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The Storm from Afar

By ROBERT LUDLOW

"He hath dethroned monarchs and exalted the poor

He hath satisfied the hungry with good things
And sent the rich away empty-handed"

So declared the Mother of God in her Magnificat in praise of Him who had chosen her as the first flower of Israel that He might dwell in her womb. And so is it fitting that the month of May is dedicated to the Ever-Virgin Theotokos and to the cause of the laboring man.

"He hath dethroned monarchs and exalted the poor"—there is here no preservation of the oppressor as a class, there is no collaborationism that would temper the system and preserve it, rather the monarch, the symbol of the oppressing class, is dethroned. Translated into terms of contemporary capitalist society it means that the capitalist class is dethroned. It means that no matter what advantages are offered the workers by the Welfare State, the political instrument of the capitalists, nevertheless the State and the Ruling Class does not shed its evil function of being always the oppressors of the poor. If not in material ways, then in psychological ways. If not by starvation, then by red-tape. If not by owning outright their bodies, then by controlling their bodies and minds because it controls the food necessary to feed them, the clothing necessary to cover them, the schools necessary to educate them, the homes necessary to shelter them. And moreover asks of them gratitude. Gratitude because it provides for them from the cradle to the grave. Reformists, do-gooders, welfare statist all play into the hands of this tyrant. And all agree in asking that the poor surrender liberty and independence in gratitude.

"As God has created our independence" writes Simone Weil, "so that we should have the possibility of renouncing it out of love, we should for the same reason wish to preserve the independence of our fellows. He who is perfectly obedient sets an infinite price upon the faculty of free choice in all men."

It is this matter of freedom that has become a central problem for labor in these days. The problem of emancipating labor from the dominance of capitalism, from servility in mind and body to the materialism of the exploiters. Of freeing labor from the illusions of the conference table, of supposing that the problem is merely a division of spoils between labor and capital. Of trying once more to instill into ourselves a sense of personal dignity and mission such as labor once possessed before it capitulated to class-collaborationists tactics.

I was happy to receive a letter from Guy Askew, an old Wobbly from the Northwest suggesting a revival of the I.W.W. I hope that many will heed his plea and not only revive but add to the philosophy and organization of the Wobblies. For if the labor unions would agree to take the preamble of the I.W.W. as a basis for agreement and would combine once

more a concern with the day to day battles of labor with the long range view which calls for the end of capitalism and private ownership of the means of production and distribution, they would then have a program to appeal to all laboring men and women. For as man does not live by bread alone so a union cannot maintain its appeal, cannot remain militant, unless it has something else to offer than material benefits. It must offer not only to satisfy the poor with material benefits but also to send the rich away empty-handed. And that cannot be done by those who are content to preserve our present economic system whereby we have one class owning the means to life and the great majority dependent on this class for a livelihood.

How is this to be received by the Catholic? Unless one would uphold the false position that ties the Church to the status quo one must concede that there is no reason why the Catholic should not work for the abolition of capitalism and the consequent evils of it. And since it is true that the Church is not to be identified with any particular economic or political arrangement but can indeed accommodate herself to many different types, then there must be room in the Church for those who do not follow along the road of reformism and progressive capitalism but rather place their hopes in a more radical program. But it must always be a program that places great emphasis on liberty, on respect of conscience. Never can it be the placing of any hope in a program that would violate rights of the person or exalt the State above all morality, or justify violence as a procedure in realizing the revolution. And all labor movements, including the I.W.W. can learn much from the example of Gandhi in this respect. For if we want a society built on justice we cannot achieve it by unjust means. If we want to eliminate the capitalist class we must not proceed by eliminating capitalists as persons. Rather we should offer to them the possibility of working side by side with their fellows in the production of wealth for the common good of all. We must be prepared to fight a non-violent revolution without benefit of guillotine.

We must recognize also that a lot of our May Day speeches will be little more than rhetoric. That the workers are not all heroes and innocent. That all of us are guilty of many things. We add to the hate in the world, we are partisan and prejudiced, we are often crass materialists, we are often at each others throats. But these are the family skeletons and are apparently unavoidable. Nevertheless they should make us pause before yelling unclean at others. We must not offer ourselves as the clean of heart. For the house of labor is also the house of sinners, as the Church is also the Church of sinners. And there are few indeed who are in the position to cast the first stone.

But it is God Himself, who will

Poverty is a very mysterious thing. We need to be always writing and thinking about it. And of course striving for it. It would seem strange that we must strive to be poor, to remain poor. "Just give me a chance" I can hear people say. "Just let me get my debts paid. Just let me get a few of the things I need and then I'll begin to think of poverty and its pleasures. Meanwhile, I've had nothing but."

This last month I have talked to a man who lives in a four-room apartment with a wife and four children and relatives besides. He may have a regular job and enough food to go around, but he is poor in light and air and space. Down at the Peter Maurin Farm each of the corners of the woman's dormitory are occupied, and when an extra visitor comes she must live in the middle of the room. During a visit to Georgia and South Carolina I have seen the shacks Negroes are living in, and the trailer camps around Augusta, Georgia, where the Hydrogen Bomb plant is under construction. Families of construction workers have lived on the move for years, and make up part of our great migrant population. They may have trailers but they are also poor, physically speaking, in the things that are necessary for a good life. Trailers cost money, so do cars, and food is high and no matter how high wages go, a sudden illness, an accumulation of doctor and hospital bills may mean a sudden plunge into destitution. Everybody talks about security and everybody shudders at the idea of poverty. And in fear and anguish people succumb, mentally and physically until our hospitals, especially our mental hospitals, are crowded all over the country.

I am convinced that if we had an understanding and a love of poverty we would begin to be as free and joyous as St. Francis, who had a passion for Lady Poverty and lives on with us in joyous poverty through all the centuries since his death.

It is hard to write about poverty. We live in a slum neighborhood that is becoming ever more crowded with Puerto Ricans who are doubling up in unspeakably filthy, dark, crowded tenements on the lower east side and in Harlem, who have the lowest wages in the city, who do the hardest work, who are little and undernourished from generations of privation and exploitation by us. We used to have a hard time getting rid of all the small sized clothes which came in to us. Ladies who could eat steak and salads and keep their slim figures, contributed good clothes, small sized shoes, and I can remember Julia Porcelli saying once, "Why are the poor always fat. We never get enough clothes to fit them." The American poor may be fat with the starches they eat, but the Puerto Rican poor are lean. The stock in the clothes room at Chrystie street moves quickly now.

It is hard to write about poverty when a visitor tells you of how he and his family all lived in a basement room and did sweat shop work at night to make ends meet, and how the landlord came in and belabored them for not paying his exorbitant rent.

It is hard to write of poverty

give judgment—the judgment He records through His prophet Isaiah: "Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees. And the recorders who make mischievous records, To thrust aside the needy from their rights, And to rob my poor ones of justice, That widows may become their spoil, And that on orphans they may prey. What will you do on the day of judgment, In the face of the storm which will come from afar?"

Poverty and Precarity

By DOROTHY DAY

when the back yard at Chrystie street still has the stock of furniture piled to one side that was put out on the street in an eviction in a next door tenement.

* * *

How can we say to these people, "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven," when we are living comfortably in a warm house, sitting down to a good table, and are clothed decently. Maybe not so decently. I had occasion to visit the City Shelter last month where families are cared for, and I sat there for a couple of hours, contemplating poverty and destitution, a family of these same Puerto Ricans with two of the children asleep in the parents' arms, and four others sprawling against them; a young couple, the mother pregnant; an elderly Negro, who had a job she said but wasn't to go on it till next night. I made myself known to a

on park benches and at the kitchen table. In an effort to achieve a little of the destitution of our neighbors we gave away even our furniture and sat on boxes. But as fast as we gave things away people brought more. We gave away blankets to needy families, started our first house of hospitality and people gathered together what blankets we needed. We gave away food, and more food came in. I can remember a haunch of venison from the Canadian Northwest, a can of oysters from Maryland, a container of honey from Illinois. Even now it comes in, a salmon from Seattle, flown across the continent; nothing is too good for the poor. There is no one working with The Catholic Worker getting a salary, so no one is bothered with income tax, and since all of the leaders of the work give up job and salary, others of our readers feel called upon to give, and help us keep the work going. And then we experience a poverty of another kind, a poverty of interior goods of reputation. It is said often and with some scorn, "Why don't they get jobs and help the poor that way? Why are they living off others, begging?" Just this last month a long letter came in along these lines, and another group in St. Louis emphasized that they didn't live by begging.

It would complicate things rather, I can only explain, to give Roger a salary for his work of fourteen hours a day in the kitchen, clothes room and house; to pay Jane a salary for running the woman's house, and Beth and Annabelle for giving out clothes; for making stencils all day and helping with the sick and the poor; and Bob and Tom for their work—and then have them all turn the money right back in to support the work. Or, to make it more complicated, they might all go out and get jobs, and bring the money home to pay their board and room and the salaries of others to run the house. It is simpler just to be poor. It is simpler to beg. The thing to do is not to hold out on anything. That might smack of the Ananias and Saphira act.

* * *

But the tragedy is that we do, we all do. We hold on to our books, our tools, such as typewriters, our clothes and instead of rejoicing when they are taken from us we lament. We protest at people taking time or privacy. We are holding on to these goods. It is a good thing to remember.

Occasionally, as we start thinking of poverty, usually after reading the life of such a saint as Benedict Joseph Labre, we dream of going out on our solitary own, living with the destitute, sleeping on park benches or in the Shelter, living in Churches, sitting before the Blessed Sacrament as we see so many doing, from the Municipal lodging house around the corner. And when these thoughts come on warm spring days when the children are playing in the park, and it is good to be out on the city streets, we know that this too is luxury and we are deceiving ourselves, and that it is the warm sun we want, and rest, and time to think and read, and freedom from the people that press in on us from

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young man in charge (I did not want to appear to be spying on them when all I wanted to know was the latest on the apartment-finding situation for homeless families) and he apologized for making me wait saying that he had thought I was one of the clients.

* * *

We must talk about poverty because people actually lose sight of it, can scarcely believe that it exists. So many decent people come in to visit us and tell us how their families were brought up in poverty and how, through hard work and decent habits and cooperation, they managed to educate all the children and raise up priests and nuns to the Church. They concede that health and good habits, a good family, take them out of the poverty class, no matter how mean the slum they may have been forced to inhabit. No, they don't know about the poor. Their conception of poverty is something neat and well ordered as a nun's cell.

And maybe no one can be told, maybe they will have to experience it. Or maybe it is a grace which they must pray for. We usually get what we pray for, and maybe we are afraid to pray for it. And yet I am convinced that it is the grace we most need in this age of crisis, at this time when expenditures reach into the billions to defend "our American way of life." Maybe it is this defense which will bring down upon us this poverty which we do not pray for.

* * *

I can remember our first efforts nineteen years ago. (With this issue we start our twentieth year.) We had no office, no equipment but a typewriter which was pawned the first month. We wrote the paper

NOTICE

Kasper Mayr, leader in the Austrian Catholic pacifist group, suggests the formation of an International Fellowship of Catholic Pacifists, and is desirous that Catholics so persuaded, particularly in countries he has not already contacted, get in touch with him. He mentions especially Canada and Latin-America as places where he has no contacts as yet.

Write to him as follows:

Kasper Mayr,
48 Nachreihengasse,
Vienna 17, Austria.

The Shape Up on the Waterfront

By LEO PIRON

Any discussion of the system used for the hiring of longshoremen on the New York waterfront must eventually deal with the expression and the reality "slave market." Most Americans, and perhaps some of the longshoremen themselves are possibly not too easily convinced that such a charge could be anything other than the product of a brain which sees a New Orleans slave block in every corner where labor is not all our fancy or the encyclical paint. An arduous work, one commanding our respect for its innate dignity, we Americans do not like to see used as evidence for those advancing the familiar thesis stating that our liberty is somewhat more of a romantic allegation than it is a reality. But there can be no question that if the fact of human servitude can be related to anything in this country, it has real connection with the vicious set of conditions under which a New York longshoreman must earn his daily bread.

Properly speaking, it is difficult to say that a New York longshoreman has a job at all. If we think of a "job," and the term is a poor one, as some labor characterized by a regularity or continuity which in some part relieves a man of the harrowing pressures of worrying about unemployment, some flow of labor not subject to any cessations other than those we regard in-

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Chrystie Street

By TOM SULLIVAN

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all you dear readers for your prompt and generous response to our spring appeal. We sincerely hope that there are none among you who have failed to receive an individual acknowledgment for whatever contribution you may have sent. If there are such cases please accept our belated gratitude and forgive our oversight.

Aside from our mortgages on the two retreat houses, Maryfarm and Peter Maurin Farm, the returns from the appeal cleared up all our debts up to the first of April. This is almost unbelievable and I am sure that we must have made some error in our calculations.

During the two week period in which the appeal was being answered several interested parties in and around the group would frequently ask the question, "How is the appeal being taken care of?" It was difficult to keep from lying as you responded, "It is hard to tell as yet." Or, you would catch your self making an over optimistic reply such as, "If the present traffic continues we might meet some of our creditors."

While you are furtively counting the checks and cash you begin to distrust those around you. You dread to state emphatically that all is well with the money situation for fear of someone dreaming up another expensive project.

I have decided that it is the same story all over. People are more willing to confess their sins than their personal wealth. You can't ask a more indiscreet question than, "What is your present salary?"

On Easter Sunday morning a breakfast of bacon, eggs, fried potatoes, bread and coffee was served to the men in the line instead of the daily snack of bread and coffee. During the afternoon a roast pork dinner was served in lieu of the usual bowl of soup and bread.

The thought is frequently in our minds: would that we could put out such meals every day of the week. However we realize in view

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The Puerto Rican Poor Suffer In the Midst of Plenty

By EILEEN FANTINO

"Whilst my bones are bruised, mine enemies that trouble me cast reproach upon me: Whilst day by day they say unto me: Where is thy God?"

Approaching the "Puerto Rican Situation" is stepping into a fire gutted tenement skeleton; it's walking, blind, touching withered bones from which the flesh of life has been burned. It's gazing out of a smashed window to see flowing lines of streets falling away to a dead river, row after row of swaying spectres, making the pure moonlight seem cast with whirlpools of dust. What is it that makes our statistics real, while the flesh and blood of the poor become fantasies, nightmares, to be spoken of in whispers, to be seen through mental veils? What can explain the utter indifference to our betrayal of the Puerto Rican people?

Of course, the roots of the housing, health, and moral problems which have overwhelmed the Puerto Ricans in New York, are buried deep in the soil of the home island. The population shift to New York is a blood-letting which never will cure the disease.

A child turns her patient eyes toward her teacher and answers, "I like it better in New York than in Puerto Rico." This same girl will go home to a garbage strewn, dark fire trap, to a dish of rice and beans, the three room flat in which it will probably be a struggle to find a place to lay her head. When night softens the ugliness she will find reason to tremble in the memory of another night when the tidal wave of disease swept

away another life, this time her sister, whose dead, rigid body lay next to hers all night because she could not be taken away until morning.

The travel folders paint a charming picture of Puerto Rico—paradise isle. Where do they hide the masses of people living on still houses over water, with absolutely no sanitary facilities? How do they cover up the staggering epidemics that result? How do they explain away the vast military installations covering huge areas of more than precious living space and farmland? It will take more than a luxurious resort hotel by the perfumed sea to take the smell of death out of the air, and more than a sighed "mea culpa" to wash these stains away.

The wounds of Christ's Hands are bleeding into the streets of "Spanish Harlem." He wanders in anguish, an exile, driven by despair from the land of his birth. Even His Holy Tabernacle, placed for a time in an old converted New York Bathhouse, makes way for the City Housing Project, another shining new building He can't afford to live in. Even their God has no place to rest His Head.

We go on listening to the talk about the labor market being flooded with "cheap labor Puerto Ricans," listening to the complaints about the Lexington Avenue subway mobs of "those filthy Puerto Ricans," complaints from John Q. Public about the hard earned money he paid out in taxes, buying the liquor and leisure to keep the Puerto Ricans happy — ad nauseum. Is it any wonder Com-

munist is finding some fertile ground in their midst. "My tears have been my bread day and night, whilst every day they say unto me: Where is thy God?"

Where have we in the Church given bread to nourish their bodies and their souls? We fill our altars with flowers and our breasts with vipers. Our Alleluias should choke us as we face the hundreds of souls drifting from Christ through our neglect, being engulfed by their need for escape and forgetfulness.

The Puerto Rican is a "second class citizen" in our temporal order, a commodity, a home relief "case," a face among a sea of faces on the hospital clinic lines, a "foreigner," the "problem child" of the schools, the undesirable tenant of the "too far gone to be much good anyway" tenement flat, the burnt corpse to be carried out on a stretcher after the hundredth flash fire, the high interest return at the loan emporium, the juvenile delinquent of the race riots. We all know the dignity of man is unmeasurable, that the veil of the Temple is rent, and the human race, every last one of us, is destined to enter the Holy of Holies, which is Divinity, through Jesus, Our Lord and Brother. Our Puerto Rican brother is stripped. He stands before God, alone and poor. He has been through the fire and the flood. We can only pray God, in His mercy will make us see with Christ's eyes, before it is too late, so that we will begin to pour unction on the wounds we have dug, and in this healing work our salvation.

Steel and The Right To Strike

In a dramatic move hailed by most supporters of American labor (and condemned by its enemies) President Truman seized the steel industry last month.

His action is a precedent for the most serious limitation of the right to strike which American workingmen have yet faced. The fact that it was motivated by sympathy to the entirely just claims of Phil Murray's steelworkers should not confuse the basic issue.

The Background

This was the background. For several months, industry and labor negotiators had bargained fruitlessly. There was indication of a truculence on the part of management, probably inspired by the knowledge that a strike in the steel industry would be considered "subversive" in the context of the armaments program.

At the request of the President, Murray took a course of restraint, postponing strike action in the hope of a settlement at the conference table. Then with the strike called (and some enthusiastic workers already off the job), the Administration made an eleventh hour seizure of the industry and Murray ordered the men back to work.

The steel worker's case was loaded. Between 1945 and 1951, steel profits shot up 499 percent. During the same period, dividends increased 170 percent. Between January, 1946, and September, (Continued on page 8)

The Leisure Society

By THOMAS CAMPBELL

Since we have abandoned common sense altogether, it is with a touch of wanness that it is suggested that something like the "leisure state" is with us already. It is all around us, if you can understand how a malady can be said to exist by symptoms. In an age where it is common for huge numbers of people to spend at least as much of their time in front of the television set as they do at work, it seems unreal to discuss "leisure" in abstract tones which might suggest that it is some unknown quantity. And if this is a wrong apprehension of "leisure," and one hopes that it is, it is no fault of this writer, for those who are given to using the word seem to have no better definition. If we hold to the notion that "leisure" is that time away from "work," and it does not seem wrong to so hold after having heard discussions of this question, you begin to have an uncomfortable awareness that twentieth century America is rather close to a "leisure" society. At least certain members, in fact whole classes, of Americans have realized that soaring dream.

And that reality would seem to discourage all but the most ardent of those Christians who have chosen to defend industrialism — for it is not intrinsically wrong, is it?—and in so doing have been forced into bizarre position of accepting as a consequence something called "the leisure society."

For the "leisure society" is intimately related to the machine. It has to be so. Every Christian who takes a stand for the "leisure society" is, or should be, aware of the classical arguments against the machine. He can usually recite these arguments as well as the next. As a matter of fact he is generally a better than well informed Christian, if rather prone to accept what is new as being good and prepared to receive with credulity any thought which for want of a better phrase might be styled "avant garde"—particularly if it

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Pope Pius XII, Easter, 1952

"Yes, bearers of life, penetrate into every place, into factories, offices, fields, wherever Christ has the right to enter. Offer yourselves, be known to one another, in the different centers of work, in the same houses, all closely united in a single thought and a single desire. Open wide, too, to embrace all who come to you, looking for a word of comfort and reassurance in this atmosphere which is dark with discouragement."

The Encyclicals: A Rededication

By MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Quadragesimo Anno and *Quadragesimo Anno* are the two most important modern sources of the Church's teaching on the social order. Often, we reduce them to simple, practical propositions—the right to strike, the vocational order, the necessity of cooperation—and lose sight of the broad Christian vision of a social order which they contain. In this month of labor it is especially fitting to return to those sources and to understand their positive message. (For reference, the paragraph numbers are from the Paulist Press "Five Great Encyclicals.")

Private Property

Leo XIII and Pius XI stood unequivocally for private property.

This does not mean that they upheld the present system of private property. This does not mean (and it was, emphatically, not the case) that they are referring to the rights of gigantic industries, of capital as we understand it.

The Catholic teaching on private property is based on the solidarity of mankind. (QA, 2).

"God has granted the earth to mankind in general . . ." (RN, 7). Private appropriation of this property is based on the relation of personality to property, that man is a creature with reason, who may put the earth to his use for necessities, for his development as a human being.

"That which has thus altered the soil and improved it becomes so truly a part of itself as to be in a great measure indistinguishable, inseparable from it . . . the results of labor should belong to him who has labored." (RN, 8).

"Every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own." (RN, 5).

Therefore, in direct opposition to private property as it is today, the Church asserts the solidarity of mankind, the personal basis of the right to property—and the right of all men to private property.

The Family

How the private property which the Church defends is personalist emerges most clearly in Leo's

teaching on property and the family.

"The rights here spoken of belonging to each individual man, are seen in a much stronger light if they are considered in relation to man's social and domestic obligations." (RN, 9).

For the family, anterior to the State, demands for its fulfillment the possession of property. Children must be given the necessities of life and an environment which is moral. And these tremendously important conditions of growth and maturity are dependent for their stability on the possession of property by the family.

It is not, then, the concentrated ownership of modern society, be it that of Stalin's state or the capitalists of the West, to which Leo refers. It is the individual property of every man, the "workingman's estate" which is necessary for his growth as a human being and which derives its right from the nature of work, it is pre-eminently the property of the family

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Peter Maurin Farm

By EMILY SCARBOROUGH

The most important human event of our last month has been the advent of the Smiths, a wonderful family from the Bahamas, who came to us via Florida. They consist in "Chad," the father, the mother Lucille, Paul the youngest, born January 24th, three days after our late Daniel (Dellinger), and seven others. They are good-looking, sweet and as alive as banjos. They are also obedient to their parents. Thelma, eighteen, with David, sixteen, and Bernadette, twelve, attend St. Peter's School, run by the Sisters of Charity in St. George; and we hope to get Lucille Agnes and Mac, next down the line, into St. Louis Academy. That leaves Charlie, five, and "Mr. Peanut" or "Queen" (Quentin), four. The latter sings—"Nit-nit Charlie, nit-nit Charlie, Sogers on parade"—with an absorbed expression; and collects frogs.

Mr. Smith was born in the Bahamas, and educated in England, at an English public school and Cambridge University. His wife comes from the Bahamas. He was intended by his father to be a lawyer. What he likes and is fitted to do is to teach history; only his ideas are original and follow the Gospels, which makes them not always what our best, even Catholic, schools and colleges care to follow. At the moment he has an accounting job in New York. Mrs. Smith is a charming lady, who takes vicissitudes of every sort with aplomb, even the entire absence of hot water at every crucial moment. She is in the habit of bathing every one of the younger children every evening—and does so, without fuss, in what seems to our residents a miraculous manner. Thelma's housewifely ways endear her so to Rita, Mary and Emily, that she is known among them as a "doll," which term does not do her justice. She and Bernadette play in the basement on Emily's zither (brought recently by her son); so does Leonard. His life since the coming of the Smiths has changed. So has he. He has been gently inundated by children, with whom he has always been a push-over—an ogre sobered by a mouse. It began with the Smith's wire-recorder, an instrument which had the whole house by the ears for a day. It was fascinating to hear your own voice; Leonard forgot everything in pursuit of it—except the furnace, which by the way, thank Heaven, no longer is needed. I think it was Mac who really got Leonard—Mac is quiet. He stands near you, drawing, causing you nothing but pleasure. Sometimes he just sits and looks at you, voicelessly asking to do a service. He wants to be a priest. He can lick any boy in school.

Bernadette is gay, and can sing and dance. Kit (David), when he's not listening to baseball and strutting up and down in square dances, is outdoors helping Rita in her manifold planting activities. Our Rita has come out with the farm side of her, and except twice, when she gave with mushroom-stuffed chickens, Italian style, baked ham (from Bernie our patient butcher), and a terrific turkey (at Easter), no one would know any more the girl of yore. She is always on the land. She has good helpers—Dan Collins "the cockroach man" (he has twice got rid of every single living one of them) who gets up at six and hoes; Mr. Smith, Lucille, Mac, and others. Our dear Freddy Baker paid for the plowing. Rita has planted any number of rows of vegetables, and flowers. Nearly everyone worked clearing the asparagus patch—led by Hans and Ed.

Easter morning, the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we sang a high mass, which we thought lovely; actually, we need practise. Mr. Smith and his whole family are in the habit of singing mass, having been associated almost entirely in the Ba-

hamas with Benedictines. He got us going. Rita has a voice like a boy soprano, and was in the Schola at the Grail. I wish she would sing Mozart. Joe too helped us practise. The chapel was decorated with white hyacinths, on the altar, peach and plum blossoms in jars on the floor, and flowering quince under the pictures of Our Lady and St. Therese. The effect was ravishing. It was done by Mary, to whom it is impossible to touch flowers and not make them beautiful. Rita had the whole house full of geraniums, daffodils, tulips and pansies at Easter. She got them from our farmer-neighbor Mr. Hauber. The dinner was out of this world (gifts). Mary Colleano was here, and Terry. Mary is well known as an expert at folk dancing. The tables were pushed out of the way, and young feet pranced, and old bones were moving. Betty (our sweet Dellingers were here) succeeded in getting Hans to the floor; but after a couple of agonized glances, he left. Leonard was sleeping in his house. Kit, Rita and Bernadette, not to mention little Lucille Agnes (the writer's partner, who is a love) really did swing those feet. There is a beautiful Grecian dance, too complicated for most, that the experts can do. There is a lovely "St. Bernard's waltz." When Rita dances, she seems inspired.

One day last week Hans and Ed noticed that something was wrong with the sewage. It ended up with both cess-pools having to be uncovered, and emptied. It was a job that would have cost in the three figures, for a plumber. Rita sent Leonard to St. Vincent's Hospital to get the personal advice of John Murray, who is working there now; but he could not leave. We had to do it all ourselves. I never will forget that day. It was warm, and all the fruit trees were in bloom; and there were daffodils about. Kit was deep in a pit, with a pall, Cyril and Ed were co-operating above; Hans directing; he and Ed had worked very hard locating the cisterns and prying the heavy iron covers off. It probably had not been done since the nineties. By mid-afternoon even Leonard was in it. Cyril, who in John Murray's absence has been attending to the trash, really on this day outdid himself. Emily brought coffee and fresh milk (from Mt. Loretto) to the combatants.

It seemed to me as I watched from the basement, getting ready for supper, that nowhere in my life had I seen anything to compare with it. It was a sort of concentration, before one's eyes, of what makes this place go—of what causes it to be, in spite of every conceivable material frustration, and the most maddening combinations of imbecility and confusion (to which I myself plentifully contribute) a genuine Christian community, living out literally, in human weakness, what Christ has asked us to do. There appeared that afternoon a visible relation between the disgusting activities which everyone in the house had been called on to assist in (Rita carted some of it down to her garden, emulating the Chinese), and our meeting every day for the mass and rosary. The willing giving of time and energy, the sacrifice of taste, the joyful co-operation, without rebellion of the men and the women—who are at war, according to psychiatrists; and indeed, in most places they seem to be—can only be called Christian; it could only result, it seemed to me (who still marvel at Peter Maurin Farm), from a spirit engendered by Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, and by Our Lady. The humor for which our inhabitants are famous was certainly not lacking on that afternoon. We deplored the absence of Kenneth and John McKeon.

We got our palms on Palm Sunday from Father Hyland, of Our Lady Star of the Sea, where we went to mass at the end of Holy Week. Our chapel is only an ora-

tory. Our Stations of the Cross were blessed by a Franciscan, who came for that purpose. At that ceremony we sang the Stabat Mater. Many of us spent time on Holy Thursday in Our Lady Star of the Sea. Father Anderson, S. J., an old reader of the paper, gave us Benediction one Sunday. He is at the Jesuit retreat house in Auriesville, N. Y., and has invited any of us up there who care to come. We are also given carte blanche by the Cenacle.

Dan Collins is going to stay awhile. He does a wild Irish jig. We are going mad on dancing. Cyril, who used to be in a circus, stood on one hand. Dorothy's very old friend Peggy Conklin, who knew Hart Crane, is with us. She is a master gardener. Maud Kraas, a friend of a friend of Emily's, comes to Sunday mass from Eltingville; and also visits us. We've had all sorts of gifts of clothes. Madeline Krider, bless her heart, brought ALL of her new stockings. Since we never see a new stocking, we were gasping. That lady should certainly get to Heaven. She is on her way to Florida, to open a house of hospitality for the old and helpless. Before she went she took Emily over to Mendham, N. J., to see Father Boyer, who was the spiritual director of "Little Rose" Ferron, the Woonsocket stigmatic who died not very long ago. He had some earth from Rose's grave, which when shaken gave out a strong aroma of roses. It was perceptible to one of the party. He said that Rose is manifesting herself to certain persons around that place; especially to those interested in her canonization. She has been seen in the heavens. Other visitors have been the Malles, who stayed over-night, our friend Bill McDonough, Ray Taylor and two friends, John Coleman Emily's son, Ray Brinkworth, Jerry Griffin, and Tom Campbell, who is about to wed. The blackberry and raspberry bushes were pruned, a frightful thorny job. They are down by Leonard's house. He forgot himself, watering his flower garden, and Rita and Emily peeked through the open door into the sanctum sanctorum. There is a shrine on the little piece of rising ground down there, in the woods; the head of Christ is beautiful. Leonard did a lot of work turning the compost pile, that day.

Colette Connors and her family were here for Easter. Her husband on observing the new elegant furniture (the Smiths') said—"They've classed up the joint." They certainly have: we now have two refrigerators, and a fine radio and record-player, besides a lot of Mozart records, opera and instrumental, lent by John Coleman; there is the whole of *The Magic Flute* and *Don Giovanni*.

We miss Dorothy. What with abbots and archbishops calling her, and Tamar needing her, we are continually operating without her. Her friend May Bellucci visited us, bringing as always wonderful gifts of clothes, and towels. The writer of this column now has Joe's hermitage—for Joe is leaving soon, to go to Canada. The tiny house is smaller than the bathroom. It is Paradise. I found some springs; and the Smiths gave me one of the mattresses from the double-deckers Leonard and Cyril installed in there before their coming. There is Joe's table, a chair, and shelves. I do not know what more anyone can want in this world. I woke up in the morning to the tune of the three roosters' crowing, next-door; and saw three robins singing out on the grape arbor.

NOTICE

A new book store and lay action center has been started in St. Louis. The address is: The Center, 4261 Olive St., St. Louis, Mo.

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The Saint for The Insecure

St. Benedict Joseph Labre, by Agnes De La Gorce, Sheed and Ward, \$3.00. Reviewed by Thomas Campbell.

Every age has its human ideal, some type which is held up for reverence and imitation, and to fall short of which is failure in the eyes of a certain section of mankind usually referred to as the "world." The Beau Brummels, the Strong Silent Men, the Casual Guy, the Man of Distinction, the Capable Director, and all the other human cliches whose tedious ubiquity in any given time seems proof positive that Tocqueville touched upon a very human truth when he thought that men do not desire freedom as much as they do equality, are all pathetic variants of the ideal man of the "world" as it undergoes the changes of fashion and time.

No depth of spirituality is necessary to perceive their essential triteness. Measured by any standard, the popular conception of what is suitable to manhood cannot survive a very close inspection. Yet we are always prone to be affected by the dream of the age as it regards the Ideal Man—advertising keeps it before us constantly—unless we have some better touchstone to guide us.

* * *

And such was St. Benedict Joseph Labre.

This man, one of the few complete successes on record, has something to say to the modern world, though it is almost certain that his message is couched in a style as to render it almost incomprehensible to our ears. It is indeed difficult to point at the figure of St. Benedict Joseph Labre, a repeated "failure" in many formal vocations, verminous, subsisting on garbage, and say to any age that this is the Ideal. But the Christian must recognize the truth of the assertion.

For this was a man prepared to act with a divine literalness upon the proposition that we either live for God or we live for Nothing. And insofar as he did live for God, lived for Him with a candour and an integrity which are shaking when we consider that the saint should not be the exception, we are obliged to see in the life of St. Benedict Joseph Labre perfect Christian expression.

Poverty, which seems inescapable in the life of the coherent Christian, that fiery cleansing necessary for holiness which we shirk so strenuously, St. Benedict Joseph Labre embraced with such fervor that he scandalized the eighteenth century no less than he does the twentieth. He was harried by street arabs most of his life. He was jailed on the suspicion of being a common criminal. He slept in any convenient gutter. He lived on refuse picked from palls. He was considered mad. He eagerly accepted the obloquy tendered him by that type of person who cannot reconcile sanctity with squalor. He received exactly the same treatment we would have given him at a later date. For such a man as was St. Benedict Joseph Labre does not square very easily with the easy notion of what it takes to be a saint—that distorted and romanticized vision a la Monsieur Vincent which we think might be the reward for our following the Little Way, going off cigarettes and attempting to put Christ back into politics.

He was a rock of prayer crawling with lice. He said nothing that was of any note. In some ways it might be said of him that he did nothing. He is a sort of patron saint for failures, inasmuch as he spent most of his life wondering if perhaps around the next bend there might be just the monastery for him. He never found it. His monastery was the streets of the city of Rome and the mountain roads and the highways of the plains, and instead of the fellowship of co-religionists he had the company of the thief, the beggar, and the destitute.

* * *

He was a "small man." His humility was almost naive. He preferred to be labelled a "Huguenot" rather than show his certificate establishing the fact that he was a practicing Roman Catholic. (There were too many people present.) His whole life was a reversal of the usual fashionable hustle after aggrandizement and the generally tawdry acceptability by our fellows. It is hard to see St. Benedict Joseph Labre as being a cultist saint. His life will not admit to the skylarks woven about a figure like St. Francis Assisi.

But there is no avoiding him. There he stands. He is a repudiation of our lives. All that we have valued so highly, that which we sometimes canonize with the expression "decent way of life," he has shown us to be nothing but the dreariest and transparent of evasions of the call to sanctity. It is perhaps too easy and not very accurate to say, "not all of us are called to such a life." It is easy to forget that salvation here and now is found in just those Christian realities St. Benedict Joseph Labre lived to the hilt with such beauty. Our world is marked for death unless we Christians attempt something like a virile attempt at those realities. We must see that poverty, humility, unshakeable trust in Christ, and service, are the cost of our Redemption. There is no other way.

* * *

St. Benedict Joseph Labre supplies meaning to life. He is the personal Christian Apocalypse. The Church, which exists for the production of saints, finds its classic meaning in history in his life. The word "meaning" has its deepest relevance only to such a life.

He lived one of the greatest lives of all time. It is a life that is like fire in the heart and in the eyes is very brine.

CULTURE ATION ::

Participation in The Mystery

CHRIST IN THE LITURGY by Dom Iltyd Trethowan. Sheed & Ward, London & New York. Reviewed by Betty Bartelme.

In one of the early chapters of his book, Dom Trethowan defines a mystery as an "invitation to think." This invitation is perhaps the keynote of his writing. His knowledge is implicit—and explicit too at times—but the reader is going to have to take the posted paths for a fuller knowledge of liturgical function and participation.

Dom Trethowan is, of course, dealing with a subject on which volumes have been written. He has not attempted to explain each prayer of the liturgy nor interpret every symbol. Rather it was with the idea that Catholics should understand that participation in liturgical prayer is an actual participation in the Christian Mystery that these essays were collected and published. The opening chapters are particularly illuminating in this context. Dom Trethowan discusses the meaning of the liturgy and dispels certain notions which insist that liturgical prayer is in opposition to contemplation; he studies the implications of the Incarnation and Redemption, and the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ, and brings up the question of sacrifice and its meaning as an act of worship. All this leads naturally into a discussion of the liturgical texts which are an expression of the life of the Church.

He begins with the Mass and treats the prayers of the Ordinary as they appear in the Roman Missal. These he studies not only from the standpoint of their great excellence as means of worship, but also from a historical point of view. It is interesting to note in reading through these articles the changes which have taken place in the Mass; the additions which have been made, the observances which have been altered. Dom Trethowan is critical of some of the latter such as the practice of kneeling at the Introit. Though his concentration is on the Roman Rite, he calls attention to the beauties of the Eastern Liturgies and brings out occasional comparisons of the prayers of the Canon.

Leaving the Mass proper, the study continues with the liturgical year—the Christmas cycle, the season of Lent and Paschaltide, and the Pentecost cycle. These chapters have a special interest, dealing as they do with the Masses for the Sundays and other solemn observances of the year. Read with the Mass for the particular time which they interpret, they are invaluable aids to an understanding of liturgical life. It is a pity that the limitations of the book do not allow a more complete treatment, for though the writer draws from and recommends more expansive texts such as those of Dom Casel and Dom Pius Parsch, it would be far more satisfying to find a full interpretation at the moment of aroused interest. Even with this drawback, however, I found that reading the book during Easter-tide deepened by appreciation of the Paschal liturgy.

The discussion of the Divine Office was particularly enjoyable, possibly because here the writer's personality was so clearly revealed. And I must confess to both

sympathy and delight at his slightly carping attitude toward the confusion of the Roman Breviary and the unsatisfactory translations which it contains. His position is not that of devaluation but rather that of the specialist whose familiarity with a beloved subject is so intimate that its minor imperfections annoy and irritate him unbearably. His feeling is that the Office would lend itself exceptionally well to the vernacular (far more so than the Mass), but in its present state it will never become what it ought to be, "the food of mind and heart for the faithful."

Leaving the liturgical texts, Dom Trethowan deals with some of the problems of the liturgical revival; the singing of the Mass, the liturgy in the vernacular, and certain changes which have been proposed for the "Mass of the future." These, of course, are problems for which no complete solution has been found, but various positions are considered and the author has his own commentary to make on each. He concludes with a presentation of the relationship between Christian perfection and "intellectualism," a term which he feels is much misused, but which is indispensable if one is to understand the liturgy and its function.

There is no doubt that this is an extremely readable book, and that Dom Trethowan has managed to cover a great deal of ground in a limited space. If at times it has a provocative note—a hint of a theological disagreement here, an indication that not all has not been said there—it is probably in order to recall that these essays were originally delivered as lectures. And if Dom Trethowan occasionally closes the doors of his knowledge somewhat abruptly, assuming a familiarity with the subject which the reader may not have, he leaves a hopeful crack by his careful footnoting of reference material.

In the Absence Of Faith

The Flight From God, by Max Picard, Henry Regnery Co., Chicago, \$2.50. Reviewed by Michael Harrington.

This is a difficult book to review. It must be emphatically approved—and that approbation must be just as emphatically qualified.

Probably more half-truth has been stated in the form of monometaphorical analysis than in any other way. Whether the single likeness in terms of which reality is to be explained is biological or theological or sociological, it almost necessarily involves the suppression, or distortion, of some of the evidence so that all may be neat. In the hands of any but a genius it is almost worthless. Yet Picard is, undeniably, a genius.

His book is a definition of the situation of modern man. The basic intuition is that in the modern world all spiritual reality starts from a premise of the absence of faith—even faith itself. Thus we are confronted with a universe in which nothing, even God, seems necessary. All is possible, and man becomes hallucinated, fantastical, a creature for whom there is no

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Life at Hard Labor

By AMMON A. HENNACY

My mother worked when she was eleven years old, hoeing in the garden in Ohio for 25c a week. In 1904 when I was eleven wages had increased, and I worked for my grandparents for around \$6 a week.

In those days the work was from sun-up to sun-down, and cows were to be milked afterwards. I was then a Baptist and a Democrat and found time on rainy days and odd hours to clean and dust the country church; fill the oil-lamps, clean the chimneys, and all "for the Lord." I also gave \$15 a year to the church which was much more in proportion than most farmers' gave. There was one essential thing that I learned that was the habit of working. During the winter of 1911-12 I milked eight cows morning and night and walked or rode eleven miles to school. My grandfather had broken his leg in August and this being an easy month to make promises for the winter I volunteered to stay that winter. I was on the track team, took five subjects, and drove Mother Bloor around, horse and buggy, to organize Socialist locals in the vicinity. (Billy Sunday had disgusted me with religion and I had quit the Baptist church. The minister who had baptized me in the old swimming hole had told me never to read the *Appeal to Reason*, the Socialist Weekly. I did so and became secretary of the Socialist Party in the town where my father was Democratic mayor). But this winter was too much for me and next summer I went to Cleveland with a crew selling cornflakes, house to house. Seven summers and later seven years as a salesman and eleven years as a social worker were needed before a study of Tolstoy and *The Catholic Worker* turned me from this life as a parasite to the farm work which I have been doing this past ten years.

It is a good thing that I like to do manual labor on the farm. A life of not paying taxes and of voluntary poverty such as I have set forth myself requires work as a basis. To talk about the dignity of labor, of life on the land, of a vegetarian in his own garden, of refusing to pay taxes, and then to mooch for a living gives a lie to all conversation. The best feeling that I have had during the past year was to look at the two rows of potatoes which I had laboriously hilled just right and planted before a storm broke over the mountains and the driving rain made me seek the refuge of my cabin. It happens that I also like to write articles describing my work and my ideas. (I think better as I type.) But the pleasure in writing an article or a book is outdistanced by my work in the garden and fields.

Working for a wage without enjoying the work that you do puts you in the class of the rich man whom some one has said is just a poor man who has money; you are a poor man who makes money. John Goldstein has written articles in *THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER* on Communities and the reasons for their failure. Nearly all of these colonies have failed because they did not look upon work as a pleasure. In some colonies most of those who came were those who were looking for a life without work; and in others, such as the Llano Colony where I visited for a time, there was a dictator who knew little about having work planned or done efficiently. I have lived in a Single Tax Colony and visited the Doukhobors in Canada. Friends tell me that two groups having a sensible idea of work still exist: the Hutterites in the Dakotas, and the House of David in Brenton Harbor, Mich. A recent issue of the Saturday Evening Post tells of workers owning plywood mills in the Northwest; one mill employing a thousand workers. This exploiting of others, whether it is done in a cooperative or in the Bruderhof Colony in Paraguay where the natives are hired to do

the dirty work, is not working toward the ideal.

During the past ten years I have had nothing to do with those props of capitalism, Rent, Interest and Profit. Reminds me of the verse which I carved on the wall of my solitary cell in Atlanta in 1918. I had read it years before in the *APPEAL to REASON*.

SURPLUS VALUE

The merchant calls it Profit,
And winks the other eye.
The Banker calls it Interest,
And heaves a cheerful sigh.
The landlord calls it Rent
As he tucks it in his bag.
But the honest old burglar;
He simply calls it Swag.

All this leads up to the conclusion that for myself a life as a "wage slave" for farmers gives me a freedom that I could not conceive of in a community where there is no freedom of thought or of action. Are these communities a refuge from the storm of the outside world? If so, as an active One-Man-Revolution I want no part of them. If their purpose is to show the world that communities can exist without the profit motive it seems to me that all they have taught the outside world is that they succumb to the gadgets of the outside world sooner or later. Today I spent 9 hours pulling weeds in our garden and just before dark I planted two dozen each of egg plant and peppers. I eat from this garden every day in the year.

For the past six months I have

irrigated barley. This is really not difficult for the water runs slowly. The only experience new to me in this work is that the sugar and malt in the barley mix with the dew as I walk through it checking the flow of the water, forming a paste which when dry made my overalls a veritable coat of armor. As usual Cindy and several other dogs came up with cold nose and muddy paws, but after I had greeted them they went on their way exploring gopher and skunk.

Coming to the farmhouse at 7:30 a.m. after my night of irrigating recently I saw the big bull loose in the open driveway pawing the earth and snorting. Just then James, my ex-army captain boss, came up and walking gently toward the bull he finally grabbed him by the ring in the nose and led him captive to the pen. This was the real pacifist way of handling the problem. As my grandfather told me: "Don't run from a bull or a billy goat; they have four legs and you have two, and you can't make it."

On the way home that morning (April 8th.) I saw pickers in the strawberry fields. I had always wanted to do this work but have been too busy. They pay 70c an hour now rather than by the basket as very few berries are ripe; in 1942 in Milwaukee I remember eating berries at 10c a quart. I tried raising them one year here but was not successful. They have to be irrigated every four days in

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Maryfarm

By DON McCARTHY

We have a tractor now and John Fillinger has been putting it to good use discing and plowing the fields. The presence of this machine on the farm means a great deal to us, but being poor as we are, we are finding that it creates a headache, too; the headache being caused by the constant need to buy gas and oil to run the tractor. More than once John has had to leave the tractor out in the field where it ran out of gas, and walk into the house, only to be given enough money to buy a few more gallons.

A sizeable house garden has been planted, with large plots devoted to onions, peas and cabbages. Other vegetables will be put in and some of the fields will be planted with corn for feed.

The goats have been taken out of the barn after their long confinement during the winter months. Although a few of the younger goats wound up in the stew, there have been quite a few additions to the family. For some of the kids it was their first taste of the great big outside world and they made most of their strange surroundings, running and prancing and bucking around and about their elders, completely intoxicated by their new freedom. The rabbits have been transferred to their rightful abode, after a winter stint in the chickenless chicken house. A new fence will keep the rapidly multiplying rabbits close to home. It was a shame during the winter months to see so many potential Sunday dinners go hopping down towards the woods to join their wild brothers and sisters. The outdoor pig sty has been repaired, and any day now our one pig will be driven out there to wax fat. She'll leave the barn with our blessing, and may all her offsprings be plump. The other day we received two hundred and fifty rooster chicks from Charlie Patrillo, our neighbor across the way. The chicks are prospering and one can easily picture them grown and in a large, substantial pot, feeding the hungry here or at Chrystie Street. We have been without a cow for some time, and with the cost of milk being what it is, we haven't been having as much fresh milk as we could use. After much

thought on the ways and means with which we might secure a cow, and after many prayers were said concerning the matter, our wish is at last going to be fulfilled, for we received a check for \$350 from a good friend to buy a cow.

It is true that poverty knows nor respects no season. So as always, there are still the works of mercy to be performed. Even among the external trappings of beauty and peace and order, there is ugliness born of hardship and misfortune, strife born of insecurity and mistrust, disorder born of instability and unrest. The mild weather finds many people coming to the house to be fed and sheltered. For the poor, this warm weather lessens the need to be completely sheltered from the elements, but they must still worry about eating. Men are on the road traveling up to the mountains for the opening of the resort season, which will mean a chance of employment for some of them. Many men come to us weak or ill, requiring long days of rest and sunshine to get them on their feet. Others come and stay for a few days or weeks and do what they can in the way of work. There is always something that needs doing, and John, Joe Cotter and the other more or less permanent can't do it all. At times there are plenty of men about, but they are not always handy, even if willing, and at best, have all they can do to keep from being trampled by the others in the kitchen. Joe Carley, our cook, is a brave and patient man.

On Easter Sunday, Tommy Hughes and Charlotte Patrillo, our neighbor's youngster, received their First Holy Communion in our chapel here at Maryfarm. Fr. Fahey celebrated the Mass, which was sung by those attending. The children looked splendid and presented a striking contrast there among the old and the tired and the defeated. The chapel was fairly in anticipation of the glorious day of Resurrection. Barney did a good job in cleaning and waxing the chapel. A friend sent over two potted lily plants for the altar. John Stanley, a fine young teacher from Villanova, and I served the Mass. During the day we had many visitors and all in all, it was a blessed, beautiful day.

Chrystie Street

(Continued from page 3)

of our haphazard fashion of operation that it is a miracle of God that we accomplish the little that we do.

Along with our Friday night talks we have begun a series of lectures on Tuesday nights. The Tuesdays are devoted to a study of the first part of the Summa. The hour lecture is prepared and delivered by a very competent layman friend of ours. When we first announced the series we did not expect any more than ten people to attend. However, we were surprised to see that we have at least twenty-five putting in an appearance each of the past three sessions.

We are tremendously proud to present another drawing of Fritz Eichenberg in this issue of the Catholic Worker. Since his first works appeared in the Catholic Worker we have received numerous complements on his artistic ability. A number of readers have requested glossy paper reprints of his works that have appeared in the past issues. We have been unable to comply with these orders but hope to get around to them in the near future. To all those who have written in please remind us again at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Two former members of our group visited us over the Easter Holiday. Gerry Griffin came up from Philadelphia where he is in training as a registered nurse in a mental hospital. Eileen McCarthy flew up from Puerto Rico where she is engaged as an instructor in a University. Both people appear well and contented with their present occupations.

A friend who has been employed by the government in Washington for a goodly number of years paid his first visit to us last week. He has been reading our paper for sometime now and has dropped us a line now and then.

His chief interest happens to be the cooperative movement, especially the consumer cooperatives. Consequently we spoke of cooperatives as the way out of the economic mess that the world finds itself in. This man pointed out how the consumer cooperative movement was the best method of carrying out the Pope's encyclical on the reconstruction of the social economic order.

Our visitor had a genuine enthusiasm for the cooperatives. It reminded me of the pre-war days around the C.W. when there was a real excitement over the cooperative movement. I guess it was due mainly to the fact that it was the first time that any of us learned that there was an answer to the either or school—Capitalism or Communism.

Some months ago I spoke at a college in Wash., D.C. When I offered cooperatives as the way out of capitalism or communism, the students acted as though I were talking about three dimensional chess. Almost to a man they were ignorant of the cooperative movement and further indicated that they were not interested in the subject.

We had a letter from a woman reader the other morning asking us to comment on the group of individuals in Brooklyn and the Bronx who had badgered certain shop owners, demanding that they observe Good Friday by closing their places of business. They insisted that the shops be closed from noon till three o'clock in observance of the death of Christ and that notices be placed in the windows to that effect.

We had read about the incident in the newspapers and we were as distraught over the episode as any thinking person would be. However we were cheered no end by our chancery office's statement to the press. The chancery stated that they deplored such an action on the part of the Catholics involved

and that they would have never authorized any Catholic to participate in that demonstration.

It occurred to me that the press would render a good service to the public at large if when they are writing up such incidents they would print the exact number of people involved in these offensive affairs. Also if they were authorized to act in the name of the Catholic Church or whatever group they belong to. You might have twenty people engaged in such activity and millions of others suffer the black eye.

My request isn't any more than we have constantly asked for other minority groups such as the Colored or the Puerto Ricans. There is no valid reason for stating that a certain enemy of society is a Colored person, Puerto Rican, Jew or Catholic.

I am midway into the book on St. Benedict Joseph Labre by Agnes De La Gorce. It is reviewed in this issue of the C.W. by T. Campbell. I have found this book fascinating and urge our readers to be sure and place it on your must list. It is on the top drawer level of St. Catherine of Sienna by Alice Curtayne and Damien the Leper by John Farrow, likewise St. Margaret of Cortona by Francois Mauriac. A strong quotation from the book follows: "The chosen soul, when he finds a poor man in the street, filthy, lacerated, wan, stinking and covered in vermin, brings him into his house, sets him near the fire, washes him and puts him to rights; a wordly soul would find this astounding. Whence is the difference? The chosen soul knows the hidden meaning of poverty."

A middle-aged woman came into the house the other day. She asked if she couldn't dine with us two or three days out of the week. She said that she is able to pay for her hotel room along the Bowery and the remaining meals throughout the week. She is not in good health, she states, but she is able to work three days a week. The work is house-cleaning and she receives seventy-five cents an hour. The work only lasts four hours a day.

We come across many women and men too in this tiny income group. They generally have a sufficient income so that it is over the quota for them to get on relief or into some charitable institution and still it is too small to provide them with the barest necessities. We cannot absorb them into our household since it won't result merely in a house divided between the haves and the have-nots but it will be a house smashed to bits with the discontent that will ensue.

All of this definitely points up the dire need for extremely reasonable boarding houses if a great number of the poor are going to keep body and soul together. We pray that some groups will be properly inspired to initiate a few.

About four years ago a young man came up from Puerto Rico. At the time he was unable to find work and lived with us for awhile on Mott street. He finally found a job and we didn't see him for sometime. Yesterday he came in to pay a visit with his three-year-old daughter. All seems well with him now since he has a fine wife and two lovely children living in a nice apartment in Brooklyn. This we must remember when people ask us if we ever have any tangible results with those we are supposed to be helping, despite the fact that we consider the question absurd.

THE JUST MEANS

On April 18 the United Press reported from Washington that Defense Secretary Lovett "told the American Society of Newspaper Editors today the United States is developing new weapons 'so destructive' that their use in war might destroy 'civilization as we know it.'"

'SHAPE UP'

(Continued from page 3)

tegral to our system, for instance, depressions or "slack seasons," then the New York longshoreman can be spoken of as being a man without a job. It is a simple fact that he is "out of a job" most of his life.

He starts his day early. He begins his work—if he is fortunate—at eight o'clock in the morning, sometimes seven. But his real work is finished before the starting hour. His real work, the most difficult part of his work, is getting work.

For if he goes to work in the morning, it means that he was successful in the "shape up." Luckier is the better word. The "shape up" is the fact which might suggest the New Orleans "slave block." And it is hard to see how such an image is in any way fanciful. He stands in a huge semi-circle of men, generally with a look of tense expectancy, as a company boss selects with complete arbitrariness those who will be allowed to work for the day. There are nearly always too many men on hand for the work to be done—double the amount is not unusual—and that fact insures that the jubilation of expression on the faces of those selected for the day is not the complete emotional note of the "shape up." New York longshoremen considered as a class are easygoing (which is not incompatible with their splendid energy at work), but it is difficult to avoid the word "morose" in any effort to describe those men who report in vain to the New York docks every morning.

It is a truth of life that there can be no real "security." Nevertheless, we are all convinced—rightly or wrongly—that one of the essentials of human happiness is the reduction of the tyranny of uncertainty. The measurement of any man must be proportionate to our understanding of what he regards that reduction should properly be. And on the question of "security" no man is so wretched as the New York longshoreman. Those who are used to the relative peace of mind which comes from the knowledge that the "job," bad as it might be, is there, not at the mercy of the most vagrant dispositions from day to day, cannot quite understand the frame of mind induced in the New York longshoreman facing the daily "shape up." (And tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.)

It is said that Christianity struck one of the most damaging blows to slavery by its insistence upon the dignity of labor. Common labor is sacramentalized under Christianity, and that fact makes it difficult for the Christian to ever set any labor in such a context which effaces its essentially sanctifying aspect. And this most certainly suggests that a man is encouraged to regard his labor with as much affection as he can reasonably be expected to hold for something which gets him out of bed nearly every morning of his life, even if it does lead to salvation. The New York longshoreman measured by such an inference cannot be said to regard his labor as being very spiritualizing. He sees it as being not much more than an evil he would gladly flee circumstances permitting. "The hireling fleeth because he is a hireling."

It is not due to the nature of his work. Anyone who has seen and worked with the longshoreman of the New York waterfront would find it difficult to say that they were men who had any distaste for their labor other than the indisposition to exertion common to mankind. Emerging from the day on the pier, they present an agreeable sight with their strides of graceful lassitude which follow a day of hard work done with the hands. But there is tomorrow. And that is the reason why a longshoreman will tell a new man, particularly if he is young, that "this is a hell of a way to earn a living."

And in spite of the good pay it can sometimes be, and the good work which it is, it is a hell of a way to earn a living.

Poverty and Precarity

(Continued from page 2)

early morning until late at night. No it is not simple, this business of poverty.

"True poverty is rare," a saintly priest writes to us from Martinique. "Nowadays communities are good, I am sure, but they are mistaken about poverty. They accept, admit, on principle, poverty, but everything must be good and strong, buildings must be fireproof, Precarity is rejected everywhere, and precarity is an essential element of poverty. That has been forgotten. Here we want precarity in everything except the church. These last days our refectory was near collapsing."

We have put several supplementary poles and thus it will last, maybe two or three years more. Some day it will fall on our heads and that will be funny. Precarity enables us to help very much the poor. When a community is always building, and enlarging, and embellishing, which is good in itself, there is nothing left over for the poor. We have no right to do so as long as there are slums and breadlines somewhere."

Over and over again in the history of the Church the saints have emphasized poverty. Every community, which has been started, has begun in poverty and in incredible hardships and with the joyful acceptance on the part of this hardship by the rank and file priest and brother and monk and nun who gave their youth and energy to good works. And the result has always been that the Orders thrived, the foundations grew, property was extended till holdings and buildings were accumulated and although there was still individual poverty, there was corporate wealth. It is hard to keep poor.

One way to keep poor of course is not to accept money which is the result of defrauding the poor. Here is a story of St. Ignatius of Sardinia, a Capuchin just canonized last October. Ignatius used to go out from his monastery with a sack to beg from the people of the town but he would never go to a merchant who had built up his fortune by defrauding the poor. Franchino, the rich man, fumed every time he passed his door, at being so neglected, though this perhaps seems even more unbeliev-

able than the climax of the story. His concern, however, was not the loss of the opportunity to give an alms, but the fear of public opinion. He complained at the friary, whereupon the Father Guardian ordered St. Ignatius to beg from the merchant the next time he went out.

"Very well," said Ignatius obediently. "If you wish it, Father, I will go, but I would not have the Capuchins dine on the blood of the poor."

The merchant received Ignatius with great flattery and gave him generous alms, asking him to come again in the future. But hardly had Ignatius left the house with his sack on his shoulder than drops of blood began oozing from the sack. They trickled down on Franchino's doorstep and down through the street to the monastery. Everywhere Ignatius went a trickle of blood followed him. When he arrived at the friary he laid the sack at the Father Guardian's feet. "What is this?" gasped the Guardian. "This," St. Ignatius said, "is the blood of the poor."

This story was contained in the last column written by a great Catholic layman, a worker for social justice, F. P. Kenkel, editor of the Central Verein in St. Louis, and always a friend of Peter Maurin, founder of The Catholic Worker.

Mr. Kenkel's last comment was, that the universal crisis in the world today was because of love of money. "The present Egyptian crisis is but one scene in the great oriental drama that has been unfolding for the past years," he wrote. "The Far East and the Near East" (and he might have said all Africa also), "together constitute a great sack from which blood is oozing. The flow will not stop as long as our interests in those people are dominated largely by financial and economic considerations."

"Voluntary poverty," Peter Maurin would say, "is the answer. Through voluntary poverty we will have the means to help our brother. Through voluntary poverty others will be induced to help his brothers. We cannot see our brother in need without stripping ourselves. It is the only way we have of showing our love."

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Life at Hard Labor

(Continued from page 5)

the season and weeds pulled from them the year around.

If there is a big head of water on or if the crop is high enough to impede the water the regular cement port will not allow enough water to go through so a low place in left in the bank where extra water is let through. This is called a "helper."

Digging a ditch for a neighbor recently I heard bottles smash on the highway. Two teen-agers had found them, along the side of the road and were smashing them in the middle of the highway. "That's not a damn bit smart", I shouted at them. They could not see me but looked around and hastened onward. This lack of responsibility belongs not only to the youth, for while irrigating one night I saw a big car stop on the highway and a man take out sacks of bottles and junk and throw them along the side of the road. This was not a slum dweller who had no place to put his garbage, but a big city bourgeois who seemed to want to save the expense of paying a garbage man to haul his refuse away. A lady wrote a letter to the local paper about a dead cat on the street and no one came to remove it. A week later she wrote again and no one had paid any attention to it. In an anarchist society each one would be responsible and would not have to write letters to papers or to call the cops to have something done. They would do it themselves.

Putting the Worst Foot Forward

In my years as a salesman I never found a boss who would allow me to be honest in representing an article. I always used my own method despite the rules. If the article had one apparent weakness I would admit this at the start and then stress the good points. Likewise in selling ideas I admit at the start that myself and those like me are not going to win—all the more reason to keep on trying. When I first meet a priest I tell him I am not a Catholic and how terrible his church is; that the other churches would be just as bad if they knew how. Then I stress the CW, Sermon on the Mount and Gandhi. I can't say anything worse so from then on I am saying something better. If I should hem-haw and dissemble I would not get the attention of the person to whom I am talking. If they get scared away by my frankness they are a weak porridge anyway who would not stand much of the truth.

Selling CW's

"Is that the Communist paper that uses the name Catholic that they tell of on the radio?" asked four people one Sunday morning after the local red-baiter had denounced the CW. I replied that it was not a Communist paper, but was the best Catholic paper in the world and if they wanted to know more about it to ask the priest. All of them bought the paper.

"Is that the good Catholic paper that is sold on the streets?" asked a lady as I was shouting "CATHOLIC WORKER, Catholic Peace paper, one cent. Catholic labor paper, a penny" in front of the bus station. I replied that it must be for it was the only Catholic paper sold on the streets. "I'm not a Catholic", the lady said, "I belong to the Grey Ladies and we visit hospitals. I have heard patients ask for it. I want ten."

One professional man invariably hands me a nickel or a dime for the CW but won't take a copy. "Makes me mad to read it. It is all true but what can I do about it?", he says. For a year or more a certain elderly lady has pointed to me and told all who would listen that I was a Communist and the CW was a Communist paper. I paid no attention to her. One day when I was speaking to a Catholic friend who for some esoteric reason won't touch a copy of the CW because it opposes Franco, but who stops and talks to me cordially, this woman comes up and says that I am a Communist and the CW is a Communist paper. The friend answers: I have my own bone to pick with the CW but I have formerly read it for years and I know Henracy from his articles for ten years and I am telling you that neither he nor the paper is Communist, ask the priest and he will tell you that I am right." The red-baiter went away mumbling, "Communist, Communist."

At another time a member of the air force was going to Korea in a few days. He was visiting here, coming from New York City. He asked what kind of a paper I had; that he had never heard of it. I told him that it had been published in his own town for 18 years. The name Worker sounded to him like Communist he said and he wanted to know if he could ask the priest who was standing nearby about it. I told him to go ahead. He did so, and the priest, who was neither pacifist or anarchist, answered, "if it's good enough for me it's good enough for you," showing him the CW in his hand. I spoke to the man for half an hour and gave him several old copies. On the street corner a soldier with half a dozen service bars on his uniform smiled and said that was the kind of paper that was needed; a peace paper, and bought one. Another time a sewer worker from Seattle who said he was a Mormon and who read the CW in the library there, and who was also a wob, bought a copy.

The Hopi

Recently Thomas the Hopi CO, and his wife and children were here. The Hopi silversmith met with us at Rik's one evening. Thomas has a college education and held the best job an Indian can hold at the agency in Keams Canyon. He quit this and went to jail. His wife was raised a Mennonite

Max Picard

(Continued from page 5)

single reality, but only possibility: of cataclysmic wars, of irrational economic systems, of faith and simultaneously of the lack of faith.

The intuition has been stated before. Kierkegaard wrote of just such a process in his *Sickness Unto Death*. Ortega y Gasset described it in the *Revolt of the Masses*. But Picard applies the notion with a thoroughness, a singleness, that none of his predecessors could master. The result is a world completely defined in terms of flight, possibility, defined not only in its creatures but in its language and economics and marriage as well.

Some of the analyses are breathtaking in their brilliance. Thus the fact that the act of faith for the aware man is ever breaking up possibility, and must be recreated and recreated; with Picard's consoling thought that God will give faith, finally, to such a man.

And yet the book must be taken—as all prophetic work—with qualification. There are things which are not the flight. There is hope, and the possibility of new syntheses. In the striking metaphor of Martin Buber: Paradise took place in a single day, and out-cast, Adam and Eve found the night and said, "It shall never be light again"—but there came the morning. We must keep such metaphors in mind—as well as those which speak of flight. For we are, as Catholics (Picard had not yet been baptized when he wrote the flight in 1934) pessimistic. Indeed the most pessimistic of optimists.

In his introduction, Marcel rightly sees Picard as a visionary, and rightly sees *The Flight From God* as one more manifestation of the flight which it describes. Yet he finds—again rightly—a center in this book, a point free from vertigo, which is a redirection of the flight. Taken with these qualifications, Picard's book is one that modern man must ponder well; in it, he will find himself.

and lived in town as a nurse. Now they look forward to moving to their "summer house" near Moencopi where they will raise corn, melons and fruit. They have finished with the ways of the white man. We discussed Gov. Pyle's schemes for getting the Indians to be like white men. In conversation with newspaper men and those who formerly worked with him on the radio I get the impression that he is primarily an actor who sincerely believes that there is no conflict between his religious phrases and attitude and his support of the status quo. His talents are a grade above the banjo playing vote chaser. He has a pleasing voice and gives the impression of a sincere and gracious personality. This could all be true and yet he could never have an original thought or never once take a courageous stand against a system of society which degrades both whites and Indians. Did not McKinley make the best stooge that Mark Hanna could desire? McKinley prayed to God and God told him to bring the Bible to the poor Cubans, so we had a war. He did not know there was a sugar trust or a venal Hearst and Pulitzer cooking up a war. Such "innocents" make the best stooges.

Thomas brought along a copy of the Jan. CRISIS which had an article on the Hopi by our mutual friend George Yamada. Gov. Pyle deplores the fact that 83% of the land in Arizona is owned by the Federal Government. What he does not deplore is that too much of this land is rented out for practically nothing to his wealthy cattle-men backers. The Hopi have only a fourth of the land they had before the Indian Bureau moved the Navajo in on them. The Navajo were moved in because the cattle-men needed more land. There is plenty of land but the wrong people have it. Meanwhile the Hopi who are still traditionalists and who have not fallen for the white man's gadgets live close to Mother Earth, having faith in nature and in God, the Hopi name of which is Massau'u.

'The Leisure Society'

(Continued from page 3)

has to be translated from the French.

But he is a pessimist and lazy. If you tell him that the only real answer to the factory system, in fact the only comprehensive answer to the complex illnesses of modern life, is a return to an agrarian economy, he smiles and says that such a solution is "romantic" or "Medieval". (Oddly enough, the word "Medieval" is a term of opprobrium for him, which seems like enough evidence to show that his arguments cannot be expected to derive much support from history.) He does not like to admit that modern Christians are simply too effete to avail themselves of the only viable and coherent position in a world which seems to be threatening them with near extinction. Since he is a modern, consequently no ergophile, and seems to resent the fact that a Christian solution could be so apparent on paper and so stupendously difficult in the concrete (which is the very crux of the "problem of Christianity") he tries to show that the problem of industrialism, if he can be spoken of as considering it to be problematical, must find its solution in its own terms. And he becomes a member of that eccentric group who long for the "leisure society."

For since he realizes that the machine is destructive of its tender, though irrationally holding that it is good for the rest of the race, he argues that less and less time in



the factory is the answer—though holding tenaciously to the idea that some irreducible time must be spent in the factory to secure the wherewithal for life. Thus, he would lead the obtuse Christian to believe that we would have the best of all possible worlds; one in which we shall perform a little labor in the morning, presumably setting the machines for the day, and spending the rest of the time in "leisure", a condition which is suggested to us as the indispensable ingredient of true culture.

Of course this is the sheerest nonsense. It is a complete misunderstanding of the machine and the order which it necessarily creates. There is no evidence on hand to show that the machine is some sort of cornucopia from which flows all the material goods of life (and plenty to boot) with an expenditure of the minimum of human exertions. The pull is really all in the other direction. Men are working as hard as they ever did. And if you are willing to put under the heading "hard" the fact that the critical condition of unrest and dissatisfaction of the average man is in the greatest part due to the nature of the work he performs, there seems to be little reason to think that the curse of industrialism contains within itself the seeds for a happy mankind.

And it is laughable for us to think that any kind of culture be-

fitting men is coming out of a machine society—even if it is a modified one. Culture, the best definition of which is an "incarnated religion," is the product, when it is a good one, of free men possessed with the ability to think. And this is just what machine society men cannot do. They are not free and they cannot think. The unparalleled idiocy of things like the television, the movies, art with a capital A, and all the rest of the trivia which bemuses the stunned intellects of modern life, are nothing but a reflection of the robot-like work we must perform in an industrial society.

"Culture is the product of work." Gill, a man who could think, and one of the few really free men who ever lived in this weird century, recognized that if the modern Christian world was not to "return to the catacombs," the only thing to do was to change the labor of men from the hideous caricature which it is to something approaching a dignity and a freedom we so vehemently protest is ours. And this has not happened, and we are going under.

To think that culture is the product of "leisure" is nothing very startling. It is held by practically all of those who profess to find "the good life" in the concert halls and in the latest novel. And it is a silly and shallow idea. It is to fall into the emasculated and tragically comic error of believing that man only lives in his spare time—his "leisure" time away from work. And, of course, such a fallacy finds fertile ground in the minds of moderns who are prepared by the sterility and the monotony of their labor to believe that life can only be lived away from such a heartless regimen of work. It is nothing but escapism. We hate our labors and we are prone to think that living can only be done away from the job. Thus "leisure" assumes a distorted value in our lives.

Leisure, psychologically speaking, is nothing but the extension of the rhythm of our work. Proper labor, or that which is suitable to a man, makes for proper leisure. And the two combined and integrated make for proper culture. There is no other explanation of "culture" without attempting a false compartmentalization of life. Since our labors are dull and stupid, inhibiting of our manhood, it is silly to believe that our "leisure" is going to be anything otherwise. Phenomenons like jazz, Life magazine, and mass athletic spectacles, are an apt reflection of our work.

And if we expect that unlimited leisure is to bring us to some sort of Utopia, as the "leisure society" advocate would have us believe, is to fall into a worse error. Leisure societies have existed. Some exist amongst us today. Thorstein Veblen made a study of them. And if it is wrong to believe that the anchorites dwelling in the desert of Park Avenue are what the proponents of the "leisure society" are talking about, then it must be forgiven this writer for no one will inform him otherwise. The word "contemplation" is sometimes used in connection with "leisure." Another silly thought. Asceticism, which is an idea and a word which must eventually arise in any discussion of contemplation, has as its root meaning "work." It is the most difficult work of all. Consequently not for everyone. The normal means of sanctification . . . and that must involve some contemplation . . . as the church has always insisted, is work. Work proper to man's nature. But our labor can be sanctifying only to the hero, the saint. Only the man who can arise above the attack upon his manhood which is our labor can be expected to derive anything like good from it. The most that we can get . . . we who are not saints . . . is the husks of life which our civilization feeds upon. And a wish for something as bad as a "leisure society."

Steel and the Right to Strike

(Continued from page 3)

1951, wages had increased only 64 percent.

Taft-Hartley

Conservatives argued for the use of the Taft-Hartley law which could compel a waiting period of over two months before the strike could take place. But Truman, in addition to his public hostility to the Taft-Hartley law, had to contend with the fact that the steelworkers had already voluntarily restrained themselves for longer than the legal period.

At the same time, the Wage Stabilization Board had sided with labor, even recommending the union shop. But management held out for a price increase which would (according to their figures) completely absorb the effects of the wage increase. As an inflationary measure, it would also absorb the worker's gains and imperil those of all workingmen in the United States.

In the seizure discussion, Truman indicated that steel profits had risen from a 1947-49 average of a little more than eleven dollars a ton to the present level of \$19.50 a ton.

Just Strike

In short, the steel-worker's strike threat was about as justified as any conceivable.

But Truman's answer to the impasse, although representing a temporary victory for the steelworkers, is a precedent of great danger to the American labor movement.

It means that a future President (say Taft or Eisenhower) could end a labor dispute by seizing an industry in the name of the public welfare, and force the workers to the factory with government power. It means that a strike could become a crime.

Even now, the profits made during the period of seizure go to the shareholders of the steel companies. In other words, we have a precedent which justifies the coercive operation of an industry for the benefit of private capital.

The railroad workers have learned this lesson well. The railroads were seized in August, 1950, to break a strike. They are still seized and the men are still working for the benefit of railroads under the coercion of the government, and their demands have not been met. James P. Shields, grand chief of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, has called the process "involuntary servitude."

Social Ownership

Conservatives have been raising the spectre of socialism in this dispute by referring to government by executive order as "nationalization."

In so much as socialists have called for bureaucratic ownership, the charge has some merit. But, fortunately, those who believe in social ownership have come to see that it is meaningless (or dangerous, as in this case of national ownership by executive order) to advocate an ownership that is not communal. In Germany, co-determination provides for worker ownership and representation. In England, the Labor Party (especially the Co-Operative Party wing of the Labor Party) is in the midst of agitation for co-ops and worker control. Social ownership that merely transfers the power from the

capitalist to a bureaucracy does not promise justice to the worker, but executive whim. (And there is a question, as I write, of whether the government will raise the wages during the seizure period.)

However, it is also obvious that the oppression of the worker in an industry of such crucial importance as steel must be stopped. It cannot be stopped at the cost of the right to strike. And if it is to be stopped by social ownership, this ownership must be grounded on community, on the actual, participating ownership of the worker in the factory and the consumer who is to be affected by industrial decision.

Right to Strike

But above all, in this May of 1952, the American unionists face a serious problem. The government's armaments policy bodes to limit, or destroy, the right to strike; or to call it a crime. The government's action in seizing the industry is a precedent for coercive work in favor of private capital.

The American labor movement must face this issue squarely. It must not be lulled by the seemingly pro-labor character of the seizure. It must rethink its position on armament (as the workers of Europe and England are doing); it must decide on its long-term goals, on the necessity of communal ownership.

But chiefly, American labor must fight every attempt to limit its right to strike—whether by capitalist or by a "pro-labor" President.

The Encyclicals

(Continued from page 3)

which guarantees the inviolability of the basic unit of society.

This teaching is, in its depth, personalist. It is significant that almost all the theoretical statements of Leo and Pius are described in terms of possession of the land, of soil, where the most intimate connection between a man and his work is visible. This teaching becomes positive even in the law: "The law, therefore, should favor ownership, and its policy should be to induce as many people as possible to become owners." (RN,35).

Liberalism

All well and good. But many Catholics, asserting acceptance of these principles, go on to defend capitalism on the ground that what was condemned was "unbridled" capitalism, "laissez-faire" or the like.

The problem has become semantic—each side has a different definition of capitalism. Let us go beyond the verbal dispute and try to find out what the Encyclicals actually teach regarding property and society.

In Rerum Novarum, the law of supply and demand as applied to human beings is condemned.

This means that even if an employer could, because of the conditions of the market, hire a worker at a sub-standard wage, he cannot. For work is not only personal, but necessary. And the contract between the worker and the employer is not free. It is based on the moral

obligation of the employer to pay a just living wage. (RN,34).

But more than this. The notion that "free competition" is the best way for the organization of the economy is also condemned. It "cannot be the ruling principle of the economic world." (QA,88).

In other words, the basic personal characteristic of work is operative in industry as well as in the necessity for each man to have private property.

In other words, regardless of what verbal formula one uses to describe our present society in the United States, the human character of the worker is paramount in every situation, and the personal character of work. This applies to the sharecropper in the South, and the textile worker in New England, and the steel-worker in Pittsburgh. This applies, but it has not been applied.

Moreover (and this is important right now as a series of just strikes are going on): all profits do not go to the shareholder, with a basic minimum to the worker (QA,54); "one class is forbidden to exclude the other from a share in the profits." (QA,56).

Freedom

Finally, the experimental freedom necessary to the realization of these values must be emphasized.

Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno contain truths of different orders—and of varying authority. In the area of principle, of insistence on the personal character of property, on human solidarity, there is absolute statement which we all should adhere to faithfully.

But when Pius XI tells of an actually existing corporate order (with his doubts concerning it), or when Leo XIII talks of Catholic unions in a way which Pius later modified, we are faced with em-



pirical cases, and they must be tested and tried in an empirical way. It would be foolish to make of this profound teaching a rigid limitation on thought.

Thus, when Pius XI speaks of worker ownership and profit sharing, he does so with this modality: "In the present state of human society, we deem it advisable..." And we, too, in following the spirit of the Encyclicals must take cognizance of the present state of society, and of the advisable, and of the many ways in which these principles may be brought to men.

It is only with experimental freedom that our fidelity to the principles of the Church on the social order can be made fruitful.

But the other truths, they are truths of principle, and we must return to them and look at our society and begin to implement them now, some through unions and the labor movement, some through communities, yet everyone maintaining charity toward every attempt.

For these great truths remain and are still tragically unfulfilled in our society:

That the private property which the Church defends is the property of persons, and grows out of their relations as persons, as heads of family, to material creation;

That this private property is the right of all, not of the privileged minority while the majority rents and buys on time;

That this private property and its relations grows into the solidarity of humanity, and that the land is ours only that we may fulfill our responsibilities to others.

That the teaching of the Church on property is based on man's spirit over matter and man's brotherhood, upon man as a person, and that we have achieved too little of this ideal, and that we must rededicate ourselves to its fulfillment.

Letters of Appeal

SOUTH AFRICA

Kolbe House,
Grotto Road,
Rondebosch,
Cape Town, South Africa.

Dear Miss Day:

Although I am aware that there have been many heavy calls on American charity on behalf of missions and education both at home and abroad, I am convinced that American Catholics will not turn a deaf ear to an appeal for one more worthy work for the cause of Christ.

Kolbe House is the hostel for Catholics attending the University of Cape Town. Father Brian Gavin, S.J., started it in 1935; I took over in 1948. With so little money in hand only running repairs could be done to this already very old house. . . . We have to use the parlor and dining room as extra sleeping quarters, but our first need is a Chapel, to be the central point of all our work. At present we use the converted side verandah as a Chapel.

Well may you ask why I appeal to America for help. South Africa is predominantly Calvinistic. We number only 32,000 Catholics, white and black, in the Archdiocese of Cape Town out of a population of 700,000. . . . Our Catholics are poor and our students are also poor, yet the future of our Faith is largely in their hands.

I have appealed for money here in South Africa. Receiving but a small portion of what is needed I am turning now to that miraculous charity of American Catholics.

Please assist us, pray for the work and make our needed known to your friends. However small your donation, please send it as soon as you can. It will be most welcome. "He give twice who gives quickly." You will be remembered daily at Holy Mass and in the prayers of the students. May God bless and reward you.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
KEVIN C. LENAGHAN, S.J.

ENGLAND

Bromdon, Bridgnorth,
Salop.

Dear Friend:

During the course of the past two years—that is since the children from the Continent came to live with us at Cleeton Court—a deficit has been steadily accumulating on the War Orphans Fund. That deficit has now reached the formidable total of £1,200.

Many of you have consistently helped us throughout the time the children have been with us and we are very grateful to you for this, but in spite of our keeping costs down to a minimum, the income for this Fund has always fallen well below our requirements.

Will you help us in this work? It is so important that these children, who have suffered so much through no fault of their own, should be given the opportunity to fill their proper place in life,

and you can share in helping them to do so. If you are not able to give a substantial sum towards this work, will you consider whether you can give small regular subscriptions. A sufficient number of such small subscriptions would be a very big help or, even if you cannot manage that, will you please consider what help you can give, however small.

Yours sincerely,
The Society of Brothers.

SPANISH REFUGEES

Dear Readers of the Catholic Worker:

This is an appeal for your help in righting an injustice.

There are today about 120,000 refugees from the Spanish Civil War still living in France. Of these about 2,500 are destitute—crippled, sick, or aged. I have just read a call for help for these 2,500 from the Liga de Mutilados de la Guerra de Espana, in Paris. The appeal was addressed to the Spanish emigration only, for the Spanish refugees have lost hope that others are still interested in their fate.

Since 1949 the situation of these "forgotten people," who have been in exile 13 years, has steadily worsened. Until recently the Spanish refugees were cared for by the International Refugee Organization (IRO). But the IRO has gone out of existence, and the 2,500 neediest Spaniards—500 are sixty years old or more, 750 are tubercular, 650 are chronically ill, 240 lost arms or legs in the Civil War, 74 are blind, and 100 women alone with children—get only from \$5 to \$25 a month from French and Spanish charitable agencies. This is nowhere near enough, and they live in misery, bitterly remembering they were the first to put up a fight against totalitarianism and now the last to be remembered.

Here are a few typical cases: Manuel A. is blind, all alone with no family; no one visits him or sends him gifts in the hospital. He lives miserably, and feels he is completely forgotten. . . . Jose A. is a teacher, ill and unable to work, who is 64 and lives with his wife, of the same age. . . . Valentin F. was an admiral in the Republican navy; he is 68 and lives in dire poverty with his sick wife. . . . Jos G. lost both legs in the war; his wife is ill, and they have two small children. . . . Mme. V. Elvira G. is 67, blind, and recently lost her husband.

Will you help by "adopting" one of these families? I have the names and addresses of some thirty, and can get many more. If you want to help a family regularly, I will send you a name and you can send them either your own parcels of food and old clothing, or CARE packages (which cost \$6.95 and \$10). If you cannot help regularly, but wish to send a contribution, please make your check out to CARE and send it to me. I will see that a package goes to one of these families in your name.

Nancy Macdonald,
"Politics"-Packages-Aboard
117 East 10th St.,
New York 3, N. Y.

BOOKS FOR SALE AT THE CATHOLIC WORKER

223 Chrystie Street, New York 2, N. Y.

The Long Loneliness by Dorothy Day
Published by Harper & Bros. \$3.50

Easy Essays by Peter Maurin
Published by Sheed & Ward \$1.00

Applied Christianity by Father John J. Hugo
Published by the Catholic Worker \$1.00

On Pilgrimage by Dorothy Day
Published by the Catholic Worker \$1.00

The Gospel of Peace by Father John J. Hugo
Published by the Catholic Worker \$1.00

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