

that far-off good be imputed to him unto justice. The other withered bud that we lay among the wreaths of deadly nightshade is culled from his later life—of some ten years ago. A foolishly impulsive young German girl, who was being 'finished off' before 'coming out', wrote to Zola, Hauptmann, Ibsen, and a few other authors of note or notoriety, asking each of them the selfsame question: 'Which of your works are suitable for young ladies to read?' All of them but one snubbed the precipitate young Teuton by not deigning to reply. The exception was Zola. 'Young ladies', he wrote, 'ought to read only what their parents allow them to read. An author has no right to specify to them which of his books they should or should not be permitted to peruse'. Going to Zola for moral counsel reminds one of the Western Celtic proverb about going to the goat's house for wool. But the advice was good, even though it came from a very queer and unexpected quarter. According to Chesterfield, there is scarcely anybody who is absolutely good for nothing. And in a similar way, there is, among human beings, probably nobody who is, like a demon, without some streak or patch of good in his composition—not even the latest demigod of French atheistic worship.

### A Danger in Quotation

Some years ago we read, in an Italian provincial paper, an article which made Sciasper (Shakespeare) a 'great German writer'. A few days ago 'The Executive of the Dunedin Branch New Zealand Socialist Party', in an official communication to the local morning paper, added a fresh laurel to the brow of the Fatherland by making Bossuet, the eloquent and historic (French) Catholic Bishop of Meaux, a 'great German Catholic priest'. The incident, though small in itself, affords a fresh illustration of the dangers of 'stock' and second-hand quotation. But we do not find it in our heart to deal harshly with the error of 'The Executive of the Dunedin Branch New Zealand Socialist Party', when we reflect on the egregious follies perpetrated a few years ago in Dunedin, and a few weeks ago in Christchurch, by high-placed churchmen, of university training, when, in the stress of controversy, they fell back upon the usual 'stock' and second-hand 'quotations' improperly alleged to have been taken from St. Alphonsus Liguori, St. Thomas of Aquin, and other Catholic divines. From the reverend divines we were entitled to expect much better; from the Socialist Executive we could well pardon much worse.

### Public School Libraries

We have more than once forcibly directed attention to the manner in which the distribution of book prizes in specific public schools has from time to time been made the medium of disseminating some of the most odious forms of No-Popery 'literature'. In at least two specific instances (one in Southland, the other on the West Coast) we had the satisfaction of knowing that our protest produced good results. A report of a recent meeting of the Pukahu School Committee shows how easily the public school may, through the 'children's libraries' (where such exist), be utilised for the propaganda of sectarianism. Whether the local 'children's library' has been so utilised we are not at present in a position to say. We are, however, entitled to assume that even the school library should be free from sectarian leanings, and that it is the duty of those concerned to scrutinise, before accepting, gifts of books from any source of a decidedly sectarian kind.

### Pictures at Napier

A decision given by Mr. McCarthy, S.M., at Napier on June 8 will, it is hoped, prove a salutary warning to those traders who exhibit in their windows pictures of a kind calculated to wither the fair flower of purity in the hearts of the young and impressionable

members of the community. 'The penal laws', said Mr. McCarthy, after a review of the evidence in the case (including that of the police and several non-Catholic clergymen), 'are directed not against the virtuous, but the vicious, and this statute is intended to protect all, whether old or young, who are liable to fall under the malign influence of immodest prints and literature. To trained and pure minds, the contemplation of such works has not a harmful effect, but to the untrained—more particularly the young—continuous dwelling thereupon creates prurient and obscene thoughts, which not infrequently lead to acts of lust and crimes of violence. The strong meat of the classic art is not for the delectation of the society weakling.' One picture, the subject of the prosecution, could not (the magistrate said) 'by any stretch of imagination be termed a work of art, and the fact that this was exhibited with others compelled him to find that all the pictures exhibited by the defendant were immoral and indecent, and intended to have an immoral and indecent effect. A fine of 10s and costs was imposed.'

## SOCIALISM

### I. MEANING OF TERMS.—SOCIALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM—THE MIDDLE WAY

The awakening interest in Socialism that marks later political developments in Australia and New Zealand renders it desirable that the Catholic side of this question should be placed before our readers. For this purpose we propose to reprint a series of clear and popular expositions of the subject, from the general, the economic, and the ethical points of view that have lately been issued by the Catholic Truth Societies of Scotland and of England. The first is a lecture by the late Mr. C. S. Devas, M.A., well known as the talented author of the noted Stonyhurst manual, 'Political Economy', and of the 'Key to the World's Progress', his last work. Mr. Devas's lecture, which will well repay perusal, runs as follows:—

#### MEANINGS OF THE WORD SOCIALISM.

The word Socialism in these days sends a thrill through an audience, exciting in them feelings, according to their antecedents, either of hope or abhorrence; there being few to whom Socialism does not sound either as a message of good things to come, deliverance from the evil things of the present—from oppression, humiliation, anxiety, penury—or else as the sinister message of revolution, the destruction of all we value most, the destruction of order, property, peace, country, home, and religion.

This being so, it is obvious that I must make clear what is meant by the Socialism about which I am speaking, so that I may not be praising or blaming one thing, and my readers praising or blaming another.

Thus, I will say at once that the Socialism I am here discussing does not mean that all goods are to be held in common, no distinction of families recognised, and no private property; that the rich are to be deprived at once of all their possessions, that all men are to be equalized, and no hierarchy of rank and employment allowed any longer—such a picture of Socialism would be a caricature. Or again, that an orderly State is to disappear and be replaced by independent groups of producers—such a condition would be anarchism, not Socialism. Or again, that landed property alone should be nationalized, not other forms of productive capital—such a plan would be an understatement of the Socialist position, no less inaccurate than the previous overstatements. Nor, again, will I make use of wide descriptions that would include Socialism truly enough, but would include a good deal besides, such a description, e.g., as 'the political economy of the suffering classes,' or 'doctrines that claim a greater equality of social conditions to be obtained by the State or legislation,' or 'the movement towards the co-operative organisation of society.' Any social reformer might thus describe his schemes though they had little or nothing in common with genuine Socialism. (1)

1. See Section I. of the treatise on Socialism, by Victor Cathrein, S.J., translated from the 8th German edition, with additions on America, by V. F. Gettemann, S.J., New York, 1904.