

When Christ declared that it was easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God; when he declared that they who would lead should serve; what did he mean? Did he not mean that it is not good for men to be exalted above their fellows? Did he not mean what all history and all observation teaches to be true - that the pride and ostentation of wealth and power deaden the spiritual nature and dull the sympathy of men with their fellows?

The Catholic Church consists of two things - a soul and a machine. The soul is the spirit of Christ's teachings; the machine is the machine of the Scribes and Pharisees and High Priests. The one is typified by the long line of martyrs and confessors, by the Vincent de Pauls and soggarth aroons who have made the church dear to the poor and oppressed. The other is represented by forty thousand dollar archbishops, and the pomp and pride and circumstance of royalty that the surround the pope. Catholics believe that the soul of the church will always have in important emergencies the divine guidance, and that, however weak or wicked or corrupt a pope may be, when acting as the "servant of the servants of God," and speaking ex-cathedra on questions of faith or morals to the universal church, Divine Providence will not suffer him to teach false doctrines. But Catholics - intelligent Catholics at least - recognize in the pope himself nothing more than a man, subject to all the frailties and conditions of other men. And it is a significant fact that, though the Catholic church has never given up the belief in miracles, and the annals of her saints, down even to recent times, are filled with them, no pope, since the popes began to assume the power and

pomp of kings, is credited with a miracle. So instinctively does the soul of the church feel that that which pertains to Caesar cannot pertain to the kingdom of God.

It is natural to look to the declared representatives and followers of the Nazarene who eighteen centuries ago was crucified for teaching the equal rights and common brotherhood of men, for active and hearty support of every movement to elevate the masses by securing social and political justice. But it is unnatural to look for this aid to men, whatever they may profess themselves, who are gorged with wealth and surrounded by pomp. Men who live in palaces and are clothed in purple and fine linen, and associate with the rich and powerful, are, with rare exceptions, now, as in Christ's time, the defenders of "things <sup>as</sup> ~~are~~ they are," the upholders of the social injustice that, to pamper the few, robs, degrades and imbrutes the many. Nominally shepherds <sup>d</sup> of Christ's sheep, and using his name as a means of gaining wealth and power, their interests and associations make them the friends and supporters of the wolves that prey upon the fold. Among the poorer clergy of the church of England are many devoted men whose whole lives are given to efforts for the elevation of the masses, but the holders of the rich livings of the church of England have, as a class, preached a gospel of servility to power and of contentment under injustice infinitely more degrading than the worship of Odin and Thor; while the English bishops, with their stately palaces and princely incomes and titles of "my lord" and "your grace," have been to a man the most bigoted and uncompromising defenders of every hoary wrong, the bitterest opposers of every step in the advance of freedom and the emancipation of labor.

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"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle

than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." What, then, can any movement which aims at restoring to the disinherited their equal rights in the bounties of their Creator, and thus abolishing poverty and bringing the kingdom of justice on earth, expect from those circumstanced as are the man who gives this letter to the press and the man who signs it? The one lives in a marble palace in that quarter of New York where the millionaires live, and draws for his own private purse a princely income of over \$40,000 a year, from the hard earnings of his poor "subjects", who live in crowded and squalid tenements - an income largely made up by a tax upon the burial of every dead Catholic in consecrated ground. He is the center of the most fulsome flattery and abject servility. Though living in a democratic country, whose ~~X~~very constitution prohibits titles of nobility, he is addressed by the title given in monarchical countries only to the highest order of nobility, has a lot of "my lords" to do his bidding, and his "subjects" salute him by falling down on their knees and kissing his hand.

The other lives in the largest and richest palace in the world - a palace so extensive that it is said to contain seven thousand rooms. He is surrounded by the pomp and circumstances, not merely of European monarchs, but of Asiatic despotism. He wears on state occasions, not one crown, but three. He is surrounded by guards, not of common soldiers, but of nobles, clad in steel helmets and white buckskin breeches, and of Swiss mercenaries garbed in all the colors of the rainbow. He is habitually addressed as "Your Holiness," and to exalt him as far as possible above human kind, men are turned in his service into beasts of burden, and he is carried on the shoulders of a corps of trained bearers, while peacock fans, the symbols of

oriental grandeur, are borne above his head, He has a court composed of "eminences," and "illustrisimos," and "my lords," and those who approach him kneel down and kiss his foot. The rich are constantly bringing him offerings, and on every occasion the kings of the earth, even to the sultan of the Turks and the emperor of the Chinese, send him kingly presents. What sympathy can a man who lives in such an atmosphere have for democracy? "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" What can the cause of the oppressed masses expect from him? "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Signed: Henry George.

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