

The soothing sound of gurgling streams;
And through the fields in rapturous glee
Heart-happy youths tread trippingly,
Through plashy-puddles, pulse-a-beat
With lilting love, fun-following feet.
All join in joyous harmony
To sing the praise of Him Who gave
The cheerful charms of April days.

—L. O'HANLEY '51

ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY

If we regard our present day society, we are faced with the prevalence of social injustice and its evil effects. Society, however, was not always like this. About the twelfth century A.D., because of the common belief in Christianity with all of its implications, religious unity prevailed in civilized countries; and, as a result of religious unity, there was social unity, based on the order of justice and charity. Since that time various false philosophies have arisen, destroying religious unity, and consequently, social unity.

Today we are faced with the problem of restoring social unity to society. But the unity of a community comes only from a common belief; and only Christianity can supply the truths which will be the basis for that common belief. It seems necessary then for individuals to take upon themselves the responsibility for acquiring a true philosophy of life based on the Gospels, and, with this philosophy to guide them to restore true values to the social, political, economic, cultural and artistic spheres. Now the basis of Christianity is Charity, which is love. But Charity consists primarily in self-giving, so that it is opposed to all natural love which is self-seeking; but to give and not to take is what makes man human, what makes him a person. Charity, then is consistent with our very nature, not with our animal nature, but with that nature which we have as a being made in the image and likeness of God. This is the part of man's nature which he must cultivate to become more God-like.

This idea of Christian charity has become so confused as a result of the selfish materialism which characterizes modern society that even many Christians have forgotten its true meaning. The root of all the evil that exists in the world is selfishness. Birth Control results from the selfishness of parents who refuse to accept the responsibilities of parenthood but wish to enjoy the pleasures of marriage; wars are caused by the desire for power or revenge. In short, as selfish pride was the first sin ever committed, so it is still the cause of all evil. We learn in physics that to counteract a force we must apply an equal and opposite one. In society, then, we must eliminate that evil force of selfishness by supplanting unselfish charity.

The idea of the Brotherhood of man and the common good of all is entirely submerged in the struggle for the fruits of industry. The right of working men to organize is denied them because usurpers of authority have forgotten or chose to forget that they have this right. A small number of men accumulate the greater wealth of the nation and acquire positions of power which they call their "rights". George Russell said that stupendous wealth exists because there are vast gulfs of poverty and despair. So we see that the dignity which belongs to man by his very nature is flouted on all sides. Moreover, it is useless to talk of any kind of peace, national, domestic or economic, unless those in a position of authority come to regard the dignity of the human person.

In the final analysis, however, the future of our society depends, not on those who hold positions of authority in the state, but on the philosophy of life, to which the people who comprise that state adhere. But a philosophy of life which is based on selfishness and materialism and which denies the dignity of the human person, leads finally and inevitably to the downfall of society, for it logically results in the breakdown of the home which is the basis of society. Today we are witnessing an increase in the breakdown of the home in America. The logical result of this is chaos.

The only alternative to such a condition is Christianity, known, understood, and practiced. Christ gave us a social philosophy for all time based on love, not on selfishness. In order to exercise any influence upon the society in which we live, we must be prepared to practice love of God and the love of neighbor in our daily lives. God depends on those who know the truth to give it to those who do not have it. This requires that each Christian must

take upon himself the responsibility for changing the social order by becoming an apostle for Christianity, and by applying Christian teachings to every phase of life. The fundamental notion of sacrifice must be made a vitalizing principle in Christian life. There is an innate desire for sacrifice in all men; in some it goes unused and perverted and we have criminals; in others it is directed into the wrong channels and we have followers of Marxism or of other false philosophies. If people were given something decent to struggle and work for, they would flock to it, especially the young. This self-sacrificing energy must be guided by Christian Charity.

If we are to overcome the present-day materialistic society and replace it with a Christian society we must be prepared to suffer in the struggle. Since Our Lady's appearance at Fatima and Lourdes to beg for our conversion we have no choice but to accept suffering. It is by such methods that a spiritual revolution must take place that we may, as Peter Maurin said, create a new society within the shell of the old, with a philosophy so old that it looks like new.

—ALAN MacLELLAN '50

"...AND THOU SHALT HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN"

A king, gold-clad, bowed from a balcony,
And tossed his coins and crowns, robes and rings
To the scarred, the hungry, the humble, the blind,
Remembering.
Then the scarred, the hungry, the humble, the blind,
Gave one to another;
And
God smiled.

—ANON