Inside the Monster by José Martí

Writings on the United States and American Imperialism

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Preface

Because his life was cut short at the age of forty-two, José Martí never wrote the volumes he planned on many subjects. Moreover, with the exception of some poetry, he never reached the point of writing a book. The pattern of his thought must therefore be culled from speeches, newspaper and magazine articles, letters, and the preliminary notes for books never written. This constitutes an enormous body of writing. Indeed, Martí's writings, collected and edited by Gonzalo de Quesada y Miranda, fill seventy volumes. Even this edition is incomplete since there still remains uncollected material scattered in South American newspapers. But in these seventy volumes there is abundant evidence of Martí's broad culture and his remarkable talents as a political thinker and organizer; evidence, in short, that has caused him to be regarded as one of the great figures in the history of Latin America.

Unfortunately, the bulk of Martí's writings has not been available in English. There have been only two collections—*The America of José Martí*, edited and translated by Juan de Onís, and *Martí on the U.S.A.*, edited and translated by Luis A. Baralt. Both contain selections from Martí's series of studies of North American life and, in the case of the first collection, some of his writings on Latin America, a few selections from his writings about Cuba, and the diary of his last days. Neither collection, however valuable, includes

Henry George and Land Monopoly

The oppressed workers are turning their eyes to the land against the day when universal production, piled up by machines, is stacked sky-high in the markets, with no buyers. Avaricious European firms and impudently rich and titled Englishmen must not come near the free man and appropriate his country's soil, later to live in unjust luxury from its enormous and capricious production!

As silently as octopuses the great companies of Europe have been spreading their tentacles over the most fertile lands of North America. Countries with vast areas of land must be extremely vigilant! The sooner they begin protecting them, the better; Europe has a large surplus of idle and restless money. A Netherlands company already possesses 4,500,000 acres of the most productive land in New Mexico. An English syndicate has 3,000,000 acres in Texas. A German firm owns 1,000,000. And one man, the Marquis of Tweeddale, is owner of 1,750,000 acres of the nation's rich farmland. They bought entire states: all of New Mexico and its rangelands, all of Mississippi and its rivers, all of Florida and its orange groves.[2] But the Senate has risen in protest, and without a

1. This selection is an extract from a more complete article by Martí. See above, pp. 200-6, for another part of the same article.

2. Although foreign syndicates gobbled up large tracts of land in the United States, they were not the only ones guilty of obtaining large

dissenting voice has passed a bill prohibiting future acquisitions of any land in the United States by foreigners, who do not buy this privilege with their declaration to obey the laws of the land they covet. None but the foreigner who declares his intention of accepting citizenship in the Republic will be able to obtain land in it, unless that land is inherited or given in payment of a debt.

No company with more than 20 percent foreign membership will be able to buy land. Not even national companies—whether formed for building railroads, highways, or canals—will be permitted to obtain more than 5,000 acres in the territories where Congress has full power, and this only if those acres are obviously used for the company's operation.

It is necessary to take a friendly stand against threatening armies. Labor met certain defeat in its ill-advised uprisings this spring. Much is still needed to enable labor to act with that unity of purpose which will sufficiently invigorate its attack upon the present social structure. In the convention held this month, it was seen that the isolated trade unions,

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holdings, frequently through bribery and fraud. Railroads, cattle barons, lumber companies, corporations, well-financed syndicates all had a share in seizing, or often stealing, public lands. Compliant officers of the Interior Department, under pressure from companies, withdrew public land from would-be homesteaders and allowed it to be taken over by syndicates. The corporations selected the cream of these lands.

Another source of fraud lay in surveys of government land. It had become customary for Washington to allow the surveyor-generals of the various states and territories to let contracts for public land surveys to their deputies. By gaining control of all surveying contacts, the syndicates cheated the government out of valuable land rights. Still another practice was landgrabbing by false entries under which corporations obtained huge tracts for little or nothing. When the true homesteader arrived he found that the best areas had fallen into the hands of the syndicates. In 1887 the Land Commissioner reported that "bold, reckless, and gigantic schemes to rob the government of its lands" had been exposed in every state and territory.

each one working for the good of the members of a particular occupation, were unwilling to yield their sovereignty to the Knights of Labor, or to be subject to its skills, defeats, and assessments.[3] But the Knights of Labor is in the hands of dedicated followers, and at an opportune moment.

Others stave off the June heat by playing ball, laying wagers, imitating the calisthenics of English soldiers. But George A. Swinton, Post,[4] and Powderly,[5] given the glorious task of making the world of humans swing on better hinges without bloodshed, are going from nation to nation teaching a way of obtaining for the working man, by concise and intelligent action, a secure existence in which his food and shelter will not have to be a donation of charity. These new evangelists do not preach blindly. They have not memorized their texts for reform. Every wrong suggests its own cure.

3. A conflict existed in the Knights of Labor between the pro- and anti-trade union elements, and many unions complained that the anti-union elements in the Knights sought to destroy their organizations. The anti-union elements, on the other hand, insisted that by concentrating only on organizing skilled workers, the unions violated the principle of labor solidarity. Unwilling to surrender their sovereignty to the Knights of Labor, many of the national trade unions met and formed the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, which became the American Federation of Labor in 1886.

4. Louis F. Post (1849-1928), single-taxer who edited Henry George's campaign paper, *The Daily Leader*, in the mayoralty campaign of 1886, later edited the single-tax weekly published in Chicago, *The Public* (1898-1913), and was U.S. Assistant Secretary of Labor (1913-1921).

5. Terence V. Powderly (1849-1924), joined the Machinists' and Blacksmiths' Union in 1870, was Secretary of the District Assembly of the Knights of Labor and elected Grand Master Workman in 1879; served as Mayor of Scranton from 1878 to 1882; pursued conservative policies as head of the Knights of Labor in an effort to appease the Catholic Church and the commercial press; supported the Republican Party in 1897 and was appointed the United States Commissioner-General of Immigration.

They have formulated their original texts from original wrongs, and with the enthusiastic and contagious force of reality, they are accommodating their propaganda to the reforms they are attempting. These men are new saints who travel the world shutting doors upon hate. They can see the hurricane coming and they are guiding its course. As a method they use peace. Realizing that the land never denies a man what he needs, they want the land administered in such a manner that its produce will be divided equally among all. Previous ideas spring from this central idea, which will grow old and gray before it is put into effect but must triumph in the end.

It is the mismanagement of public lands, principal source of all property, that is responsible for those insolent accumulations of wealth so ruinous to futile competition among the aspiring poor. It is the abuse of public lands that gives rise to those monstrous corporations that shrivel or flood the national fortune with their thunderings and greed. It is those evil partnerships of capital that compel the laborer to perish from unemployment, or to work for a grain of rice. It is those huge companies that elect senators and representatives at their own expense, or buy them off after they have been elected, to be sure of their support for the laws that keep these companies happy in abusing them. And they distribute, with national consent, new tracts of public land from whose produce they continue amassing their tremendous power.

Those apostles believe, then, that there must be a stop to the illegal alliance between the companies and their representatives who, in the name of the nation, provide the corporations with the wealth of the land for the interest of that part of it which is to be returned to them in the form of shares or the like, in payment for their vote—for their plunder!

Those apostles—George, Swinton, Post, and Powderly—believe that the nation, which is only another name for the guardian of common property, cannot put under private control the land that belongs to all and is necessary to all, except in lease or loan and for national use only. Those apostles

believe that, since the public domain must become the property of those who live upon it, the less of it that is given away, the less it will cost later on to take it back from the hands of men who, through cunning or bribery, were fraudulently declaring bankruptcy with its use.

This, then, is the main significance of the unanimous vote of the Senate, and the analogous bill in the House, which prohibits foreign ownership of the land. It was an opportune act and did not to any extent decrease respect for the power of labor, now moving quietly ahead.

The courts are punishing labor's illegal coalitions, its sieges of proprietors who resist the workers' demands, its threats or acts of violence.[6] The proprietor is free to employ, or refuse to employ, whatever worker he wishes; by the same token the worker is free to work, or refuse to work, for his employer. The worker who forces the proprietor to consent to his demands, by means of coalitions or sieges or threats of violence is, under laws now in force, guilty of conspiracy.[7] Day

6. The courts were punishing all of labor's acts, not merely those Martí describes. Numerous arrests were made for picketing and boycotting and for "unlawful assemblages and unlawful words." In one case in New York City, Judge Power warned: "I hold that any man who walks up and down in front of a man's place of business commits a species of assault. I intend to hold such men hereafter on bond to keep the peace." In two months in New York City, there was a "legal round-up" of some one hundred strikers and boycotters under the charge of "conspiracy." Men who distributed circulars advising the boycott of a bakery got ten days. For boycotting Cavanagh, Sandford and Co., forty-seven tailors were indicted. In the famous Theiss boycotters' case, five union members were sentenced to State Prison at hard labor -two for two years and ten months; two for one and one-half years, and one for three years and eight months. (Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States* [New York, 1955], Vol. II, pp. 117-19.)

7. Only two states, Maryland and Michigan, had by 1886 enacted laws authorizing the formation of trade unions. Thirty-six states, in 1886, failed to provide for the legal formation of labor organizations, and in thirty-five the activities of workers in combination were subject

after day this spring the agitators have been starting to serve their prison sentences. In Chicago a jury is already considering the murder charge against the anarchists who incited to slaughter and spread it with their own hands.[8] But the Knights of Labor, served by those steelwilled men of peace, is a strong organization precisely for this reason: it condemns the use of force.[9]

La Nación (Buenos Aires), August 15, 1886
Dated New York, July 2, 1886

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to limitations imposed by conspiracy statutes, or, where these were lacking, by judicial application of the English common law governing combinations. Conspiracy laws usually prohibited any person from trying to prevent any other person by threat, intimidation, or "unlawful interference" from working at a lawful business or occupation on any terms he saw fit. They also prohibited "any two or more persons" from combining "for the purpose of depriving the owner or possessor of property of its lawful use and management, or of preventing by threats, suggestions of danger, or any unlawful means, any person from being employed by or obtaining employment from such owner or possessor of property, on such terms as the parties concerned may agree upon. . . ." Violation was usually punishable by fine up to $500 or six months' imprisonment.

The courts defined intimidation so loosely that even if no interference with the right to work had occurred, the mere inducing of workers to break their contract with an employer was considered a conspiracy. Indeed, the mere presence of a large number of strikers outside a mine or factory often resulted in convictions for conspiracy. In nearly every case where such convictions were appealed to the state Supreme Courts, the judgments of the lower courts were sustained.

8. Martí is here referring to the trial growing out of the Haymarket Affair which is discussed below. See p. 287.

9. Martí here is referring to frequent statements by Terence V. Powderly, Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, condemning radicalism, the use of violence in labor disputes, and especially the anarchists involved in the Haymarket Affair in Chicago. However, he does not note that Powderly's views were often condemned by members of the Knights of Labor.

The Schism of the Catholics in New York

Nothing of what is happening in the United States today is comparable in transcendence and interest with the struggle between the authorities of the Catholic Church and the Catholic people of New York.[1] This has reached such a point that for the first time the loyal observer wonders in amazement if Catholic doctrine can truly belong in a free nation without being harmful to it, and if such is the virtue of

1. At the beginning of the campaign to elect Henry George mayor of New York on the United Labor ticket in 1886, many, if not a majority of the Catholic priests supported George. But as the campaign advanced, "at the suggestion" of the "higher Catholic powers" all Catholic priests except Father Edward McGlynn (1837-1900) withdrew from active participation on behalf of the Labor Party candidate and single-tax advocate. On September 29, 1886, Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan (1839-1902), a strong conservative, forbade Father McGlynn to speak at a scheduled public meeting on behalf of George. Father McGlynn disobeyed, informing the Archbishop of New York: "I, in view of my rights and duties as a citizen, which were not surrendered when I became a priest, am determined to do what I can to support Mr. George; and I am also stimulated by love for the poor and oppressed laboring classes, which seems to be particularly consonant with the charitable and philanthropic character of the priesthood, by virtue of which it has gained everywhere its greatest triumphs." McGlynn was thereupon suspended from exercise of his priestly functions for a period of two weeks.

freedom that it restores to its primitive condition of poetic teaching a church which has unfortunately become man's most efficient instrument of deprivation. Yes, this is so! Sudden clashes reveal the heart of the matter. From the heated controversy in New York the corrupt Church was left chastised unmercifully, and the Church of justice and compassion triumphant. It is obvious that the virtue and poetry of the Church can fit into the modern world, with no threat to freedom. One feels that Catholicism in itself has no degrading power, as might be thought in view of the fact that so much about it is debasing and enslaving. The degrading element in Catholicism is the extent to which the Church's hierarchy abuses its authority and its malicious counsels knowingly confuse its own interests with the simple injunctions of the faith. It is understandable that one can be a sincere Catholic and a zealous and loyal citizen of a republic. And as always, it is the humble, the shoeless, the needy, the fishermen who band together shoulder to shoulder to fight injustice and make the Gospel fly with its silver wings aflame! Truth is

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As soon as the exciting mayoralty campaign of 1886 was over, the Archbishop decided to take more decisive action against the rebel priest. On January 14, 1887, he removed McGlynn from the pastorate of St. Stephens. McGlynn was then ordered by the Pope to come to Rome to hear why he should refrain from pursuing his activities on behalf of the labor and single-tax movements, and when he refused, he was excommunicated from the Catholic Church, the order to take effect July 4, 1887. Father McGlynn had strong supporters among the clergy and laity of New York City and a real split occurred in the Catholic Church over his excommunication. McGlynn himself continued to support social reform causes as president of the Anti-Poverty Society. He was reinstated to the ministry in December 1892. (See Foner, op. cit., pp. 126-27, 146-47; Stephen Bell, *Rebel, Priest and Prophet* [New York, 1937], pp. 34-62; *Irish World*, November 6, 1886, January-March 1887; *New York Times*, January 14-20, 1887.) For another article by Martí on the subject, see "La Excomunión del Padre McGlynn," *Obras Completas* [La Habana, 1946], Vol. I, pp. 1819-28.)

revealed more clearly to the poor and the sufferers! A piece of bread and a glass of water never deceive!

I have just sat on their benches, have just seen them, mingled with them, seen the souls of men shine in all their splendor when I had thought that a despotic religion with unlawful purposes had extinguished that splendor. Ah, religion—as dogma always false in the light of a lofty wisdom, as poetry eternally true! In a word, what are religious dogmas but the beginnings of natural truths? Their very candor and crudity inspire love, as in poetry. That is why, because these dogmas are ineffable grains of certainty, they so gently captivate the poetic spirits who do not willingly descend to the concrete study of the true.

Oh, if they could but know how religions merge and are weighed and measured there, and how Nature, crowned with harmony and robed with song, emerges from among them more beautiful than all! The strongest part of man's faith in religions is his faith in himself and his proud resistance to believing he is capable of being wrong. The most powerful aspect of faith is affection for the tender years when it was received, and for the adored hands that gave it to us. Why do men quarrel about those things which can be analyzed without effort, known without pain, and which leave all of us confused in an extraordinary and common poetry?

I have just seen them, sat beside them, smoothed the wrinkles of their frowning souls which, stone upon stone and thorn by thorn, their exile is causing. Another man would have rejoiced in their protest; I rejoiced in their unity. Why were those Catholics, those working people, those Irishmen there? Why were those housewives there, worn out and white-haired? Why were the good men of all creeds there if not to honor the saintly priest, persecuted by the Archbishop of their Church for having stood beside the poor?

It was at Cooper Union, in the free school's meeting hall—

Cooper Union, built by that grand old man Cooper[2] with his own earnings so that others could learn how to overcome the difficulties he had found in life. Although he was far from handsome, a handsomer man never lived! The meeting was held in Cooper Union's lower hall. It was raining outside and overflowing inside. Hardly an ignoble face was to be seen, not because there were none but because there seemed to be none. Six thousand people, six thousand Catholics, filled the seats, the halls, the doorways, the spacious corridors. Their "Sogarth Aroon," the "priest of the poor," had finally been thrown out of their church. For twenty-two years he had advised them without belittling them, had shared his inheritance and salary with the unfortunate, had not seduced their wives or led their daughters to a life of easy virtue. It was he who built in their own poor neighborhood a church whose doors were always open, he who never used the influence of faith to intimidate the people's spirit, or darken their thought, or reduce their free minds to the blind service of the worldly and impure interests of the Church—he, Father McGlynn! He has been thrown out of his house and his church; his own successor evicted him from his bedroom; his name was stricken from the confession box. Who will go to confession now with a soul full of hate? Because the Father has been saying what Jesus said, what the Church of Ireland says with the Pope's blessing, what Archbishop Meade preaches to his diocese, what that deepthinking Balmes lays at the feet of the Pontiff as ecclesiastical truth—because he

2. Peter Cooper (1791-1883), industrial pioneer and inventor, founder of Cooper Union in New York (1857-1859), which offered popular instruction in science and art. A social reformer as well as a wealthy capitalist, Cooper ran for president on the Greenback Party ticket in 1876, offering a program of currency reform for the solution of the economic crisis. He received 80,000 votes. Martí, who admired Cooper, wrote an appreciative essay on him. See *Obras Completas*, Vol. I., pp. 1072-80.

said that the land must belong to the nation, and that the nation must not distribute it among the few; because with his dignity and fame, his virtue and wisdom, his sermons and advice, he helped in the magnificent autumn elections those energetic workers and fine thinkers who look to the law for the solution to needless poverty—for all these things his Archbishop robs him of his parish, and the Pope orders him to Rome for discipline!

When from the political rostrum Father McGlynn defended Cleveland in the elections two years ago because he thought he was honest, the Archbishop was not displeased, for Cleveland was the candidate of the party with which the New York Church was negotiating—negotiating and scheming![3] But the same thing about Father McGlynn that seemed good to the Archbishop when the priest was defending the archiepiscopal candidate, that same expression of political preference on the part of a Catholic priest seemed bad now that Father McGlynn's defense could be alarming to those wealthy Protestants who entrench themselves in the Church and use it to stand against justice for the poor who built it!

The Catholic Church came to the United States on the shoulders of Irish immigrants whose religious faith, as with the Polish, has been strengthened by the fact that in times past their saints were the leaders of their independence, and by the fact that the Norman and English conquerors have always attacked their religion and their country at the same time. The Catholic religion has become the fatherland for the Irish, but not the Catholic religion that the servile and ungrateful secretary to Pope Pius VII established in agreement with the Protestant king of England George III when, on asking favors of this implacable enemy of the Irish Catholics, he made him observe that "the Protestant colonies in America have rebelled against your Gracious Majesty, while

3. Martí is referring to the Democratic Party, which Catholics traditionally supported.

the Catholic colony in Canada has remained loyal." For the Irish, it was that other religion of those bishops who were gentlemen and poets—those who, their banners emblazoned with a gold harp on a field as green as their own countryside, pushed aside the hungry clergy arrived from Rome sullied by iniquitous ostentation, by all the vices of an arrogant oligarchy, and by the immoral commitment of aiding the princes from whom they had received donations, a clergy using the influence of the faith to act against those princes' enemies and vassals. These merchants of divinity bit the dust before those simple Irish theologians who could always count on a meal at the tables of the poor, and who desired no more purple than that conferred upon them by the conqueror's sword as it stabbed them through, a hymn on their lips, among the hordes of faithful peasants who were fighting furiously for their freedom. The Irish curate was the soothing pillow, the medicine, the poem, the legend, the rage of Ireland. From generation to generation, spurred on by misfortune, this fondness for the priest has been accumulating in the Irishman, and he would sooner burn his own heart in his pipe than uproot his affection for his "Sogarth Aroon," his poetry and advice, his country in exile, the smell of his native countryside, his medicine and his soothing pillow!

Thus Catholicism grew rapidly in the United States, not by springing up spontaneously or from any real increase in members, but by a simple transplant, and there is no reason to wonder or marvel at this. There were as many more Catholics in the United States at the end of every year as there were Irish immigrants arriving during the year. With them came the priest who was their adviser and all they had left of their country. With the priest, the Church. With their children thus reared in Catholicism, the new generation of parishioners. With the noble tolerance of the United States, the facility of raising above the Protestant steeples the steeples built with Irish pennies. Those were the foundations of Catholicism in these States: men in work shirts and coarse jackets, poor women with swollen lips and scalded hands.

How is it that such fertile fields were not invaded by the bold and despotic souls whose lamentable and perennial predominance is the plague and ruin of the Church? Pomp and vanity continued the work begun by faith. Scorning the humble people to whom it owed its establishment and wealth, the Church raised money in the streets of the wealthy, and with its sumptuous regalia easily dazzled the vulgar appetite for ostentation, so common to people of sudden aggrandizement and little culture. It took advantage of the normal disturbances of public life, in an age of study and readjustment of social conditions, to appear before the apprehensive monied classes as the only force which, by means of its subtle influence over the soul, could check the dreaded march of the poor, keeping alive their faith in a world to come where their thirst for justice would be slaked, in order to dull their eagerness to slake it in the present world. So one can see how in this stronghold of Protestantism, the Protestants, still representing the wealthy and cultured class here, are the staunch and tacit friends, the grateful accomplices, of the religion that roasted them on the spit, one that today they cherish because it helps them safeguard their unjust accumulation of worldly possessions! Pharisees, all of them, and augurers!

Having acquired the desire for power, in a place where religious mystery and threatening times hold it in such high esteem, the Catholic Church cast its eyes on the origin of that power—here the ballot box—as in monarchies it casts them on the sovereigns. And it began trafficking in votes. When the Irish immigration increased in strength, the Democratic was the weaker party, and since liberal opinion always belongs to defeated parties, the immigrants were drawn to it as soon as they acquired citizenship. For this reason the Catholic element became a formidable factor in the Democratic Party, and that party achieved success in New York City and in other cities where the Irish congregated. Soon the Church, with its ability to influence votes, and the men who needed those votes to climb to where they could enjoy public office,

weighed and measured and brought about changes in power. The Catholic Church began to have interested and compliant representatives in meeting halls and on town councils and governors' boards, and to sell its influence on the ballot box in exchange for donations of land and the passage of laws to its liking. Feeling capable of electing legislators, or of blocking their election, it tried to make laws for the exclusive benefit of the Church, and in the name of freedom it set about, little by little, proposing every means of replacing it.

The Church had courage for everything, since it felt strong among the masses because of their unquestioning faith, among the powerful because of the alliances it offered them for the protection of their worldly possessions, and among the politicians because of their need for the Catholic vote. Among the mansions in the wealthy section of the city it erected a marble cathedral surrounded by almshouses, so that everyone could see and admire them. How different from those Father McGlynn maintained in the slums, where people are acquainted with affliction! Miracles of ecclesiastical influence began to appear: mediocre lawyers with a sudden clientele; unctuous physicians who left the sick and discouraged women ready to be anointed; bankers trusted by their depositors for no visible reason; silk-robed, well-fed cardinals who came from England, smooth and fresh as new apples, to convert the wealthy families to faith in the Archbishop. There were dazzling hospitals and asylums. The more enterprising candidates solicited support from the Church's neutrality. Even the newspapers, which should be the bona fide priests, mitigated or concealed their beliefs, flirted with the archiepiscopal palace, and seemed to applaud its attacks on the people's freedom—some for fear of being abandoned by their Catholic readers, and others in their desire to strengthen a valued ally in the struggle to preserve their privileges! The affable influence of the "Sogarth Aroon" was employed to take the Irish vote wherever it suited archiepiscopal authority, conniving to profit by the laws which, like this authority, trafficked in votes. The power of the Church in the United

States thus grew to enormous proportions: because of the large number of European immigrants, the collusion and usefulness of political cliques, the timid hopes of the working masses, the disorganization and lukewarm character of the Protestant sects, the carelessness of the times in religious matters, the little that is known of the ambitions and methods of the Roman clergy, and the foolish vanity of the recently arrived immigrants so enamored of this new ostentation. But it owed its growth in power especially to that vile tendency—characteristically born on this altar of money—to consider the Church's hold over the common people as the firmest obstacle to their demands for betterment, and as the surest bulwark for the fortunes of the rich.

So it seems that all the problems that interest and confuse mankind are to take shape and be resolved in the United States, that the free exercise of reason is going to save men many years of doubt and misery, and that the end of the nineteenth century will leave in the zenith a sun that rose at the end of the eighteenth in rivers of blood, multitudes of words, and the sound of heads. Men seem determined to know and assert themselves, and lend strength to one another, with none but the bonds agreed upon for their mutual honor and security. They stagger, shake, and demolish, like all gigantic bodies when rising from the earth. Too much light misleads and usually blinds them. There is a great threshing of ideas, and all the chaff is carried away by the wind. Human majesty has grown enormously. False republics are becoming known; if sifted in a sieve, they would produce nothing but the souls of lackeys. Where freedom truly prevails, with nothing to hinder its rule but our own natures, there is no throne like the mind of a free man, no authority nobler than that of his thoughts! All that torments and belittles man is being called to trial and must surrender. Whatever is incompatible with human dignity will fall. Nobody will be able to clip the wings of the poetry of the soul, and there will always be that magnificent eagerness and that long-

ing look toward the clouds. Whatever wishes to remain must become reconciled to the spirit of liberty or consider itself dead. Whatever lowers or reduces man's stature will be struck down.

With liberties, as with privileges, it follows that together they prosper or are endangered, and one of them cannot be sought or misused unless all of them feel the harm or the benefit. Therefore the Catholic Church in the United States, with both its impure and its virtuous elements, is being brought to judgment for enslaving and tyrannizing when the generous souls of a country decide to lead the downtrodden for purposes of helping them and mitigating the physical and spiritual servitude in which they live. All the pompous officialdom is aligned on one side and all the suffering on the other. There is the brotherhood of despotism and the brotherhood of affliction.

Still alive in memory, as if a legion of apostles were seen to pass by, is the admirable campaign for the election of the mayor of New York in the autumn of 1886. Evidenced there for the first time, and in full strength, was the spirit of reform that animates the working masses and the devoted men who suffer from their complaints. There are some passionate men in whom the human species is purified by all the tortures of the furnace. There are men ready to lend unselfishly, to suffer for others, to wear themselves out showing people the light! This campaign demonstrated the wonder of a new political party, a party able to count a mere three years of preparatory mistakes and dissension, struggling along without friends or money or servile, complacent officialdom, and without any corrupted accomplices. And it was on the point of winning, for not only was it inspired by the usual enthusiasm of political campaigns, but also by the impetus of redemption, something demanded in vain from parties that do nothing but talk and make promises.

The origins of this historical movement are already known. Henry George came from California and reissued his book, *Progress and Poverty,* and it spread through Christendom like

a Bible.[4] In it is that same love expressed by the Nazarene, set down in the practical language of our days. The main thesis of the work, destined to have bearing on the causes of a poverty which grows in spite of human progress, is that the land must belong to the nation. From this essential premise, the book derives all the needed reforms. Let the man who works and improves the land possess it. Let him pay the state for it while he uses it. Let nobody have rights to land unless he pays the state for its use, and let him pay no more than its rental. Thus the weight of taxes to the nation will fall only upon those who receive from it a way of paying them, life without unjust taxes will be easy and inexpensive, and the poor will have homes, time for cultivating their minds, understanding their public obligations, and loving their children.

George's book was a revelation not merely to the working man, but to thinkers. Only Darwin[5] in the natural sciences has left on our times a mark comparable to that of George in the social sciences. Darwin's hand appears in politics, history, and poetry; wherever English is spoken, the cherished ideas of George are impressed on the mind with commanding force. He is a man born to be the father of men. When he sees an unhappy man, he feels a slap on his own cheek! The labor

4. In 1885 Professor Richard T. Ely wrote that "tens of thousands of laborers have read *Progress and Poverty*, who have never before looked between two covers of an economic book. . . ." In Ireland the book had a strong influence on the land reform movement. In England George Bernard Shaw and Charles Darwin commented favorably on the work, and Tolstoy read pages from *Progress and Poverty* to his peasants. However, Karl Marx wrote to John Swinton on June 2, 1881: "As to the book of Mr. Henry George, I consider it as a last attempt to save the capitalistic regime." (*Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Letters to Americans, 1848-1895* [New York, 1953], p. 127.)

For the details of the mayoralty campaign of 1886 in New York City, see Foner, op. cit., pp. 116-27.

5. Charles Robert Darwin (1809-1882), British naturalist, expounded the theory of evolution by natural selection in *On the Origin of Species* (1859), a major challenge to religious fundamentalism.

unions cluster around him; to succeed, he tells them, you must educate yourselves! In a nation where suffrage is the origin of law, revolution lives in suffrage. Right must be staunchly defended, but it is more useful to love than to hate. When the working people of New York began to feel their power, all of them—Catholics, Protestants, and Jews; Irishmen, Germans, and Hungarians; Republicans and Democrats—appointed George their candidate, to show signs of their power and resolve on the occasion of New York's mayoralty election.

It was not a party being formed, but a church in process of growth. Such fervor has never been seen outside of religious movements. Even in physical attributes those men seemed to be endowed with supernatural strength. They never became hoarse from talking. They needed no sleep. They forged ahead as if they had discovered in themselves a new being. They were as joyful as newlyweds. They improvised a treasury, election machinery, conferences, a newspaper. Great was the alarm of the political cliques, the leagues of ruffians and profiteers who live in luxury from the buying and selling of votes. Those hordes of voters were running away from them and beginning to see the light. "Look to the law for righting your wrongs!" said the political parties to the workers when censuring them for their attempts at violence or anarchy, but as soon as the workers organized themselves into a party to look to the law for help, they were called anarchists and revolutionaries. The press ignored them; the upper classes refused them aid; the Republicans, on the side of privilege, denounced them as enemies of the country; and the Democrats, threatened at close range in their occupations and influence, demanded assistance from the powers allied to them, in order to administer the law for the good of all. The entire Church fell upon the workers who built it. The Archbishop, after having deposed a priest for supporting the policies of the common people, ordered his priests, via a pastoral letter, to support the policies of the ruffians and profiteers determined to betray them. Only one parish priest, the most illus-

trious of them all, the only illustrious one, refused to abandon the common people—Father McGlynn!

So then, if the Archbishop, who should be an example to priests, can favor a certain policy, how can it be considered a crime for a priest to do what the Archbishop does? And who are the holy ones—those who ally themselves with the powerful to stamp out the rights of the downtrodden, or those who, defying the wrath of the powerful, and being above them in virtue and intelligence, toss the purple aside and go quietly to sit down among the sufferers?

There is said to be a saintliness equal to Father McGlynn's, but none greater, and that there is so much meekness in his lofty spirit that in all his wisdom he finds no obstacle to the dogma of the descent of grace. They say he considers the tallest man so enslaved by his body that he never quite understands why the man who achieves success because of his body should be only a man. He is said to regard virtue as so desirable and beautiful that it is enough of a wife for him. They say he lives to comfort the unhappy, to strengthen and expand men's souls, and to lift them up, by means of the hope and beauty of worship, to an ardent poetic state. And they say that he creates at the heart of the Church the spirit of universal charity which engendered its triumph over the ambition, the selfishness, and the despotism that has disfigured it. And they also say that he has the indomitable energy of one who, instead of serving men, serves mankind!

Whatever stifles or debilitates man, he considers a crime. It cannot be that God supplies man with a mind, and that the Archbishop, who is less than God, should keep him from expressing it. And if from the pulpit some priests, by order of the Archbishop, can intimidate their parishioners to vote for the enemy of the poor, how is it that one particular priest, by his rights as a free man, cannot help the poor away from the altar, and even help them in nonreligious matters, without resorting to his purely religious authority over their consciousness? Who is the sinner, he who from the holy pulpit

misuses his authority in the area of dogma to immorally favor those who sell the law in payment for the vote that puts them in a position to dictate it; or he who, knowing that on the side of the poor there is nothing but bitterness, comforts them from within the Church as a priest, and helps them outside of it as a citizen?

The parish priest, it is true, owes obedience to his archbishop in ecclesiastical matters; but in political opinions, in the realm of simple economy and social reform, in matters having nothing to do with the Church, how can the parish priest owe absolute obedience to his archbishop if those matters are not connected with the administrative affairs of the Church, or with the practice of worship, to which his authority over the priest is limited? How is it that nationalization of the land should be held as a harmful Catholic doctrine in New York, if at this very moment it is a doctrine promulgated by all the Catholic clergy in Ireland? Or must the parish priest be allowed no more plan of action than is ordered by his archbishop, who is not his authority in matters of politics, and become like a slave trembling at the wrath of his master, merely because the offending priest has the courage to tenderly intercede on behalf of the unfortunate? Or should the priest give up his country?

Inasmuch as the Archbishop, who had expressed in a pastoral letter an opinion on land ownership, wrongfully forbade Father McGlynn from attending an open meeting in which the land question was to be discussed, and inasmuch as the Father disregarded him in this matter concerning which as a priest he had the right to disregard him, and as a man had the duty to do so, the Archbishop suspended him from his parochial duties—suspended the one who had made his parish a community of love! Inasmuch as on a matter of material policy he disobeyed his ecclesiastical superior, the Pope ordered him—Father McGlynn, virtue incarnate—to Rome for discipline. And because, instead of going, he humbly explained to the Pope in a letter the mistake for which he was

condemned, the Pope defrocked him—stripped Father McGlynn, the only saintly priest in the diocese, of his clerical vestments!

Here is where the handsome spectacle appeared. Obviously, power will never want for friends. Those who live from the Church's vote—the politicians who fear it, the men it supports or recommends, those who see it as a safeguard for their excessive wealth, and the press interested in preserving its alliance with it—are all contentedly fluttering in the shade of the Archbishop's palace. But the parish has deserted its pews en masse, has draped with immortelles the confessional box bare of its priest, and has indignantly thrown the new priest out of the sanctuary—the new priest who had the temerity to appear there to break up a meeting of parishioners gathered to express their affection for their much beloved "Sogarth Aroon." "Nobody will harm him, nor will he want for a thing on this earth!" "We built this church with our own money, so who will dare throw us out of it?"

"This saint who lives for the poor, whom could he have offended?" "Why do they mistreat him? Because he's against our having religious schools we don't need, when we have public schools for learning, and our homes and church for religion?" "He loves us Catholics but he also loves us men!" The women at the meeting were the most enthusiastic. A woman drew up the protest which those in charge of the session took to the Archbishop. Husky workmen sobbed, their faces in their hands. Father McGlynn, humble and sick, had not seen or talked with anybody and was suffering in the modest home of a sister.

But the New York Catholics rose in fury against the Archbishop and laid plans for huge meetings. They set the ineffable piety of the persecuted priest against the contemptible character of those vicars and bishops who are the pride of archbishops. With all the intensity of the Irish soul they succeeded in regaining their right to think freely about public issues, to denounce the Archbishop's immoral dealings with

the mercenary politicians whose dictates he obeys, to proclaim that aside from the truths of God and the management of his own house, "the Archbishop of New York has no more authority over the political opinions of his flock than has the agent who goes looking for naturalists in deepest Africa." And they remember that there once was an archbishop in Ireland who died of shame and neglect for having condemned the just resistance of Irish Catholics to the crown of England. "It is on our conscience, God, but let nobody come to mow down our thinking, or rob us of our right to govern our Republic according to our own understanding!" "In matters of dogma, the Church is our mother, but outside of dogma, our country's Constitution is our Church."

"Hands off, Archbishop!"

Never, not even in George's autumn campaign, was there greater enthusiasm. The hall resounded with cheering when those prominent Catholics fervently justified the absolute freedom of their political opinions.

"So then, to our joy, he who was honor itself for his wise use of propaganda, and is famous in New York for his charity; this holy Father McGlynn, our joy and integrity, who has taught us by his loving word and example all the beauty and justice of faith; the one who poured his entire fortune into our hands and returned to us in alms the wages we paid him, and never wanted to forsake the slums of his poor—this man was evicted from the church built with his own hands, was denied for one more day the room where he prayed and suffered? And that other Bishop Ducey, who smuggled an embezzling banker to Canada under his robes, is enjoying the full trust of the Church? And so the Archbishop compels our Pope to deal unjustly with this glory of the Christian faith, and goes grieving to the funeral of that Catholic destroyer of freedom, that James McMaster[6] who shone like the eyes of a

6. James Alphonsus McMaster (1820-1886), Catholic journalist, publisher and editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, outstanding Catholic journal which was against the abolition of slavery and during the Civil

hyena, and spent his life vilifying free peoples and using his poisonous remarks to help rulers and slaveowners?" "Deliver us, Lord, from speaking out against our faith, from obeying the priests who work against our freedom as citizens, and from forsaking our 'Sogarth Aroon' by whose immense charity Catholicism has become the foundation of our souls!"

The schism of the Catholics remains in this state of upheaval. How many intrigues and collusions, how many dangers to the Republic it has brought to light! And so the Church buys influence and sells votes? And so it is angered by saintliness? And so it is an ally of the wealthy members of hostile sects? And so it forbids its priests to exercise their political rights unless they exercise them on behalf of the men who traffic in votes for the Church? And so it attempts to degrade and ruin those who offend its political authority and meekly follow what the sweet and gentle Jesus taught? And so one cannot be a man and a Catholic at the same time? We shall see how one can, as these new fishermen are teaching us! Oh Jesus, where could you have been in this struggle? On your way to Canada with the rich robber, or in the lowly cottage where Father McGlynn is waiting and suffering?

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La Nación (Buenos Aires), April 14, 1887
Dated New York, January 16, 1887

War was so hostile to the Lincoln administration that it was suppressed for a time and the publisher imprisoned.