

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

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The Church and social problems by Joseph Husslein

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JOSEPH HUSSLEIN

**THE CHURCH AND
SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

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BY

REV. JOSEPH HUSSLEIN, S.J.

(Associate Editor of AMERICA)



“Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus
that is called Christ?”—*Matt., xvii: 17.*



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DEDICATED
TO THE
PATRON OF LABOR,
THE FOSTER FATHER
OF HIM WHO WAS KNOWN
AS THE
SON OF THE CARPENTER

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Archbishop of New York

New York, August 21, 1912.

PREFACE

THE present work is largely, though not exclusively, concerned with the religious view of the social question. It is this which must first be understood before we can satisfactorily approach the economic issues. If Socialism, as it exists to-day, the great international movement which attracts the attention of the world and calls for its allegiance, is shown to be opposed to Christianity, irreconcilable with our Holy Religion and detrimental to its best interests, then at least the first important conclusion has been definitely attained, the first step has been taken towards the solution of the social problem. No Catholic, no Christian, can then offer his vote or support to the Socialist Party; but all must combine their strength to combat against it in the coming conflict which will soon divide the working classes of the world under the banners of Marx or Christ.

The battle is not so much between Capitalism and Socialism as between Socialism and Christian Labor. Socialism can not abhor more strongly the excesses of an unjust and oppressive greed than they have been condemned in the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII. Between the selfish and unjust extremes of tyrannical Socialism and unrestrained Capitalism there lies the only way to industrial liberation and Christian concord, which is pointed out by the Catholic Church.

With our first problem clearly solved we can then proceed to discriminate between the good and evil in the economic doctrines which Socialism proposes. No heresy has ever been so wholly and hopelessly false that it did not reflect at least some broken lights of truth. This we may rightly say of Socialism where truth and error, fact and fiction are forever blended in an indistinguishable confusion. What is good we must keep and perfect, what is wrong and evil we must relentlessly

reject. For the rest we have the guidance of our faith and the clear words of the sovereign pontiffs to construct that ideal Christian Commonwealth towards whose realization we can then cooperate by social service and legal reform.

Many of the chapters in this work appeared originally in the pages of AMERICA. All, however, have been carefully revised since the first writing, some have been recast or more completely developed, while others are entirely new.

New York, August 15, 1912.

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