

General Election and have no rights at all, if you have only attracted the votes of forty-nine per cent. Like the Catholics, they have their faith, which they hold because they believe it right, whether the majority is for it or not, and they would agree with the Catholics that

"He is base who dare not be  
In the right with two or three."

To them the mere worship of the majority is a bourgeois superstition, more ridiculous, if less dangerous, than Catholicism itself. So in 1934 the Socialists in Spain had little hesitation in rising in armed rebellion against the legally chosen Government, and—strange as it may seem—Liberal-Labour newspapers here supported their action.

It is not true that the "majority," as is so often said, of the Spanish people has declared for the present regime. On the contrary, the elections early in this year showed a slight majority of votes in favour of the Right. It is true that, by one of those accidents so common in all Parliamentary systems, a majority of seats went to the Popular Front. A Government, holding power on such a very tenuous and technical mandate, should surely have been very careful to govern in an impartial a fashion as possible. Thus, when the Conservatives were in a not dissimilar position, Señor Gil Robles, though the leader of the largest party in the Cortes, insisted on co-operating as far as possible with anti-clerical groups. By doing so he earned much criticism in some Spanish Catholic circles.

But really the abstract intentions of these individuals are not matters of great importance. For, wherever the blame should be put, the fact is undoubtedly that, whatever emerges from the present troubles in Spain, the one thing that is certain not to emerge is what the *Daily Herald* calls "democracy." Either there will emerge mere anarchy or there will emerge the dictatorship of a party which has never hesitated to repeat its utter contempt for the "bourgeois ideology of democracy." Or there will emerge a Government of the Right, supported by men who, it is true, differ widely in their conception of the best Government for Spain, when normal times return, but among whom are some, at any rate, who have shown a reasonable willingness to introduce into the country such democratic experiments as may seem at all compatible with the preservation of order.

Meanwhile, Catholics who study the English press since the outbreak of hostilities, can hardly escape a sense of humiliation as they contrast the apostolic zeal and missionary activity of Left Wing leaders with the readiness of prominent and educated Catholics to allow the case for the Church to go by default. It is surely the duty, not of the Catholic hierarchy, but of the Catholic laity, to ensure that the attacks upon the Church are answered in the secular press. Men whose services to the State give them a right to be heard with respect are under a special obligation in this matter.

It is mortifying for Catholics to reflect that it has been largely left to Lord Rothermere, so far as the secular press is concerned, to refute the misrepresentations of those who calumniate the Church in Spain and who represent this conflict as not essentially against the forces of Anarchy and Communism but between "Fascism" and "Democracy."

In Spain heroic priests have remained at their posts and died for the Faith. English Catholics are not required to die for the Faith, and are apparently

### The Weep and Wail Corps

THE traditional folk-lore of mankind does not look with a kindly eye upon creditors. In the fairy stories it is Lawyer Slyfox who has the stranglehold. History supports popular tradition, for the lot of debtors has generally been miserable enough. It is only in our own day that debt has become respectable, and that the non-payment of enormous debts is quite cheerfully practised by the principal governments of the world. A magnificent inability to pay is a commonplace of the great world of International Affairs. At the same time, instalment buying goes ahead, and there are a great many people who live in comfort, owing on everything from the house and the car to the gramophone. It is as though manufacturers, being practical men, have recognized that in a changed world they must view success more modestly than their fathers. They cannot hope to sell and be paid, but they can, at any rate, sell and be owed.

An exceptional interest accordingly attaches to the Weep and Wail Corps, which has been organized by a number of creditors in Shanghai. A big Chinese Trust Company defaulted, and the creditors could not get paid through the ordinary machinery, so they have formed groups of mercenary mourners and of genuine creditors, who hang about outside the homes of the directors, bewailing the miserable condition of not being paid what you are owed. The calculation is that after a time these gloomy presences will begin to tell on the unscrupulous high spirits of the defaulters, who will object to being followed everywhere by these embodiments of their non-existent consciences, and that, in short, they will make a real effort to pay. It is a subtler and more oriental method than that of the New York debt collector whose practice is to use a white van with the letters painted very large, "I collect bad debts." The American method relies on shame and human respect, but the older civilization of the East is less easily shaken, and its nerves are less easily upset.

The old profession of the mute, which seemed to have passed away in an era of ever-gayer cremations, may perhaps be required if the big London stores adjudge the employment of a melancholy and persistent visitor better debt-collecting than a graduated series of patient, pained, and peremptory reminders. If so, many people who at present despair of ever finding work that the world wants of them or think that they can do, will have the satisfaction of paid employment. All the points that tell against an applicant for an ordinary post will help towards membership of a Weep and Wail Corps. The uglier, the more decrepit, the surlier, and the more despondent the better, nor will the work be hard for those with a natural grievance. The present commercial tradition makes people who come to the door over-anxious to please, ingratiating, often servile. A salesman's life is wearing, because it is not natural to man to be for ever exerting himself to make a good impression. Those whose work keeps them constantly dealing with the public, are only happy, like bus conductors, when they have standing of their own and a protective capacity. It is all to the good, seeing the great place which business has come to hold in human life, that all the emotions shall find a place in business routine. Office boys who have hitherto been discouraged from whistling can be trained to whistle for their employers' money, and can be promoted in due time to wail.

### RELIGION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

#### I: THE CHURCH AND THE REVOLUTION

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The events of the last twenty years, culminating in the terrible conflict in Spain during the last few weeks, have shown how empty were the hopes of the last century that civilization had outgrown the violence of war and revolution that had marked the pre-war age. On the contrary, it seems as though Europe were sinking ever deeper into a chaos of strife and disorder that threatens the existence of our civilisation.

There seems an impassable gulf between this age of social unrest and the social security of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. On the other hand, circumstances make it easier for us to enter into the life and thought of the previous age—the half-century of war and revolution that preceded the Victorian era. Then, as today, Europe was divided into two camps and civilisation seemed shaken to its foundations. For Catholics, above all, it was a time of stress and anxiety, for the Revolutionary movement had declared war on the Church in the name of the rights of man and social justice, and thus had enlisted the forces of idealism in an indiscriminate attack against the abuses of the traditional order and the Catholic faith and tradition in which that order had been founded.

In sheer material destruction of monasteries and churches, in confiscation of property and abrogation of privileges, the age of the Revolution far surpassed that of the Reformation: it was, in fact, a second reformation, but a frankly anti-religious one. Throughout Europe the old regime had based itself on a union between church and state so close that any revolt against the political system involved a corresponding revolt against the established church. Moreover, the church was singularly ill prepared to stand a shock of this kind. For more than half a century—first in the Bourbon kingdoms and Portugal and then in Germany and the Austrian dominions—the super-Erastian policy of enlightened despotism had been at work reducing the church to complete dependence on the secular power. The princes and statesmen who carried out this policy, Choiseul in France, Pombal in Portugal, Florida Blanca in Spain, and Joseph II and Leopold II in Austria, were themselves the disciples of the philosophers, and in some cases were animated by the same spirit that inspired Voltaire's campaign against Christianity. It was, however, not their intention to destroy the church but rather to make it a part of the machinery of the new bureaucratic state by limiting its function to that of an educational institution whose business it was to make men useful and obedient citizens.

This ideal was most completely realized by the Emperor Joseph II, who set himself to rationalize and socialize the church in his dominions with Teutonic thoroughness. No detail of ecclesiastical usage was too small to escape his meticulous regulation, and the parish priest was expected to supervise the rural economy as well as the morals of his parish. But while in Austria the church was thus reformed by an enlightened despotism inspired by the rational and progressive ideas of eighteenth century Freemasonry, in the rest of Germany every kind of abuse continued to reign,

Rev. of 1790s  
L.ica  
today  
Age of Rev. → a second Reform



Nothing could be darker than the picture which the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Pacca, paints of the Catholic Rhineland at the close of the century. The prince bishops lived a thoroughly secular life and squandered the resources of their sees on their courts and their mistresses. Of the electors of Mainz, the primates of Germany, Ostein was the friend of Voltaire, and Erthal was the patron of the neo-pagan Heinse; and for the greater part of the eighteenth century things were no better in the archdiocese of Cologne, though the last elector, the Archduke Maximilian, was a well intentioned "enlightened despot" of the type of his brother, Joseph II.

But underneath this corruption in high places the faith of the masses remained as strong as ever. When Pacca travelled through the Rhineland, the peasants assembled in their thousands, old men and children alike, to receive the sacrament of confirmation which their own bishops had for decades neglected to administer. And when the power of the electors collapsed before the armies of the Revolution, the tension that existed in the German church between the traditional Catholicism of the masses and the innovations of the enlightened prelates was actually relieved, so that Mass was once more said in Latin after six years of unwelcome change.

Nevertheless, the net result of the revolutionary wars and the wholesale secularization that followed the treaty of Lunéville was to leave the Catholic church in Germany weaker and more at the mercy of the secular power than ever before. The old order was destroyed, but there was as yet no new life to take its place, and the leaders of the clergy like Wessenburg and Dahlberg were still permeated with Josephite ideas.

In France at the close of the eighteenth century the situation seemed even more grave, since it was there that the rationalist propaganda of the Enlightenment had made most progress among the educated classes and it was there that the storm of the Revolution produced its most destructive effects. There it was not merely a question of the disendowment of the church and its subjection to the secular power, as in the Civil Constitution of the Clergy enacted in 1790; opposition rapidly reached such a pitch as to involve national apostasy and wholesale persecution. Priests and nuns were executed in scores and deported and exiled in thousands. By 1795, even the constitutional clergy, which had accepted the new order and renounced all dependence on Rome, was reduced to a pitiable state: of the eighty-two bishops some twenty-four had apostatized, six had been executed, twenty-four had renounced their episcopal functions and only about fifteen were left to rally to Grégoire, the constitutional Bishop of Blois, when he attempted to restore the ruins of the Gallican church.

Yet the very violence of the storm revealed the strength of those religious forces which the eighteenth century had ignored; in fact, persecution did much to restore the prestige of religion and of the clergy by investing them with the halo of martyrdom. If it was difficult to take seriously the religion of the frivolous and well dressed abbés of the old régime, it was just the opposite with men like Mgr. Emery, or like the Abbé Pinot, who mounted the scaffold like a priest going to the altar in his ecclesiastical vestments with the words "Introibo ad altare Dei" on his lips. The effect of such things

was, in fact, just the opposite of what the Jacobins intended. Fifty years earlier, when religious conformity was enforced by law and people were obliged to produce certificates of confession, the rising generation grew up as infidels; but now that the churches were closed and the refractory clergy said mass in secret at the peril of their lives, religion took on a new lease of life, and the new generation—the generation of Lamennais and the Curé d'Ars—turned to Christianity with an enthusiasm and a conviction which in the last century had been found only among Methodists and Moravians.

Thus the Revolution which was the child of the Enlightenment also proved to be its destroyer. The philosophic rationalism of the eighteenth century was the product of the highly civilized privileged society which was swept away by the catastrophe of the ancien régime. In the salons of Mme. de Pompadour, Mme. du Deffand or Mme. Geoffrin it was easy to believe that Christianity was an exploded superstition which no reasonable man could take seriously. But the same men and women felt very differently when the brilliant society that had worshipped at the shrine of Voltaire was decimated by the guillotine and scattered to the four winds. Many of them, like Chateaubriand and Mme. Tour du Pin and Mme. de Montagu, recovered their faith in Christianity under the stress of personal suffering and bereavement, but even those who did not recover their faith in God lost that faith in man and in the law of progress that had been characteristic of the previous age. Rationalism flourishes best in a prosperous age and a sheltered society; it finds few adherents among the unfortunate and the defeated.

The course of the Revolution was equally fatal to the hopes of every party. It seemed as though fate had determined to explode the hollowness of any kind of idealism by the destruction of all that was best in France and by permitting only the basest elements—the Barras' and the Fouchés—to survive and prosper. There were some to whom this sense of the malignity of fate came with the force of a personal revelation, as to Chéodollé and Bremond d'Ars, during the dreadful retreat of the army of the emigrants across the ice of the Zuyder Zee during the night of January 21st, 1795.

No more terrible answer could have been given to the facile optimism of the age of Louis XVI, than the twenty-five years of revolution and war from 1790-1815, and it is not surprising that the more sensitive minds who contemplated this long drawn out spectacle of human misery were led not only to surrender their illusions, but to question the principles which had been the foundations of their whole thought. In many cases, as for instance with Senancourt, the author of *Obermann* (who is so well known to us through the poems of Matthew Arnold) or Mallet du Pau, the young Chateaubriand, these doubts found expression in a pessimistic fatalism which left no room for human effort. There were some, however, who found in the disillusion and tragedies of the Revolution, the key to a new interpretation of history and a new philosophy of society diametrically opposed to those of the Enlightenment. Of these the most remarkable representative was Joseph de Maistre.

(To be continued with "Joseph de Maistre and the Counter Revolution.")

de Maistre

BOSWELL, VOLTAIRE AND RELIGION

By ALFRED NOYES

This week and next, we are printing, by courtesy of the author and publishers, some passages from Mr. Alfred Noyes's forthcoming work on Voltaire, which Messrs. Sheed & Ward will publish in October. They begin with extracts, from Chapter XXXVII, of a hitherto unpublished record of Boswell's visit to Voltaire, and Voltaire's attitude to religion.

One of the most interesting glimpses of Voltaire at Ferney has only recently come to light in the newly discovered Boswell papers, an extract from which I am privileged to quote here by the kindness of their owner, Colonel Isham.

The brief anecdote of this visit, in the *Life of Johnson*, gives us a preliminary glimpse, perhaps, of Voltaire's impishness in the presence of undue solemnity. At one moment, Boswell suggests that Voltaire affected Johnson's manner, and, with a characteristic roll, before the very eyes of the distracted worshipper of the two opposed deities, called Johnson "a superstitious dog." Boswell then tried to make the peace by repeating Johnson's opinion of Frederick the Great: "He writes just as you may suppose Voltaire's footboy might do, who has been his amanuensis." Whereupon Voltaire gave another Johnsonian roll, and remarked: "A very honest fellow."

But it was not till quite lately that a further and a more important account of this December visit came to light among the Boswell papers. The description is in the best style of the great Life; and, in some respects, even more amusingly Boswellian. One part reads:

"The Jansenists," Boswell observes, "used to publish against the Jesuits what they called *Mémoires Ecclésiastiques*. Voltaire has got a thick volume of them bound up with the title of *Sottises Ecclésiastiques*. I saw upon a Shelf an Octavo with the title *Tragédies Barbares*. I was sure they must be English. I took down the Book, and found it contained Elfrida, Caracacus, etc. I was naturally amused at these little sallies, which were quite in the taste of Sir David Dalrymple. I heartily wish Voltaire had titled more of his books. . . . "I was dressed the first time at Ferney in my sea-green and silver, and now in my flowered velvet."

This evening, while in the flowered velvet, Boswell says that he had a truly singular and solemn conversation with Voltaire, as follows:

- BOSWELL: When I came to see you, I thought to see a very great, but a very bad man.
- VOLTAIRE: You are very sincere.
- BOSWELL: Yes, but the same sincerity makes me own that I find the contrary. Only your Philosophic Dictionary troubles me. For instance, your article on the soul (*Ame*).
- VOLTAIRE: That is a good article.
- BOSWELL: No, excuse me. Is it (immortality) not a pleasing imagination. Is it not more noble?
- VOLTAIRE: Yes. You have a noble desire to be King of Europe. I wish it, and I ask your protection. But it is not probable.
- BOSWELL: No. All cannot be the one, and they may be the other. We continue to feel it must be so, till we grow convinced of immortality.

Woman's sleep smooth

of true corruption



# RELIGION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

## II: JOSEPH DE MAISTRE AND THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION.

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

Joseph de Maistre was one of the most original thinkers and brilliant writers of his age and one of the most important formative influences on French thought in the early nineteenth century. His style was the fit instrument of his thought. In striking contrast to the luxuriant and cloying sweetness of Chateaubriand and his followers, it suggests the clash of naked steel and has the strength and dexterity of the swordsman. Yet he was by no means insensible to the new romantic appeal, as we see in rare passages like the famous and lovely description of the northern summer night and the songs of the Russian boatmen on the Neva, which opens *Les soirées de St. Petersbourg*.

Although he belonged to the pre-romantic generation—the generation of Mirabeau and Goethe—owing to the circumstances of his life it was not until after the Restoration that his influence was fully felt. He had spent the whole of the period from the Revolution to the Restoration in exile, and the greater part of it in Russia, as the penniless ambassador of the exiled dynasty of Savoy, for de Maistre, though a man of French culture and speech, was never a French citizen. But the intellectual isolation and material failure which marked his whole career served only to strengthen the almost fanatical singleness of purpose and force of conviction that characterized his thought. Beneath the exterior of a diplomat and a man of the world he hid the spirit of a Hebrew prophet, and, in fact, the problems that preoccupied him were fundamentally the same as those that confronted Job and Jeremiah—the problem of suffering and evil and the justification of the obscure purposes of God in history. The men of the Enlightenment had lived on the surface of life. They had rejected the very idea of mystery and had done their best to eliminate and ignore everything that was irrational and obscure: they explained the problems of existence by denying that there was a problem to explain. De Maistre, on the other hand, concentrated his attention on the dark side of life and made the suffering and evil of the world the key to the understanding of it.

This insistence on the darker aspects of life earned de Maistre the reputation of a pessimist, a fatalist and an enemy of humanity, and it was undoubtedly shocking to men who had been brought up in the facile optimism of eighteenth century thought. But de Maistre would have replied that a philosophy which ignores these things ignores the substance of reality. War and revolution are not unfortunate accidents; they are the very texture of historic change. They are not the result of the free choice of individuals. The men who seem responsible, victors and victims alike, are but the instruments of impersonal forces which move to their appointed end by paths which none can foresee. Society is not a number of individuals who have consciously determined to combine for the greatest happiness of the greatest number: it is a living stream whose surface may be partially illuminated by the fitful light of reason but which springs from subterranean sources and flows toward an unknown sea. In this unceasing flow, when all things pass and yet

remain the same, in this whirlpool of forces in which one thing loses itself in a thousand and reappears in a thousand forms, how is it possible to distinguish cause from effect and means from end? And if this is the case throughout history, it is above all so in time of revolution, when the current of change suddenly increases its momentum and sweeps away every obstacle in its path. Wise men and fools, heroes and criminals, all contributed to its success whether they wished to oppose it or to turn it to their own ends. The very men who seemed to lead and dominate it were passive tools in the hands of events, and they were broken and thrown aside when their hour had passed. But this spectacle of the impotence of man to change the course of history does not lead de Maistre to fatalism or despair. In the mysterious force which carries men with it like straws in a torrent he sees the power of God which destroys to create and erases to write anew.

The Revolution was not an event, he wrote as early as 1794, it was an epoch in the history of humanity, the birth pangs of a new age. And its real significance was not to be found in its conscious ideals, as expressed, for instance, in the Declaration of the Rights of Man; these ideals were nothing but hollow abstractions concealing the real trend of events by a sort of rationalizing mirage: the true significance was to be found on a much deeper plane in profound spiritual changes of which the contemporary mind was still unconscious. "What we are witnessing," he writes, "is a religious revolution; the rest, immense as it seems, is but an appendix." And again, "It seems to me that any true philosopher must choose between these two hypotheses: either that a new religion is in process of formation, or that Christianity will be renewed in some extraordinary way." "This conjecture will only be rejected contemptuously by those short-sighted men who believe that nothing is possible but what they see. What man in antiquity could have foreseen its success in its beginnings? How then do we know that a great moral revolution has not already begun?"

De Maistre regarded the Revolution as a cleansing fire in which the forces of evil were employed against their will and without their knowledge as agents of purification and regeneration, and he believed that France and the French monarchy would emerge stronger than ever after the terror and the wars of the Revolution had accomplished their work; so, too, he believed that the destruction of the Gallican church and the ecclesiastical system of the old regime at the hands of the enemies of religion was a necessary step toward the restoration of the unity of Christendom and the freedom and universality of the church.

This ideal was in fact the dominant preoccupation of de Maistre's mind from his young days, when he urged Ferdinand of Brunswick, in 1781 at the time of the famous Masonic congress of Wilhelmsbad, to transform the orders of Freemasons into a society for the reunion of the churches, down to his old age, when he was the intellectual leader of ultramontaniam. For however intransigent were his views and however inflexible his orthodoxy, de Maistre was always ready to recognize the signs of the times, whether in Freemasonry and Illuminism, or in the French Revolution, or in the Holy Alliance (whose weaknesses he fully realized). All of them were, in his eyes, phases of the great religious revolution which was inevitable and already far advanced. "It is their function to melt the

Some thinkers say the Revolution was a necessary

It have a direct bearing upon his religion. After describing various religious conflicts in which Catholics and Protestants engaged, from time to time, in mutual massacre, he says:

"What was the cause of all those wars of religion whereby Europe was drenched in blood? None other than the wrong of having too long neglected the moral law for controversy. Authority wished to order men to believe, instead of commanding them simply to be just."

He is not suggesting here, of course, that we should abandon the use of reason in the search for truth. He is suggesting merely that duress has no value in that search, from whatever direction it may come, religious or secular; and his words are in exact harmony with those which T. H. Huxley quoted from the prophet Micah in one of his finest essays: *What should the Eternal require of me but to do justice and love mercy, and walk humbly with the Eternal?*

### The Divine Law

More important still, he affirms, as clearly as Kant with his categorical imperative, that above and below all the contingent and relative arrangements of human law, there is an absolute and divine law wherein the conscience of man recognizes the nature and will of the Supreme Being. "A law of nature" he calls it (in a very different sense from that which modern science has given to the phrase) and its observance is a part of what he calls "natural religion."

"The only fundamental and unchangeable law that there can be for all men is this: do unto others as you would have them do unto you." This is a law of nature itself. It cannot be torn out of the human heart. It is of all laws the worst obeyed; but it always asserts itself against those who transgress it. It seems that God gave it to man to counteract the law of the stronger, and to prevent the human race exterminating itself by war, by chicanery, and by scholastic theology."

There is the usual impish touch in the last sentence, and one might question whether, in coupling the "Angelic Doctor" with Attila the Hun, Voltaire was doing unto poor St. Thomas exactly as he would be done by; but there is ample evidence that he did not quite mean it; and the core of the matter is in the italicized sentence. To say that the dictum of the Sermon on the Mount is the only fundamental law for mankind might again seem rash; but, if it be considered how much it implies, it is clear that all "the rest" would almost necessarily be added to those who successfully fulfilled it.

It is the law to which Voltaire most constantly returns, and the point here is that he did regard it as a law of God, established in the hearts and consciences of men.

The *Essai* was naturally not looked upon with favour in the ecclesiastical circles of Paris; but, as he so often did, Voltaire carried the general public with him, by the successful production of his play, *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, in 1755. It was probably all the more successful, because it was now known that the king had forbidden the return of Voltaire to Paris, and it roused the curiosity of both friends and enemies.

Next week we shall publish the second half of this study of Voltaire's historical work, with which our extracts will be concluded.

*Tablet*  
*Sept. 5, 1936*



metal, afterwards the statue will be cast." "All our plans," he wrote in 1809, "vanish like dreams. I have preserved, as much as I could, the hope that the faithful will be called to rebuild the edifice, but it seems to me that new workers advance in the profound obscurity of the future and that Her Majesty, Providence, says, 'Behold I make all things new.'"

De Maistre is an isolated figure standing between "two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born." He belongs neither to the eighteenth nor the nineteenth century, neither to the Enlightenment nor the romantic movement. But though this simple and austere gentleman of the old regime has little in common with the undisciplined, emotional, unstable spirit of romanticism, there is a curious parallelism between his thought and that of the leaders of the romantic movement. This parallelism is seen most clearly in the essay on "Europe or Christendom" composed by the young Novalis in 1798, only two years after de Maistre's "Considerations on France." In spite of his Protestant origins, Novalis exalts the religious ideal of the Middle Ages and condemns the Reformation for its sacrilegious attempt to divide the indivisible church and to imprison religion within political frontiers. Like de Maistre he regards the Reformation as the source of the movement of rationalism and free thought, which found its culmination in the work of the Revolution. But at the same time he sees in the Revolution the dawn of a new era and shares de Maistre's belief that the signs of the times pointed to a great spiritual renewal which would bring Europe back to religious unity.

All the early romantics were inspired by the same consciousness of an imminent spiritual revolution, all of them were enemies of the Enlightenment and admirers of medieval Catholicism, and many of them, such as Friedrich and Dorothea Schlegel, Adam Muller, Zacharias Werner, Franz von Baader, Görres and Clemens Brentano, found their spiritual home in the Catholic church. It would, of course, be a mistake to ignore the existence of a Protestant element in the movement. Schleiermacher, perhaps the chief formative influence on Protestant religious thought in the nineteenth century, was a friend of the Schlegels and was closely associated with the origins of the movement, while at a later date the most original Protestant thinker of the nineteenth century, the Dane, Sören Kierkegaard, was a true romantic in spite of his isolation and his hostility to everything for which Schleiermacher stood. Nevertheless, contemporary opinion was not unjustified in regarding romanticism as a Catholicizing movement. The tendency is to be seen most clearly years before the conversion of the Schlegels in the writings of early romantics like Wackenroder and Novalis, who never themselves became Catholics and whose admiration was in no way inspired by propagandist motives.

I have already referred to Novalis' remarkable panegyric of medieval Catholicism and his criticism of the Reformation, and in the same way Wackenroder in 1797 initiated that return to the religion of the Middle Ages through the art of the Middle Ages which became so typical of the Catholic revival in the nineteenth century. This Catholicizing tendency, which was denounced by Heine and the young German school as mere reactionary sentimentalism, did much to render romanticism unpopular in the later nineteenth century, as we see, for example, in the well-known volumes of George Brandes, *The Romantic Movement in Germany*

(1873), which for all their ability are characterized by an almost sectarian bitterness. In reality, however, the religious element in romanticism, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, goes much deeper than the superficial aesthetic appeal. It has its root in the fundamental principles of the movement, which differed not merely aesthetically but also metaphysically and psychologically from those of both seventeenth century classicism and eighteenth century rationalism. Behind the change in literary taste and aesthetic appreciation there lies a profound change of spiritual attitude: an attempt to enlarge the kingdom of the human mind by transcending the limits of ordinary consciousness.

Human consciousness is a little circle of light in surrounding darkness. The classicist and the rationalist keep as close to the centre of the circle as possible and order their life and their art as though this little sphere of light were the universe. But the romantic is not content with this narrow sphere. He longs to penetrate the secret of the great reality that is hidden behind the veil of consciousness to the lighted house of reason. Thus the most profound expression of the romantic spirit is to be found, not in the Byronic cult of personality nor in the aesthetic gospel of Keats's "Ode to a Grecian Urn," but in Novalis' "Hymns to the Night" with their mystical exaltation of death. There is in fact a definite connection between romanticism and mysticism, for religious mysticism tends to express itself in the form of romantic poetry, as in the poems of St. John of the Cross, while literary romanticism at its highest aspires to the ideal of religious mysticism, as in the case of Novalis and Blake.

In the same way the victory of classicism at the end of the seventeenth century was intimately connected with the defeat of mysticism and was followed by what Henri Bremond, in his great work on the history of religious sentiment in France, calls "*la retraite des mystiques*." Throughout the eighteenth century mysticism was exiled from the world of higher culture and the religion of society became more and more arid and rationalistic. Mysticism took refuge among the sects—Quakers and Quietists, Moravians and Methodists, Swedenborgians and Illuminists—or in Catholic Europe among the common people, where it produced gains like Benedict Joseph Labre, who seem as out of place in the age of the Enlightenment as an Indian Fakir in a London club. This artificial separation of the higher culture from the deeper forms of religious experience has been described by Coleridge in the remarkable passage of the *Biographia Literaria*, in which he acknowledges his own debt to the mystics.

The romantic movement had its roots deep in the religious underworld; M. Viatte in his learned work *The Occult Sources of Romanticism*, has shown how manifold were the lines of communication which led from Böhme and the seventeenth century mystics through Swedenborg and St. Martin and Lavater to the romantics of the early nineteenth century. On the one hand this stream flowed back to its original source in the Catholic church, while on the other mingled with the stream of political and social change and inspired the new movements—liberalism, socialism, positivism, anarchism and the like—with a spiritual religious enthusiasm and apocalyptic hope.

(To be continued next week with an essay on *Wackenroder and the Romantics*.)

## THE STATISTICAL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

"Does prayer have any external effect such as can be measured by statistical methods? Is the husband of a loving and prayerful wife a 'better life,' from the point of view of life insurance, than a man who has no christian relatives anxious for the prolongation of his existence? These are questions which a man may surely ask without impropriety, and they are questions which a statistical enquiry alone could answer."

—DEAN INGE at the Modern Churchmen's Congress.

The Modern Churchman plans a test  
"Let's see if saying prayers is best,  
Or can we let such labour rest?"

His very reverend knee he bends  
Before his scientific friends,  
For on their word his law depends.

"O please provide for us some sick  
And watch if prayer will do the trick;  
Take pains with the arithmetic.

"See who gets better, who gets worse,  
Whose husbands lengthy prayers rehearse,  
And whose remain extremely terse.

"Were prayer and fasting ever meant?  
Our fathers saw that fasting went.  
Can prayer survive experiment?"

"Such pastimes suited Bedouin tents,  
But they have very little sense  
In the modern villa residence.

"And clergy, praying by mistake,  
Waste breath ordained this point to make:  
How much true Christians must forsake.

"Denial is the Christian's weeds,  
Not self-denial of real needs,  
But firm denial of the creeds.

"When our statistics see the sun,  
The prayer wheels will no more be spun.  
The hassock maker's day is done."

The Modern Churchmen's test took place,  
They backed their fancies for the race,  
And Double-entry checked up Grace.

Alas, that in the heavenly courts  
The tests gave rise to different thoughts:  
Cherubic pouts, seraphic snorts.

"They think to measure to a hair  
What loads, and when and why and where,  
The Everlasting Arms will bear.

"And Cambridge man shall ascertain  
Mechanically the point of strain,  
And when to press and when refrain.

"With compass and dividers neat  
They seek the line, in yards and feet,  
Where Mercy and where Justice meet.



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 The Tablet  
 P. 336

RELIGION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

III: WILLIAM BLAKE AND THE RELIGION OF ROMANTICISM.

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The situation in England during the Age of Revolution was fundamentally different from that of continental Europe. We had had our political revolution a century earlier, and the critics of the old regime in France during the eighteenth century tended to regard England as the classical example of the benefits of political and religious freedom. And at the same time we had had our religious revival in the Wesleyan movement, which had directed into religious channels much of the spiritual energy which provided the dynamic element in the revolutionary movement abroad.

Q

Evangelical too individualistic

But English evangelicalism in the eighteenth century was far too individualistic to provide any religious solution to the social problem that had become more pressing, owing to the weakening of the monarchy and the disappearance of the traditional corporate organization of industry and trade. As John Stuart Mill wrote in 1825: "The British constitution is the constitution of the rich. It has made this country the paradise of the wealthy. It has annexed to wealth a greater share of political power and a greater command over the minds of men, than were ever possessed by it elsewhere. It has given those who have money great facilities for making it more. All this is very fine, but I cannot help reflecting that the peasant of Languedoc eats his three meals of meat a day and cultivates his vineyard; he has cheap justice at his doors; he may go where he pleases, engage in any trade that he pleases, tread upon as many partridge eggs as he pleases and need not fear to find himself next day in the treadmill, a victim of the unpaid patriot of a game-eating squire. We are a free country, but it is as Sparta was free; the Helots are overlooked."

poor ignorant

On the whole, the official representatives of religion seemed singularly insensitive to this state of social injustice: it is hardly unfair to say that they actually regarded Christianity as the opium of the people and many of them were not ashamed to say so. And while the Tories and the Church of England stood for privilege, the reformers and radicals advocated unrestricted competition and exalted the ideal of enlightened self-interest. The cause of the poor found few defenders, and these were divided between opposite political camps, while many of them, like Owen and the early English socialists, were bitterly hostile to traditional Christianity. One man stands out from his contemporaries—more revolutionary than the official representatives of reform and more religious than the official representatives of Christianity. William Blake was at once a prophet and an artist, one of the greatest of the English romantics, and at the same time the most remarkable product of that religious underworld to which I referred in my last article, and which had so much influence on the formation of the new spiritual attitude which characterized the dawn of the new age.

Blake

Blake was considerably senior to the rest of the romantics, not only in England but on the Continent also. He belonged to the generation of de Maistre rather than to that of Wordsworth and Coleridge and Novalis. Like de Maistre he was a lonely thinker, a

spiritual exile, though his place of exile was not in distant Russia on the banks of the Neva, but by the waters of Thames in a Lambeth lodging house. Like de Maistre he was a prophet who saw historic events *sub specie aeternitatis*, as in that strange picture of Pitt as the angel who rides on the wings of the storm, "ordering the Reaper to reap the Vine of the Earth and the Ploughman to plough up the Cities and Towers."

But here the resemblance ends. In their principles and position the two are antitheses. De Maistre, the devout Catholic and the royalist noble, the apostle of moral order and social authority; Blake, a man of the people, a heretic of heretics and a revolutionary of revolutionaries, an apostle of anarchy and antinomianism. Moreover, while de Maistre is still faithful to the classical traditions in the clarity of his style and the firm logic of his thought, Blake surpasses all the romantics in formlessness and obscurity. He knows nothing of logic and cares nothing for consistency. He regards reason as the enemy of spiritual vision and science as the tree of death. He builds up vast, cloudy mythologies without troubling to explain their meaning or to reconcile their contradictions.

Yet whoever has the patience and the imagination to follow him through his strange visionary world will gain a more direct insight into the process of spiritual change that was taking place under the surface of European consciousness than is to be found in any other writing. For Blake, unlike the other romantics, emerges directly from the religious underworld and has little contact with the literary movements of his age. He was brought up as a Swedenborgian, and although he soon diverged from the narrow line of Swedenborgian orthodoxy, he continued to live his spiritual life in the world of sectarian theology, the world of Lavater and St. Martin and Willermoz. Yet at the same time his revolutionary sentiments brought him into contact with the freethinkers and political reformers of the London Corresponding Society and the Friends of Liberty, such as Paine and Godwin, and his earlier prophetic writings are directly inspired by his enthusiasm for the cause of the Revolution.

This earlier phase of Blake's thought seems at first sight to be not merely unorthodox but anti-Christian and anti-religious. Religion is the "Web of Urizen," the evil God of the old Testament, who enslaves mankind under the iron laws of morality. The new Messiah is the spirit of revolution, Orc "the son of fire," who "stamps the stony law to dust" and "scatters Religion abroad to the four winds as a torn book." Thus the one evil is repression. "He who desires and acts not, breeds pestilence." "Energy is Eternal Delight." "For everything that lives is holy, life delights in life; because the soul of sweet delight can never be defiled." This gospel of anarchy has much in common with the creed of the romantic liberals and utopian socialists, such as Godwin, Shelley and the young Fourier, but it is already distinguished from the orthodox revolutionary creed by its hostility to rationalism and to the empirical philosophy of the eighteenth century. Blake would have agreed with de Maistre in his view that "the contempt of Locke is the beginning of wisdom," and both assailed the philosophy of Bacon with the same animosity, as in Blake's epitaph on Bacon,

O reader behold the Philosopher's grave  
 He was born quite a Fool and he died quite a Knave.  
 Moreover, the progress of the Revolution disillusioned

Blake no less than the other romantics. The mood of the earlier prophetic books gradually changes from capturous hope in the new dawn to an atmosphere of apocalyptic terror and gloom, culminating in the "Song of Los" with its grim frontispiece showing a headless figure brooding over a desolate landscape.

For Adam a mouldering skeleton  
 Lay bleached in the garden of Eden  
 And Noah as white as snow  
 On the mountain of Ararat.

During the period of his stay at Felpham, 1800-1803, at about the same time that German romanticism was turning toward Christianity, Blake went through a great spiritual crisis, which transformed his religious attitude. In "Milton" he describes how Los the Eternal Prophet, "took me in his fiery whirlwind, from Lambeth's shades. He set me down in Felpham's Vale and prepared a beautiful cottage for me, that in three years I might write all these Visions, to display Nature's cruel holiness, the deceits of Natural Religion." (Milton, 37: 21-25.)

He speaks in 1804 of having been for twenty years "a slave bound in a mill among beasts and devils." "I have indeed fought through a hell of terrors and horrors (which none could know but myself) in a divided existence; now no longer divided nor at war with myself I shall travel on in the strength of the Lord God, as Poor Pilgrim says."

These twenty years correspond approximately to his revolutionary period which followed his Swedenborgian youth, when he came under the influence of the Enlightenment as represented by Godwin and Priestley and Paine. Now he returned to Christianity, though it was a strange theological Christianity that had more in common with Böhme and St. Martin than with any kind of Christian orthodoxy. He still retained his antinomian hostility to moral law and repressive authority, but it is in deism rather than in Christianity that he finds the representative of this evil power.

You O Deists profess yourselves the Enemies of Christianity; and so you are: you are also the Enemies of the Human Race and of Universal Nature. . . .

Man must and will have some religion; if he has not the Religion of Jesus, he will have the Religion of Satan, and will erect the Synagogue of Satan, calling the prince of this World God, and destroying all those who do not worship Satan under the Name of God.

Your Religion, O Deists, Deism, is the worship of the God of this World by the means of what you call Natural Religion and Natural Philosophy, and of Natural Morality or Self Righteousness, the selfish virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the religion of the Pharisees who murdered Jesus. Deism is the same and ends in the same.

Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon, Hume charge the spiritually Religious with hypocrisy: but how a Monk or a Methodist either can be a hypocrite, I cannot conceive. We are Men of like passions with others and pretend not to be holier than others. . . .

You also charge the poor Monks and Religions with being the cause of war while you acquit and flatter the Alexanders and the Caesars, the Louises and Fredericks who alone are its causes and its actors. But the Religion of Jesus, Forgiveness of Sin, can never be the cause of a war or a single martyrdom.

Those who martyr others, or who cause war, are Deists, but can never be Forgivers of Sin. The glory of Christianity is to conquer by Forgiveness. All the destruction, therefore, in Christian Europe, has arisen from Deism, which is Natural Religion.

Blake had come to realize that salvation was not to be found in negation and that the spirit of revolution might in its turn become the instrument of evil.

Accordingly, he abandoned the crude idealism of his earlier system which is expressed in the myth of Urizen, the evil God and creator of this world, and Orc, the spirit of freedom and revolt. In its place he created the new myth of Albion, the universal man, and Jerusalem, the divine vision, a myth which has considerable affinities to the system that St. Martin had developed



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in his prophetic books such as *L'Homme de Desir* and *Le Nouvel Homme*. Man has become separated from the divine unity. He has turned his back on the divine vision and has sunk into the deadly sleep of materialism, from which he can only be delivered by the annihilation of the selfhood "when the Divine Mercy steps beyond and Redeems Man in the body of Jesus."

Jesus said: "Wouldst thou love one who has never died For thee, or ever die for one who has not died for thee?" And if God dieth not for Man and giveth not Himself Eternally for Man, Man could not exist; for Man is Love Even as God is Love; every kindness to another is a little death In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood.

This doctrine is less Christian than it appears at first sight, for Blake not only assimilates the Saviour to the creative imagination and the prophet to the artist, but asserts the substantial identity of God and man in terms that seem to exclude any belief in the divine transcendence. "I know of no other Christianity and no other gospel," he writes, "than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination—Imagination the real and Eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow and in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more."

But Blake's Imagination is no subjective human faculty; it is the creative and eternal *Logos*. "Imagination is the Divine Vision, not of the world, nor of man, nor from man—as he is a natural man." Neither do his pantheism and antinomianism cause him to shut his eyes to the problem of evil or the necessity of moral effort. He was equally hostile to the facile optimism of the radicals with their cult of enlightened self-interest and to the callous indifference of church and state. In *Jerusalem* he prays,

O divine Saviour, Arise  
Upon the Mountains of Albion as in ancient times. Behold!  
The Cities of Albion seek thy face. London groans in pain  
From Hill to Hill and the Thames laments along the valleys.  
The little villages of Middlesex and Surrey hunger and thirst.  
The twenty-eight cities of Albion stretch out their hands to thee.  
Because of the Oppressors of Albion in every City and Village  
They mock at the Labourer's limbs; they mock at his starv'd children;  
They buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons;  
They compel the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mild arts;  
They reduce the Man to want, then give with pomp and ceremony,  
The praise of Jehovah is chaunted from lips of hunger and thirst.

This intense sensitiveness to the sufferings of the poor distinguishes the religion of Blake from the orthodox Christianity of the age. If his ideal of creative imagination and spiritual intuition resembles that of the German romantics, his devotion to social justice has more in common with the utopian socialism of Fourier and the St. Simonians. He is an isolated figure standing alone between the religious underworld of the sects and the secular world of contemporary art and literature, and leaving no disciples to develop this thought in one direction or the other.

Nevertheless, he is a significant figure, because he reflects in a highly individual and independent form the spiritual conflict which underlies the social changes of the age and which resulted from the resurgence of the spiritual forces that had been repressed by the rationalism and moralism of the Enlightenment. This movement took two different forms: on the one hand, as in the Catholic revival on the Continent and subsequently the Oxford movement in England, it was a movement of return to the tradition of historic Christianity—a Catholic renaissance—which went back behind the



Enlightenment and behind the Reformation to the religious faith and the religious art of medieval Christendom. And on the other hand, it was a movement of innovation and change which proclaimed the advent of a new religion in harmony with the spirit of the new age, like the new Christianity of the St. Simonians, Comte's religion of humanity, or Mazzini's religious nationalism. Nevertheless, in spite of the apparent opposition of these two forms, they are far more closely connected than one would suppose. The religious liberalism of Lamennais developed from the religious traditionalism of de Bonald and de Maistre; Comte was a disciple of the same school and borrowed the forms of his religion of the future from the religion of the past, while some of the chief apostles of the religion of progress, such as Pierre Leroux and Buchez, advanced through the new Christianity to the old. Religion failed to reconquer and reunite European Civilization as de Maistre and the Christian romantics had hoped, but on the other hand, it recovered its vitality and once more asserted itself as an autonomous force in European culture. In comparison with the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century, especially the first half of it, was a religious age.

(Mr. Dawson is now on holiday, and will continue this series at a later date. Future articles deal with the rise of Liberalism and Socialism.)

## CHRISTIANITY IN JERSEY

By MICHAEL TRAPPES-LOMAY

One of the pleasing things about things is the way one thing leads to another, often indeed to several. The arrival in Britain, for instance, of some rough fellows from northern Germany led to much else besides giving Tennyson one of the most telling lines in his welcome to the Princess Alexandra. Among such may be counted the sensible conclusion come to among the surviving Christian clergy that Armorica was preferable to Britain as a dwelling place. Incidentally, if Armorica had not become Brittany there would have been no excuse for mis-spelling an excellent form of lobster as *à l'Américaine*. But, to return: among those who got away from Britain in time was St. Sampson, who exchanged his British Bishopric for the safer one of Dol, which included the Channel Islands. In spite of his sanctity it must be admitted that he seems to have had little or no influence on the religious beliefs of the inhabitants of Jersey—perhaps because he contented himself with ridding only Guernsey of moles as well as snakes. The feat was still super-Patrician, but the number of moles in Jersey remains a reproach to him to this day. However—a pleasing piece of nepotism—his nephew succeeded him both in sanctity and at Dol, and quickly brought the inhabitants of Jersey to accept Christianity, a process which perhaps had nothing to do with the fact that both uncle and nephew were pre-Augustine Christians, and so (as the learned historian of Jersey has pointed out) not "such saints as they whom Rome has canonized in latter ages, and with whose forged miracles the Popish legends are filled."

The Norsemen, alas, were incapable of so subtle a distinction, and proceeded on arrival to martyr a distinguished hermit, St. Helier. Later efforts to confuse

danger was happily averted, and the chief town and seaport of Jersey commemorates him, at any rate in name, to this day.

Time, however, notoriously has its revenges, and the Normans were in turn not only converted but converted to post-Augustine Christianity, with the result that they indulged in the then prevalent "corruptions," including (we are told) the "building of churches and monasteries, and filling them with relics of saints; in which the Normans quickly outdid all others." The fruits of this excess were one abbey (St. Helier), four priories (Noirmont, St. Clement, Bonne Nuit and Lecq), twelve parish churches, which, with tower and spire inconspicuously coated in cement, still remain, and upwards of twenty chapels, of which one (Notre Dame des Pas, near St. Helier) was on the site of a miraculous vision, and another (La Hogue Bie) stands on a high tumulus containing a recently excavated prehistoric tomb.

The inconvenience of owing allegiance to the Kings of England while being subject to French bishops must have been considerable, and in 1499 Pope Alexander VI ordered the Channel Islands to be transferred from the diocese of Coutances to that of Winchester. The Bull, however, was ineffective, and it remained to Queen Elizabeth to carry out the intentions of the Borgia. Yet even under those auspices the results were not wholly satisfactory, for the crossing from France was far less trying a matter than that from England, wherefore in former times (as the learned and pious historian observes) "we sometimes enjoyed the presence of our bishops, a happiness which in these latter times we are unacquainted with." In another respect also the Reformation did not achieve all that might have been hoped. The churches in Jersey had been under continental (and mostly abbatial) patronage, and were over-heavily tithed. But the sorely-tried clergy gained nothing by their change of master. Far from being able to keep their dues for their own welfare, "all was alike swallowed up, and without distinction thrown into the revenue." However, if the learned and perhaps prejudiced historian is to be believed, this lack of financial accretion was largely counterbalanced by an inestimable advantage, for, until the Reformers had got to work, no place was "more overrun with little and low superstitions than this island. But the time was now come for this darkness hanging over us to vanish at the light of the Reformation."

The succession of Queen Mary seems temporarily to have made this light seem like a false dawn, for Mass was once more offered in Jersey. However, there was no persecution. On the contrary, "while the Queen made bonfires of protestants in England, one Richard Averty, a Popish priest in this island, was hanged for murder by sentence of the royal court." On the whole, it may have been as well, for the "murder" seems to have had some of those qualities which the modern Sunday Papers find endearing. It is quite clear, however, that justification by faith was held of greater value than justification by works, for, in spite of this happy event, the learned and staunchly Protestant historian later remarks that there followed "the more happy days of good Queen Elizabeth, which restored to us true religion."

But there still remained some in the island who upheld the Church which acquiesced in the elimination of Mr. Averty, and the restoration was not immediately

[his brother, Sir Hugh] was for the in a wrong manner." One may list the whole Diaconate, that Dear only in tact, for such may perhaps course not justified, in those who out of existence. Perhaps, too, that time hereditary in the family, it appears, had some years before p Wolsey in the stocks. It is pleasant balance of good behaviour in the some degree restored by the Duke the Loyal Marquess of Winches manner" was then entirely on the shamed themselves in the sequel to House. Unfortunately the learned historian does not throw any light the French Protestant exiles who search of religious liberty and matter it is recorded that "so effectually every superstition remaining that Papist was left in the island, nor ever since." However, we learn that their method entailed flogging through St. Helier for defending occurred in the year in which John Dean, his "wrong manner" a certain stimulus, even although smaller than it is now. But so liberty was not enough for the Elizabethan religion also suffered taint: when the French had had that staunch episcopalian, El expedient, in 1565, to let them at St. Helier. In fact, as the learned historian remarks, "we were drawn union with the Church of England happiness and glory, to let in presence of affairs which lasted for about 1

But reformed episcopalianism down so easily. An unerring eye: the then episcopal organization, sorry example of the "wrong man the office of Dean of Jersey was that James I set affairs in proper order "Canons and Constitutions for These require little note, but it may consolation of those who find a need of interpretation that ever could creep into a reformed alone," the section on Baptism allowed to be Godmothers" (*Et ne seules estre Marraines*). But they seem to have been insuperable, for there "not a Papist left" but of none of any sort . . . ; and with names without significance, and ap The latter part of the statement island which has no party politics, can no longer be made. Catholics are now so many as seriously to tions of the parish churches, though many a worthy Nonconformist still and burial the churches which he is are his by right. As to the Papist:

relig.  
not  
re-write  
Euro, but  
it did  
leave it.



## RELIGION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

IV

### THE TRIUMPH OF LIBERALISM

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

We have seen how religion reasserted its power in the age of revolution, but yet failed to dominate European culture. The dominant force in the new age was neither the Catholic traditionalism of de Maistre and de Bonald, nor the religious idealism of Blake and the Romantics, but the great movement of secular idealism that is known as Liberalism. Unfortunately, the term has been used and abused in so many different senses during the last hundred years that it easily lends itself to misunderstanding. In its narrower sense it is merely the label of a political party or rather of a number of parties, while it is sometimes extended—as for example, by Professor Laski in his recent book on *The Formation of European Liberalism*—to cover the whole development of bourgeois individualism in political, economic and intellectual life from the Renaissance to our own age. Nevertheless, the word itself is of comparatively recent origin, and corresponds in origin and diffusion with a definite historical movement and a definite social philosophy. As a philosophy of freedom and individualism it is a development of the philosophical tradition of the eighteenth century, modified and reinterpreted by the romantic spirit, but as a political movement it belongs essentially to the nineteenth century, and represents the movement of national and constitutional resistance to the Holy Alliance and the restored Bourbon monarchies.

The term "Liberalism" makes its first appearance in Spain with the constitutionalist opposition to the absolutism of Ferdinand VII and the Inquisition, and thence spread eastwards to Sicily and Italy, and northwards to France and England in the years that followed the fall of Napoleon. The first English "Liberals" were idealists, like Byron, Shelley, and Leigh Hunt, who adopted the cause of the Mediterranean revolutionaries with romantic enthusiasm. At first sight there may seem little in common between this romantic liberalism and the utilitarian rationalism of the English radicals—between the Utopian idealism of Shelley's *Revolt of Islam* and the bleak rationalism of Bentham's *Defence of Usury* or Ricardo's *Principles of Political Economy*. Yet both of these apparently discordant elements went to the formation of English Liberalism, and romantics and rationalists were at one in their enthusiasm for the abstract ideal of liberty and the concrete cause of political reform.

In the same way Continental Liberalism arose from the fusion of two different elements—bourgeois individualism and nationalist idealism, but there the combination was rendered even more paradoxical by the military and revolutionary character of the opposition movement. In Spain and Italy the Liberal propaganda was carried on mainly by the secret societies, whether Freemasons, Carbonari, or Communitos, and bore fruit in military pronunciamientos, like that of Riego and Quiroga in Spain, and that of General Pepe at Naples; while in France it was the government of Louis XVIII which stood for constitutionalism, and the Liberal opposition which fostered the sentimental cult of Napoleon and encouraged the abortive attempts

But the Corporative State, the form of Government which most nearly meets Catholic ideals of social justice, is in no sense reactionary or extreme right; its structure for industry, with its firm subordination of profit motive to social ends, is equally opposed to the regime of indiscriminate private accumulation and to the opposite extreme of forbidding profit and scope for private enterprise altogether. There is great danger of Christians in Great Britain thinking that the only alternatives are Capitalism as they have known it and Socialism as they have heard about it, and that as generous-minded men they must prefer the second. The choice is happily not thus confined.

#### Public Support

Four thousand labourers of Alexandria have drawn up a petition saying that they want to be able to see the King of Egypt when he says his prayers in the Mosque on a Friday. It is a sound instinct this, and we should like public demand to extend to politicians and public men generally, who would show to much more advantage on their knees. Probably nothing did more harm to the Church of England in the eighteenth century than the popularity, among Squires, of the institution of the Squire's pew, the private room, often complete with table and refreshment, which enabled him to perform his Sunday Churchgoing with a minimum of inconvenience. He did not want to be watched, not, it is to be feared, from any desire to retire to his chamber to pray unobserved. Churchgoing as an example to the poor could not be a success on such terms, and it has since been further weakened by the growth of the week-end habit, because in strange countryside the social obligation sits very lightly. Public prayer has often been attacked on the ground that it puts a premium on insincerity and loud beatings of the breast, and huge shouts of *mea culpa*, which cause every head to turn for a glimpse of the new saint. But it is profoundly, and indeed obviously true, that all duties tend to be shirked by human kind, and that as a race we need every sort of aid and stimulus. Nor is there any stimulus greater than the opinion of society. Slaves in antiquity earned their low reputation because they were removed from the societies in which they had grown up, with all the compulsions and supports to virtuous action; they found themselves isolated and oppressed, with no one to be surprised and horrified that they, of all people, should have misbehaved. That is the feeling which causes many a temptation to be decisively rejected, and neighbours, however little angelic in other respects, may play the rôle of recording angels, whose eyes and pens are wisely and acutely feared. In religious houses here there have been such prolonged opportunities for the observation of human weakness, it is noteworthy that stalls are built not on any bathing machine principle but with immense visibility, so that it is at once apparent not only who is absent but who is present, but asleep. Custody of the eyes is a good enough thing in its way but virtue owes a mighty debt to the roving eye which sees notes no less than beams the moment they appear in a fellow creature's eye, and morality owes something to the inquisitive. This is the defence of gossip and scandal, that if people did not say things, there would be no sense in the awe-struck question, "What will people say?" and that too many people mind that question who gaily, and habitually, disregard still smaller voices.

the University's own interests when it becomes an assemblage of different little worlds to which it gives little more than a geographical unity. The preliminary tests—including a rudimentary knowledge of the Gospels—have been abolished or whittled down in the interests of the varied specialisations, and today a man may go through Oxford without any first-hand experience of the traditional Oxford influences, which can, however, still be found and enjoyed.

In the absence of a common religion, the battle to maintain the studies of the University on a special footing is doubly difficult, because the practitioners of each subject tend to elevate it to the place from which theology has been banished. The ring is held between the competing subjects of the University courses, but they are not grouped together, and they fit into no framework. The old Trivium and Quadrivium were all seen in relation to each other and to the end of human life, but that sense is missing to the student who gazes at the wealth of competing interests which he is invited to study at the modern University.

#### THE CHURCH AND FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Last week the *Church Times* expressed some alarm at what it termed the "open and vehement Roman Catholic support of Fascism, or at least of the politicians of the extreme Right." It went on, after repeating the familiar and unhistorical view of Spain with its popularly-elected Government, being destroyed by a plot of the military backed by the authorities of the Church and the aristocracy, to say "The Roman Church is now aligned with the Extreme Right," which it also termed the forces of reaction. The statement was not limited to Spain but meant to cover Europe. It is a new charge this, that the Church supports the Totalitarian State, and at any rate it makes a change. So long an innings has been enjoyed by the opposite contention, particularly popular in England, that what was wrong with Rome was that it set limits to thorough-going patriotism, and came between subjects and their rulers. But the truth perhaps is that Catholic doctrine enables men to transcend local and insular views about forms of Government. The peoples of Europe—and beyond Europe—differ too profoundly for the same panaceas to be equally useful everywhere. The Church insists on a few fundamentals, that all forms of Government can fulfil or fail to fulfil, fundamentals arising out of the nature of man and his business on this earth. Kings, aristocracies, democracies, parties, all may be acceptable and all may have to be opposed. No one who takes the trouble to enumerate the forms of Government in Europe today and the attitude of the Church in each country will find much force or point in the generalisation of the *Church Times* on this subject. What is true is that the Church would nowhere wish to see concrete human good sacrificed in order to maintain in nominal authority certain forms of Government; because the origin of a Government is of less importance than its capacity to fulfil its function of governing. The Fascist States, to accept a convenient but sweeping general term, have commonly arisen in countries where the collapse of all civilised order was plainly threatened, and that has given them a claim. In other countries they have established themselves as the *de facto* Government, and with all such Governments the Church lives in harmony if it can.

Great  
spec. histories  
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Liberalism

Oct. 10, 1936

The Tablet



of discontented officers to bring about a military *coup d'état*. It is no wonder that constitutional monarchists like the Duc de Richelieu should stigmatize this alliance of Liberalism and militarism as a "monstrous union" which involved the betrayal of genuine Liberal principles, and there is some excuse for the scepticism of conservative critics who denied that Liberalism was ever a genuine unity, either as an international force or even within the limits of any single national culture. Nevertheless, every movement of ideas tends to become contaminated with all kinds of incongruous elements when it enters the field of practical politics, and the fact that nineteenth century Liberalism allied itself with Bonapartism in France, and with military adventurers like Riego in Spain, should not lead us to deny its international character or the existence of a Liberal tradition based on common principles and inspired by common ideals.

Even the two most distinct schools of Liberalism—the English and the French—shared this common tradition in spite of all their divergencies of principle and practice. The English Radicals were the heirs and successors of the French philosophers of the previous century; the continental Liberals, even in Spain, were deeply influenced by the ideas of Bentham and the English Liberal economists. The early English Liberals were at once more philosophical and more revolutionary than their Victorian successors, and thus had a much closer affinity to the contemporary Liberal movement on the Continent. According to Professor E. Halévy, English Utilitarianism was a philosophy of Liberation in every sense, theological as well as political and economic. "In Bentham's phraseology, 'Utilitarianism' is opposed to 'asceticism.' And hence to say that man is born for Pleasure, not for suffering, is to say that he is born not to obey the commands of a master, divine or human—omnipotent God or absolute King—but to enjoy his liberty. The revolution of 1830, like that of 1789, was a revolution of Liberty, and this time the revolution had two centres, at Paris, and in London. So that at a moment when the European parties joined hands across the frontiers, and the same party of political and social conservatism seemed in every nation at war with the same party of progress, the intimate union of England and France was in the eyes of an English radical, the symbol of the triumph of Liberalism."

Thus Europe in the '30's was divided into two camps: on the one side the three "reactionary" powers of the Holy Alliance—Austria, Prussia and Russia—and on the other, the four "progressive" and constitutional monarchies of the Quadruple Alliance—England, France, Spain and Portugal. At that date English Radicalism was still frankly anti-clerical, and sympathised with the bitterly anti-Catholic spirit of the Spanish and French Liberals, while Continental Liberalism was still predominantly bourgeois and favourable to the ideal of constitutional monarchy.

But this "common front" was not destined to endure. The English middle classes which came into power after the Reform Bill consisted mainly of pious Protestants who made a fetish of moral respectability, and were no less hostile to the revolutionary idealism and the irreligion of French Liberalism, than they were to the Popery of Charles X and the Spanish

Carlists. Continental Liberalism, on the other hand, in spite of the influence of strict constitutionalists like Royer-Collard and Guizot, could never disown its revolutionary origins, so that the bourgeois monarchy of Louis Philippe, which seemed to be a triumph for constitutional Liberalism was not a stable regime like that of Victorian England, but a step towards republican democracy.

English Liberalism rapidly shed its revolutionary elements, and found its ideal in the economic Liberalism of Free Trade, while French Liberalism discarded its conservative elements, and reasserted the revolutionary ideals of the First Republic. But this republican tradition was itself by no means a single unity. It contained two elements—Girondin and Jacobin, bourgeois and proletarian—which were at war with one another, until they finally found expression in the clearly defined opposition of proletarian Socialism and bourgeois Liberalism. That these opposing elements were able to co-operate throughout the greater part of the nineteenth century, and to some extent even today, was due to the fact that they both found a common enemy in the power of the Catholic Church. For more than a century the forces of "the Left" have rallied to the war cry "Clericalism is the enemy." It inspired the earliest Liberal propaganda of Paul Louis Courier and Béranger against the Bourbons, and it was equally characteristic of the romantic Liberalism of Michelet, Quinet and Victor Hugo in the middle of the century, and of the party politics of the third republic from Gambetta to Combes. And today when the conduct of the campaign has passed from bourgeois Liberalism to the Communist International—from Paris to Moscow—anti-clericalism still provides a spiritual bond, without which the unity of the Front Populaire would fall to pieces.

This is one of the outstanding features of modern history which no student of history can ignore, though it is easy for the Englishman, whose view is confined to his own country, and who regards Liberalism as essentially the creed of Cobden, J. S. Mill, and Gladstone, to shut his eyes to it. For the essential distinction is not that between "theological" and "political" Liberalism, but that between the revolutionary tradition of Continental Liberalism, which is based on a consciously secularist ideal of culture, and the reformist Liberalism of Great Britain, which has its roots in Whig and Nonconformist traditions, and is inspired by the humanitarian idealism of undenominational Protestantism.

Nevertheless, this distinction is tending to become effaced or blurred in the changed conditions of post-war Europe. Liberalism has everywhere lost its importance, not only as an independent political power, but also as an autonomous intellectual force, and it survives mainly as a vague idealism which suffuses western democratic culture, and supplies the common atmosphere of press, parliaments and international assemblies. The question is whether this vague idealism can resist the fierce realism of the new social forces which have arisen on the Continent, and whether in this country it can survive the passing of the peculiarly religious type of idealism which gave British Liberalism its distinctive character. Certainly its prospects of survival are far from bright, for if it attempts to stand alone it has to fight a losing battle on two fronts, while if it prefers

the policy of the Common Front, which is the easy solution, it is forced to become the ally or the servant of alien powers which are fundamentally hostile to Liberal ideas, and which accept the alliance only as a means towards the destruction of the economic order out of which Liberalism grew, and without which it cannot exist.

### CATHOLIC ACTION IN SPAIN

By H. L. FRIEND

(Mr. Friend, who last week described his own adventures in Madrid prior to his escape, is one of the leading figures in the Catholic Action Movement there.)

To appreciate the background of Catholic Action in Spain, one must recognise the great blow which the Catholic conscience of the country suffered when the Church was deprived of its possessions by Mendizábal in 1835. As Menendez y Pelayo says: "Mendizábal did not only sell the properties of the Church, but bought the consciences of the buyers," as since then all these Catholics who bought lands at the lowest prices stood behind the Government and against the Church. To this generation followed another, influenced by such parents, and also by liberal principles, and a certain atheism *à la mode* created the type of so-called intellectual, which, with few exceptions had little power of independent thought and copied from other countries anything they thought exotic and irreverent.

Yet, in the words of the great master I have mentioned before, I may say that "the Spaniard who ceases to be a Catholic is incapable of any other belief, if it is not his own common sense, which nearly always is bad."

It is true that during the reign of the last two kings of Spain, the Church seemed to be at liberty, but this same peace, which was only apparent, did little good to the Catholic cause.

On the one hand we have the Liberal governments who passed increasingly restricted laws against the liberty of action of the Church. The Crown had the appointment of high dignitaries, and although this did not corrupt the Spanish clergy—a fact which speaks very highly for its character—it made the higher Churchmen appear, in the sight of the people, as much less free from political influence than they ought to be.

The same apparent peace and protection of the Church made a part of the Clergy believe that the faith was as alive as before in the hearts of all Spaniards, and they neglected, in some cases, their apostolic work. The Clergy were very poor. If the Church had been powerful, as many people in England believe, she would have done much more to avoid the hunger endured by many priests, and the way Churches and Convents went to ruin for lack of money for repairs.

The individual conscience of many Catholics was well formed regarding their private duties, but, when beyond the boundaries of the home they faced the political, social or economic problems, many of them acted as if their belief did not impose any duties in public as well as in private life. It was common enough to meet the father who sent his children to Catholic schools, and at the same time held shares in a newspaper which was working against religious education, and the deputy who fought in the Chamber for the defence of Civil Marriage deprived of any religious ceremony, and who would not hear anyone suggest that his daughters might marry outside the Church.



Tablet

Oct. 17, 1936

valuable. Now it was a pathetic, commonplace thing, the cross at the top loose and hanging askew; every stone had been prised out of it. But it was still recognizable as the ornament that had been used on that absurd occasion. It recalled the aspect of the assembled dignitaries—the Duke of Gloucester, the Prince of Udine, Marshal d'Esperey, Mr. Jacoby from U.S.A., and all the meaningless good words that had graced the day. He asked about the book I was going to write; said he was sure he would not have time to read it, and dismissed me. I left with the impression of one of the most amiable and sensible men I had met for a long time.

(To be continued).

### RELIGION IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

V

#### THE TURN OF THE TIDE

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The last twenty years has seen the rapid decline of Liberalism throughout Europe and its supersession by new forces which aspire to dominate Western culture. But though Liberalism is everywhere losing power, the revolutionary tradition which was so closely bound up with the Liberal Movement during the nineteenth century is as strong as ever. In fact, the passing of Liberalism has been accompanied by the reawakening of forces of revolutionary violence which had been temporarily held in check by the economic prosperity of the later nineteenth century. After fifty years of relative stability, European society is once more launched on the stormy sea of revolutionary change. Barricades are once more rising in the streets of European capitals, whole countries are being devastated by civil war, and political and religious persecutions are raging as fiercely and perhaps more widely than at any other period in European history.

But this new phase of revolutionary activity differs from that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in that it is no longer united by common aims and ideals. Today the struggle is not so much between the party of conservatism and the party of change as between the revolutionary parties themselves. There is not one revolution but two, and they are at war with one another. Both of them are opposed to Liberalism in the classical sense, both reject the capitalist economy and the social ideals of bourgeois individualism, but each professes a different creed and asserts its own political dogmas and its own social ideals.

These two opposing creeds are Socialism and Nationalism. Neither of them is new. Both were clearly formulated in the nineteenth century, and their origins can be traced back still further into the eighteenth century. Even in Rousseau, who is usually regarded as the father of Liberalism, there are strong communal and anti-individualist elements which are more akin to Socialism than to Liberalism, while modern French historians like Professor Mathiez have seen in Robespierre and the Jacobins the forerunners of Social Democracy. In the same way, the creed of modern Nationalism and racialism finds its

precursors in early Romantic writers like Herder, who asserted the importance of "blood and soil" as the sources of the national genius primarily in literature, but also in culture and social life generally. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the creed of Nationalism was explicitly formulated by the great German idealists. Fichte asserted that the individual life has no real existence and that it is the species as represented by organized historic society which alone lives, while Hegel regarded the national state as the supreme incarnation of the divine Idea: the goal of that process of historical evolution which is the progressive manifestation of the World Spirit. This philosophy of Nationalism was applied to the history of law by Savigny and to economics by Friedrich List, while from the very beginning it found a direct application to political issues in Fichte's "Addresses to the German Nation."

The Socialist creed did not achieve definite formulation until later. Indeed, it was not until the democratic idealism of the French revolutionary movement had been fused with the organic historical theories of Hegelianism by Karl Marx that Socialism fully realized itself. But its challenge to Liberal individualism was of an even more drastic and fundamental character than that of Nationalism, since its social ideal was completely communal and totalitarian and could realize itself only in a homogeneous and uniform mass civilization.

Nevertheless, neither of these movements succeeded in dominating Western culture in the nineteenth century. They only achieved success in proportion as they compromised with the Liberal ideas that were the dominant intellectual force of the age. The triumphs of Nationalism were for the most part victories of Liberal Nationalism like the Liberalism of Victorian England or of the Italian Risorgimento. In the same way Socialism remained an impotent protest against the dominant social and economic order, until in the later part of the century it allied itself with the movement of democratic social reform and began to take its part in political life as the reformist Socialism of the official parties, who "put Marx in the attic" and concentrated their efforts on practical measures of reform, like the eight-hours day.

Today, however, the decline of Liberalism has put an end to this tendency, and has led to the reassertion of Nationalism and Socialism in their pure, undiluted form. This process had already begun before the War with the appearance of syndicalism and the theory of direct action among the Socialists and the rise of a new type of militant Nationalism and racialism on the Continent. The post-War period has seen the culmination of these tendencies, respectively, in the revolutionary Communism of Russia and the Third International, and in the National dictatorships of the Fascist type. But though these two movements are at war with one another and seem at first sight poles apart ideologically, if we compare them with the classical Liberal point of view, we shall find that they are converging towards a common goal. Neither of them admits the old Liberal ideals of freedom of opinion and of the Press, or allows the individual to live his own life as an end in itself. Both represent a reaction against the individualism that was characteristic of the nineteenth century and a tendency to return to more communal forms of social life and culture.

But although these tendencies are irreconcilable with Liberalism in the classical sense, they are not necessarily opposed to Democracy in itself. This may appear paradoxical to the modern Englishman, who is accustomed to regard Parliamentary institutions as the hall-mark of Democracy and to look on "Liberal and Democratic ideals" as essentially identical. But if we look back to the classical exponents of Liberal principles and the founders of historic Liberalism, such as Benjamin Constant and Camille Jordan, Guizot and de Tocqueville, Macaulay and John Stuart Mill and T. F. Green, we shall see that they are aristocratic rather than democratic, not only in their temper of mind, but in their political philosophy, while the representatives of the pure Democratic tradition maintained the Jacobin ideal of revolutionary dictatorship and were often unsympathetic towards constitutionalism and Parliamentary institutions. Even at the present day, Benedetto Croce, the Cato of Continental Liberalism, still not only maintains the essential distinction between Liberalism and Democracy, but contrasts them with one another as two rival systems and creeds.<sup>1</sup>

But while Liberalism is aristocratic in its individualism and its hostility to public control of economic and cultural life, Nationalism and Socialism are both democratic inasmuch as they claim to embody the General Will—the supremacy of the people as a whole over all particular and separate interests. They tend to merge the individual in the group and to identify his private interests with those of the State as a whole.

It is true that they differ profoundly in their ideology and cultural ideals. Socialism has inherited the cosmopolitan and humanitarian ideals of the older revolutionary tradition together with its hostile or critical attitude towards the Church and religious institutions. Nationalism looks to the past for its inspiration. It insists on the continuity of national life and the vitality of the national genius, and it tends to ally itself with the national religious tradition.

Nevertheless, in spite of their contradictions, Nationalism and Socialism are not exclusive, and it is probable that the future will show a progressive natural assimilation and interpenetration between them. Already Nationalism in its latest and most extreme development has become National Socialism, while even Communism is tending in Russia to assume a national form and to appeal once more to the spirit of militant patriotism and national self-assertion.

Thus, behind both these movements and also behind other less clearly-defined movements that are emerging in Western Europe and America, there is a common tendency. It is the tendency which St. Simon, the great precursor of modern Socialism, divined in his great generalisation on the law of an alternate rhythm in the history of culture: the alternation of "organic" and "critical" ages. When a culture has lost its spiritual unity, it enters on a period of centrifugal and critical activity in which great material and intellectual progress is made in all sorts of directions, but where at the same time culture becomes disorganized, inorganic and individualistic. Art becomes a specialized activity and is no longer the spontaneous expression of culture; form. Religion becomes a private affair, a matter of the individual conscience, not a consecration of the whole society and its life. Eventually, however, a poi

<sup>1</sup> Cf. his *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, ch. I *Opposing Religious Faiths*.

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<sup>1</sup> of his *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*, ch. II., *Opposing Religious Faiths*.

is reached in which this centrifugal movement reaches its limit: the possibilities of the cultivation of the individual are exhausted and the tide turns towards a re-organization of culture, a fresh subordination of the individual to the community and a reassertion of spiritual unity as the dominant motive in social life. This turn of the tide of Western culture is what St. Simon and his disciple Comte foresaw a century ago, and what is actually being realized in contemporary history. Not only does the State seek to subordinate all individual activities to a central purpose, but the individual himself no longer seeks to enjoy unlimited freedom. He is weary, or afraid, of independence and isolation. He longs to merge himself in the mass, to take refuge in some impersonal objective system. In the eyes of the most intelligent and highly cultivated members of the middle classes, their own domain of individual ethical and aesthetic culture has become a "waste land," a land of darkness and emptiness "*ubi umbra mortis et nullus ordo*." They feel themselves to be "hollow men" and they are ready, as we see in Mr. Auden's recent works, to accept the destruction of their world and their own social liquidation not merely with resignation, but in a spirit of self-abnegation and devotion.

From the religious point of view there is obviously a great danger in this situation. For it opens the way to irrational forces and emotions which found no outlet in the prosperous materialism of capitalist society. But at the same time it provides an opportunity for the reassertion of religious values and of the religious view of life. The trend towards a new organic type of culture also involves a return to spiritual unity, and this can never be realized adequately in a purely secular civilization. It demands the reconsecration of social life and the restoration of an organic relation between religion and culture.

## CATHOLIC ACTION IN SPAIN

II

By H. L. FRIEND

(Mr. Friend, a civil engineer in Madrid, described his adventures in the Civil War in THE TABLET of October 3rd. Last week he wrote about the background of Catholic Action in Spain. This week he completes his account of the new movements.)

A very interesting Catholic movement which I have referred to in my previous article is that of the Professional "Hermandades," which are institutions formed by all those who belong to a certain profession. The medical doctors, surgeons, architects, lawyers, engineers, university professors, etc., form their own associations, whose object is to look after the spiritual welfare of their members and to train them as practical Catholics in the development of their professional work. As an example, the "Hermandad" of St. Cosmo and St. Damian, for physicians, in which are grouped hundreds of Spanish doctors of medicine, must be mentioned. It was only started a few years ago, but since then not only has the Association been looking after the religious and moral training of its members, but also the technical part, and especially in relation to morals. They publish their review, *Medicina*, considered the best technical periodical on its subject in the country. Besides this,



Englishmen were giving judgment on crises abroad, judgments based wholly on the assumption that if the liberties now enjoyed in England are not extended to the citizens of a particular country, the Government withholding them must stand condemned. Englishmen feel a proprietary interest in Parliamentary democracy and constitutional liberties, and just as they are flattered when foreigners seek to copy their institutions, so do they take it as a personal insult when their ways of doing things are abandoned. In this Spanish civil war, many Catholics have sought to find explanations for the attitude, to them so extraordinary, of a considerable number of Anglican dignitaries. The builders of popular fronts, talking of democracy and popular rights, set their "springs to catch woodcocks," and at once there strut into the traps a plump assortment of aproned and gaitered woodcocks. Nothing is easier than to sit in the comfort and security of episcopal palaces and deaneries in England and to withhold the name of Christian from the brave men who have borne the peril and the heat of the conflict in Spain.

It is not necessary to find the explanation for these perverted sympathies in any instinctive desire to take sides against Rome, whatever allies it may involve. It is juster and more charitable to see in these incidents and speeches nothing more culpable than insularity, an honest belief that all foreigners could live and act like Englishmen if only they would bestir themselves and take a little more trouble.

But there is an intellectual failing continually recurring in these clerical utterances on the affairs of Europe, a failing which may be defined as the habit of living by names, of caring much more what things are called than what they are in themselves. It is a failing which may perhaps be said to be fostered rather than eradicated by a training in Anglican theology. It emerges in the world of European affairs in a continual placing of the emphasis in the wrong place. Last year the low character of Abyssinian civilization was lost sight of, and all that was remembered was that Abyssinia was a full member of the League of Nations. This year the collapse of all government in Spain was not admitted and was not seen, because what dominated the English imagination was the statement that it had come into being as the result of a general election. In the near future we may expect the new Government in Spain to be censured and condemned for its failures to provide for all its citizens, however disaffected, the legal rights which an Englishman would expect in England. The truth is distasteful to pacifists who like to talk as though strength brought with it no domination of ideas, but in fact a dominant people frames its own rules, and nineteenth-century England was a dominant power which imposed, down to 1919, its standards all over the world. It is not surprising if today Englishmen find it difficult to make adequate allowance for perils and necessities among which they do not have to live, but it is important that the effort should be made. It is quite natural if working men and women who have never been outside this island are misled by the application of familiar English words to very different foreign things, but the highly educated man in a responsible position ought to be fully conscious that he must not glibly apply secondary tests, or blame men who are at war for being harsher than men living easily at peace.

SELLING THE SAINTS

The name of Dr. Fell gives rise to immediate feelings of inexplicable aversion, which is unfortunate for the memory of Charles Fell, whose anniversary occurs about this time. For he deserves much grateful remembrance, that eighteenth century priest who went bankrupt through publishing the Lives of the Saints in English. The work was ambitious. He called it "Lives of the Saints, collected from Authentic Records of Church History, with a full account of the other Festivals throughout the year. The whole interspersed with suitable Reflections, together with a Treatise on the Moveable Feasts and Fasts of the Church." The four quarto volumes containing such treasures never made any great mark. They did not please the eighteenth century lay palate, and they offended the clergy, which can easily be done. In this case, the book was denounced to Rome by a Doctor Witham of Douay as being insufficiently filled with miracles, and later on the clergy had a further ground for complaint, for Dr. Fell's publishing ventures had been carried through with clergy property, on which at his bankruptcy he could only pay tence in the pound. It is not recorded whether his creditors were also given the four quarto volumes, "interspersed with suitable reflections," to learn resignation from the Lives of the Saints, and to learn also, not to expect miracles.

Since Father Fell's day, a good deal of money has been lost providing the public with devotional reading. There is perhaps no other trade in which there is so much unconquerable sanguine expectation that people will love the highest when they see it. It would be fitting if on Fr. Fell's anniversary, October 22nd, Catholic authors and publishers paused for a moment, and ceased hitting typewriters or writing cheques, while they thought about this pioneer. On the whole the record of hagiology among the classes of Catholic books published is not such a bad one, for the lives of the Saints may be works of comfort and delight. But it is true that people sense an incongruity in being asked to pay for edification, or for the record of good deeds. Secular memoirs can be priced highly, for they represent a form of peep show, and no one expects to be allowed to put her eye to the keyhole for nothing. There are other classes of writing for which the public expects to pay: text books of special knowledge, for examinations believed to be more imminent than the Last Judgment, fiction which has been created with a wealth of effort to provide vicarious excitement in the detection of crime, or more commonly, an amorous glow. But good words, and tales of good deeds, people expect more or less free. They feel that it is so much in their neighbours' interests to turn them into saints, or at least into venerables or near-venerables, and that it is absurd to ask people to pay for being improved and reformed out of all knowledge. Yet so perverse is the human heart, that literature is not read attentively when it is free.

There is one great exception, for free reading, over the shoulders of other people, results in triumphs of eager concentration. It would be a good work for tertiaries and others to sit about in buses, trains, tubes, and trams, holding lives of the Saints in large print at such an angle that many craning necks could read them with surreptitious delight. Perhaps along these lines great quarto volumes will come down from the shelves and will find their public, non-paying indeed but interested, at long last.

RELIGION IN AN AGE OF REVOLUTION

VI

By CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The emergence of a new type of organic social order marks the end of the process of evolutionary change through which our civilization has been passing during the last 160 years. The process is not yet completed, but it is entering upon its last phase. What will be the character of this order, and what place will religion hold in it? These are questions which one cannot help asking, though time alone can give a final answer. As we have seen, the Liberalism which dominated the nineteenth century seems to be a spent force. It was bound up with capitalism, and the dominion of the property-owning middle classes, and neither of these seems destined to endure. On the other hand, the power of democracy is as strong as ever, and it is the democratic ideal of the good life for all, not the liberal idea of the political rights of the individual, that inspires the present age. But, as we have seen, the forces of democracy are divided by the feud between socialism and nationalism which threatens to become a religious war between the fanaticism of international Communism and the intolerance of nationalist exclusivism.

There remains, however, a third alternative—that of Christian democracy and a Christian Corporate Order—an alternative which as yet hardly enters into the region of practical politics, but which, nevertheless, offers a basis for the reconciliation of the social forces that are tearing Europe to pieces. On the one hand, this solution would satisfy the demand for an economic order based on justice rather than self interest, a demand which inspired the Socialist protest against the selfish individualism of capitalist society and Liberal economic theory. But at the same time it is far from being hostile to nationalism, although it regards the nation not as the ultimate and exclusive society, nor as a unit in an abstract cosmopolitan system after the Genevan pattern, but as the organ of a corporate culture and a member of the historic society of Christendom. In fact, the same Catholic principles which stood for the unity of Christendom against the disruptive force of religious nationalism at the time of the Reformation, now require the maintenance of the historic principle of nationality against an unhistoric and un-Christian internationalism. Unfortunately modern Europe is still far from realising the possibilities of such a solution, not because the programme of the Papal encyclicals has been tried and found wanting, but because religion and social life have become so divorced from one another that even religious opinion itself is not yet prepared to adapt itself to the new conditions or to realise the necessity for an organic relation between religion and culture. During the last two centuries religion has been forced to accept the situation and to adjust itself to the conditions of an individualist and "critical" culture, and although this adjustment no longer corresponds to the needs of the new age, the religious mind, which is naturally conservative, is loath to abandon it and launch out into an uncharted sea with improvised and untested equipment.

Now if we apply St. Simon's generalization to the history of Christianity, it is obvious that the religious form of the last "organic" age of culture finds

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P. 550

last organic age

expression in medieval Catholicism, while Protestantism represents an adaptation of Christianity to the conditions of a critical, individualistic bourgeois and private type culture. The Protestant principles of private judgment, the supremacy of the individual conscience, individual conversion and conviction of salvation all make for the individualization of religion, while the centrifugal movement of nonconformity and sectarian Christianity which disintegrated the organic unity of Christendom, corresponds on the religious side to the centrifugal movement of culture which disintegrated the unity of western civilization in its "organic" phase. This tendency found its fullest realization in the Liberal Protestantism of the nineteenth century, especially where it passed beyond the limits of orthodox Christianity into a religion of pure individual feeling such as we find first in the religious theories of the early Liberals, like Benjamin Constant.

As against the centrifugal and individualist tendencies of sectarian Protestantism, the Catholicism of the Counter Reformation type represents a conservative effort to preserve the organic relation between religion and culture, and was consequently an obstacle to the development of the critical and individualist type of culture. Hence the countries where Counter Reformation Catholicism reigned supreme, as for example, Spain and Austria, took but a small part in the elaboration of the individualist type of culture, which found its fullest expression in Protestant bourgeois society. Nevertheless, the Catholicism of the post-Renaissance period was not organic in the same sense as the Catholicism of the Middle Ages, or of the Byzantine Age. It represents a compromise between the two types, and was being constantly invaded and undermined by centrifugal movements, the religious nationalism of Gallicanism and Febronianism, the religious individualism of Jansenism and Quietism, and above all the dualism of Renaissance humanism, which permitted so sharp a cleavage between religious and secular culture and spheres of activity. During the eighteenth century the centrifugal critical movement broke down the organic unity of Counter-Reformation Catholicism, and produced a second religious revolution comparable to the Reformation, which, however, resulted in the drastic secularization of culture. The second half of the eighteenth century was the low water mark of "organic" Christianity. It saw the final decadence of the traditional social forms of medieval Christendom that had survived the Renaissance and the Reformation. But while the political and social revolution that took place at the close of the century was marked by the wholesale destruction of socio-religious institutions, and the creation of the modern secular state, it was followed by the beginnings of a return to a more organic conception of religion among the leaders of European thought. The recovery of the organic principle in political and social thought, which showed itself in the birth of Nationalism and Socialism, found simultaneous expression in the religious sphere. It is represented not only by the Catholic revival and the development of Catholicizing tendencies and movements in the Protestant world, but also by the tendency of non-Christian or unorthodox thinkers like St. Simon, Rodrigues, Comte and Buchez to abandon the negative and critical attitude to religion that was characteristic of the Enlightenment, and to put forward the idea of a social Christianity or a positivist neo-Catholicism as

the unifying principle of the new organic culture of the future. It is true that none of these movements was strong enough to withstand the increasing impetus of the trend towards secularization that characterized nineteenth century culture. Socialism found its creed, not in the social Christianity of St. Simon or the religion of humanity of Pierre Leroux, but in the historic materialism of Marx; while the Catholic revival, in spite of its importance in the ecclesiastical and theological sphere failed to stem the tide of secularism or to dominate national culture and social life.

Hence in the present century, when society began to reconstitute itself deliberately on an organic basis, historic Christianity was not strong enough to act as a bond of spiritual union. Religion was no longer in a position of cultural hegemony, and the new type of organic culture left it on one side and constituted itself on the basis of the secular state, with the economic or racial principle as its unifying factor. Nevertheless, in spite of the secular character of the modern state, the trend towards organic unity is in itself by no means unfavourable to religion. The secularization of European culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was only made possible by the individualism which treated religion as a private matter, and left the human soul out of politics and economics. But in an organic culture this division of life is no longer possible.

There is no room in the new state for purely private spiritual activity. The whole man—body and soul—is brought back into public life, so that the new type of culture is obliged to choose between giving the human soul its due place or denying it altogether, and turning the individual into a soulless robot. Now it is impossible for the Christian to believe in the possibility of a completely soulless civilization. Either society must de-secularize itself or it will perish. If European civilization survives, we must believe that religion will gradually seep back into public life until it permeates our culture. But, in the nature of things, this must be a very gradual process. We are at the bottom of a curve which has descended for centuries, and its ascending movement must be correspondingly prolonged.

The greatest danger at the present day is a premature identification between religion and the new culture; an identification which is seen both in the Communist attempt to substitute economic for religious categories, and to transfer religious faith and emotion to secular objects, as well as in the attempts to create an *ad hoc* religion that will be subservient to political ends, whether it takes the form of a racial mysticism, as in Germany, or of a religion of social service and humanitarian idealism which is the dominant tendency in democratic countries, above all in England and America. The new state is groping its way towards the ideal of a spiritual community, but its ideal is limited by the poverty and barrenness of a culture that has been almost completely secularized. As yet there is no organic relation between the spiritual communism of the Christian Church and the temporal community of the state, whether that is regarded as a community of blood and race, or as a community of work and leisure. It is necessary on the one hand to look askance at attempts to create a premature synthesis between religion and modern culture and, on the other hand, to avoid any impatient condemnation of the new trend in western culture which would precipitate a conflict between the Church and the positive organic elements in the totalitarian state. The

situation demands a two-fold policy—a long term policy which aims at the eventual reconsecration of social life and the re-establishment of an organic bond between religion and culture, and secondly, an immediate policy for the establishment of a *modus vivendi* between the Church and the New State. Where the latter has adopted a policy of exclusive and intolerant secularism, and has declared war on organized religion, the only possible *modus vivendi* is that of the catacombs, the traditional solution of the Church in a pagan society. But where this is not the case: where the state or the party recognizes, in however limited a degree, the rights of religion and the religious community, there the *modus vivendi* will be in principle that of the concordat, not necessarily a concordat in the formal juridical sense, but a working arrangement which not merely secures the spiritual independence of the Church, but which also permits the co-operation of Church and State in the field of culture. For our ideal cannot be that of two cultures—a religious and a secular one—existing independently or in opposition to one another but a single culture, an organic unity inspired and guided by religion towards a transcendent super-temporal end. And this ideal can only be realized in so far as the Church is faithful to its own mission, and clearly manifests to the world the activity of the Holy Spirit by which the fullness of the Divine Life is communicated to humanity.

THE END

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## ABYSSINIA RE-VISITED

by EVELYN WAUGH

(The final instalment from Mr. Waugh's new book, "Waugh in Abyssinia," which comes out on Monday).

II.

Addis was never a town of outstanding amenities. At this season of this particular year it seemed preternaturally forbidding. The central square, where the Post Office, the two cinemas and the principal European shops had stood, was still as it had been left by the rioters, a heap of blackened masonry, charred timber and twisted iron. For weeks now the Dessye Road had been impassable; the railway was the sole means of communication with the outside world, and this had been working to its utmost capacity to keep the city, whose population was now increased by a garrison of forty thousand troops, in flour and the bare necessities of life. It had been impossible to import building materials, and all work of reconstruction had thus been postponed until after the rains. Every available building had been taken over to provide quarters for the new civil and military population; a ring of temporary forts protected the city, where the men lived under canvas behind timber stockades and waged a ceaseless war on the flood water which seeped in from all sides and lay everywhere in shallow pools of muck. The commissariat departments were faced with a formidable task. They provided an adequate supply of essential food, but no surplus and very few luxuries. Prices, though controlled, were abnormally high; most things were three or four times their usual price, some things ten times; eggs, milk, butter and vegetables were very rare indeed. The private soldier's five lire a day did not go far in supplementing his rations; he had wine once a week and lived mainly on coarse dry bread, meat-stew and spaghetti. Petrol was rigidly controlled; an occasional densely-crowded bus might be seen, but the taxis, once so numerous, had disappeared from the streets. So had the natives. The crowds of white figures which formerly had filled the streets, teeming in to market, lounging and trotting and brawling from sunrise to dusk, were scattered about the countryside. They were shy of the new regulations. They did not like the new money. They had nothing to sell. Many of the *tukals* had been destroyed and deserted during the riots. The native population who remained were being humanely treated. Those who had got employment were well paid, but there was an ample supply of white labour for most purposes of the moment. A big school had been established where the children were fed, clothed and taught to sing patriotic songs. They were the happiest people in the city. The Italians, as everyone knows, love children, and it was the most common sight to see groups of Italian soldiers playing with small Abyssinians in a manner which shocked the race-conscious of the German colony.

It was difficult to get information about what was going on outside, for beyond the stockades lay a closed country; but people who had lately come to town reported that wherever they went in Shoa and round Addis they found that the fields had not been planted. It seems almost certain that during its first year the new regime will be faced with serious famine throughout the whole district from Addis Ababa to