

making work, *The Labor Question and Christianity*, published in 1864, was an uncompromising defence of the laboring classes, against unrestricted competition, pretended freedom of contract, the law of supply and demand, and the 'slave market of modern Europe.' Under his leadership were established Catholic associations for production, Catholic savings and credit associations, Catholic associations of factory girls, and widespread Catholic social associations, into which members of the middle class and employers are also admitted, and the object of which is to discuss and study the social question from the Christian point of view. In these associations, the priests address the workmen at least once a week, on the rights of labor, and the social question. The workmen take part in the discussions, and in this manner the priest is brought into close and sympathetic touch with the wants, tendencies, and aspirations of the working-classes. As part of this movement, Abbé Schings of Aix-la-Chapelle founded a labor newspaper, and established a learned Catholic school of social science, represented now by Canon Hitze, Count Losewitz, Meyer, Ratzinger, and many others. Ketteler at first relied entirely upon voluntary effort in his social work, but latterly he came to see that in order to give stability to corporative labor organisations legislative support from the State was necessary; and this view is now generally adopted, being favored by no less an authority than the great Jesuit, Fr. Lehmkühl.

\*

But perhaps the most impressive feature of Catholic social effort in Germany is the way in which, under the influence of the spirit of Catholic Christianity, German employers have co-operated with their workmen in organising and laboring for the common weal. As an outcome of the widespread organisation promoted by the clergy among Catholic German laborers, an association of Catholic employers was formed, with Abbé Hitze as secretary-general. The work which has been, and is being, done by this organisation can not be better indicated than in the words of the statute setting forth the formal objects of the association. The association, 'proceeding from the conviction that an efficacious struggle against the numerous evils connected with the great manufactory system, and the dangers which, in consequence of these, threaten civilised society, is only possible on the ground of Christianity, and setting aside all political questions, proposes to co-operate for the improvement of the condition of the working-classes.' According to the second article of its statute the association seeks to attain this end by 'supporting the religious, moral, and material interests of the laboring-class, and especially:—' 1. By aiding all efforts to raise the standard of education and of Christian life (encouraging good conduct in the factory hands, allowing them to rest from work on Sundays, organising and extending, under ecclesiastic direction, associations of working men and women, supplying them with good reading, etc.). 2. By endeavouring to procure greater cordiality in the relations between employers and workmen (interesting the former in the family conditions of the latter, etc.). 3. By improving workmen's dwellings (cheap and healthy dwellings, moderate rents, etc.). 4. By providing for the education, instruction, and recreation of the working-class (infant schools, institutions for imparting elementary and technical knowledge, for teaching domestic economy and needlework to women and girls, associations for recreation, etc.). 5. By founding, with the co-operation of the workmen themselves, economic institutions for their advantage (funds for the relief of the sick, saving banks, funds for relief and for advancing money, funds for the relief of the aged, widow's funds, courts of arbitration, the first necessities of life furnished at low cost, war against usury, etc.). 6. By attending to the hygiene of the working people and their families (proper ventilation of workshops, etc., bathing establishments, supervision of midwives, prohibition of work being over-protracted, limitation of working hours for women and children, etc.). 7. By founding institutions for assuring the life and health of the workmen (precautions to ensure safety, proper insurance of work-

men in case of accidents). The association has a paper of its own—the *Arbeiterwohl*—and Claude Jannet, in his work on *State Socialism*, declares that this organisation forms one of the great forces of the Catholics in Germany. It is certainly a rare and striking thing to see a great body of employers patronising institutions and supporting legislative measures which are expressly designed to benefit the workers. In connection with the association there has been formed a vast agricultural league (*Bauern-Vereine*), which has established a bank of credit on landed property (*Landschaft*) which advances money to settlers on much the same lines as our New Zealand department, co-operative stores, and co-operative distributing agencies; and which is using every weapon which sagacity and devotion can devise for the protection of the rural population against the economic bondage of the capitalistic system. Every year the delegates of the various associations meet in congress, and out of the Catholic congresses of Germany has grown the Centre Party, the 'impregnable centre' and controlling influence in German politics. From the beginning until now labor has been the main plank in the Centre platform; and all the modern labor legislation of Germany has been initiated or helped through by the Catholic Centre Party.

\*

When, therefore, we are asked what Catholics who condemn Socialism have to offer in its place, we may point with some effectiveness to what has been done in Catholic Germany. The magnificent organisation of the workers, and the systems of co-operative credit and co-operative production in vogue have tended (1) to obviate strikes; (2) to stimulate the workman to industry and carefulness; (3) to improve his moral, social, and political character; (4) to provide employment for him independently of the will of the middle-man; and (5) to give him the middle-man's share of the profits. While Socialist leaders have been dreaming and theorising, Catholic social reformers have been doing. Compare ultra-Socialism with co-operation, unlimited state-help with judicious self-help, Lassalle with Kolping, Karl Marx with Ketteler. The comparison—between practical action and mere visionary dreaming—recalls the old Corn Law rhyme:

'What is a communist? One who hath yearnings

For equal division of unequal earnings.

Idler or bungler, or both, he is willing

To fork out his penny and pocket your shilling.'

Although there is not the same completeness of organisation amongst the Catholics of France as exists in Germany, yet France's contribution to the solution of the social problem is of notable interest, and is every year, by reason of the prominence given to study and to careful and comprehensive research, becoming more and more valuable. Catholic social effort in France is carried on chiefly by the following organisations. (1) *Bœuvre des cercles Catholiques d'ouvriers* (Catholic Workmen's Clubs) founded after the war in 1870 by the Count de Mun, one of the most brilliant orators in the French Chamber or in the world. The workmen associated to the *Cercles*, besides receiving assistance in case of sickness or accident, are furnished with diplomas, which serve them as valuable letters of recommendation to Catholic employers of labor. Moreover, the committees generally see to providing them with work. The practical programme of the organisation is very much on the lines of that of the Catholic social party in Germany. The law of 21st March, 1884, by which Trade Councils were instituted in France, was the work of Count de Mun and his followers. (2) *Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Française* (Catholic Association), founded in 1886 by Count de Mun and half a dozen young men. In 1909, the association united in one group nearly 100,000 young men, students, peasants, and employees of various kinds, and had 2400 groups in the provinces. The members lay great stress on the need of social study. They have formed an immense number of 'study circles,' little groups of about a dozen young men who set themselves to investigate and discuss the various social questions of the day under the guidance of some experienced priest or layman. The association has devoted much of its

**J. TAIT, Monumental Sculptor**

43 CASHEL ST., CHRISTCHURCH.

Just over Bridge  
and opposite  
Drill Shed.

Manufacturer and Importer of every description  
Headstones, Cross Monuments, Etc., in Granite,  
Marble, and other Stones.