

Italian Catholics, do more than subscribe to a creed and scrupulously fulfil their obligations. They feel as Catholics ought to feel, they act as Catholics ought to act in every conceivable situation. They do not have to reason about it; the right thing to do comes to them by a sort of instinct. They have the Catholic mind. By heredity and by custom and by environment they are so saturated with Catholic feeling that they act on it spontaneously. If our readers want a concrete illustration of this, let them consider the lives and the habits of thought of the old French people and of the old Irish who brought the faith to this country, and let them contrast with them the lives and habits of thought of the average Catholic boy or girl of this Dominion. The difference is surely clear to those who have eyes to see. And what is the explanation of it? First of all the young people have not had the same thoroughly Catholic home life as their parents had. They have not learned to keep the Fourth Commandment, which is the all-protecting law of the Home; they have not been brought up to habits of unquestioning obedience and to deep, loyal, sincere reverence for their parents. From childhood they have been immersed in an anti-Catholic atmosphere which acts as fatally and as surely as slow poison. The papers they read every day are hostile to our religion in spirit. They are edited and owned by persons who have been imbued with the traditional lies about us; they can never repress an ill-mannered sneer at the Pope and his policy when opportunity arises: at their very best they are totally ignorant about us and totally incapable of conceiving how vital a matter religion is to us. Here, where Government, schools, public opinion are of a frankly secular tendency, the most we can expect from the press is impartiality, and taking the world as we find it, impartiality would be a miracle from men who are traditionally biassed against us. English literature at its best is bigoted too. Even Dickens professed that he would never publish anything that might lead sincere persons to approach the Catholic Church, and Dickens is held up to us as one of the safest and soundest of our novelists. In most novels that touch at all on the Church we find falsehoods or lies. The bias is there always: innuendoes, sneers, covert and open attacks on our doctrines are part and parcel of the literature which grew up on the great Protestant lie which started when lying about us became the official policy of Protestantism. Quite apart from the gutter literature of people like Chiniquy, Robertson, or Maria Monk—whose outrageous calumnies are nevertheless accepted as Gospel by many of our benighted Protestant neighbors—there is a vast body of fiction and so-called history which could hardly have been worse were it written for the express purpose of blackening the Catholic Church in the eyes of the public. Books of this sort find their way into State schools; we have known such used as text-books; we have seen them given as prizes. Even in Scott, even in Thackeray you will find the snake in the grass. Men write as they think, and habits of thought among Protestants are certainly not fair to us. An environment such as this cannot fail to react on Catholics. If even harmless light reading is ultimately bad because it relaxes the mind and enervates the intellect, how much more deleterious is poison thus subtly instilled in small doses day by day and week by week. The environment is enervating; it causes what might be called Catholic form to run down: it lowers the tone of Catholic mentality. Therefore to counteract all such influences and to raise Catholic tone is an apostolate for us all, whether lay or cleric. The harvest is great and the workers few.

The American Hierarchy and Social Reform

Some short time ago the American Bishops issued a Manifesto dealing with Social Reconstruction. This striking document is worthy of a place beside the great pronouncements of Leo XIII. It does not aim at being a complete programme of economic reform, or the last word on the subject. It is a helpful, thoughtful

summary of reforms that are necessary and it indicates the broad Christian lines on which the reforms ought to proceed in order to produce their full fruit in a regenerated, stable society. Among a few points of the Manifesto may be mentioned the declaration that no woman should retain any occupation harmful to health or morals, that female employees should receive the same wages as men for equal amounts and qualities of work, and that there is no reason why workers should not have more than a living wage if the industry will support it. It declares against bad housing, monopolies, middlemen profiteers, and advocates that workers should have a share in industrial management. The Bishops are mindful of the words of Leo that "Society can be healed in no other way but by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions," and they advocate earnest action by the Catholic Church towards making Christian principles more widely known and appreciated among the masses. The Manifesto has made no small stir in the United States. It is described by Frank P. Walsh, former Joint-Chairman of the National War-Labor Board, as "one of the most significant and far-reaching developments of recent years, a triumph for true religion as it is a triumph for the cause of economic democracy." John Fitzpatrick, the recent Labor candidate for the office of Mayor of Chicago, writes that the Manifesto "is virtually the programme of organised Labor as expressed in the official declaration of the American Federation of Labor," and goes on to say that "its declaration in favor of maintaining the present wage-rate and progressively raising it, while at the same time taking steps to reduce the cost of living and to control large fortunes, constitutes the strongest possible support for the position taken by organised Labor. It should be printed in its entirety in every Labor journal in the country. Nothing will do more to strengthen the cause of orderly but fundamental economic reform as opposed to the plans of those who would destroy our entire civilisation at one blow in the hope of bettering the conditions of the masses." Socialist papers in many instances are loud in appreciation of the wisdom of the Bishops. Upton Sinclair, writing in the *New Appeal*, calls the Manifesto "a Catholic miracle." The *Seattle Union Record* says: "We are glad that the Catholic Church sees the coming of a new day. . . . This official pronouncement of the Catholic Church can be held up to strengthen many who are starting on the road to an understanding of the new world that is to be." In the *New York Nation*, Raymond Swing writes that the Bishops have taken a courageous step, "possibly one that some day will be designated as the most serviceable that Catholicism has recently ventured in America." We have seen some months ago that Cardinal Bourne issued in England a Pastoral much on the same broad lines. The Church everywhere is wide awake to the need of reform and her only anxiety is that through the erroneous views of demagogues who are dominated rather by greed than by Christian principles the attempts at reconstruction may be rendered futile or even harmful. The Church calls on her children to insist on the necessity for basing reform on the principles of Christian charity and true brotherhood, and the task of Catholics in the present hour is to do all in their power to help in the remaking of the new world on the only lines that guarantee stability and good order. Priests can do much, the Catholic press can do even more, but here is peculiarly the harvest which invites the zeal of the Catholic laity whose hour it is now.

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