

# LENTEN PASTORAL

FRANCIS,

BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FAVOR OF THE  
APOSTOLIC SEE,  
ARCHBISHOP OF WELLINGTON AND  
METROPOLITAN

TO THE CLERGY AND FAITHFUL IN THE SAID DIOCESE,  
HEALTH AND BENEDICTION IN THE LORD.

Dearly Beloved Brethren and Dear Children in Jesus Christ,—

Reading and experience have led us to the conviction that most of the prevalent and pernicious errors which afflict mankind at the present time in social matters, arise from false or incomplete ideas regarding the nature, rights, and duties of the individual, of the family, of the State, and of property. The object of this pastoral, therefore, is to convey to your minds, as far as is possible in a limited space, accurate doctrines concerning these various subjects, and, at the same time, to contrast them with the false theories spread abroad by Socialism in reference to the same. Then a few concluding remarks will accentuate the absolute antagonism of Socialism towards religion, which, with the family and property, forms the basis of society.

## I. THE INDIVIDUAL.

In their reaction against a false individualism Socialists have rejected that true individualism which is the necessary basis of sound democracy. They tell us (by their recognised authors) that each individual man is a mere cell in an organism, and that his personality is valuable only in so far as it contributes to the welfare of the social organism. This view, based on a mistaken analogy, robs human life of its value, and deprives man of his sense of personal dignity, of his independence of character, and of all incentive to self-improvement and self-development. Man is a distinct and separate existence, not a mere screw in complex State machinery. Man is because of his soul, not because of his citizenship. Socialism would subordinate him to the State, and not to the present State only, but to some highly problematic future State of very doubtful character, which might prove to be the cruellest tyrant that ever ground a human being into the dust. "Why care about your career?" it says to the individual. "Your career is to provide a career for those yet to come. Your reward must be to labour for generations yet unborn." "No one," says Bebel, "has a right to consider whether he himself, after all his trouble and labour, will live to see a fairer epoch of Socialism. Still less has he a right to let such considerations deter him from the course on which he has entered." (*Woman*, Eng. Tran., 264). Now just note the glaring contradiction of the Socialist's position. He rails at Christianity for "dealing in futures," and deluding the people with a "draft on eternity," and yet he himself speculates in futures of far less assured character than the heaven which even a shoeless child selling newspapers in a slum knows to be the term of his earthly pilgrimage. Socialism boasts of its ideal as both scientific and valuable, whereas it is neither the one nor the other. How unreasonable and misleading is the Socialist's application of biological analogies to human society! Society is not a physical organism, but a moral one. What does that mean? It means that it resembles a physical organism in some important points, and differs from it in other equally important points. Hence what is true of a physical organism (such as man's body; for instance) cannot be straightway applied to the organism of society. In a physical organism the members exist entirely for the body: their activity is ordained directly for the common good. In a moral organism (such as society) there is also auto-

nomy of parts and unity. But the autonomy of the parts is real and not apparent. The individual in society has his own individual end, directly given him by God. He is answerable to God alone, not to society, except so far as society is delegated with God's authority. The individual will be judged not merely as a member of society. He is not wholly immersed in society. Society exists (as we shall show) in order to protect him and to help him to do certain things which he cannot do for himself. To assert, then, that we are members, or limbs, or cells of one organism is to use an analogy supplied by St. Paul, and helpful as long as regarded merely as an analogy. The moment we argue (as Socialism does) that we are as wholly dependent on society for our life and destiny as the cell is dependent on the organism—we are talking nonsense. Catholics realise that they are members of living organisms. As Catholics they are members of Christ's mystical Body, the Church, and as citizens they are members of the organised body called the State. But in no sense does any Catholic lose thereby his personality. Neither by Church nor State has the individual been swallowed up or assimilated. Man does not exist merely as a cell in State organism. He is not merely what the eye, the hand, or the foot is to a human body. He is complete in himself, and were he to find himself alone on a desert island he would still be, in a very literal sense, a self-determining being, responsible to God for the things done in his body. Now, this fundamental error, this misconception of the nature of the State as a real, live organism, in which man is but a cell, is widely diffused among Socialists. It colours their practical proposals, it distorts their views of the individual, of the family, of liberty, and of property. This glorification of the State has its humorous side. From Socialistic testimony one would picture the new State as a very God in disguise, or at least the ideal superman: but, alas! stripped of its stage clothes and warpaint, it proves to be a large co-operative body of political office-holders, whose office symbol might be an axe to grind, a purse to fill; and whose fit motto might be: "We are the State."

So the boasted Socialist ideal is not scientific. Neither is it valuable. No human ideal can be valuable which debases the worth of the individual man. There once prevailed a heathen principle—*Humanum paucis vivit genus*—the human race exists but for a few. Democracy, after many a struggle, has been taught by Christianity the wickedness of such a maxim. "No," says the Church, "each individual here and now has his value; he has his personal work, and must earn his personal reward for its accomplishment. He is an end in himself, and must never be made a mere means to the welfare of others." Socialists take the pagan maxim and repeat it in a no less objectionable form: *Humanum futuris vivit genus*—the human race lives for a problematic future. This amounts to a denial of the worth of the individual man even more sweeping than were the principles of the Roman slave-owner. Somebody, at all events, derived advantage from human society. Somebody got enjoyment and prospered, while the majority were crushed under the wheels of tyranny. But the present-day Socialist must content himself with the "wait-and-see" policy, lately so much in vogue. The ideal offered us by Socialism is the commonwealth State with the voice of its comrades for the law of its life. The ideal presented by Christianity is a life penetrated and permeated with the spirit and principles of Christ. It is sheer nonsense to speak of the State—as Socialism does—as if endowed with a vital principle such as exists in the human body. The State has been set up not to appropriate, but to protect; not to absorb, but to assist the rights of the individual man. The State is not a person in the strict sense of the word: it is a thing only—an institution with its limitations well defined.

But what must be the upshot of putting before democracy an ideal offering no immediate satisfaction of man's needs, but only the prospect of a vague problematic future? Nothing, of course, but a policy of grab. For human nature scorns to wait for joys uncer-

**Taxi Cabs for Hire**

F. G. BUTLER—WELLINGTON.

These two cabs—71 and 79—can be had at any time by telephoning to 59 or 2707,  
day or night. Wedding and parties specially catered for.

Guaranteed clean speedy.