

perfect philosophy of life. And when she succeeds in this attempt, then will she have attained that ideal of national greatness and glory about which the present generation of her people are but dreaming, for the realization of which they will be all willing to die. The good angel of destiny seems to be standing with a smile upon her face and pointing to the road the New Japan is to take.

TOKIWO YOKOI.

TOKYO, JAPAN.

---

### THE SOCIAL QUESTION IN THE CATHOLIC CONGRESSES.

THE reports of the Congresses upon social questions in the Roman Catholic Church, together with the literature which these gatherings directly inspire, already furnish illustrations of inestimable value as to the part that organized religion is likely to play among the industrial and economic forces. It is the purpose of this article not to describe the various local, national, and international Congresses upon the social question, but rather to show the content and development of thought and discussion upon economic and industrial issues which the Church is raising. As early as 1862, Dr. Döllinger advised the Church to take social questions into more definite consideration. A further step was taken in 1869 by Bishop von Ketteler in recommending the clergy to study political economy as a part of their training for priestly duties. This counsel received the sanction of the assembled Bishops at their conference in that year. After the war of 1870-71, several teachers introduced economic and social science studies into their seminary courses. Though these subjects had been touched at two previous Congresses, it is after this date that the real interest begins. It is not confined to one country, but shows itself in Austria, Germany, France, and Belgium. Two young officers returned to France from German prisons \* resolved to rouse the religious leaders

---

\* The Count de Mun and his friend, La Tour du Pin Chambly.

to some sense of the importance of openly recognizing social problems as a responsibility which the Church could no longer ignore. In the earlier Congresses, a single address appears during the three days' session. This allotment of time gradually increases until other questions are so crowded out that special sessions are decided upon at which the social problem alone is discussed. In the north of France, a single yearly gathering of three days has been found too scant, and thus two meetings are held in the year.

The subject-matter at these Congresses differs in some degree in different countries. It is of great significance that both theory and practical proposals are profoundly modified by the stage of industrial development. English Catholics would not dream of parliamentary agitation in favor of compulsory guilds for the regulation of industry such as has been secured by the Catholics of Austria. Where industry is most highly developed and open to the widest competition,—a competition that shows how vast and yet how sensitive is the interdependence of trade interests,—there we find invariably that the traditional Catholic remedy of a restored type of guild regulation is least valued.

The same variations in theory and practice are introduced by the different political ideals that prevail. The kind of alliance which the brilliant Ultramontane, Decurtins, forms with the Swiss radical democracy is possible because it is in Switzerland. Whether the government is in Protestant or Catholic hands naturally modifies the Catholic doctrine of State interference. The proposals for land reform are strongly colored, if, as in Austria, the Jewish question (everywhere at bottom not a religious but an economic question) is bitterly rife.

The form which a militant Socialism takes (as in France, Germany, Belgium) acts at once upon the whole policy of the Church. The largeness and elasticity of the Catholic view may be seen by comparing the discussion and legislative activity in Austria with the social activity which has express Papal sanction in Switzerland and France. This is in keeping with the doctrine of time, place, and circumstance as

determining factors, which is laid down in the Encyclical on Labor.

Beneath these differences there are others common to all programmes,—arbitration and conciliation, housing of the poor, benefit associations, co-operation and profit-sharing, various schemes of mutual insurance, factory and even tenement-house inspection, loan funds, credit associations, and every form of saving institution to create and strengthen the thrift habit. These familiar reforms are doing service in scores of places, and are everywhere pressed for further development. Agencies are also established for furnishing the freest information to employers who may wish to adopt one or other of these remedies. It is noticeable that conservatives at the Congresses invariably recommend changes through these commonplace reforms. Everywhere something like a revolt of opinion appears, more frequently among the younger clergy, against the sufficiency of these routine proposals. The alternative succor is invariably some form of restored guild with power to compel its members or an increased supervision and activity upon the part of the State. Especially, within the last ten or twelve years no Congress has been held (upon the social question) which has not been agitated, often to the danger point, by the introduction of proposals to shorten the labor time, establish a minimum wage, to give legal personality to trade-unions formed only of laborers. The method of the Church is to work through such groups. Shall the Church (as is the case with the "Social Union" of the English Church) welcome these trade-unions and co-operate with them? How else, it is said, can the Church get at the workingman. Everywhere this form of labor union rapidly outgrows the unions made up of employer and employed together. The independent union moreover includes, in large towns, the *élite* of the workingmen. Yet few issues have given rise in the Congresses to more prolonged and heated debate in Continental countries, where such unions are largely Socialistic.\* This is the terrible

---

\* The powerful and growing labor unions known as the *Fachvereine* in Germany are practically all Socialist.

dilemma which the Church has to face; how to reach the workingmen—those who have influence with their fellows—without adopting the methods of the unions. These methods, like weapons shaped in the exigencies of war, have grown out of the long struggle with the employer. Never in any instance has the Church persuaded a union to give up its methods or in any important way to modify them. To go over onto the ground won by the unions is to take sides, and thus forfeit the sympathy of those who chiefly support the Church and the charities.

Again, what duty has the Church towards strikes? To frown upon them is to lose at once all sympathy from organized labor unions; to smile upon them is as dangerous from the side of the employer. The bolder spirits in the Church take middle ground, and resolve to stand by the strikers "where they are right." This implies some organized method of examination of special cases, with all the delicate responsibilities which such decision enforces. This keeps the Church constantly between two fires,—now from labor, now from employer.

The bold stroke of Cardinal Manning in taking sides for the dockers made him for the time, with multitudes of Protestant workingmen, the real Primate of England; but what would have followed if, in another great and passionate strike, he had as fearlessly sided against the strikers? Or shall the Church stand aloof and merely recommend arbitration? This is usually the counsel of the cautious, but the more aggressive spirits in the Church answer that this safe timidity is the one sure way to lose the last uncertain hold which the Church now has upon the working-classes.

Again, every concrete question of wage payment rouses hot discussion. There was little friction in the earlier Congresses, partly because the employing class did not take this new concern of the Church with seriousness, partly because some years elapsed before the proposals as to wages became at all definite or legislative enactments were put forward. The maximum or minimum wage, and all friendly suggestions about "fair wages" are not only tolerated, but enjoyed, by

intelligent employers so long as the discussion is general. Until about 1886 scores of employers, mine owners, bankers, directors of iron-works and factories were found at these Congresses, listening amiably, and even giving their applause, to discussions of wages, hours of labor, treatment of operatives, etc., because the proposals were for the most part purely voluntary, or so far abstract in character as not to threaten any specific business with immediate discomfort.

Employers would sit at ease under any measure of good advice. They showed little opposition to the discussion of really test questions so long as the changes suggested depended only upon their free consent. If they were told that fair wages should be paid, they were not offended, because the employer believed that he had never failed in this respect. If justice were urged upon him in all his relations to his workmen, he was likely to feel very honestly that he had not been remiss in fulfilling this law. Every word of ethical import, like "fair" and "just," is not merely relative, but various interpretations from wholly different stand-points are possible. The employer who feels himself the victim of a pitiless competition which threatens the very existence of his business will have his own idea of a fair or just wage to his employés. The only significance which an employer sees in such terms is a wage which the conditions of the market make possible. Nothing can shake his conviction that wages are determined by competition with his rivals in a vast market over which he has little or no control. He is justly incensed against any one who assumes that he can pay what he likes independently of such conditions. A large part of the economic discussion at these first assemblies took for granted that the changes were to be "patronal," *i.e.*, freely initiated and controlled by the employer.

When in these discussions the voluntary principle begins to yield to some form of compulsion or outside interference, the employer is roused to antagonism. As in the English factory legislation from 1802 onward, the great majority of employers have doggedly opposed every step of interference which took the form of compulsory change in their business. This oppo-

sition will continue for a reason which brings out the conflict between the ethical or social point of view and that of the private individual employer. The stand point of the Church is always that of the community rather than that of the individual,—always that of the “long run” as against the short run. The concern of the employer is invariably with the “short run,”—his pecuniary advantage in that short period (of weeks or months) over which commercial conditions give him the slightest real control. Practically, every business is struggling for the profits of a very near future. The fierce heat of competitive rivalry compels the employer to concentrate attention on those business possibilities that are just before him. Whatever may be thought of the needs of the larger social whole and of a more distant future, it should be clearly understood that the average employer rarely sees his relation to such social whole or to such far-off future. The view of his relations is determined by an economic struggle in which the near and more immediate alone has any reality to him. It is within these sharp limits of the short run that every system of “economic harmonies” has been conceived; nor can it for a moment be denied that in the actual work of the world this “identity of interest” between employer and employed—also between both of them and the community—has been so far practically real and true as to justify much of the enthusiasm which the theory has inspired. It has, however, come to be the dreariest commonplace that no conjuring à la Bastiat can turn this philosophy of proximate pecuniary advantage into a theory that is in the least adequate to the situation. Occasions are so constantly arising in industry of sharp and hopeless conflict between instant personal gain and some value which society esteems superior to individual profit that this pleasant optimism is no longer taken seriously by any first-rate economic thinker. It is to the credit of Catholic scholars that this view from the beginning has been rejected. However strenuously opposed to State interference (Le Play and Périn) and to all forms of Socialism, the doctrine of economic freedom, as a sort of final good, has met with steady opposition by these

writers. It is this attitude which heightens the interest in the social and economic discussions at these Congresses. We seem always to be placed at that point in the conflict between the narrower and the larger good from which distinctly ethical questions spring into view.\* The disturbing change which takes place as discussion develops in the Congresses is the tendency of a vigorous minority to abandon the older social method of *patronage*,—the voluntary application of such remedies as the employer finds possible. Under *patronage* the conflict of interest does not appear, because the employer controls every change that is made. Under this method even very radical proposals leave him unconcerned. But let the test questions—trade-unions, shorter working time, support of strikes—be urged in such form that the control is to be placed elsewhere, so that the employer must submit to a decision which he can but slightly, if at all, direct and determine, then he is at once in arms. It is no answer to him to say that the good of the working-class, or that of the community, demands this outside interference with affairs that seem to him private. Only in the rarest cases will he or can he see that his business interests are not one with the interests of others. Even if theoretically convinced that shorter hours, higher wages, stricter State inspection of his factory or workshop, etc., are probable advantages, he knows that the risks at least of admitting such changes are considerable, and may easily put him to such disadvantage with his competitors as to destroy that small margin of profits on which success depends.

These changes in raising the standard of labor are “long-run advantages,” and it by no means follows that in any

---

\* If the reader wishes to see this truth amply illustrated, let him look at the following reports in which strikes, hours of labor, wages, labor legislation, etc., are fully discussed. “Congrès des Œuvres Sociales à Liège, 1890.” Imprimerie, 8 rue St. Michel, Liège, Belgium. “Conférences d’Etudes Sociales de Notre-Dame du Haut Mont,” Nos. 1, 17, and 18, Juillet 17, 18, 1893. Also Report No. III., 23, 24, 25, Nov. 1893, published at Lille, 78 rue de l’Hôpital Militaire. “Compte Rendu du deuxième Congrès Ouvrier Chrétien,” Reims, 1894, 24 rue Pluche. Also a “Mémoire” of great value published by employers upon “La Situation de l’Industrie en Belgique,” rue Treurenberg, 46 Brussels.

specific case the application of the remedy will prove propitious. There is just now no nicer question involved than this attitude which the Church should take towards external interference (or, if the word is an offence, regulation or supervision) from the side of the State or other foreign organization. Yet the Church seems to have committed itself irrevocably to the principle that this control from without is a necessity in modern industrial life, so that the eternal perplexity of specific application to concrete cases cannot be ignored. This movement begins in demanding that the clergy shall be instructed in economic studies. The second step is the consideration of means through which a social doctrine may be taught. The final step concerns practical voluntary and legislative activity. At the last gathering of which the writer has any report, that at Saint-Quentin in September, 1895, the paper of the Abbé Roux, on the social training of the clergy, seems to have called out unanimous applause.\* It is there not merely assumed, but aggressively proclaimed that direct and positive action should follow in social questions. To accept this responsibility of positive social activity that must to some extent thrust itself between employer and employed in time of strife,—to take such responsibility in countries like Germany, France, and Belgium, where the social question has come with a sort of fury into practical politics,—must inevitably bring out the points of conflict into sharp relief. So long as persuasion and “voluntarism,” self-help, and charity are thought to be sufficient, no antagonism need arise between any reforming body and the employing class. Every generalized doctrine of “self-help” or *patronage* assumes an identity of interests among all classes of workers, but if two steps are taken, we emerge where the whole scene changes. Let it be once admitted that (*a*) the present economic individualism is so organically diseased that the acrid censure of the Socialist

---

\* “ Mais l’heure a sonné pour le clergé comme pour l’église d’opérer, dans tous les domaines de la vie sociale, une entrée victorieuse et complète.” “ Que le prêtre sorte de la sacristie,—que le prêtre aille au peuple.”

“ Tout le travail social s’exécute en trois parties ; les études, la propagande, l’action.” The Abbé Roux at the Conference at Saint-Quentin, September, 1895.



is found none too harsh to express the feeling of the clergy so that they merely adopt and repeat it, and (b) that such depth and magnitude of evil is beyond the healing of moral appeal, self-help, and charity, then the situation has but one logic,—recourse to compulsion, under which the diversity of economic interests spring into irritated activity. This, which is easily susceptible of theoretic demonstration, may now be seen in actual experience which removes all doubt as to the seriousness of the situation. The “left wing” at the Congresses taking, as the whole Church must, the stand-point of society, or the long run as against what the individual interprets as his immediate interest, brings into the field its list of proposed remedies: normal working-day; minimum wage or higher wage; assistance for strikes that appear to be justified; total discontinuance of Sunday work; entire elimination of married women from factories, etc. Having admitted that State action and legal compulsion may be necessary for the realization in practice of these changes, they fall at once into the area of party politics. If it were possible to compel all competitors to adopt the shorter working-time or the higher wage, many of the employers’ objections would cease; but that feat, even within the smallest country, is not yet practicable. The beginnings have to be made at some place and in some specific business. This brings out the angry retort, “You are crippling me with my competitors; force them also to shorter hours, higher wage, and improved conditions.” M. Harmel, from his own splendid patronal achievement, cries out, with eager sincerity, “My men do work too long; I would rejoice to have the shorter hours, but my margin of profits, as all may see, is so narrow that my competitors would at once take my business; make our Belgian and English rivals adopt the same regulations, and I will gladly comply.” It is thus admitted that the larger good would be served by the lessened working-time, but M. Harmel thinks of his business interests during a future of three or four months. Unless his business has a monopolistic character or is exceptionally successful, he must take the short-run view rather than of the long run, which is the social and the Church view.

There is thus far but slight indication that the advanced party in the Church realizes in any fulness what honest defence can be made by the *average* business man against those who would introduce (wholly beyond sanitary measures) compulsory changes into his wage and time relations with his workmen. Even the compulsion of large trade guilds does not leave him free. The issue has an importance so vital and so urgent for those who would act wisely and bring the Church into no merited discredit, that further illustration should be given, not merely to show the difficulty of this more adventurous social reform, but also to show that the cry of immediate business interest cannot be allowed to set limits to industrial reforms.

Much space has been given at a score of Congresses to Sunday labor in industry. It was one of the earliest reform proposals, and one concerning which the unanimity of opinion has been most complete. It was observed that competition was forcing an ever wider and wider use of Sunday labor, with consequent injury to the family and the Church. Conservative leaders who agreed that such labor must be checked, yet believed that employers could be induced by moral suasion to discontinue a practice so unmistakably pernicious. Much encouragement was given by the speedy conversion of a number of high-minded employers. Here, however, the reform stopped. As Von Ketteler reluctantly admitted that funds for his cooperative scheme could not be won by moral entreaty to the faithful; as the Positivist remedy of "moralizing the upper classes" has been found to be a very partial and imperfect solution, so it appeared that these abuses of Sunday could scarcely be touched by moral forces alone. Experience showed that two classes of employers were beyond the reach of any voluntary influence—(1) those who recognized the evils in much of this Sunday labor, yet who felt themselves victims of a competition which compelled it; (2) the sharper and less conscienceless class eager to make every concession of their rivals an occasion of unfair advantage, as in the history of "early closing."\*

---

\* Of course many exceptions of inevitable work are seen to be necessary.

It is this palpable failure of free moral inducement to control the evils of Sunday work which has driven such numbers within the Church to turn to the State. Law, it is said, may compel the recalcitrant and introduce uniformity, so that the burden shall fall on all alike. Years ago Professor Périn prophesied \* that if this principle of State help were once admitted, it would drag the Church into Socialism: "l'entraînement vers l'organisation socialiste est fatal." This was also the view, though with different reasons, of Le Play. It was the opinion of the most distinguished Catholic economist in France, the late Professor Claudio Jannet.†

It is certain that this principle of State intervention has been accepted, and must henceforth be taken with all its risks. This principle is admitted in the case of children and women. At the Catholic Congress at Breslau in 1886 ‡, appeal was made, by the sanction of the majority, for State help in regulating the hours of labor for men.

It may be said that this fairly characterizes the sentiment of the leaders in the German Congresses since this date. In the French and Belgian Congresses the discussions have roused far more violent differences of opinion. Before it became evident that the employers and corporations would organize instant and powerful resistance against State intervention, even Conservatives like Monseigneur Freppel favored such control. At a gathering of *l'Œuvre des Cercles* in 1886, this influential prelate seemed to side with the Count de Mun in demanding further activity of the State for the Sunday rest and for insurance of workingmen, but in 1891 the agitation had so clearly brought out the practical bearings of such intervention upon certain great industries that he even voted against the law which extended merely to women and children. The Congress at Liège in the previous year had made it clear to all that the practical consequences of appealing to the State were momentous. It was observed that the great

---

\* "Le Socialism Chrétien."

† "Le Socialism d'État," ch. i.

‡ This is the residence of Cardinal Kopp, often called the successor of Von Ketteler.

remedy of the Church (corporate associations of free patronal type) gradually lost its interest as the doctrine of State help strengthened. The eloquent French parliamentarian, de Mun, the unquestioned chief of the progressives, made feeble defence of the "corporation" each year, and demanded with increasing confidence the enlarged activity of the State.

It was observable, also, that as the adequacy of *patronage* and self-help was lightly or even scornfully spoken of, so the sufficiency of charity was questioned in terms which recalled too vividly the gibes of the Socialists. Professor Périn insisted that charity is the final remedy for social ills; that mercy and good-will may meet every want. The need of a larger and a tenderer charity is not denied by the most hardy radicals in the Church, but it is strenuously denied that charity stands in any proper relation to many of the most stubborn evils with which the Church is called to deal. There is scarcely a Catholic Congress at which it is not maintained with apparent unanimity that economic conditions are so vicious as to produce unfitness, weakness, and poverty among the working-classes. Shall such victims, it is said, be held blameworthy? If not blameworthy, they should have "justice," and not charity.

At Maline, in 1892, the words of "the leading group of Catholic sociologists" are quoted with hearty favor. Society is economically "diseased, running to ruin under the wasteful influence of plutocracy." The proletariat is held to suffer "unmerited" (it is the Pope's word) misery. "We deny that drink is the chief cause, or the decay of religious faith, or the rise of Socialism. The evils spring both from the economic and moral disorders."

Wherever these views obtain as to the "cause of poverty," charity becomes intolerable as a general or final remedy. So far as society and circumstance are at fault, so far, it is urged, every victim should have "justice" and not charity. Nothing more characterizes the speeches of the progressive party than this claim that justice, not charity, should be organized for the great mass of those who suffer under "the system." The active Abbé Naudet calls his paper, *La Justice Sociale*. In his

book, "Notre Œuvre Sociale," he begins with a chapter on justice as the fundamental idea from which the Church should start. This talk of justice excited little attention until its practical implications began to appear. As the demand for State activity grew at the Congresses; as the proposals for shortened hours, regulated wage, elimination of night work, etc., grew more definite and *appeared in actual political programmes*,\* this distinction between justice and charity suddenly acquired new meaning. Charity comes as a favor; it is voluntary; it seems to imply gratitude as for something not quite deserved. Justice asks no favors, does not come cap in hand, but as an equal to demand a *right*.

But more embarrassing still are the practical bearings of such "rights" when the line separating the abstract from the concrete, theory from practice, is passed. Once *apply* justice with its rights to actual cases in the programme of social reform, and it follows that under either ideal of this Church movement (*a*, large labor corporations; *b*, State interposition) compulsion is a necessity. An example is seen in the insurance of workmen against accident, sickness, and old age. This is claimed in the name of common justice, and the weight of opinion at the Congresses is for compelling such insurance, even though the State be not called in, as it is in Germany. Or is justice to require the exclusion of all married women from factories by a State law, with fixed penalty for disobedience? If opinion at the Congresses grows steadily away from mere moral exhortation, away from voluntary trade associations toward corporate and legal force, justice, as actually applied to wages and conditions of labor, will mean a series of changes against which the average employer will stubbornly fight, because those near and immediate business interests which are most vital to him will seem to be disturbed and threatened.

To this point the activity of the Congresses has brought the whole discussion upon the social question. A great many theories, principles, and phrases about labor and capital have

---

\* The recent great extension of the suffrage in Belgium increased the anxiety.

been "discussed into clear consciousness." As these abstractions were forced into the field where definite proposals are made for their application to specific business and social conditions, the elements of conflicting interest among those concerned can no longer be concealed. The supposed interest of society, of employer, of labor, of larger future interests, and the pressing interests of business, one and all leap out for their defence. This stage of the inevitable strife has now been reached, and no page of the history which has led up to it is without proof that the economic basis of society is of almost limitless influence in determining the character and direction of reforms.

Marx, more powerfully, perhaps, than any other, has stated this doctrine, though with less clearness than Engles, to whom the meaning, in his own words, is "that view of the course of history which seeks ultimate cause and the great moving power of all important historic events in the economic development of society, in the changes in the mode of production and exchange, etc." This is not merely the thought of the ablest Continental Socialists, but is continually asserting itself with great force among recent writers. It fills Professor Loria's book\* on Society. It constantly appears in Professor Lamprecht's new "History of the German People." It is fundamental in the strong and skilful work which Professor Patten is doing from the side of consumption. If it is true that the material side of the problem gets from these writers much overstatement, it is even truer that their opponents have underrated the part which the strictly economic element plays in shaping and limiting those energies which seek to express themselves in reform, whether educational, political, or social. It is not merely that every bearer of heroic remedies is brought back, somewhat bruised and sobered, to a painful reckoning with the hard realities of business, but it is also true that the kind of remedy which the real powers within the Catholic Church seem more and more to sanction is a remedy which accepts the present eco-

---

\* "Les bases économique de la Constitution Sociale," Alcan, Paris, 1893.

conomic order, with the wage system, private interest, rent, and profits. This remedy is one through which it is sought to turn the wage-earners into property-owners by making credit and small investments possible,—building and loan associations, savings and credit banks, profit-sharing and co-operation, and reforms of similar character. This all follows from the highest and most authoritative utterance upon the sacredness of private property as laid down in the Encyclical, and in such books as Professor Hollaind's "Ownership and Natural Rights," to which Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Corrigan give their most definite approval. Cardinal Gibbons, acknowledged to be a leader in the liberal interpretation of labor questions in the Church, yet speaks of the "principles which fence in the rights of private property \* as a sacred trust confided to the Church by God."

One of the chief results of the long agitation within the Congresses has been to bring out the meaning of these principles as they bear upon practical issues. While this agitation has made the essential remedies—for broader distribution of property among the masses—far more definite upon the one side, it has upon the other driven the advanced party to change the emphasis and form of their demands without yielding anything essential to their radical character. The discussions bring out each year with greater distinctness, for instance, the direct difficulties of international competition. Belgian employers, in highest standing with the Church, submit elaborate evidence to show the intensity of their struggle with England in case of certain iron and textile industries employing hundreds of thousands of men. While it is known that this plea of the employer has been set up for a generation against every proposed change, the facts, in these special industries, are so convincing that they cannot be ignored. In the entire Catholic movement, moreover, the employing class has, through its co-operation and activity at the Congresses, great influence; the result is therefore to shift the centre of demand for reform onto *international* ground. As the papers and debates

---

\* See Open Letter published in Professor Hollaind's book.

brought out the supposed difficulties of an enforced change within a given country of hours of labor, normal working-day, discontinuance of night and Sunday work, etc., the necessity of other countries adopting the same regulations grew clearer. Thus the Swiss leader, Decurtins, brought his plan of international action before the Federal Council in 1887. The dream of an international understanding upon industrial affairs is of much earlier date. Bismarck often coupled the two internationals—the black and the red; but no definite form is given to it, nor is there anything like common enthusiasm for it until its apparent necessity was brought out by the work of the Congresses. In Germany, the necessity of such larger understanding is proclaimed with much unanimity in 1885.\* In 1882 the French Council of the *Œuvres des Cercles* urge the same step.† The claim is put forth anew by Kolp in Vienna, in 1890.‡ At the three National Congresses (Austria, France, and Germany), the feeling for the “international of labor” found the strongest expression.

Now, it is evident that the employer is not likely to oppose this braver enthusiasm to bring the whole world to some common action upon labor regulation. So far as it could be effected, he would doubtless accept it; but there is little evidence at the Congresses that he has the least anxiety upon this point. Better than the reformers he sees the immense obstacles to any such action *that can be enforced*. There is even evidence that this fervor for international understanding and regulation is directly encouraged as a kind of safety-valve for the more revolutionary spirits. “The more,” says one employer, “they try to manage Europe the less they will interfere to manage my cotton mill.”

Results thus far reached are (1) much clearing up of uncertain issues about the facts of competition as it now acts in a

---

\* See “Jahrbuch der freien Vereinigung Katholische Socialpolitiker,” 1887.

† “Association Catholique,” 1888 (1).

‡ See full account of this movement in Grégoire’s “Le Pape les Catholiques and La Question Sociale,” pp. 221-231, Paris, 1893, and “La Question de la protection ouvrière internationale,” Berne, 1889.



world market; (2) more definite knowledge about the application to business of such principles as "justice," "equity," "fair wage,"—a realization that, unless business conditions first admit of a given change, the applied "principle" is likely to prove harmful for all concerned, and therefore not just or equitable;\* (3) a new sense that wherever reforms are put in practice, at least three points of view must be considered,—that of the community, that of the employer, that of the laborer; that while these interests, "as God sees them," may be identical, they are by no means in all cases identical as man sees them, that consequently much knowledge of detail is a vital prerequisite for all industrial reorganization. All this is but saying that something of the vastness, the diversity, and complexity of business interdependency has been brought out by the study and the discussion at the Congresses. Upon the negative side this is the greatest good thus far accomplished.

It would be obviously unfair to assert that no other results had been attained. Many actual social experiments of extreme value have sprung directly and indirectly from the Congresses. An educational force of the first magnitude has grown into strength through at least a thousand clubs (in the countries where Congresses have been held), composed of workingmen, boys, employers. These clubs in great variety exist because the social question exists. They are directly related through their chief activities to some phase of the social question.

But aside from these results, others of perhaps more significance are making themselves felt. Though the employer is vehement against enforced changes in his business,—changes which are to be controlled from without,—he is by no means uninfluenced by this organized pressure for reform, which speaks in the interest of some good larger than his own. Indeed, most of the employers' organizations for rais-

---

\* It was shown, for instance, after much debate and many papers of more general character, that in certain industries the eliminating of married women would work serious injury; that no *general* proposal applied in all places and to all businesses could possibly result in good.

ing the condition of their laborers can be traced directly to this constraint of the surrounding public appealing in the name of religion, humanity, the social welfare, for a more wholesome human life among the toilers. As employers, scornful of "consumers' leagues," are yet ill at ease until their names are upon the "white list," as they will even hasten to make voluntary improvements in store and shop, so the pressure of a strong public demand leads business men to initiate other reforms within their free control which are often more fruitful of good because they are felt to be free and self-directed. This type of industrial amelioration is certain to extend under the constraining influence which acts through these Congresses upon the social question.

Nor is it unlikely that these "indirect persuasions" will prove to be the best service which the new sociological instincts within the Church can render to the cause they champion.

JOHN GRAHAM BROOKS.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

---

## NATIONAL PREJUDICES.

THE recent international courtesies at Havre probably signify little, but that little is certainly in the right direction. England and France have just now some important matters in dispute, yet their leaders can be friendly and pleasant together. It has not always been so, and it is well to notice that we do seem at last to be making some progress, though it be little, in these respects. Nations do not seem to hate each other quite so bitterly as formerly, and every year's continuance of peace enables them to know one another better and despise one another less. "Are the English as great fools as the French?" said the German *Candide* in his day to Martin. "C'est une autre espèce de folie," replied Martin. "Vous savez que ces deux nations sont en guerre pour quelques arpents de neige vers le Canada, et qu'elles dépensent pour cette belle guerre beaucoup plus que tout le Canada ne vaut."