and wrong. This attitude of mind is always typical of pagan beliefs and practices. And to-day, and right here in democratic America, we have the sad spectacle often presented to us of people professing Christianity, who have the blasphemous audacity to tell us that the Church of Christ has no right to interfere, in declaring the morality or immorality of certain practices, which even the Old Testament declared were sins of such a heinous type, that they cried to the very Heavens for vengeance—practices which Leo XIII, in our own day denounced so sternly from the heights of his Apostolic office, the very

throne of St. Peter, as being so immoral as to enable "a very small number of very rich men, through their iniquitous use, to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor, a yoke little better than that of slavery itself."

The Church of Christ from the very day that Christ Himself was accounted the son of a common laboring man, a toiler at the carpenter's bench, has always been accounted the Church of the poor, the lowly, and the humble workingman. The Church has always sanctified labor as a necessary and a blessed thing, because the Church stands up for the dignity of human personality, and labor no matter how common or how hard, is that human personality transformed into wealth.

On the contrary the pagan world of old and now, considers labor as a badge of disgrace. In the Roman Empire laborers were called *proletarii*, the sixth and lowest class of Roman citizen. The poor and their labor alike were only for the rich, in order that these old pagan Roman plutocrats might live in ease and luxury and opulence. Even the mighty Socrates, greatest of pagan moralists, Plato and Aristotle, twin princes of pagan philosophers that they were, could not rise above this servile standard of their day and age. The Roman patrician capitalist despised the man who had not amassed a fortune. Rome like ourselves, Americans, worshipped success. And is it not a sad fact that after two thousand years of Christianity, in certain circles to-day in America it is again considered a crime to be poor. As among ourselves, the rich bankers were the idols of Roman society. They too were tremendously powerful and influential in directing the current of Roman political life. Rome like America suffered from all the evils of invisible government that afflicts democracy to-day through the influence of Morgans and Rothschilds and Wall Streets innumerable, in the struggles of our own political arena.

Rome when she was poor was a community of hardy, thrifty, self-denying religious people. Rome when she expanded into a world power became capitalistic and militaristic, avaricious, spendthrift and licentious. Simple rural life ceased, swept away in a flood of emigration to the license of the cities. Small estates and hold-

ings were grabbed up by the rich senatorial families. Cheap slave labor competed with the small land owner and drove him also from the soil in despair. These same senatorial capitalistic families secured all the lucrative offices of the state, until the imperial and once venerable Roman senate became at last a hereditary body of legislators. Their big financial combinations invaded all the imperial provinces, Greece, Macedonia, Africa, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria, Judea, Spain and Gaul, until the Roman Forum became a gambling den for the stock exchanges of the pagan world.

They looted even the Imperial Treasury in their mad rush for wealth. The taxes of Imperial Rome were farmed out to the highest bidder, and the Roman governor went to his allotted province to make three fortunes; one to buy the votes of the Roman people who elected him, the second for himself and his family when he retired from office, and the third to bribe the courts and judges who were sure to prosecute him for extortion when his term of office was ended.

The arrogance and brutality of this new aristocracy of wealth knew no limits. They fomented wars to destroy their commercial rivals, and old patriots like Cato, thundered in the Forum until Carthage and Corinth were destroyed. We all know that Cicero was a great orator. How few think of him as a wealthy corporation attorney. Yes, that is what Cicero was, a well paid advocate of publicans and bankers, whom he calls in the most idyllic style, *ornamentum civitatis, firmamentum rei publicæ, flos equitum*,—the very ornaments of society, the pillars of the state, the noblest flower of its citizenship! It is just like our modern adulation and flattery of the rich.

Cicero the corrupt, while he was writing beautiful philosophical treatises on virtue, was despoiling with violence the inhabitants of the provinces he administered. He became a multi-millionaire in less than two months to the tune of two million two hundred thousand sestericia. Honest Brutus, the murderer of the noble Cæsar invested his capital in Cyprus at 48 per cent, and Cicero thundered against Verres for loaning money in Sicily at 24 per cent. Seneca whom we used to think a saint as we read his philosophical treatises was the

same Seneca who despoiled Britain by his usury, while he was preaching sermons on the contempt of riches!

There was Roman society, the great mass of the poor and the slaves at the bottom, and the wealthy few at the top, the great menace to the stability of Roman or any civilization. There is a picture of pagan civilization, and that same predatory wealth which finally brought the Roman Empire tumbling down to its inevitable ruin and fall.

And now the Church appears upon the scene. Christianity begins to be a force in the social and industrial world. Slave labor had no hope or comfort left save that of drowning its miseries in acid wine, yet Christian teaching transformed the life of the Roman slave. It began by ameliorating his hard lot. Immediate freedom would be impossible, and would lead to bloody and futile revolution, just as a sudden change to-day would lead to anarchy and bolshevism. The conservative force of the Church helped society to change slowly, by leavening the bad corrupt mass, with sound doctrinal and economic teaching, until finally the whole lump was leavened. Like to Leo XIII. in the nineteenth century in his great encyclical "On the Condition of the Working Classes," so the two Gregories of Nazianzen and Nyssa, in the fourth century with St. John Chrysostom and Lactantius, rose up in that bad age to protest against the unnatural inequality that existed between the few idle and licentious rich, and the many hard working poor. By degrees the State legislated into her civil codes what the Church preached from her pulpits. The poor slave and his rich master were equal in the eyes of God. Slaves rose to the highest ranks of the episcopacy. In Pope Calixtus, in the third century, the Roman world beheld a slave in the Chair of St. Peter.

Labor was thus gradually restored to its true dignity in the minds of men. At the suggestion of the Church, Christian Emperors mitigated the harsh dominion and finally took away the slave owner's power of life and death. The slave could plead before the law. His marriage was respected as legal. He was set free in the sanctuary before the very altar of the Church. Council after Council made laws to protect the manumitted slave. The ill-treated slave could take refuge in

the Church, never again to pass back to his master's power, but to the state and condition of a freeman.

The Church was during all this time producing hundreds of saints whose lives were the greatest rebuke to the age, to its riches, its lust, and its oppression. Imperial Rome finally collapsed through the sheer weight of its own rottenness. Its culture and its glory were engulfed in its hopeless fall. There was nothing left of the mistress of the world. Her power and her pride were passed for ever. A waste of ruin and desolation covered the face of Europe. Owls hooted and wolves preyed from the stately mansions and beautiful palaces of fallen Cæsars, whom the savage races of the North dragged away into slavery. The marble baths and luxurious theatres of pagan Rome, had no charm for her barbarian conquerors, who were at home alike in the forest and in the field.

Pagan Capitalistic Imperial Rome had refused to listen to the Church and its moral code. Then, as now, ethics had nothing to do with the social question. The Church had to leave the Empire, go or perish with it. She immediately began to civilize the young savage tribes that had overrun the Empire. Her priests and her monks went into this new wilderness, building up a new Christian civilization. Only for that young Church, Europe to-day would be as savage and as barbarous as America was when Christopher Columbus discovered it.

When the Empire fell the ancient learning of the classic period would have been lost and forgotten, were it not for the monks of the West. Even men of the calibre of Professor Carver of Harvard are forced to admit, "that Europe and America owe whatever culture and learning they possess to those Catholic monks of an earlier day." He states, "that their part in preserving the ancient learning and civilizing the rude barbarians, entitles them to the respect of all mankind." The laboring monks of St. Columbanus and St. Benedict who cleared the forest, drained the swamp, preserved the art of agriculture, "did constructive work of the highest kind, at a time when industry was all but submerged by the brutality and violence which then prevailed over the whole of Europe." These Catholic monks were the men who humanized, dignified and sanctified labor.



These were the founders of the twin democracies of labor and industry which flourished in Europe for a thousand years.

Wherever the monks appeared were built homes of labor and learning. Especially distinguished were the Benedictines. They brought the world forth again from the darkness of anarchy and paganism into the light of Christian truth and the blessings of a new civilization. Nearly one-half of the towns of France were founded by Benedictine monks.

But all these young savage tribes that supplanted the old Empire were strangers to the sweet spirit of Christ. Slaves with them were on the same level as cattle. The young barbarian had degraded and would degrade and still brutalize labor. But the Popes and Bishops and monks of the Church were here again, as in pagan Rome, the friends of the toiler and the slave. Learning and art, agriculture and the crafts went forth from the monasteries. The monks being workers on the land themselves knew how to sympathize with their fellow toilers. The great monastic abbeys became the centers of civilization in a religious, literary and social way, as well as along industrial and economic lines. Each monastery had a model farm and towns grew up around them and received charters of liberty from the beginning. These monasteries and abbeys were the first sanctuaries of the new trinity, learning, labor and liberty. Even such as it is, Anglo-Saxon democracy was started on its way by the monk that forced the Magna Charta of English liberty from the tyrannical hands of King John at Runnymede.

It was the influence and teaching of the Church that changed the slave of Barbaric Europe into the serf of the Middle Ages. He could no longer be bought and sold like a chattel. Serfs were freely admitted to the Roman Priesthood. There was no dignity in the power of the Church to bestow that was not within reach of the humblest serf, and this at a time when Anglo-Saxon civilization did not legally recognize the very existence of the serf. Lambert tells us, "that the spiritual and even temporal provisions made for the serf might well be envied by countless laborers in our modern civilization." It must be understood all along the line that

the first duty of the Church was not the freedom of the slave, or the serf, but the salvation of their immortal souls. She was sowing the potent seed of Christian liberty, which contained within itself all the elements of a perfect social order, blossoming forth in the Middle Ages from a soil prepared by centuries of Catholic Culture, into the world's most ideal industrial democracy, a true brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God woven of the triple strand of learning, labor and liberty.

Then there came into the modern world capitalism and the industrial revolution. Men and women and little children were again reduced into slavery in the great industrial centers. Labor had pressed down on its sweating brow a crown of sharp thorns. It was being crucified on a cross of industrial and commercial gold. Labor began at length to fight back at this new paganism in industry. Trade Unionism was born as its great weapon. There was and there is a war being waged in the modern world between the forces of capitalism and those of labor. Leo XIII., the Pope of the working man, in his great Encyclical has told us why. Does the great Pope and prophet of industrial democracy exaggerate when he declares that the reason of this war "is social and economic inequality and injustice which has enabled a very small number of very rich men to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor, a yoke little better than that of slavery itself?"

What power on earth to-day is able to remove that economic slavery which Leo denounced with all the might of his apostolic authority? There is none if not the moral force of the Church. And thanks be to God we Catholics are proud to-day that our Church through her Popes and Bishops is taking up the challenge in this war between capital and labor, thrown down by Leo XIII. to every Bishop and priest and lay man and woman within the four walls of this old historic Roman Catholic Church.

Yes, indeed, the Church to-day has a very definite mission to capital and labor. Her Popes and her Bishops and her priests are not afraid to proclaim that message to the world. And the Church to-day, as in all ages past is on the side of the under dog, on the side of

oppressed labor. She has ever been so from that first blessed Christmas night when her divine Founder found the doors of rich Bethlehem closed against His divine poverty, and had to choose His first resting place in the lowly manger of the poor. Look around to-day on the vast wilderness of the industrial world, with its teeming masses of laboring poor, and we see the old Church again preaching to them the same gospel of Charity and Justice and Hope. There was the Catholic Church saving the world over and over again from economic slavery in Pagan Rome, in Barbarian Europe, in Feudal serfdom, and she is going out to save it again to-day from industrial and capitalistic slavery, for she is always true to her grand traditional rôle—the great friend of the laboring poor.

No, indeed, the Catholic Church is not the moral policeman of capitalism, a capitalistic system that was denounced so vigorously by Pope Leo XIII., “whose injustices and iniquities have,” as he said, “enabled a very small number of very rich men to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor, a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.” And if there is industrial revolution in the air to-day, what is its cause? I will let President Wilson answer that question. “What,” he asks, “gave rise to the Russian Revolution? The answer can only be that it was the product of a whole social system. It was not in fact a sudden thing. It had been gathering head for several generations. It was due to the systematic denial to the great body of Russians of the rights and privileges which all normal men desire and must have, if they are to be contented and within reach of happiness. The lives of the great mass of the Russian people contained no opportunities, but were hemmed in by barriers against which they were constantly flinging their spirits, only to fall back bruised and dispirited. Only the powerful were suffered to secure their rights, or even gain access to the means of material success.” “It is,” says the great ex-President, “to be noted as a leading fact of our time that it was against ‘capitalism’ that the Russian leaders directed their attack. It was capitalism that made them see red, and it is against capitalism under one name or another that the discontented everywhere draw their indictment.”

"Is this capitalistic system unimpeachable?" asks the ex-President, "which is another way of asking have capitalists generally used their power for the benefit of the countries in which their capital is employed and for the benefit of their fellow men?" "Is it not, on the contrary," he says, "only too true that capitalists have often seemed to regard the men whom they used as mere instruments of profit, whose physical and mental powers it was legitimate to exploit with a slight cost to themselves as possible, either of money or of sympathy? Have not many fine men who were actuated by the highest principles in every other relationship of life, seemed to hold that generosity and humane feeling were not among the imperative mandates of conscience in the conduct of a banking business, or in the development of an industrial or commercial enterprise?"

"And if these offences against high morality and true citizenship have been frequently observable, are we to say that the blame for the present discontent and turbulence is wholly on the side of those who are in revolt against them?"

"Ought we not, rather, to seek a way to remove such offences and make life itself clean for those who will share honorably and cleanly in it?"

"Yes, indeed, political democracy has not made the world safe against irrational revolution. That supreme task which is nothing less than the salvation of civilization, now faces democracy insistent and imperative. The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the spirit of Christ, and being made free and happy by the practices which spring out of that spirit. Only thus can discontent be driven out and all the shadows lifted from the road ahead."

I think our Church is taking up that challenge gloriously. I think of Leo XIII., of Pius X., of Benedict XV., of Pius XI., calling us to Catholic social action. I hear the American Hierarchy in their great "Joint Pastoral" and "Reconstruction Program" taking up the challenge of labor. I think of our own Dr. John A. Ryan bringing moral theology to the making of a whole philosophy, not merely of working class well being, but of working class

development and high destiny in the world. I think of the Jesuit Father Husslein saying, "that the craft guilds of the Middle Ages were the most important social institutions of all history," saying, "that they were Christian trade unions," saying, "that the guild system is doubtless the most important social suggestion for the ills of our own time." I think of the pointed title of his great book, *Democratic Industry*. I think of the words of Nitti, Prime Minister of Italy, "While the bourgeoisie is eaten away by skepticism, and no longer has faith in those liberal institutions from which it sprang, while the wealthy and upper classes fall away from religion, the Church feels ever more imperiously the necessity of returning whence it came,—to the people." "The Church which began as the church of the lowly, finds itself after sitting with the mighty in the Middle Ages, the church of the lowly again. Among them it made its youth. Among them it may move to remake it."

I hear Benedict XV. from the throne of St. Peter saying, "that the Catholic clergy must not oppose the proletarian revindications, but provided they remain within the limits of honesty and justice, must favor them." I hear the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States of America preaching a great new economic program. We see the oldest and largest of the churches brought by its human, social situation to a new refreshment of the ancient gift of prophecy for the poor. I hear our Bishops declaring the truths of St. Augustine, of St. Ambrose, of St. Clement, of St. Antonino, of St. Thomas Aquinas, of St. Francis of Assisi in the strange modern circumstances of New York and Philadelphia and Boston, Chicago and St. Paul and San Francisco. With a new enthusiasm we can go out among our associates because many thousands and millions of workingmen for whom the call of the Church was growing faint will be brought back to a firmer reliance and a deeper adherence.

# The Problem of Unemployment

REV. M. EGAN, S.J.

*Reprinted from "The Tribune," Melbourne*

WHEN the problem of unemployment is being investigated, commonly only those facts which are on the surface are considered. We hear much of the seasons, the changes of fashion, new inventions, the dullness of trade. But these, while they immediately determine the evil of unemployment, are symptoms rather than its root causes, at least when they are widespread and lasting. So, too, the remedies usually considered housing insurance and the like, are suited only to superficial evils and are at best but an alleviation of the trouble. They are necessary expedients, but they leave the real evil untouched.

The true cause of unemployment lies deep in the nature of man, and in the constitution of our modern industrial system. Selfishness in all its forms and avarice are everywhere to be found, and particularly in our commercial activity which rejects any serious moral control; while the vastness of industry, when a nation is at work producing for the varied needs of the world with which it is in touch, has outstripped the directing powers of its organizers.

Consequently, unemployment must be a world-problem until the methods of industry shall have been adjusted to the moral law, and a wider outlook secured on the relations with one another of the different factions of industry. Both industry and morality develop. For well over a century the process of invention carried the world on with a rush which impeded reflection, but now the moral aspect of social relations is forcing itself more upon us. The standards of living are higher now than they were in the previous period, and men's independence of classes is greater. The individual looks more to his rights as a man than before. His right to a fuller share of life is less contested by others. So, we have much social legislation concerned with education, with wages and the regulation of factory life, by which the right of a man, who is an owner or employer, to act as

he pleases in the control of the world's resources and the direction of other men's labor, is more closely restricted.

#### INERADICABLE DEFECTS

These are only beginnings in social improvement. The methods of industry in control and distribution must also be reorganized and brought into harmony with the law of justice and charity. For the present system is an outcome in part of false moral and economic principles, and until these are corrected and true principles universally recognized, the evils which are essential to it must continue. To this end, new habits of thought must be developed, and the old principles of right dealing insisted upon.

It need not be said that no amount of organization can prevent the recurrence of dry seasons and the natural failure of resources, or utterly destroy the selfishness and greed of men. But industry can be so arranged with compensating advantages and social legislation can be so directed, that these natural incidents shall leave the welfare of the people unharmed.

Of course, the moral law is not a specific remedy for unemployment, or ignorance, or defective housing, nor is it the part of the Church to remedy social evils by immediate action. Defective social conditions must be eliminated by the contrivances of men who improve the state of society by removing the defects. But religious and moral principles are necessary as rules of health for the body of society, and the observance of the moral law makes the solution of social problems less difficult by directing the public conscience and preparing men's wills for the sacrifices which justice and equity demand.

#### WHERE RELIGION FAILED

We shall be told, of course, that, even if religious principles could be admitted into industrial life, Christian ideals when applied to the life of society in the past were a failure, as witness their absence from the industry of to-day.

But they failed in the past only when the spiritual life of a great part of industrial Europe failed through the growth of individualism and the decay of religion.

Religion ceased to be a vital element of society. Thus we read in Hammond's *The Town Laborer*, that "in England the religion that sprang from the Reformation, intensely individualist in its outlook, alive at this time only in the tenets of the Evangelicals and of the Methodists, tending to separate the world of the spirit from the world of public life, made no such claim as to insist on the conception of man as an end of politics or any law of trade." But it is on that conception of man as an end in himself and no other man's instrument, that the moral success of industry must rest, and it is on this sovereignty of man that true religion, as we see it taught in the Encyclicals of Leo XIII. and Pius X., based its claim to be able to prepare the way for the solution of the great social problems.

In the past, when the nature of man with his selfishness and greed was just as it is now, the Christian world successfully applied true moral principles to industrial methods. Modern problems are not altogether new, for most of them existed in the paganism which preceded Christianity. In the Middle Ages men knew them, and they were able to solve them by insisting upon the spiritual element in man and protecting society from a materialistic interpretation of its life through accurate teaching and rigorous social legislation.

#### MODERN COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY

The present-day system is essentially competitive, even when its operations are directed by great combines. Combination guides those forms of industry only with which the interests of the enemy of combines, the consumer, are concerned, but the trusts themselves are agents as well as results of the fiercest competition. The evils of the competitive system are an outcome of the individualist principle, developed on its economic side by Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham, that individual enterprise must be left absolutely free, since self-interest produces results which are best for the mass of the people. Thus expressed, the principle proves to be a policy of the jungle in which might is right, for its only safeguard is force. It results in industrial strife, to issue in the oppression of the weaker producers or in an armed peace



through the temporary expedients of arbitration and compromise.

But competition in itself is not an evil. It is rather that which gives the spice to a man's life and a fillip to energies that require to be stimulated. Industry develops its various forms best, not by suppressing all competition, but by regulating it and keeping it under control. So, too, the combine, as we know it, is a ruthless instrument of modern life with objects and methods not controlled by any higher law than that of selfish advantage. Combines, however, could be just, as they are necessary, if only the Christians of the world would insist on the observance by them of just standards in their operations.

Industrial competition, as it works out to-day, does not evoke the most socially advantageous production. It produces only what is most advantageous competitively too frequently in luxuries or things that are not of vital necessity. If industry were arranged for the production of necessities as its primary object, no man would need to starve. But now when machines for luxury are working at high pressure, the necessities of life are not produced in a quantity or at a price which will put them within the reach of all, as they should be. As a consequence of this unregulated competition, we have the rush and advertisement and fraud which distinguish modern industry. Much thought and energy are expended in finding a way of defeating a rival by an hour in a race of days by land, by sea and by air, while the hurry of modern production leads to imperfect workmanship and the slap-dash methods with which we are so familiar.

The art of advertisement, the agents themselves will tell us, consists in persuading the unwilling to buy. What an infinity of deceptions and frauds there is in the business principle of "caveat emptor," let the buyer be wary. The advertiser, if he has any knowledge of man's habits of thinking, cannot fail of his purpose, for the mob-spirit affects man so intimately that the ordinary modern man can no more live the simple life without many useless luxuries than the average woman can keep from casting envious looks even on a hideous costume, if only it is approved by the fashion of the moment.

These evils cannot fail to influence the course of our industrial life. They upset the balance of things and cause that disorder which makes an uncertainty of demand for objects of production and thus, while it increases the useless wealth of the few, leaves great numbers of men without the means of procuring that which a more equal distribution would have secured them through constant employment.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF INDUSTRY

Without risking the charge of excessive optimism, a Catholic can maintain that a Christian re-organization of society is as possible as it is necessary, if civilization is to survive. That does not mean the restoration in its entirety of the industrial system of the Middle Ages, for the methods of industry must be adapted to the needs and the ideals of an evolving society. But the spirit of those days can be restored, and so Pius X. counsels us to "adapt that organization to the new situation created by the material development of society in the Christian spirit which inspired men of old." This means that we must plan social improvement through co-operation in trading and banking in order to eliminate that waste of effort and resources which, in the present world's distress, is a crime against society, and to abolish the usury which is so marked a characteristic of our banking and credit system. In the world of production, again, there must be co-operation and a right estimation of values. Money and material capital must have no advantage over human capital in labor. Production must be co-operative in the sense that all those who share in producing must have their share in the ownership of the product and in the direction of their activities in hours and in the nature of their work.

That these are no mere Utopian proposals is clear from the success of the efforts already made to put them into practice in Belgium and France and elsewhere. But a serious obstacle to their fuller achievement is set by those Christians who talk so ignorantly of socialistic proposals, when only a juster conception of human rights is aimed at. Even amongst Catholics there is need of a complete renewal of ideas in all that concerns the social order.

Besides insisting upon a juster form of direction in industry, if we would have a reasonable organization of methods, we must secure that men have a truer conception of the relations of things. We must put luxuries in their proper place, subordinated to necessities. We must regulate spending and saving. Usury must be abolished and the wage system rightly adjusted.

### THE IDEAL IN WORK

If life is to become richer and fuller, the machine must be no more than the instrument of the man who uses it. Man must not be the instrument of other men's wealth. The ideal of productive industry is that in which interesting work is a maximum and toilsome work a minimum. The monotony of routine is inevitable, but its evil effect can be modified by a higher purpose and a juster understanding of the quality of the work. Thus a mother is the type of the perfect worker, with the inspiration that urges her to the dreariest work and the love that lightens her burdens. Such, too, are workers in the higher arts and professions in which a man lives for his work and enjoys it in its progress and its perfection. This realization of the ideal we find to some extent in the work of the artisans who built the great medieval cathedrals. These monuments of the thought and the spirit of the past could never have been produced by men without the inspiration of the pleasure of noble work, impelled only by the dire necessity of earning their daily bread.

### HARMONY OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

The right industrial system must work itself out in a larger production of objective wealth at a smaller cost to life and reasonable enjoyment, and with a greater social utility. Larger quantities must be produced, not of luxuries, but of things necessary or useful for the great mass of men; the mechanical burden of toil must be lessened and the driving force must be human, intelligent and moral.

Again, the production of necessities must not be allowed to outrun consumption, nor must it be less than the legitimate demand, and costs in work and in life

must be lessened. The people, too, must be educated in the values of things and the right manner of using them, for the wastefulness of our system of selling and distribution is an offence against society. The vast army of middlemen absorbs a profit which is more justly the property of those who produce the goods and those who pay unjust prices for them. Our trading system tends more and more towards extortion, through the numbers of those who are engaged in it, while it keeps multitudes in blind-ally occupations who should be trained to take a fuller share in the life of their country.

#### SPENDING AND SAVING.

Industry as an element in the well-being of the people demands a wide distribution of wealth. The real wealth of a country is not in the aggregate of possessions, for the existence of a few abnormally rich men is quite compatible, and usually occurs with that of a majority of men living below the poverty line. The reckoning of wealth by averages is fallacious, for with an average income, say, of £150, an income of £10,000 will absorb the incomes of over sixty people. So London and New York with their overflowing riches must still be reckoned among the poor cities of the world.

Hence the economic element of the problem involves the question of spending and saving. There is a thrift that is necessary and laudable, and there is a hoarding, or saving, that is socially injurious. It is by means of proper thrift that men can lay by the means of securing present comforts and insure themselves against the hardships of the future, thus adding to the general well-being, while a surplus due to excessive saving and irregular spending of necessity impairs the regularity of employment and the free flow of commodities. The ordinary checks for the adjustment of consumption and production must remain ineffective while this irregularity exists. Of course, part of the surplus is put out as investment, but the quantity is smaller and its action less effective than when the surplus is widely distributed.

From this consideration the anti-social nature of vast capital locked up in a few hands is evident. Wealth that is turned through right objects of production into wages or other forms of immediate advantage for the people

is the only means of providing full and regular employment. The power of the people for consumption and spending is thus increased, and industry becomes more settled, while fluctuating trades engaged in satisfying artificial tastes and trivial needs must become less important and in the end disappear.

#### WHERE INDUSTRY FAILS

In industry as we know it, however, the organizing power which could bring about the harmony of production and consumption, and the education which would make men set a true value on the things which they use and the work of those who produce them, are absent. Industry is left, by this defect of real control and under a false conception of what liberty is, to shape itself blindly through circumstances directed often by greed and envy or hatred.

There is over-production in one element with scarcity in another. What is required for the needs and comfort of the people is not produced while articles of luxury abound, absorbing a quantity of raw material and of effort that should be more socially useful. Dishonest dealing under cover of legitimate trading is left unchecked. The flow of labor from one section of industry to another is prevented by a narrow over-specialization which restricts the opportunities of the artisan, while the neglect of intellectual and technical training prevents the adaptability of workmen which is necessary if our very complicated system is to run smoothly, or even to exist.

# Social Reform

G. K. CHESTERTON

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I THINK the question of real social reform divides itself into two distinct stages and even ideas. One is arresting a race towards mad monopoly that is already going on, reversing that revolution and returning to something that is more or less normal, but by no means ideal; the other is trying to inspire that more normal society with something that is in a real sense ideal, though not necessarily merely Utopian. But the first thing to be understood is that any relief from the present pressure will probably have more effect than most of our critics imagine. Hitherto all the triumphs have been triumphs of plutocratic monopoly; all the defeats have been defeats of private property. I venture to guess that one real defeat of a monopoly would have an instant and incalculable effect, far beyond itself, like the first defeats in the field of a military empire like Prussia parading itself as invincible. As each group or family finds again the real experience of private property, it will become a center of influence, a mission. What we are dealing with is not a question of a General Election to be counted by a calculating machine. It is a question of a popular movement, that never depends on mere numbers.

That is why we have so often taken, merely as a working model, the matter of a peasantry. The point about a peasantry is that it is not a machine, as practically every ideal social state is a machine; that is, a thing that will work only as it is set down to work in the pattern. You make laws for a Utopia; it is only by keeping those laws that it can be kept a Utopia. You do not make laws for a peasantry. You make a peasantry; and the peasants make the laws. I do not mean that laws must be used for the establishment of a peasantry, or even for the protection of it. But I mean that the character of a peasantry does not depend on peasants. . . .

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