

MODERN PROBLEMS AND CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES

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“Why should [the Church] seek to control his [the Catholic’s] action outside the sphere of religion? There are Catholic politicians who call themselves Tories or Liberals. Why should not a working-man be a Catholic Socialist if he sees his advantage in Socialism . . . ? Like friction not unfrequently is set up elsewhere. One person is smitten by the new science of Eugenics. Another cannot understand the prohibition of Cremation. Some venture too far even in the good cause of Temperance. Philanthropy itself is not free from snares for the unwary. . . . An obvious reply is to point out that human life is moral from end to end : that the Church is the arbiter of morals : and that she cannot alter or lower her standard of morality to meet difficulties created by a Protestant or materialistic environment.”—*From the Advent Pastoral (1910) of the Bishop of Northampton.*

EVERYBODY being presumed to desire what is true and good, a perfect knowledge of truth and goodness would put an end to all sects and parties, for the true cannot but be good and the good must be true. There would no longer be any “questions” or “problems” to be solved, because the one true answer to each would be known to all. But as things are, the endless differences of human minds in point of ability, information and training, lead to widely-differing solutions of the ethical difficulties, theoretical and practical, which are

constantly met with, and, were it not for two causes of a unifying tendency permanently at work in the world, the multiplication of parties would know hardly any limit. These causes or forces are (1) the individual conscience which reflects the divine law, and (2) the teaching Church which guarantees and interprets it.

Since the Reformation, the latter force has been shorn of much of its efficacy amongst non-Catholic communities, and the former, deprived of necessary guidance, often acts amiss; witness the chaos which to-day exists in this country in our moral and intellectual surroundings.

To the existence of this disorder the Catholic Social Guild looks for justification in its efforts, under Papal and Episcopal encouragement, to apply the principles for which Catholicity stands to certain social problems that perplex the modern world. The effort is not uncalled-for, even if only members of the Church are held in view, for we find ignorance and misapprehension of revealed truth, and consequently erroneous views of conduct, inside the Church as well as without: what Catholics believe does not always represent Catholic belief. It is true that not every project of social betterment, nor every debated question of political action, directly involves Catholic principles, yet full investigation will always show that such principles lie at the basis of all sound progress. Accordingly, it may serve a useful purpose to examine, by the light of Catholic principles of morality, certain questions of conduct and certain practical issues, social and economic, affecting the individual, the family, and the State,¹ concerning the ethical bearing of which there is much uncertainty in the modern mind.

¹ The general interests of the three entities cannot of course be separated, but must be promoted together.

It will be clear, I hope, that in the following very concise statements of the Christian position much has had to be omitted in the way of explanation which would tend to make that position still more evidently reasonable.

1. Betting and Gambling.

General Definition.—The risking of something of value on some uncertain issue, or as the emphatic assertion of some personal view, in the hope of gain if the issue be favourable or the view prove correct.

Moral Aspect.—A contract, lawful in itself, but very liable to abuse. It is lawful because, as he who owns a thing may give it away freely or for less than its value to another, so also he may risk the loss of it on the chance of gaining something in return. How easily the practice may be abused all human experience shows.

Conditions for Lawfulness.—

(a) The thing staked must really in all the circumstances be at the free disposal of him who stakes it; (b) this act must be voluntary; (c) there must be no fraud or undue advantage on either side.

Dangers of the Practice.—It readily excites the passion of avarice, the desire for gain disproportionate to need or to effort, and it lends itself to every sort of trickery. These abuses are so likely to occur and are actually so prevalent that, in the interests of public order, the State rightly restricts opportunities for gambling. In view of the great evil it causes, the State would be justified in going further, by prohibiting, for instance, the publication of betting news.

Remedies.—

(a) Clear recognition of the permissible limits of the practice; (b) avoidance of wrong views which defeat their end by confusing the moral sense, e.g., the classify-

ing of betting and gambling as not less evil than lying and theft ; (c) obedience to the civil law ; (d) obedience to the Christian law which teaches moderation in the desire for wealth.

2. The Drink Problem.

Definition.—How to stop the terrible social evil of excessive drinking without infringing justice or proper liberty.

Moral Aspect.—Christianity enjoins moderation in the use of intoxicating liquor under pain of the sin of gluttony, and encourages total abstinence as a special application of the general ascetic principle—Deny thyself. The command affects all, the counsel only those who are inspired to make that particular act of self-sacrifice ; an act which of course may be dictated not by religious but by merely prudential motives. As the moderate use of strong drink is lawful, so the manufacture and sale of it for use in moderation are also lawful. What amount of it can be considered moderate must be determined for the individual by various circumstances—the claims of health, moral and physical, his duties towards others, the work entrusted to him, even the state of his purse—none of which can be left out of sight in making the estimate.

Dangers.—All history shows that the habit of drinking to excess is one which can be contracted with comparative ease, in spite of the manifest evils it brings in its train, because the consumption of intoxicants has always been a feature of convivial meetings and is a conventional sign of hospitality and goodwill. It is still disputed amongst medical men whether alcohol in moderation is injurious to health, but all agree that moderation is easily and frequently exceeded, to the harm of the individual and the State.

Remedies and Safeguards.—The State attempts to check the social evils attendant on this practice by restrictive legislation tending to make intoxicants dearer and less accessible. The difficulties which confront it, *i.e.* how to protect the weak without injuring those who do not need protection, how to control the monopoly its licences create, and how to find an equivalent for the revenue which the prevalence of the drink-traffic brings in, will always render its efforts ineffective, unless the public conscience supports them. The public conscience is formed by the consciences of individuals, and so it is ultimately in voluntary effort that the remedy lies. The Church in her Temperance Associations organizes that voluntary effort on sound lines, *sc.* by putting forward the most powerful and permanent motives, those drawn from religion, for the practice of Total Abstinence, as well as by condemning the errors which, in spheres outside her influence, are apt to vitiate that practice.

Errors.—

(*a*) To say that alcohol is intrinsically evil, which is Manichæism. (*b*) To insist on Total Abstinence as a necessary mark of a good Christian, thus violating Christian liberty. (*c*) To condemn the Drink-Traffic, because of its abuses, as inherently wrong. (*d*) To put on the same level the abuse of strong drink, which injures the community as well as the individual, and the abuse of tobacco, the effects of which are less harmful and merely personal. (*e*) To look on moderation as the “golden mean” between the vicious extremes of drunkenness and total abstinence. The other extreme to “taking too much” is “taking too little.” Abstinence is not taking too little, just because there is no need to take any. If abstinence from alcohol necessarily injured health, then it might be blame-

worthy as an "extreme." But the contrary is generally the case.

3. Suicide.

Definition.—The act of the individual by which he directly and voluntarily compasses his own death.

Moral Aspect.—If murder is wrong, suicide is wrong also, as both acts violate the command of God—"Thou shalt not kill." Deliberate self-destruction, therefore, is either an assertion of entire independence of any higher power, and so an implicit denial of God's existence, or an unwarranted presumption of God's permission. Speaking generally, it is directly opposed to proper self-regard, for every living nature desires and is equipped for its own preservation, and if, in particular cases, self-regard would seem to prompt self-destruction, a further reason against the act must be sought in the evil and inevitable consequences of allowing exceptions in a prohibition of such gravity. We may freely grant that, as Ecclesiasticus says (xxx. 17): "Better is death than a bitter life," but that does not justify us in seeking death by our own hand. There are many other most desirable things, to which the law of God forbids the individual lawful access.

However, the only reason against suicide which can always securely withstand the attacks of casuistry is the fact that the Almighty *has* fixed His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. God is the Lord of life and death; to destroy oneself is to usurp His dominion, for only the full owner may lawfully destroy. Even of the inanimate and irrational creation man has not entire control, but must use such things in accord with the divine law; still less may he dispose at will of his own personal self. Deliberately to depart this life by one's own act is to treat the Almighty with defiance or disbelief and,

short of a clear commission from God, can never be right.

God having conferred on the Civil State all that is necessary for its well-being and having thereby authorized it to remove by death those of its members whose offences are gravely injurious to it, one may inquire whether a criminal, lawfully condemned to death, may, at the command of the supreme authority, compass his own destruction. The intrinsic unlawfulness of such an act is not evident beyond dispute, but it is universally agreed that no one is morally bound to obey a command of this sort.

Self-mutilation is prohibited on the same grounds as self-destruction. His limbs and faculties are no more in man's absolute ownership than his life itself. Still, as the parts exist for the sake of the whole, the sacrifice of a part *for the preservation of the whole* (not for any extrinsic reason) is always lawful. On the other hand, serious self-mutilation to escape military service, or to make money, or even to avoid danger of sin is unlawful as being an infringement of God's absolute rights over His creatures. The Church has always condemned the literal interpretation and application of our Lord's vigorous metaphor in the Sermon on the Mount, about dealing with the causes of scandal.

Deductions.—

(a) The decay of Faith is necessarily marked by an increase of suicide. If man is his own master, and if there is no future life to restore the balance of this, human misery must often be found literally intolerable. (b) To give one's life for others—the noblest act of Christian charity—is not suicide, as in such a case the direct and immediate object of one's will is not one's death, but some service of the neighbour or the State, proportionate to the sacrifice. (c) To

admit that hopeless and agonizing illness justifies a person in causing or hastening his own death would justify others in thus acting for him, and so would open the door to the murder of all sorts of creatures in like case—deformed children, helpless old folk, &c. The life of the innocent may never be taken for whatever cause, even on public authority. The pernicious and pagan doctrine, to which its advocates give the specious name of Euthanasia, is utterly condemned by Christianity.

4. The Marriage State.

Definition.—Christian marriage is a sacramental contract, lawfully entered upon by man and woman for the procreation and education of children and for mutual companionship.

Moral Aspect.—The contract must be freely undertaken, but the object of the contract and the means to fulfil it are already determined by God's ordinance and do not depend on the will of the contracting parties.

Consequences.—

(a) Christian marriage is always a Sacrament. (b) Christian marriage is always monogamous. (c) Entire solution (*a vinculo*) of a consummated marriage is never lawful, though judicial separation (*a mensa et toro*) is permissible for grave reasons. (d) It rests with the Church as guardian of the Sacraments to lay down conditions for the lawfulness and validity of the marriages of her subjects. (e) The State has also the power and the right to determine just conditions to secure the civil effects even of Christian marriage, but cannot make conditions affecting validity¹ which are not recognized by the Church. (f) The

¹ Hence it is plain that, since the Reformation, Governments which have broken off from the Church have constantly usurped and misused her functions in dealing with Christian matrimony by setting up various diriment impediments.

Church permits "mixed" marriages only with conditions intended to secure the Catholicity of the offspring and to remove what is apt to be a deep-rooted and permanent source of difference between man and wife. (g) All interference with the primary end of marriage is grievously sinful.

5. Eugenics.

Definition.—The science which aims at eliminating disease, whether bodily or mental, and promoting the healthier development of the race, by prohibiting or sterilizing the marriage of the unfit and degenerate.

Moral Aspect.—The Church, looking beyond mere earthly good, proclaims that all adults have a right to marry (unless they have abandoned that right by vow or have been justly deprived of it as punishment for crime), if they are substantially capable of fulfilling the duties of marriage, including of course the education of their offspring. She teaches that no wrong is done to the State by the begetting of sickly or imbecile children, unless their parents can do nothing to support them. Nor is wrong done to such children themselves, because, in view of the eternal happiness normally within their reach, it is better to be born maimed or tainted than not to be born at all. But the Church, outside the limits of this lawful liberty, welcomes everything that promotes physical and mental well-being.

Deductions.—

(a) It is wrong to induce sterility by surgery, as it is wrong to cause any other similar serious mutilation of the innocent. (b) Such an operation is useless as a punishment for criminals, being comparatively painless and not depriving them of sensual gratification. (c) The State may rightly segregate the wholly unfit, if it can be shown that their marriage with the healthy would

greatly injure the public welfare ; it has so acted, for instance, in regard to lepers. (d) It is at least arguable that the State, for the common good, can by separate detention prevent the wholly degenerate from intermarrying. (e) All practices for the direct impeding of conception or of living birth are utterly unlawful.

6. Education.

Definition.—The training and development of human mind and character, in view of earthly career and heavenly destiny.

Moral Aspect.—A duty incumbent, in the first instance, on parents or their representatives ; then, in default of those, on the State ; but, on account of its essentially religious nature, always under the guidance of the Church, which has exactly the same natural concern in the development of the destined citizens of heaven as the State has in the development of its members.

Consequence.—It is, therefore, an outrage on the rights of parent and child to deprive the latter of, or refuse to provide it with, an adequate religious training. "Secular" education is an error in theory and a crime in practice. The child's first right is to be told of its destiny, and how to fulfil it. As against the State, it is the parent's right to decide conscientiously what religion shall be taught the child.

Fallacies.—

(a) To speak of the State as if it were an entity with interests different or opposed to those of its component parts. (b) Under guise of a spurious "neutrality," to teach what is in effect definite irreligion. (c) To think that religion can be taught without dogma, or that morals can be effectively inculcated without religion.

7. The Housing Problem.

Definition.—The provision of decent and secure homes and home-surroundings for working-class families.

Moral Aspect.—Decent housing, whereby health and morality are adequately considered, is practically a necessity for decent living. Moreover, besides space and cleanliness, the institution of the family requires some sort of family privacy. “Associated homes,” “municipal family dwellings,” and the like cannot, be regarded as satisfactory from the Christian standpoint. The first charge on house-property, therefore, is the provision for its occupiers of the means of decent living. Overcrowding, insanitary surroundings, &c., tolerated for the purpose of larger rents, violate justice. It is the duty of the State, in default of private recognition, to enforce this dictate of the natural law.

State of the Case.—Overcrowding exists in all our large, and in most of our smaller, towns, and, strange to say, in our country districts as well, and is a main contributory cause of a vast variety of moral and physical evils. The reasons are largely economic, but fundamentally they spring from that un-Christian individualism which regards labourers merely as “hands,” and whilst providing, inadequately enough, for their physical efficiency, has no regard for their higher welfare.

Remedies.—The State and municipal authorities are busy in removing slums, but too often the substitute suggested by economy is the barrack-building, a great improvement on the slum-dwelling but not favourable to family life. A truer remedy is the restoration of the Catholic ideal of the relations between employer and employed, in accordance with which the former (as several great firms actually do at present) shows practical interest in the welfare of the latter out of work hours by seeing that his home-life, is passed in decent

surroundings, and a general realization of the duties as well as of the rights of ownership.

8. Socialism.¹

Definition.—The public collective ownership of all land and capital, and the public collective management of all industries.

Moral Aspect.—In so far as it denies *in practice* the right of private ownership and the sanctity of the family, and assumes the inherent moral rectitude of man, and inasmuch as it could not be carried into effect without manifest injustice, Socialism is radically opposed to Christian teaching. The evils that it aims at removing have already their remedy, devised by God, in the observance of the Christian law. Hence Socialism is in effect an abandonment of the means provided by God to cure the results of human selfishness, in favour of human efforts which rely for a change of heart mainly on a change of environment. The Christian is bound to insist that the solution of Christianity has not really been tried on a large scale to cure modern industrial disorders, and that in the application of Christian principles of justice and neighbourly love is to be found the remedy for whatever is remediable in social life.

Social Reform.—On Catholics more than on any other citizens lies the obligation of labouring for the reform of social abuses. All the virtues that Socialism claims—hatred of dishonesty and injustice, tender regard for the poor and the unfortunate, contempt for useless luxury and for privilege divided from responsibility—is the pure spirit of Christianity, and no Catholic can be called

¹ Unfortunately for clear definition, a great variety of proposed civil polities claim the common name of Socialism: we deal here only with that form which is un-Christian in its essence and developments.

really practical in his religion who can contemplate, without doing something to remove them, the widespread evils of our modern life—the iniquities of sweated labour, the cruel conditions of working-class life, the curse of intemperance, the infamy of “white slavery,” the indecencies of literature and the drama, the defective religious education of the young.

Fallacies.—

(a) That social evils result mainly from circumstances and not from human nature rebellious against the yoke of Christ. (b) That they can therefore be cured by human means without the aid of religion. (c) That non-Catholic Christianity, without Sacraments or Sacrifice, aids to worship and means of purification, ascetical discipline and certainty of belief, fairly represents the Christianity of Christ. (d) That the individual, not the family, forms the unit of Society. (e) That the individual exists for Society, not Society for the individual.

NOTE.—In view of the explicit condemnation of thoroughgoing Socialism by the present Pope and his predecessors and by innumerable similar pronouncements of ecclesiastical authority, it is certainly misleading, and may easily be scandalous, for Catholics to call themselves Socialists.

9. Capitalism.

Definition.—The possession by a minority in the State of great wealth of any kind which is used in the production, for private profit or power, of more wealth.

Moral Aspect.—In itself private property is justified by the natural law, as necessary for the well-being of the individual and the family. The evil connotation of the word capitalism arises only from the abuse of wealth. Wealth, like other talents, carries responsibility for its proper use.

Abuses.—

(a) The employment of wealth merely for the private advantage of the owner. (b) The accumulation of wealth under the form of means of production in the hands of a small irresponsible class, which reduces the vast bulk of the inhabitants of a country to a kind of economic slavery. (c) Various sorts of speculative trickery, possible only to great wealth, by which "corners" are created, competitors ruined, prices inflated, and the evils of gambling produced on a large scale.

Remedies.—It is within the competence of the State, by judicious legislation, to check the excessive accumulation of capital in the hands of a few. The multiplication of small landowners, the spread of the principle of profit-sharing, even the fixing of a maximum rate of interest, would all be steps in this direction. But the only permanent remedy is a conviction in the mind of the capitalist, created by evangelical teaching, that his superfluous wealth, after making due provision for himself and family and for the future conduct of his business, should be freely spent in promoting the welfare of his neighbour.

10. The Living Wage.

Definition.—Such a return for labour expended as will enable the labourer to live in reasonable comfort and support a normal family.

Moral Aspect.—The Catholic Church teaches that the labourer has a natural right to a living wage, and that justice is in some way violated when he does not get it. His lack of it may be due to the unfair dealing of his particular employer or to the faulty industrial conditions of the trade he exercises. In the latter case the immediate employer who *cannot*, owing to trade conditions,

pay his labourers a living wage and make a living himself, does not offend justice by paying less. But the State in its own interests should intervene either to remedy the trade organization or to provide that the defective wages should be supplemented in some other way.

Abuses.—

(a) The crime of “sweating,” *i.e.*, taking advantage of the necessity of the worker to pay less than a living wage, is, in the Church’s teaching, one of the sins “crying to heaven for vengeance.” (b) All exploitation of labour, as if the labourer were not also a human being with a soul to save and a right to the decencies of life, is condemned by Christianity. (c) Useless extravagance, culpable in those who can afford it, is more blameworthy in those whose well-being and that of their families depends on their thrift.

Remedies.—

(a) The fixing, whenever possible, of a minimum wage by the State in conjunction with the trade authorities and the workers. (b) The refusal on the part of the community to deal with firms that sell “sweated” goods, and to purchase goods the low price of which is the result of “sweating.” (c) The development of provident systems to secure workfolk against unemployment and fluctuations of demand. (d) Combination amongst workfolk the better to resist attempts at the exploitation of labour.

II. Pacifism.

Definition.—The movement in favour of substituting Arbitration for War, as the means of deciding all international disputes.

Moral Aspect.—Inasmuch as Christianity aims at the perfect and universal observance of the moral law, by

communities as well as by individuals, this movement is thoroughly in accord with its spirit. Questions of right, which are moral, cannot be properly decided by physical might. Both parties in a quarrel presumably want only what is theirs by right; they make war only that right may prevail. But to this end war is neither a certain means, for either side may be defeated; nor is it the only means, for the decision of an impartial tribunal is at least as likely to secure justice. As conflicts of right between citizens are settled, not by violence, but by the tribunals of the State, as there are Arbitration Courts for commercial cases, the members of which are chosen by the parties whilst the decisions are sanctioned and enforced by the State, so, by analogy, State quarrels should be referred to an International Tribunal representing the Governments of the world. The analogy is not perfect, because (in the true Catholic theory) the citizens do not confer on the State the authority to judge them, whilst the International Tribunal would receive its authority from all its constituent parts which could always take it back again, but as the principle of arbitration has already been accepted in the main and done much excellent work, there is only question of its extension. In an International Tribunal there would be the same risk of miscarriage of justice as there is in State tribunals, the utility of which is not thereby discredited. And just as the individual, where recourse to law is impossible, is allowed to repel unjust aggression by force, so in like circumstances the like course would be open to the State to follow.

Fallacies.—¹

(a) To think that the State abdicates its sovereignty by appealing to the moral law, interpreted by an authority freely chosen and in part representing itself, rather than

¹ Fallacies abound on *both* sides of this question.

to the sword. No State is sovereign in the sense that it is not subject to justice ; and there is no dishonour in that appeal. (b) To confound in one general condemnation unjust aggressive wars with just wars of self-protection. Some kinds of war have been so manifestly righteous as to have secured the formal blessing of the Church. (c) To assume that because an International Tribunal may be appointed some day, that *now* recourse to methods of violence are unjustifiable. Such methods may be inadequate means of defending the right, but, as things are, they are often the only means. (d) To think of war, on account of its spectacular accessories, of the field it offers for the display of high qualities of self-devotion and of its possible good effects, as anything but a deplorable calamity (like shipwreck, or earthquake which also call forth the heroic in human nature), only tolerable as an escape from worse evils. (e) To assume a necessary antagonism between different races, as if in God's design all were not meant to live in amity on earth as well as in heaven. War never arises except through some violation of God's purpose and His commands. (f) To assume that one's own nation is specially designed by Providence to dominate the rest of the world. What is morally reproachable in an individual as regards his fellows is equally so in a community in its relations with other communities, and no violation of justice may be condoned because executed on a grand scale, or for "patriotic" reasons. (g) To imagine that universal arbitration is impossible because it is undeniably difficult to bring about, and thus to delay its accomplishment by unfounded pessimism. War is still possible only because international relations are not yet Christianized. (h) To take for granted that all Pacificists are Quakers, or Socialists, or Little Englanders, or members of the Red International.

12. Feminism.

Definition.—That development of the modern democratic movement which has for aim the emancipation of the female sex from all unjust restrictions, social, educational, political, and economic.

Moral Aspect.—The morality of the movement depends entirely on the justice of the claims made; and their justice can only be determined with certainty by reference to the Creator's purpose in making the distinction between male and female, viz., married life and the family. Hence a sound, if general, test to distinguish between true and false feminism is the influence of the particular development on the family ideal. Every development of woman's personality—moral, intellectual, social, economic, and political—which does not impair, or tend to impair her functions in the family, is desirable on exactly the same grounds as the corresponding development of man's personality is desirable. It is not always easy to apply the test, but the following facts cannot be ignored.

Facts of the Case.—

(a) Except in regard to their common origin and common destiny and their consequent religious obligations, the sexes are not equal but complementary. (b) Having thus different standards of excellence, there is no means of determining whether one sex is or is not naturally superior to the other. (c) The normal man is intended by Providence to be a father and the normal woman a mother; their education, therefore, must be mainly governed by that assumption. (d) In the family, which is a true society, God has given the father the official headship, which official position does not necessarily connote superior moral or intellectual qualities. (e) Divine Providence has with equal explicitness ex-

cluded woman from the official ministry of the Church. (f) The marital authority is limited not only by the moral law, but by the fact that the wife is a companion, not a servant, and has her own sphere of internal government, wherein she is held to be supreme. (g) The State has rightly, to prevent abuse, limited the husband's authority over his wife's property, and may for the same reason have to make the position of the woman, whether wife or widow, more secure against injustice; but these practical safeguards notwithstanding, the *ideal* Christian marriage connotes a complete fusion of interests. (h) Many unreasonable discriminations against woman as such remain to be remedied, especially in the matter of wages. Payment for work done should have reference to the human dignity of the worker, not be determined by sex. The extension of the franchise to women on the same grounds as to men may reasonably be considered a means to remedy these and other abuses. (i) Judged by the above-mentioned test, *i.e.*, the welfare of the family, the political enfranchisement of women cannot be shown to be opposed to the spirit of Christianity, any more than is her municipal enfranchisement.

Fallacies.—

(a) To ignore the radical distinction of sex and all that it involves. Thus, though man is not tempted to imitate woman, the latter sometimes apes man, even to the extent of donning his garments and adopting his vices. (b) To leave out of count, under stress of minor injustices, the great fact that woman, no less than man, is the child of God, and that sex does not debar her in any way from His favour. (c) To insist on the complete equality of man and wife, in opposition to Christian teaching. This would make marriage a mere contract and destroy the principle of order in the family. And with the Christian conception of the family will go the

chief factor in raising and keeping raised the status of womankind. (*d*) To regard the subordination of woman in the marriage relation as something degrading to her human dignity. There is no degradation involved in obeying God's representative, however personally unworthy of obedience. (*e*) To think woman in general can compete on fair terms with man in *everything*. Even granting complete moral and intellectual equality, her particular functions in the propagation of the race and the education of the family remain as a perpetual handicap in regard to a great many careers. (*f*) To emphasize sex-rivalry and sex-antagonism ; in the last resort—brute force—woman must always get the worst of it.

13. The Right of the Sword.

Definition.—In its fullest significance this means that every independent community has the right to punish crimes against itself, serious ones even by death and lesser ones proportionately.

Moral Aspect.—This right to punish is inherent by the natural law in all organized sovereign communities, as it is essential for their well-being. It responds to the universal human instinct that no one should be allowed to profit by wrongdoing. In its extremest form it may possibly be exercised very rarely, and should, of course, be reserved for crimes which are anti-social in the highest degree, such as wilful murder or high-treason. It rests on the Christian principle that punishment is primarily *retributive*, and only secondarily *medicinal and deterrent*. This doctrine is commonly denied by the false humanitarianism of the day, which is an instinctive revolt against the inexorability of the moral law.

Fallacies.—

(*a*) To think that, because capital punishment is not in the strict sense reformatory, it is unlawful. Its chief

function is to restore the balance upset by the criminal act which deserves and provokes it. (b) To think that, because many crimes are due to degeneracy, and are not wholly due to culpable malice, all crimes are such, and that the criminal is merely the product of his circumstances. (c) To allow sentimental considerations (which do not diminish guilt) to blind one to the gravity of the crime committed. (d) To think that everything uncomfortable, *i.e.*, causing pain, should be eliminated from a prisoner's surroundings. (e) To fall into the opposite extreme and to treat the criminal as if punishment were not also meant for his reformation.

14. The "Rights" of Animals.

Definition.—The phrase is often used loosely to signify the claims on mankind which the non-human sentient creation has for humane and considerate treatment.

Moral Aspect.—The Church, in the interests of sound philosophy and true religion, has always taught that animals in regard to man are not "persons" but "things"—*i.e.*, that they were made, like the rest of the non-rational creation, to be subordinated to man's needs, and have no independent *raison d'être*. Only persons, beings endowed with reason and free-will, have rights in the strict sense, having each a separate individual destiny and, therefore, a strict right not to be hindered in securing it. No person can be wholly subordinated to another. The right to life and the means of living, the right of liberty of conscience and such other liberties as that involves, the right to reputation, the right to immunity of goods and person—these personal rights in man are normally inalienable, but they cannot be urged against man on behalf of animals. In their case what would be the highest right

of all, the right to live, man may always ignore when it suits his purposes, and so with regard to all "rights" that are less than this. But man's treatment of the animal creation is not on that account purely arbitrary: besides proper use, there can be misuse and abuse. Though his dealings are not regulated by any charter of liberties that animals can claim, they are under the sway of God's law and the Christian conscience, which emphatically prohibit all *cruelty*—*i.e.*, the direct infliction of physical pain without a justifying object.

Deductions.—

(a) Just as to secure food and clothing for himself and to protect himself from their excessive numbers or their ferocity, man may deprive animals of life, so he may deprive them of liberty and make them work for him in various capacities, avoiding always unnecessary infliction of pain. (b) It is forbidden to ill-use animals for mere sport—*i.e.*, to cause them pain or death for the sole purpose of exulting over their helplessness or taking delight in their suffering. (c) But where the end sought is something to which that suffering is not essential, such as exercise, excitement, exhibition of skill and prowess, no sound ethical considerations can be found to condemn as sinful sports that involve animal suffering. [N.B.—Killing things, by fishing, shooting, &c., which are available for man's use when dead, requires no further justification, supposing unnecessary suffering to be avoided.] (d) At the same time it seems certain that, in proportion as Christianity is more fully grasped and universally practised, and the tyranny of convention and prescription shaken off, "blood-sports" generally will fall into discredit, as unworthy of those thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of Christ. Many, like cock-fighting and bull-baiting, have already gone, condemned alike by law and public opinion, and there

are many, such as hunting the carted deer, rabbit-coursing, otter-hunting, tame pigeon-shooting, which are only tolerated because of a sort of general and traditional obtuseness to their real nature. (e) The Church does not forbid the use of animals to further the cause of medical science, known as vivisection, always provided conditions are observed which prevent or minimize the suffering of its subjects. The benefits which have accrued, both to man and the lower animals themselves, from this process are so great and so undoubted that it must be considered as thoroughly justifiable.¹ (f) A great deal remains to be done before lovers of animals can be satisfied that they are spared all unnecessary suffering. The State very commendably endeavours to supply the lack of Christian principles by legislating against cruelty to animals. Still, voluntary effort, such as that organized by the S.P.C.A., is to be encouraged as a means of making that legislation effective.

Errors to be avoided.—

(a) To condemn cruelty to animals on the grounds of our supposed kinship with them, as if we differed from them, not in kind, but only in degree of evolution. (b) To overlook in favour of animals the terrible and preventible sufferings which so many of our own species are exposed to: this is an inversion of right order and argues mere sentimentalism rather than Christian principle. (c) To read into the actions of irrational beings which have no proper powers of reflection the emotions and purposes of man. (d) To advocate vegetarianism on the score that it is wrong to eat animals: it is just as wrong to eat vegetables, which according to "evolution" are also in the line of our ancestry. (e) To

¹ See final Report of the Royal Commission on Vivisection, March, 1912 [Cd. 6114].

ascribe to the teaching of the Church and not to racial, political and social defects the greater prevalence of cruelty to animals amongst certain of the Latin races. (f) To regard physical pain as the greatest of evils, and to confound the dislike of witnessing it, which is characteristic of refined natures, with the divine virtue of compassion which feels for all God's creatures because He made them. (g) To imagine that animals left to themselves would be happier than they are under the dominion of man, whereas "Nature," red in tooth and claw with ravin, would be much redder if man had not to some extent checked her ravages.

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