

BOOKS YOU SHOULD READ

BY HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

The Gift of Faith.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The Mother of God.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

The Holy Rosary.

Prayer.

The Blessed Sacrament.

Sorrow for Sin.

On Suffering in the Christian Life.

Atonement.

Death.

Our Judgment.

The Church's Worship.

Behold This Heart. By REV. H. KELLY, S.J.

Topical Temptations. By REV. P. ANDREWS, S.J.

Peace for Troubled Souls. By ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI.

Look to Your Halo. By REV. R. BRENNAN, S.J.

Between 13 and 20. By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

Girls in Big Cities. By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

Price 3d. each. By post, 5d.

PRINTED IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.

THE GUILE OF THE COMMUNISTS

By

TADHG GAVIN



IRISH MESSENGER OFFICE, 5 GT. DENMARK ST., DUBLIN

PRICE THREEPENCE

MY FAITH

The Gift of Faith. By THE MOST REV. JOHN CHARLES McQUAID, D.D.

What the Church Means to Us. By REV. S. J. BROWN, S.J.

What Does Life Mean? By REV. P. MACSEAMUS, S.J.

Is One Religion as Good as Another? By REV. P. FINLAY, S.J.

The Church and Her Marriage Laws. By REV. P. FINLAY, S.J.

What Are Catholics? By REV. J. GARLAND, S.J.

Faith and Conduct. By REV. M. SCOTT, S.J.

The Light of the World. By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

My Living Faith. By REV. J. VEALE, S.J.

This is Christ. By REV. S. REDMOND, S.J.

What Think You of Christ? By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

What Use is Faith? By REV. M. SCOTT, S.J.

Thoughts for Retreat. By REV. D. DONNELLY, S.J.

More Thoughts for Retreat. By REV. D. DONNELLY, S.J.

Price 3d. each. By post, 5d.

THE GUILE OF THE COMMUNISTS

The articles contained in this pamphlet have previously appeared in the pages of The Cross. For permission to publish the material in its present form the author wishes to tender to the Editor of that magazine his sincere and grateful acknowledgment.

By TADHG GAVIN

I SPENT six days in Dublin last Christmas — only six days — and yet during that short space of time I fell into conversation with a man who gave me the disturbing piece of misguided information that it was possible to be a practising Catholic and a Communist at the same time.

“Just look at Soviet Russia,” he intimated with a serene sort of smile. “Is there anything in the Constitution that in any way debars an individual from practising his religion? And can you point me out even one instance since the Revolution of 1917 where Catholics were persecuted or where priests were outlawed?”

I must confess that I am not easily shocked; yet, as I looked at the speaker, I felt a great fear tugging at my soul and a great sadness weighing on my heart. Was it possible, I asked myself, that this man really believed what he was saying? Was it possible that one who had been born and bred in the sane atmosphere of Catholic Ireland could be so “crazy” and so “mixed-up” that he was of the opinion that Catholicism and Communism could so easily be reconciled?

And then the shattering thought came to me . . . Perhaps there were many others like him who were gullible enough to subscribe to the same opinion? If they believed it at home in Ireland, would they not be the more ready to fall victims to the wiles of insidious propaganda when they were cut adrift from their native moorings — when they reached an alien shore and had such pernicious suggestions poured into their ears? And, if they were foolish enough to swallow such ideas as this, then they would assuredly be fair game for those Communist agents who conceal their real aims and objectives under a patriotic guise and seek to trap the unwary.

It was inevitable that I should ask myself the question: what can I do to show such people that they are mistaken in their views?

There seems only one way by which I can open their eyes to the fact that Catholicism and Communism can never be reconciled; and that one way is to write an article, setting forth the aims of the Soviet and the ceaseless struggle which it has waged against the Catholic Church from the time of

the Russian Revolution down to our own day. And I can only hope that the words which follow will be instrumental in showing even one hitherto misguided and misinformed soul that Catholicism and Communism are, and must always be, like poles apart.

I cannot, of course, in this brief sketch include all the details of Soviet oppression and injustice. I cannot recall the names of the myriad Catholics who have been sent to work in the salt-mines of Siberia or the concentration-camps of the White Sea borders. Nor can I put on record the prayers and famous last words of the countless others who bedewed the snows of Russia with the cascades of their blood.

Books upon books have been written to describe these things. Refugee upon refugee has sought asylum in the West, and has carried in his mind the memory of atrocities that make even the brutalities of the sadistic Nero pale to insignificance in comparison. The Iron Curtain and the refusal of free elections in the Union are sufficient evidence of the desire of the Kremlin to prevent the people of the Western world from learning the real wishes of the ordinary Russian people; and both the Iron Curtain and the refusal to the plea for free elections allow the big bosses who reside in Moscow to carry on their "dirty work" under the guise of prosperity and non-resistance.

As every schoolboy probably knows, the Russian Revolution occurred in 1917. And on 23rd January, 1918, a decree was issued to the effect that all Church property was going to be nationalised. It was quite apparent that the Communist leaders were not going to let much grass grow under their feet in getting rid of any obstacle which they saw in their way. To them Communism was a religion, and the Soviet Constitution was a god; they were willing to allow no other religion and no other creed to stand in the way that led to the achievement of their own political ends.

"No Church or religious society has the right to own private property," ran the words of the decree; "such societies do not enjoy any judicial rights."

In the same year the monasteries were dissolved and looted. "All articles of platinum or silver, cloth of gold or cloth of silver, precious ornaments and precious stones were placed to the credit of the State funds and were handed over to the local financial body for disposal at their discretion."

Religious instruction was strictly forbidden in all schools within the Soviet Union. A few years later the prohibition went even further. According to a decree dated 13th June, 1921, religious instruction was strictly forbidden to be given at either a school or in a house to any person under the age of eighteen.

"The idea that man can fulfil his high destiny only on the basis of the Gospel is erroneous," rang the edict of the Kremlin. "It is obvious that

religious education results in stupidity. As the Soviet Government is responsible for the children of the country, it must prevent the minds of these children from being darkened by religious superstition."

Family life was steadily undermined, and no official recognition was given to Church marriages. Divorce was so easily obtainable that it was only necessary for one partner to send a postcard to the other and the union was automatically annulled. Anyone who had the courage to practise his religion openly was not allowed to teach or to lecture, to be either a doctor or a nurse.

There was no mercy meted out to those who attempted to speak their minds, if their minds were in any way opposed to the new *régime*. A priest or bishop who endeavoured to withhold the sacred vessels from Communist hands was hauled up before the Commissariat and declared guilty of treason.

"By proclaiming the church valuables inviolable, the defendants incited the masses of the people to engage in civil war." Such was the absurd charge which their accusers made against them.

As time went by, things became even worse.

In the February of 1922 a Communist publishing firm called 'The Atheist' was formed with the sole aim of putting on the market books and tracts of every shape and size that derided religion and glorified the "freedom" of paganism. Anti-religious demonstrations were organised. Mock processions were staged.

"... The following themes were selected for the mock processions:—the performance of miracles; opening holy shrines; the Immaculate Conception. The students of Sverdlov University imitated the representatives of different religions..." Thus an eye-witness penned his description.

In February, 1925, the Militant Atheists' League was founded, and at the end of three years it numbered a hundred and twenty-three rabid members who held God and Our Blessed Lady up to scorn at every conceivable moment.

Holy Communion was criticised on the absurd grounds that it "encouraged drunkenness". God was declared to be a pious fake on the equally absurd grounds that no airman had ever seen Him. Priests were commanded to submit their sermons and discourses so that they might be censored and partly deleted. Church holydays were declared to be official working-days. Religion was described as "a brutalisation of the people". And instructions were issued that "education was to be so directed that it would efface from the people's minds this humiliation and this idiocy".

In 1928 Christmas trees and Easter eggs were declared illegal.

In 1929 one thousand four hundred and forty churches and chapels were closed, and one hundred and fifty bishops were sent to concentration camps on the borders of the White Sea.

In the same year Sunday was declared a compulsory working-day. Certain charitable activities were utterly forbidden. From now on, no religious society could give material assistance; no religious society could organise prayers or doctrine lessons; no religious society could open a playground or a library; no religious society could operate a sanitarium or render medical aid.

Teachers were urged to pour the deadly poison of Communism into the minds of the young.

In 1930 it was declared illegal for a "non-worker" to live in either a town or city. This new edict was specially directed at priests and bishops. The inevitable result followed. Priests and bishops had to take their belongings and go to live in some rural area. Thence they had to cover every day the extraordinarily long journey that now separated them from their urban flock.

In the pages of a Russian magazine, *Bezbojnik*, dated 21st April, 1939, there is an account of the difficulties with which those priests had to contend—an account which is in many ways reminiscent of the trials and hardships which our own faithful Irish clergy had to endure during the dimness of the Penal Days.

"The wandering priest carries the Church in his suitcase. He is dressed in ordinary workman's clothes, but carries about his Mass vestments, chalice and ikon. He visits secret meetings of worship, distributes Communion, performs wedding ceremonies, blesses baptismal water which the parents keep for christening their babies in the priest's absence, and after that he visits the sick. He then wanders off to the next village."

A touching picture of unflinching heroism and faithfulness in the face of what even the most sanguine might be tempted at times to describe as impossible odds.

The waves of persecution rolled on.

But the remarkable fact eventually came to light that such oppression and wholesale persecution were failing to produce the results which the rulers of the Kremlin had so ardently hoped to achieve. Moreover, Pope Pius XI, in a famous encyclical, spoke out boldly and fearlessly against the utter inhumanity of the Communist agents. And even from the English Press there went forth a great diatribe against those Soviet monsters who could so loudly profess their belief in freedom and tolerance and yet were forcing their Catholic subjects to endure a slavery that was absolutely appalling.

So, quite suddenly, the Soviet pretended to turn over a new leaf.

The Militant Atheists' League took on a less militant tone. One of its principal members even went so far as to criticise the anti-religious demonstrations. Policemen were empowered to clamp down on those "hooligans"

who broke up religious services. And in the November of 1936 the opera *Bogetyri* was stopped at the Kamerny Theatre when it was noticed that some of the actors were uttering would-be 'wise-cracks' against religion in general and Catholicism in particular. An apology for some of these would-be 'wise-cracks' appeared on the following day in some of the Russian newspapers.

"It is well known," ran the gist of the apology, "that Christianisation of Russia was one of the principal factors in the *rapprochement* of the backward Russian people with the people of Byzantium and later with the peoples of the West, namely, with peoples of a higher culture . . ."

The open attack on the One True Church had accordingly been made and was remarkable for nothing more than the way in which it had failed to achieve its object. An attempt was now made to destroy Catholicism by the implication that "the two great C's" could get on amicably together—with the veiled assertion that it was possible to take one's religion from Rome and one's politics from Moscow. Cleverly—oh, so cleverly!—the Soviet agents tried to conceal the fact that atheism and divorce and godless education were matters which lay within the bounds of religion, and could not therefore be so lightly dismissed and relegated to the political sphere.

Yet surely every intelligent Catholic ought to realise that he cannot become a Communist and retain his religion. One cannot serve God and Mammon. And every intelligent Communist is fully aware that he can harbour only hatred and bitterness in his heart for the Church which is the greatest obstacle on the pathway of his godless ideals.

Clearly did Yaroslavsky, the great exponent and agent of Communist views and ideas, show the attitude which every Soviet follower must bear towards God and religion.

"A person cannot act correctly, cannot act in an organised manner as a Communist . . . if his brain is poisoned by religion," he stated. "In order to overcome the tremendous difficulties which confront us . . . it is necessary that every person, that every peasant and worker sees things as they are, without the intervention of gods, saints, angels, fiends, goblins, were-wolves, and other spirits, good or evil. Religion acts as a bandage over the eyes of man, preventing him from seeing the world as it is. It is our task to tear off this bandage and to teach the masses of workers and peasants to see things correctly, to understand what does exist and what does not, so as to be able to rebuild this world to fit the needs of the workers and peasants. We must therefore convince the masses that Communism and religion cannot go together, that it is impossible to be a Communist and at the same time believe in devils or gods, in heavenly creatures, in the Virgin Mary, in the saints, in pious princes and princesses, bishops and landowners, who have been canonised by the

priests. It is impossible to be a Communist-Leninist and at the same time to go to church, listen to the lies of the priests and take part in the performance of religious rites . . . ”

It will come as no surprise to the intelligent reader when he learns that Yaroslavsky wrote the foregoing before 1932, when the waves of religious persecution were at their strongest, and when it was not yet realised how dismally such persecution was going to fail.

But to return to the gullible man whom I met in Dublin during the Christmas holidays and the many others who may be just as gullible as he . . .

I am of the opinion that there are very few Irishmen worthy of the name who would willingly forsake their religion in order to join the Communists. The bulk of those who do so are misguided by the belief that they can be both Catholics and Communists at the same time. The agents of the Soviet are not nearly so outspoken now as they were in the far-off days when Yaroslavsky penned the message which I have previously quoted. Now they disguise their real aims under the twin cloaks of patriotism and humanitarianism. They assure the gullible that they are merely concerned with giving the workers of the world a square deal. They assure the gullible that their policy is to give freedom to all the small countries of the world. And the gullible have been known to swallow such stuff and nonsense in the past — even in our own country and in our own capital.

The remarkable thing is that the majority of Irishmen would be ready and willing to fight Communism if they really knew what it stands for. They would nobly man the breach to wipe out its bigotry and cruelty and godlessness, as their ancestors did against another and less dreadful enemy in former days. But Communism has put on a very deceptive garment. She has endeavoured to transform herself from a witch into a maiden of dazzling loveliness. Yet the same spirit lurks behind the fair array, and Communism remains at heart unaltered: the same yesterday, the same to-day, and presumably the same to-morrow.

Anyone who is familiar with Virgil's *Aeneid* will recall the famous comment which was made when the Greeks, despairing of capturing Troy by open hostilities, resorted to coaxing means and a wooden horse. ‘*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes* — I fear the Greeks, even when they bear gifts.’ It is worthwhile to remember that self-same comment at the present day, especially where the Communists are concerned and the agents of the Soviet are at work. For, like the Greeks of old, they have done their level-best to destroy Catholicism by open means. Now they are doing their level-best to wipe it out by hidden methods.

It has been said with a great measure of truth that “we Irish win the war, but always lose the peace”. Let us ponder on that saying, and see in what

ways it can be applied to our own lives. And let us pray God that we may be wise enough not to lose our heritage beyond price when Communism discards her weapons of war and comes to woo us in the guise of peace.

SO THERE'S FREEDOM IN CHINA!

I HAVE recently come across a credulous journalist who gave me the swift and firm assurance that we of the West are entirely mistaken as to real conditions in Communist China.

“Before 1949,” he declared, “the country was poor and backward; but, since the advent of Communism and the rise to power of Mao Tse-Tung, there is a liberty and tolerance in evidence which must inevitably bring happiness in their train.”

I described the author of the foregoing passage as merely ‘credulous’. But, as so many of my readers will have instantly surmised, I was altogether wrong when I chose that particular adjective. I should have gone further than that and referred to him as a man whose downright gullibility would have left a fool completely in the shade. For, when I inquired whether he had ever studied the Constitution of Communist China, he was compelled to answer “No”.

“Then what makes you imagine there is liberty in evidence there?” was my next question.

“I’m not quite sure,” he answered with a shrug. “I’ve just been reading about the progress they’re making out there — and I had a hunch . . .”

Any man or woman who has taken the trouble of looking at the Constitution which Mr. Mao Tse-Tung has drawn up for the China which he is happy to dominate will readily realise how wrong that hunch could be. Like all Communist-governed countries, there is no liberty in China. There is no tolerance. And, as long as the Reds retain their ascendancy there, there can definitely be no happiness.

Mr. Mao Tse-Tung is not particularly interested in the liberty of the individual. Indeed, he goes out of his way to suppress and eradicate freedom in any shape or form. He has built up a powerful Party in the China that he governs, and in the interests of the Party all individual likes and dislikes are compelled to go by the board. There is no place here for personal hopes or private dreams or individual aspirations. The citizen of Communist-governed China must always remember that it is the Party that is important and not the individual, and that anything which may come in conflict with the progress of the Party must never be allowed to rear its head.

Not even the slaves who used to toil and sweat beneath the glare of a tropical sun ever felt more hopeless and more insecure than the people who

are forced to live under Mr. Mao Tse-Tung's by-no-means benign rule. Outside the Party which he has established, there is always the risk of certain death. And, within the Party, members must always walk with wary feet lest they, in their turn, should be expelled from its ranks and be forced to meet the fate which is meted out to those whom Mr. Mao Tse-Tung and his accomplices are wont to look upon as "traitors" and "renegades".

According to the Constitution of Communist-governed China, "every Party member must understand that the interests of the Party and those of the people are one, and that responsibility to the Party and people is identical. Every Party member must wholeheartedly serve the people, constantly consulting them, pay heed to their opinions, concern himself with their well-being and strive to help realise their wishes."

But the wishes of the people were not really what Mr. Mao Tse-Tung had in mind when these particular words were first drafted — nor have they been much in the forefront of his mind throughout the years that have rolled between. What does concern him, however, is the ever-present fear that the people whom he rules with a hand of iron may endeavour to organise some subversive activities and that he himself may suffer in the consequences. For that reason, each Party member is warned "to be constantly on the alert against the intrigues of the enemy, and to guard the secrets of the Party and the State." That is why Mr. Mao Tse-Tung insists that they should "pay heed to the opinions" of the ordinary people!

The Communist *régime* in China is not merely a form of government. It is also a form of religion to which people owe what Mr. Mao Tse-Tung describes as a "sacred duty".

"It is the sacred duty of every Party member," the Constitution continues, "to pay constant attention to the safeguarding of the solidarity of the Party and the consolidating of its unity. Within the Party no action which violates the Party's political line or organisational principles is permissible, nor is it permissible to carry on factional activities or activities which aim at splitting the Party, to act independently of the Party, or to place the individual above the collective body of the Party."

A person cannot become a member of the Party unless he can give a firm assurance that he is prepared "to serve the masses, heart and soul, and strengthen his ties with the masses, to learn from them, to listen with an open mind to their wishes and opinions and *report them without delay to the Party*, to explain Party policy and decisions to the people." (The italics are mine.)

A person cannot become a member of the Party unless he is willing to promise "to be truthful and honest with the Party and not to conceal or disguise the truth."

In short, a member of the Party is not free to live his own life or follow his own bent. Every thought he thinks, every word he says, every action which he does, should — if he is a real member — be directed to one end and to one end only, and that one end is the furtherance of the Communist *régime*.

You think I am drawing the long bow? Far from it. The rules and regulations which I have quoted are taken from the Documents of the "Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party in China." And for further proof of the subjugation of the individual in the interests of the Party take a look at the following passages:

"The Communist Party of China requires all its members to place the Party's interests above their personal interests, to be diligent and unpretentious, to study and work hard, to unite the broad masses of the people, and to overcome all difficulties in order to build China into a great, mighty, prosperous, and advanced socialist state, and on this basis to advance towards the achievement of the loftiest ideal of mankind — Communism."

There can be no leniency or clemency under this form of government. There can be no room for a liberal and broadminded outlook.

By hook or by crook "the Party must prevent and resist corrosion of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ways of thinking and styles of work and guard against and defeat any Rightist or 'Leftist' opportunist deviation inside the Party."

There are those in the Western hemisphere who would raise their voices against each and every dictator; but even the harshest form of dictatorship would appear mild and benign compared with the Communism which is here outlined.

The question naturally arises: what happens if a Party member feels unable to live up to all these rules and regulations? The Constitution of Communist-governed China cleverly disguises the consequences.

"Party members who fail to fulfil any of the above-mentioned duties shall be criticised and educated." (What "criticised" and "educated" mean in the present context is open to anybody's guess.) "Any serious infraction of these duties, splitting the Party unity, breaking of the laws of the State, violation of Party decision, damaging Party interests, or deception towards the Party constitutes a violation of Party discipline, and disciplinary action shall be taken against it."

The wording "disciplinary action" is delightfully vague. It conveniently covers a multitude of punishments, of which death is the speediest and not at all the most unlikely.

AND THIS IS FREEDOM ?

It was Mr. Mao Tse-Tung who declared that he and his minions had since 1942 "done much to strengthen Marxist-Leninist education within the Party. . . ." "But," he added a little later in the same speech, "we still have our shortcomings . . ."

Yes, make no mistake about it. Mr. Mao Tse-Tung and the *régime* which he has helped to establish have their quota of shortcomings. But they are not the ones he has in mind. He has his shortcomings because through his ambitions and endeavours freedom and happiness are to-day absent in Communist-governed China, and because the highest and noblest of aims are blotted out before the fierce onrush of Soviet-born ideas.

Count the number of times the word 'Party' is used in the extracts which I have quoted. The Party! The Party! It is always the Party! One would imagine that the Party was a deity to be set on high and to be constantly worshipped.

Would you consider this a good form of government to live under ?

I asked my gullible journalist acquaintance this question when I had come to this point in my article and handed him over the facts and quotations which I had penned.

"Of course not!" he exclaimed, when he finished reading what I had written. "You see, I didn't know before," he added, by way of an apology.

Sure — he didn't know! I knew that from the very beginning. If only he had known, he would never have uttered the foolish statements which he made in the first place.

But the point to remember is this. That particular journalist was not alone in his foolishness and gullibility. There are many more in my native Ireland who will open their mouths and stupidly opine, when something goes wrong, that "there may be something to be said for Communism, after all!"

If you know anyone who utters or has uttered a single word in praise of what Communism stands for, do me a favour: Pass this article on to him to read, and ask him to compare the existing forms of government in the free democracies of the West with the slavery and the insecurity under which the people of Communist-governed China are compelled to pass their days.

THE FATHER OF COMMUNISM

The town of Trier, old-world and leisurely, lay drowsing in the warm glow of a summer's afternoon when, on 5th May, 1818, a child who was destined to be known throughout the world as Karl Marx made his first appearance on this earthly scene. The child's father was a Jew and a prosperous lawyer into the bargain; and he cherished the hope that one of his

sons would follow in his footsteps and carry on the legal business, long after he himself should have passed away.

Karl was the second son to be born of the marriage, and the father's heart beat happily as he looked down at the tiny bundle of humanity nestling so peacefully in its mother's arms.

"We shall call him Karl," he proudly announced.

"You may call him what you will," the mother returned with a smile. "But in my own heart he will always be known by a grander name."

"And that, my dear, will be —?" put in Heinrich Marx interrogatively.

"Child of good fortune," supplemented Henrietta Pressburg.

Little did those fond parents realise as they uttered those words that their son would in later years wound their hearts and smash their hopes and cause them to know many a sleepless night. It was indeed well for them that they could not tear aside the veil that divided the future from the present or see just then the roadway which this boy would travel or glimpse the seeds of havoc and destruction which his hands would so wantonly sow.

An indication of Karl's ungovernable temper was not long in making itself evident. He was barely seven years old when his parents became converted to the Christian Faith; and, when they tried to explain to their second son what this entailed, he stormed and fumed. Their conversion, he declared, was nothing less than an open insult to Judaism, and he in his turn would see to it that he made "his whole life a reply and a revenge".

His parents at the time did not take such a threat seriously. Indeed, it is more than likely that they thought he had no clear realisation of what his ranting statements really meant. But the years that followed were to prove that young Marx was quite in earnest when he made that threat.

At the Trier Gymnasium the boy showed that he was reasonably clever. He was especially fond of Latin and Greek; and his teachers suggested that he might do well at the university.

So at the age of seventeen Karl registered as a student at the University of Bonn, and there he took up the study of Law. During his sojourn there he seems to have spent most of his time in gambling and drinking. He missed his lectures, and he gloried in being referred to by the rest of the students as "a tough man". In the sessional examination which took place at the end of his first academic year, he failed miserably — so miserably, in fact, that the university authorities wrote to his father, intimating that it would be pointless for the young student to put in an appearance when the other students returned in the autumn.

His father was on the point of keeping Karl at home for good. But the young man pleaded for "just one more chance". Why should not his father

send him to the University of Berlin? He was older now — older and wiser — and he gave his solemn promise that he would immediately settle down to the serious business of study.

After a great deal of hesitation, Heinrich Marx agreed; and in the November of 1836 Karl registered at the University of Berlin, and once more gave the impression that he was going to study Law.

But the promise which the young man had made was soon conveniently forgotten. Again he spent the greater part of his time in the gambling-dens and drinking-saloons of the city. Again he missed lectures, and gloried in such appellations as “the rake” and “the spendthrift”.

It was only to be expected that the diligent and steady Heinrich Marx should be extremely displeased with the behaviour of his dissolute son. Time and again he wrote to him, urging him to see the light of reason before it was too late.

On 17th November, 1837, the old man declared: “I am disgusted with your letters; their irrational tone is loathsome to me; I would never have expected it of you. What cause can you have for your behaviour? Weren't you the child of good fortune from your very cradle? Wasn't nature generous to you? Haven't your parents loved you with a great love? Was there ever a time when you could not satisfy the least one of your wishes? . . . And now, the first sign of opposition, the least discomfort, brings forth your pessimism! Do you call that strength or manly character?”

On 1st December, 1837, Heinrich Marx again took his son to task.

“I perceive in you complete disorder,” he wrote, “stupidly wandering through all branches of science without really imbibing any of them, stupidly brooding at your burning oil-lamp when you should be really studying. You are a madman turned wild in a coat of learning and unkempt hair; and in your utter wildness you see with four eyes. It is those four eyes that make you unable to endure even the least set-back and fill you with such a complete disregard for everything decent . . .”

Later on in the same letter the following shrewd summing-up appears: “You are surely following in the footsteps of those malicious young men who proclaim their perverted thoughts as to the nature of genius.”

But what cared this dissolute young man what his father might think or say as long as he had sufficient money in his pocket to provide him with drink and amusement — as long as he had sufficient grounds for believing that more funds would be forthcoming when his present store was exhausted?

On 10th May, 1838, the unexpected happened. Heinrich Marx died. There was only one road open to Karl now, if he wished to stay on at the university. He simply must get down to real, solid work! Down to work he got; and in the summer of 1841 he sat for his final examination and

managed to scrape together sufficient marks to obtain for himself the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The more arduous task of making a living now lay before him.

In the year 1842 he became editor of *The Rhenish Gazette*; but the downright obscenity of some of the articles and the revolutionary views which the leader-column invariably contained could not fail to attract the attention of the authorities. Within a year the publication was suppressed. So now indeed it would appear that Karl Marx was on the bread-line!

To Paris he made his way, and there for two years he did his level-best to gain a livelihood as a hack-writer. But there were many writers of far greater talent and ability in the French capital at that time, and editors were in no wise inclined to accept for publication the badly-written articles of a mere dabbler who was quite obviously carrying a chip on his shoulder.

Banished from France in 1847, he made his way to Brussels. While there, he committed to paper all the hatred and bitterness and spite which he cherished for those who had the leisure and money and comfort which had once been his, but which now he no longer possessed. The document containing his attack on those more fortunate than himself he grandiloquently styled ‘The Communist Manifesto.’ And in that so-called manifesto Marx posed as the defender of the downtrodden Proletariat against the powerful, self-complacent Bourgeoisie!

“The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms,” he ponderously enunciated. “It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

“Our era — the era of the bourgeoisie — possesses, however, a distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.”

When Marx had been a wealthy student at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin, he had seen nothing wrong with luxury and affluence. Now, however, because he had nothing to lose, he advocated a levelling process whereby the rich might become less rich and the poor might become less poor. It sounded sufficiently impressive on paper to make quite a number of people foolishly imagine that the idea could be put into practice. They little dreamed that the man who had written it all was not really concerned with the poor and the needy — that he was merely interested in himself.

“The distinguishing feature of Communism,” he declared, “is not the abolition of property generally, but the abolition of bourgeois property. But modern bourgeois private property is the final and most complete expression of the system of producing and appropriating products that could

possibly be based on class antagonism — on the exploitation of the many by the few.

“In this sense, the theory of the Communists may be summed-up in the single sentence: Abolition of Private Property.”

By promising to abolish private property, Marx felt sure he would gain a ready support from those who had no property to lose. He also tried to win the immoral over to his standard by assuring them that “the bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the disappearance of capital.”

In 1848 Marx went back to Germany with a view to organising a revolution in his native land. A warrant for his arrest was issued. He fled to Paris, but there was no welcome for him there. So he was compelled to cross the English Channel and take up his abode in a squalid corner of Camberwell in the City of London.

Marx was already an embittered man, and the years which he spent in England made him still more bitter. He could not understand why the English people did not recognise a genius when they saw one. He could not understand why they refused a soft job and easy money to one who had gone out of his way to uphold the weak and the distressed.

Poverty and hardship stared him in the face; but it was not really Marx who experienced the brunt of it all, but the unfortunate woman who had gone through a form of marriage with him years before and who was now the mother of his four children.

Fragments of the letters which she sent home from London bear ample testimony to the trials which she endured.

“You know London and its conditions well enough to appreciate what difficulties I have to face. . . . Nobody wanted to take us in . . . I had to sell my bedding to satisfy the druggist and the baker and the milkman. . . . On Easter of this year our poor, little Francisca died. . . . For three days the poor child wrestled with death . . . She suffered, oh, so terribly, and I suffered, too. . . .”

And what was the upholder of the weak and the distressed doing all this time to alleviate the sorrows of this unfortunate woman? Absolutely nothing! He was too proud to take off his coat and do an honest day's work. All he was capable of doing was to pen series upon series of vitriolic articles about the loathsome bourgeoisie of the period; and even on these articles he was incapable of making a single penny.

“It is the fate of women to weep,” he once remarked callously, when someone sought to remind him that he should be looking after his family and ought not to leave the task of bread-winning to his already-sickly wife.

By this time Marx not only hated man — he also hated God.

“The idea of God must be utterly destroyed,” he vehemently asserted. “It is the keystone of a perverted civilisation. The true root of liberty and equality and culture is atheism.”

In the September of 1864 he launched an ‘International Workingman's Campaign’ with the hackneyed slogan: “Workingmen of all countries, unite!” And in the year 1867 the first volume of his *Das Kapital* came rolling off the printing-presses and marked by its publication the real birth of Communism.

“Religion is the opium of the people,” the author had sneered; and he had no doubt that many a gullible man and woman who chanced to peruse the pages of this carefully-worded volume would be caught in the mesh of Communistic aims and ideas.

For the last thirteen years of his life Marx was in bad health; and his wife was compelled to be constantly at his beck and call. It must therefore have been a merciful ease to her when on the afternoon of 14th March, 1883, the man whom she undoubtedly loved in spite of all his faults passed quietly away — leaving to the world the memory of a life that was anything but noble and copies of some books which would continue to disseminate the evil and the guile that was in his heart.

Judged impartially, Karl Marx must inevitably strike the reader as a man whose character and life left much to be desired. He broke his father's heart. He neglected his mother and wife and children. He instigated riots and revolutions, and then fled from the various scenes of trouble, leaving his slower associates to face the unpleasant consequences. His so-called love of the working-man was nothing but a cloak to hide the love that lurked in his heart for his own success and his own aggrandisement.

“Child of good fortune,” his dotting mother had called him when, as a one-hour-old babe, he had nestled in her arms. But it was her oft-voiced regret in after-years that she should have lived to see that self-same son stirring-up the bitterness of revolt and scattering the blight of misfortune on every place where he might happen to find even a temporary home.

NIHIL OBSTAT :

Jeremias Hayes, S.J.
Censor Theol. Deput.

IMPRIMI POTEST :

✠ IOANNES CAROLUS,
*Archiep. Dublinen.,
Hiberniae Primas.*

DUBLINI, die 1 *Septembris*, 1960

THE SACRAMENTS

Life Comes Through These. By REV. S. REDMOND, S.J.

Baptism and Confirmation. By REV. M. QUINLAN, S.J.

How To Make a Good Confession. By REV. M. QUINLAN, S.J.

Practical Advice on Confession. By REV. N. WALSH, S.J.

The Joy of Confession. By REV. L. SHEIL, S.J.

The Virtue of Penance. By THE MOST REV. DR. O'DWYER.

Going to Confession. By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

The Sacrament of Confirmation. By DR. M. KREUSER.

Holy Communion. By REV. M. QUINLAN, S.J.

Take and Eat. By REV. R. NASH, S.J.

Matrimony. By REV. M. QUINLAN, S.J.

Courtship and Marriage. By REV. M. J. SCOTT, S.J.

Extreme Unction and the Sick Room. By REV. M. QUINLAN,
S.J.

Price 3d. each. By post, 5d.