

address all Christian peoples, must above everything avoid originality." Our great contemporary, in short, is very cross and exceedingly filled with disgust; but, being what he is, may many more, and still stronger disgusts of a kindred nature overtake him.

### ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF OUR MOST HOLY LORD, LEO XIII., BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE, POPE.

TO THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, AND ALL THE BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD IN FAVOUR AND COMMUNION WITH THE APOSTOLIC SEE.

VENERABLE BRETHREN—Health and Apostolic Benediction. From the commencement of our Pontificate, and in accordance with the duties of our ministry, we have not neglected to point out that deadly plague which is creeping along the closest paths of human society, and is leading it to ruin, and at the same time we have indicated the most efficacious remedies, by means of which society may regain the way of salvation, and escape the grave perils which threaten it. But the evils which we then deplored have increased so rapidly that, once again, we are forced to address you, for we seem to hear these words of the Prophet ringing in our ears—"Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet." You readily comprehend, Venerable Brethren, that we allude to the sect of men who call themselves under the different and almost barbarous titles "Socialists," "Communists" and "Nihilists," and who, scattered over all the earth, and closely bound amongst themselves in an unholy league, no longer seek for themselves protection in the darkness of secret conventions, but confidently and audaciously emerging into the light, have proclaimed the resolution already entered upon by them, of overthrowing the foundations of all civil society.

It is surely these men who are indicated in the language of Holy Writ as men "who defile the flesh, and despise dominion, and blaspheme majesty." (St. Jude's Epistle, v. 8.) They will not leave entire or intact anything which has been wisely decreed by Divine and human laws for the security and honour of life. Whilst they decline obedience to the higher powers, who hold from God the right to command, and to whom, according to the Apostle every soul ought to be subject, they preach the perfect equality of all men in everything that concerns their rights and their duties. They dishonour that natural union of man and woman which was held sacred even by barbarous nations, and the bond of that union which chiefly cements domestic society they try to weaken, or rather they expose it to the assaults of debauchery. Finally, seduced by the longing for present good, "which is the root of all evils," and through whose coveting "many have erred from the faith," they assail the right of property sanctioned by the natural law, and by a monstrous wrong, whilst they affect to be anxious about the wants of all mankind, and are pretending to satisfy all their desires, they endeavour to spoliage, by making ownership common, everything which each one has acquired, either by the title of legitimate inheritance or by thrift and economy. Nay more, they publish their monstrous doctrines at their meetings; they urge them in pamphlets, and through a whole cloud of journals they diffuse them through the people; and, impatient of all check, they have, within a brief interval of time, on several occasions employed their weapons against the heads of States, in order that, having assassinated those from whose authority and command they had anything to fear, they might plunge all the more freely into all sorts of crimes, and deluge human society with troubles, robberies and murders. These attempts of perfidious men, who threaten with increasing ruin civil society, and who are filling all minds with uneasiness and alarm, have had their origin and their cause in those poisoned doctrines which, in former times sown as the germs of corruption in the midst of the people have produced in their season destructive fruits. You know very well, Venerable Brethren, that the deadly warfare which the Reformers raised at the close of the sixteenth century against Catholic faith and which has but widened more and more down to our era, tends to this end, namely—that all revelation being set aside, and the whole natural order being suppressed, the field may be laid open to the inventions, or rather the vagaries, of reason alone. This error, which unjustly takes its name from reason, flatters and excites the pride of man, and loosens the rein to all his passions; naturally, it has made deep ravages on the minds of many individuals, but it has made even deeper on civil society. Hence it has come to pass, by a new sort of impiety un-

down even amongst the pagans, that States are constituted without taking any account of God, or of the order established by Him. Public authority has been declared not to be dependent on God for its principle, its majesty, its power, or its right to command, but to be derived rather from the crowd, which, esteeming itself free of all Divine sanction, believes that it only owes obedience to those laws which itself according to its own caprice, shall have adopted. The supernatural truths of faith being resisted and rejected as contrary to reason, the very Author and Redeemer of the human race is insensibly and gradually banished from the universities, the lycœums, the schools, the recreations, and all the usages of human life; nay, the eternal rewards and punishments of the future life being pushed away into oblivion, the ardent desire of happiness has been circumscribed within the limits of the present existence. With these doctrines widely spread, with this extreme license of thought and of action introduced into every place, it is not surprising that men of lowly condition, weary of the poverty of their homes, or their little workshops, should yearn to become masters of the dwellings and property of the rich; it is not surprising that there should be scarcely any tranquillity in public or private life, and that the human race should have arrived at the brink of an abyss. Meanwhile, the supreme pastors of the Church, on whom devolves the duty of preserving the flock of the Lord from the snares of their enemies, have devoted themselves with care to the task of averting the danger and of providing for the safety of the faithful. In truth from the moment that secret societies commenced to be formed, those societies in whose bosoms were developed the seeds of those errors which we have been indicating, the Roman Pontiffs, Clement XII, and Benedict XIV., were not

slow in unveiling the iniquitous designs of the sects, and in warning the faithful of the entire world of the serious evils that would result from them. When those who glorified themselves with the name of philosophers had asserted for man a sort of unbridled independence and had begun to invent and to sanction that which they called the new right in opposition to the natural and divine law, Pope Pius VI., of happy memory, immediately made manifest by public documents the unholy character and the falsehood of these teachings, and at the same time foretold, with apostolic clear-sightedness, the ruinous condition to which the people, miserably misled would be dragged down. Nevertheless, as no efficacious measures were taken to prevent the diffusion of those perverse doctrines amongst the people, and their penetration into the public acts of governments, Popes Pius VII. and Leo XII. anathematised secret societies, and gave fresh warnings of the perils with which society was menaced. And more, everyone knows with what authority, with what firmness and perseverance, our glorious predecessor, Pius IX., of happy memory, has combated in his allocutions and in his encyclicals, addressed to the bishops of the entire world, the impious projects of the sects, and especially the disastrous doctrines of socialism, whose beginnings were just then becoming apparent. But, and we say it with great grief, those who are charged with watching over the public good, deceived by the devices of the wicked, and frightened by their threats, have always given proof of their distrust in, and of injustice towards the Church, not recognizing that all the efforts of the sects would have been powerless if the teaching of the Catholic Church and the authority of the Roman Pontiffs had been always duly respected by princes and by people. It is the Church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth, which teaches those doctrines and those principles whose effect is to make perfectly sure the existence and the peace of society, and to completely eradicate the fatal seeds of Socialism. For although the Socialists whilst perverting the gospel, for the purpose of deceiving the more incautious, are accustomed to twist it to their own purposes, yet there can be no greater divergence between any two things than there is between their depraved doctrines and the beautiful teaching of Jesus Christ. 'For what participation hath justice with injustice, or what fellowship hath light with darkness' (2 Cor. vi., 14). They never cease from proclaiming the equality of all men, and affirming it, resting on this principle that we owe neither honour nor veneration to the majesty of Sovereigns—no obedience to the laws, unless those laws be made by themselves, and according to their own inclinations. But, on the other hand, the Gospel teaches us with reference to this equality of mankind, that as all have obtained the same nature, all are called to the sublime dignity of children of God, and at the same time, one and the same end being destined for all, each one is to be judged according to the same laws, and is to obtain those punishments or those rewards which each will deserve. In the meantime, it teaches that there is an equality of right and of power which emanates from the Author of nature Himself, 'of whom all paternity of heaven and earth is named' (Eph. iii., 15). As for princes and subjects, their souls according to Catholic doctrine and precepts, are mutually bound together by duties and rights in such a manner that on one side moderation is imposed on the passion of power, and that on the other obedience is rendered easy, strong, and honourable. Thus the Church constantly inculcates on its subjects this apostolic precept, "There is no power but from God, and those that are ordained of God. Therefore, he who resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist purchase to themselves damnation." This precept ordains further to be 'subject of necessity, not only for wrath but also for conscience sake,' and also to 'render to all men their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.' For he who has created and who governs all things has disposed them in His preventive wisdom in such a way that the lofty things by mean things, and the mean things by lofty things obtain their ends. Hence as he has wished that even in the kingdom of heaven the choir of angels are distinct and subordinate, so He has established in the Church different degrees of orders, with diversity of functions, so that all should not be apostles, nor all pastors, nor all teachers; and so, too, He has established in civil society different orders in dignity, in right, and in power, in order that the state like the Church, should form one body, composed of a great number of members, some more noble than others, but all necessary to each other, and anxious for the common good.

But, that the rulers of the people may use the power confided to them for building up and not for destroying, the Church of God appropriately warns princes themselves that the severity of the Supreme Judge is impending over them, and applying the words of Divine Wisdom, it cries aloud to them in the name of God, 'Give ear, you that rule the people, and that please yourselves in multitudes of nations; for power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the Most High, who will examine your works and search out your thoughts; for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For God will not accept any man's person, neither will He stand in awe of any man's greatness, for He hath made the little and the great, and He hath equally care for all. But a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty.' (Wisdom vi. 8). If, however, it happens that princes rashly exceed in the exercise of their power, Catholic doctrine does not permit rebellion against them, lest tranquillity and order should be thereby more disturbed, and society receive a more grievous hurt. And when the excess has reached to such a point as to have no further hope of safety, Christian patience teaches to search for a remedy in merit, and in instant prayer to God. But, if the ordinances of legislators and of princes sanction or command anything contrary to the natural or Divine law, the dignity of the Christian name, duty, and the apostolic precept proclaim that we must obey God rather than man. But this salutary influence of the Church, which is exercised over civil society for the maintenance of order in it, and for its preservation, is felt and experienced in domestic society itself, which is the foundation of every city and of every State. You know, Venerable Brethren, that the regulation of this society has, according to the natural law, its foundation in the indissoluble union of the husband and wife, and its complement in the duties and the rights of parents and of children, of masters and of