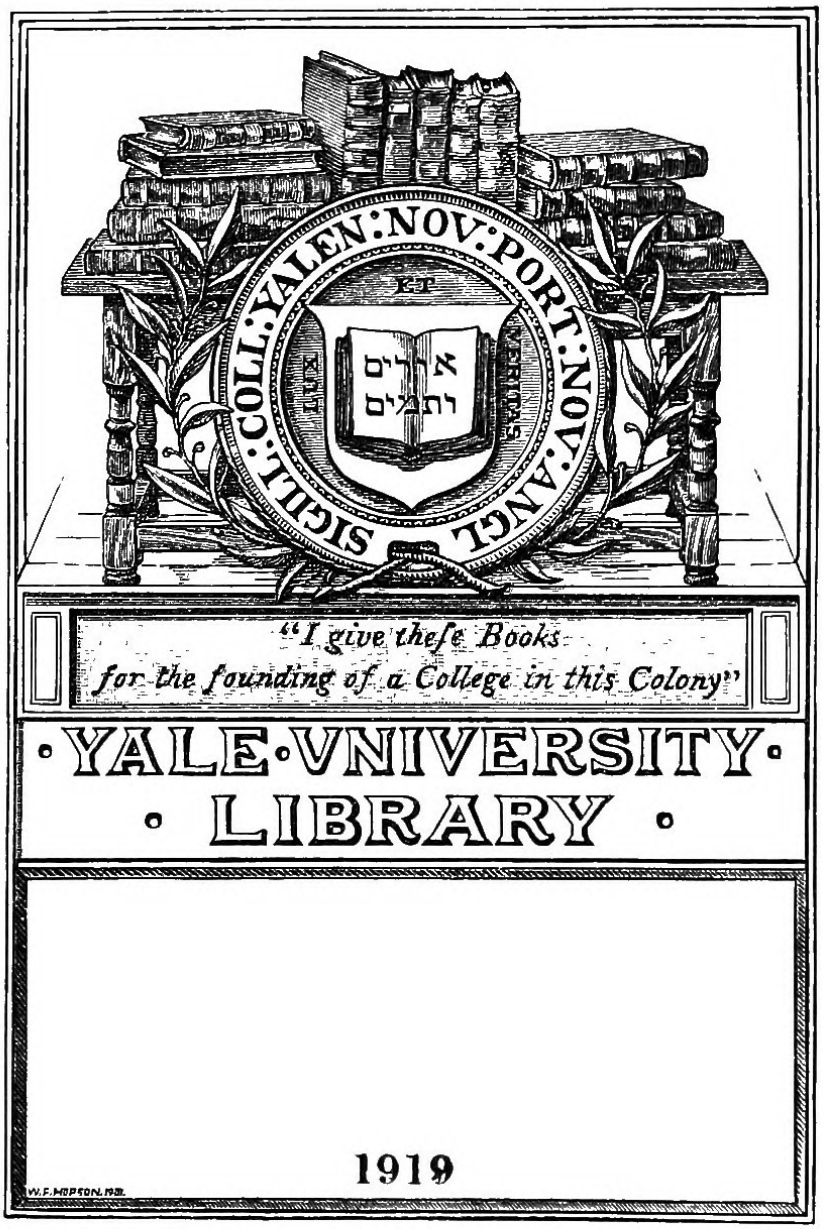
MODERNISM

M D PETRE

THE MODERN OUTLOOK SERIES



MODERNISM
ITS FAILURE AND ITS FRUITS

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BY

M. D. PETRE

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TO

GEORGE TYRRELL.

I dedicate this study of a cause which has been declared hopeless to the memory of one of its leaders, from whom I learned that life may be well spent in sowing what we shall not reap, and that it is enough to see the Promised Land from afar though it be not given us to enter therein.

'By thy mercy, O God, may we be freed from the dead hand of the past, and enter into new life and holiness.'—(Prayer in the Roman Missal for Tuesday in Holy Week.)*

* *Tua nos misericordia, Deus, et ab omni subreptione vetustatis expurgat, et capaces sanctae novitatis efficiat.*

FOREWORD

MODERNISM AND THE WAR

THIS is a pre-war book; finished and set in type in 1914. Although, as I write these lines, we seem no nearer the end of our great probation than in those first months when so much was laid aside to await 'the end of the war,' yet there are signs, in the reading world, that normal and abiding subjects of interest are coming into their own once more; that it is possible to go on with the duties that our present condition imposes, and yet to think of other things besides.

Furthermore—the scaffolding of social reconstruction is being erected at home even while the work of material destruction continues abroad, and religious reconstruction is, for some of us, an essential element of all social reconstruction. We are beginning to realise that it is time to live and think once more even while men fight abroad, or endure at home, for the right to live and think in their own way.

The author of this little volume is among those to whom these very reflections may be addressed, even while uttering them. To a great extent my

ordinary life has been suspended during the last three years. In France and in England, time and strength, even more the latter than the former, have been expended on work new and strange to me; work not easily combined with intellectual effort. And now I realise that the war, which seems to have lasted a day, seems also to have lasted many years —that some remnants of youth have been carried away on its tide, that life is on the descendent, and that it is time to do the little bit of work which, as contained in one's own head and heart, only oneself can do. Perhaps some of one's intellectual freshness is gone for ever—but many other and greater things are gone than one's personal possessions; and if the pen works more slowly it is a price to be gladly paid for the privilege of having turned a few pillows and cheered a few dreary nights with cups of tilleul or tea.

So I took up my revised proof, feeling like a ghost returning to scenes of past activity. What was my surprise, therefore, to find that the subject was not only alive—that was no matter for astonishment, for such subjects cannot die—but that it was brim full of immediate actuality; that Modernism was not only a religious movement, important to those interested in religion, but that it was also a movement deeply representative of the conflicting

aims of this very world war; that the Modernist leaders were men inspired, in religious questions, with the same ideals for which we are fighting in national life; that Modernism was, in fact, a spiritual struggle between the principles of 'self-determination' and human democracy, and those of unrepresentative authority and unsympathetic rule. If we are now battling that 'the world may be made safe for democracy,' that national and political institutions may be brought into accordance with human needs and aspirations, so the Modernist was fighting to make the Churches safe for democracy, to bring the mechanism of religious life into accordance with the free spontaneous life of heart and head in the believer.

The Modernist, then, was out for the liberation of religious life from the exaggerated claims of religious form; his ruling text was that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, which he would have interpreted as the Church being made for mankind and not mankind for the Church; he was out for the just demands of the faithful to a right share in fashioning the religious home in which their souls were to dwell; he was out, in fine, to obtain fresh breathing-space for the mind, fresh warmth for the heart, in that great Institution which belonged to him as he to it.

His claims were answered by an invitation to carry himself elsewhere; to go where his opinions were welcome, or to go where he could uphold them all to himself. He was told, by those in religious authority, that his position was unreasonable and inconsistent, as well as objectionable, for that he had no right to stay in a church which did not recognise his principles. It was natural that his religious rulers should hold this view, since it was precisely the point on which the Modernist broke with them. He was told the same thing by others standing outside the Church and outside the movement; and this was not so natural, for many of them ought to have understood better than they did.

To blame Modernism for this attitude of combined revolt and attachment is to blame it for being itself —a form of criticism that is not true criticism. It is of the very essence of Modernism to maintain the need of both life and form; to uphold the primary necessity for the former, but also the secondary necessity for the latter. He asks for self-determination, but not at the cost of going out of his own land into a desert to exercise it. He asks to be respected, listened to and represented in the administration of his Church; he does not ask to pull down or abandon the building which was his home. The Modernist sets forth, in things religious, the claim which we are

making in things political; the claim of a people to live on its own soil, but to live there in peace and freedom.

And the Modernist has also proved himself a fighting man by deeming his cause worthy of his life; he has not died by the material sword, for his contest was not 'with flesh and blood,' but he has died in another sense, by suffering deprivation of his own share in the life he strove to promote. The soil of France covers the bones of those who will not enjoy the new world for which they bled; the exiled grave of the Modernist covers the ashes of one who renounced the spiritual privileges which he endeavoured to secure to the modern mind. In his own way he died on the field, and died without beholding the issue of the contest, without tasting the after joys of peace.

It is a frequent matter of discussion whether the war has made the world more religious, or not. Personally I tend to agree with M. Loisy, that it has made the religious-minded more so, that it has inspired respectful tolerance in places where the opposite prevailed, but that, for the rest, it has left religion as it was.

Indeed, I am not quite sure whether, as the crisis is prolonged, we can even say as much as that; whether the continuous exercise of brute strength

and the sense of its ruthlessness do not, on the whole, tend to a weakening of spiritual faith. We begin to feel like puppets in a vast show ; and to feel like a puppet is not to feel like an immortal soul. On the whole, and from what I have seen of soldier life, I should be inclined to think that war tends to increase the spirit of fatalism as against that of faith.

But, on the other hand, if ever the need of religion was apparent, it is so now. When was the world in greater want of a spiritual and eternal setting to its sufferings and endeavours than now, when those advanced in life can hardly hope to live down the sad memory of the turmoil, when the young can never regain the lost years of youth, when it has fallen on all of us to pay the price for goods we shall not live to enjoy ?

Furthermore, the very ideals for which we strive are, if we really mean what we say, spiritual and ultra-worldly. We aim at the construction of a world in which material strength shal lnot predominate, in which the instincts of egoism shall be controlled ; such a world supposes a spiritual and eternal beyond in which, like the Platonic ideas, our own ideals have a true and permanent existence. If this world is to be 'made safe for democracy,' there is also another world in which it must find a

safe home; a world in which its noblest ideals can be ultimately realised.

I feel then that my subject has a very pronounced application to present conditions; that in the Modernist movement we find, in some measure, a spiritual type of the great world struggle.

. . . . . .

Of the chief personalities with which this work deals one, of course, had left us long before the great tragedy began. Of the others we may make particular mention of M. Loisy, in whom the love of country has bloomed into a great human religion which he has set forth in a work of which I have treated elsewhere. In *La Religion*, M. Loisy—who had already taken leave of the Church which rejected him—proposes a religion of Humanity, closely allied to the Positivist religion of Auguste Comte, but with a far deeper sense of the spiritual Beyond. A world without religious faith is not, for him, a world worthy of the sacrifices we have made for it.

The chief opponent of Modernism, Pius x., is no more, and circumstances have been such that it is not possible fully to estimate what the action of the present Pope would have been in quieter times. Certain vexatious measures have been arrested; but the anti-modernist oath is still exacted.

To one, whose name appears in this book by

reason of quotations from a work addressed to him, I would here offer a tribute of respect, sympathy and homage—such a tribute as the author of *Medievalism* would have been the first to offer him. Cardinal Mercier has become the representative figure of a country that has bled and suffered for us. The writer of this work would like to tell him, through these pages, that the rooms in her house where Father Tyrrell lived and died, rooms which had been set apart and used for no other purpose, became the home, for years, of exiled Belgian peasants; that members of his own diocesan flock found shelter therein; and that one of his own priests has blessed his exiled countrymen in the room where Father Tyrrell spent his last days.

CHIRK EXTENSION HOSPITAL,
March 1918.

CONTENTS

(1,986)

MODERNISM

CHAPTER I

WHAT MODERNISM IS

HOW are we to define the very positive, and yet elusive, movement with which these pages are to deal? It is a movement in the Church, but not a Church movement; and it is a movement not in one Church only, but in all. It is a religious movement, yet the official representatives of religion repudiate it; it is a deeply human movement, yet the larger section of humanity cares nothing for it. It is a learned movement, yet learning regards it more frequently with pity than with respect; it is an unlearned movement, yet the simple and unlearned look on it with fear and suspicion rather than love. It is a persecuted movement, but its martyrs get little honour or sympathy; it is a defeated movement, yet it is still dreaded and reviled.

George Tyrrell defined the modernist as *a churchman of any sort who believes in the possibility of a synthesis between the essential truth of his religion and the essential truth of modernity.*

Modernism is, then, essentially, a religious movement, though, as we shall see later on, certain non-

religious elements have made common cause with it; and it is also a religious movement within the Churches, though its human sympathies spread beyond them. We may, therefore, add to the above definition a certain conception, special to modernism, of the relation of the Church to religion, and of religion to the Church. In this way the modernist becomes one who believes not only in the possibility of a synthesis between modernity and religion, but also in the possibility of a synthesis between modern religion and the Church.

For many centuries the Church (I speak of the Church as one, since, in some sense, we all agree as to her unity) had been regarded as the sole guardian of religion, and just as, in the Middle Ages, having first claimed the right to evangelise the whole world, she then claimed the right to rule the whole world, so, yet more easily, has she passed on from regarding herself as the chief guardian of religion to regarding religion as her own peculiar possession. By a further advance, not conscious, but due to the unconscious logic of life, she has not only taken possession of religion, but has made it subordinate as the possessed is subordinate to the possessor. Not that she has professed to be the end to which religion is the means; to make such profession would be to proclaim her own deviation, and to proclaim it would be to wish and intend to correct it. But in so far as religion which, if anything at all, is universal as humanity itself, is represented

as exclusively dependent on the Church, which really exists for its maintenance, the relations are inverted, and religion becomes the means instead of the end. In this way the Church has grown greater and religion has grown less; the handmaid has become the mistress.

Modernism, besides endeavouring to mediate between science and faith, has also attempted to arrest this process; to make religion paramount and the Church secondary; to restore the Church to her position of guardian, but not mistress, of religious faith and life.

This is what explains both the reason and the unreason of modernism; its persistent attachment to a Church by which it is rejected, its persevering appeal to a world by which it is slighted. It can find a home in neither because it believes in both. It is, in fact, one of two things. It is either the last explosive movement of vitality in institutions doomed to proximate extinction, at least in so far as they can be considered of world-wide importance, or it is the beginning of a new condition of things, in which the Church shall be subservient to the religious and spiritual needs of humanity; shall preserve the truth committed to her guardianship, but shall not refuse to learn that which mankind can teach her; shall guide and command, but also follow and obey.

In the former case modernism will interest posterity as the stage in a process; it will be

as a scientific or critical hypothesis, which was eventually proved false, but without which the truth might never have been discovered. In the second case it will eventually be reckoned as at least one of the forces in a great movement of religious transformation and revival.

It is no duty of the present writer to pronounce between the two alternatives. I may, or I may not, have found the answer so far as my own faith is concerned, but I cannot make that answer the matter for argument. My task is the less assuming one of seeking to lay bare the most intimate characteristics of the movement; of describing its chief manifestations; of explaining its difficulties and acknowledging its failures; of indicating its aims and justifying its hopes.

The object, then, of this work is not a history, but a study of modernism.[1] A history of modernism might easily become a history of religion, or a history of heresy; a history of authority, or a history of rebellion; a history of tyranny or a history of liberty; it could as easily become a history of the Church as of a particular movement in the Church. We might begin with the Vatican Council, or we might begin with the Council of Trent; we might even go back to the very Gospels or the Acts of the Apostles to find the first modernists; and any scheme

[1] An excellent documentary history of the movement is to be found in the work of M. Albert Houtin, *Histoire du Modernisme Catholique*, to be obtained of the author (18 rue Cuvier, Paris).

of history which one elected to follow would be dependent on the particular definition one had laid down of the subject.

Furthermore, the question would arise whether such history was to cover the vicissitudes of the movement in the Roman Catholic Church only, or in all Christian Churches and even in Jewish and other non-Christian Churches. Again, it would be asked whether we should deal with it in every country, or in one or two only; for it is known in Europe and in America, and it is not all unknown in Asia.

History is one thing and reflection is another; we are dealing, in this place, with something that is yet before our eyes, even if there are those who declare that it is but a corpse awaiting burial. Many, indeed most, of those who took part in the movement are yet living, whether they continue to take an active part in it or not. The repressive measures invoked against it are still in full action; its supposed votaries are still objects of pious horror to the orthodox; to deny and repudiate it is still a means of advancement to the ecclesiastic who would make his way; it is still a spectre of undefined shape, of lurid colour and colossal dimensions, to the simple believer. We will take it, then, just as we find it, and seek, not its remote, but its quite immediate origin; we will study its character and its meaning; its strength and its weakness; its honesty and its dishonesty; its courage and its failure; its death and its chances of resurrection.

We will consider it chiefly in the Roman Catholic Church, because therein it has found its classic manifestation; but we will not forget that it has played a part elsewhere as well.

We will seek its characteristics in the places where they are most readily to be found, not presuming, on this account, that the same characteristics might not be found in as great force elsewhere.

To put it shortly, we will study that movement called Modernism which arose in the Catholic Church in the last years of the last century, and which was condemned by Pius x. in the Syllabus *Lamentabili* of July 1907, and the Encyclical *Pascendi* of 8th September 1907. That movement was represented by Catholic priests and laymen in France, Italy, England, Germany, as well as other countries, who, being in touch with science and history and criticism, sought to defend the Catholic faith by methods of apologetic which did not demand, for their use, a type of mind and thought peculiar to the traditional Catholic believer.

Some of these men were historians or critics, some were philosophers, some were social reformers, some were mainly apostles. They began cautiously and went on more boldly; they were accorded, for a time, a certain measure of suspicious toleration on the part of their official superiors; they excited a good deal of attention, sympathetic or adverse, in the outside world; they attracted followers who rightly belonged to them, and followers who had little in common with them; they were regarded by

some as the saviours, by others as the destroyers of their people.

Then came the thunderbolt, not wholly unexpected. In a syllabus, followed by an encyclical letter of somewhat special and peculiar character, the movement was crushed and condemned *en bloc*, and its leaders, unnamed, but described, held up to obloquy, as the enemies of religion.

This general condemnation was succeeded by various special ones, and a reign of repression set in which has not yet reached its close. Some of those affected by the pronouncements of authority left the Church; others bowed to the storm and abandoned, at least in part, all attempt at further activity; others, again, adopted what has been named 'the doorstep policy,' and maintained their adhesion to the Church in spite of her adverse attitude.

Thus matters stand at present as we proceed to our analysis of the movement. Some may assist at such an analysis with as much calm and detachment as though they were spectators of the mere dissection of an inanimate organism. For them the tragedy is played; it was foolish, or it was heroic, but it was, in either case, desperate, and nothing but dead bones is left to remind us of it. Such are not, however, the sentiments of the writer who diffidently undertakes the task, and to whom the work is so much more one of vivisection than of dissection that every page is instinct with living pain and fear, love and hope.

CHAPTER II

UNCONSCIOUS MODERNISM

IN a novel which, if not professedly, yet actually, contained a review of the modernist movement, from the standpoint of one who regarded it with very qualified approval, the sister of the modernist leader, exasperated by the lack of sympathy which her brother encounters in Rome, exclaims :

They go out to preach to the heathen, to make some silly beggar woman go to confession, and they trample on a great soul and a great heart.[1]

Elsewhere another chief personage in the story remarks :

I do not say that I am in love with all the officials. I am not. But I do think that the width and the wisdom and the sense of spiritual values here are enormous. I know that there is a danger in being more keen about two additional missionaries to the Indians than the founding of a chair of philosophy ; but I think that St. Paul would have been in the same danger.[2]

These passages convey the suggestion that the Roman authorities have neglected or repressed the needs of learning by reason of their too great con-

[1] *Out of Due Time*, by Mrs. Wilfrid Ward, p. 292.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 281.

centration on the needs of the unlearned ; the beggar women and the Indians have so blocked the horizon that the philosopher and the historian have been, perforce, disregarded.

In *The Church and the Future* Father George Tyrrell, then a member of the Society of Jesus, wrote :

I do not suppose that any 'official,' from the Cardinal Secretary downwards, nor any theologian, would care to dispute the proposition that the Church is before all else a school of sanctity and charity ; that her sole raison d'être *is to reproduce the pattern of Christ as exactly as possible, in as many as possible ; that this simple end is professedly the ultimate justification of all her institutions, her hierarchy, her sacramental system, her dogmatic system ; of all her battlings and diplomacy in defence of the temporal power ; of all the pomp and parade of the Court of Rome in its palmiest days ; of all the ceremonial, the purple and scarlet, and fine-twined linen, of bishops and prelates and cardinals ; of all that is mere worldliness if not sanctified by that end—and mere fraud and hypocrisy if it only pretends to be so sanctified. Pass through the courts and halls of the Vatican Palace, amidst the outward semblances of earthly vanity and secular power, and ask yourself the ultimate* Why *and* Wherefore *of all that you see and hear going on around you ; or ask the first Monsignore or Cardinal who will deign to notice you, and he will have to answer you* as gravely as he can *: 'Our sole thought and aim is that men*

may love God and love one another as much as possible in the Spirit of Christ. We do not care about temporal power for its own sake, or for money, nor even for spiritual power over men's minds and wills; nor for our own dignity and position; nor for the system and institution which we defend; but we desire purely and simply to make men holy and Christlike, and we are convinced that these are lawful and expeditious means to that end.' [1]

In the first of these quotations, with its unhesitating confidence in the good intentions and disinterested policy of ecclesiastical rulers; and in the second, with its ideal of what those intentions and that policy should be, and its suggestion of what they are not, we have two contrary presentations of the Church and modernism, in their respective relations to the needs of the unlearned.

According to the former of these two views modernism is a purely intellectual crisis, in which the claims of the scholar come into conflict with the traditional teaching of the Church; and the Church is here represented as resisting those claims chiefly in the interest of her little ones. She is protecting the unlearned against the learned, and resisting the stream of knowledge lest it flood an inhabited land before a bed has been prepared for it.

Now there are many who accept this presentation

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 71. This work was published after its author's death by the Priory Press, Hampstead: in the first instance it was printed under a pseudonym for private circulation only.

of the case, though they do not consequently justify the action of ecclesiastical authority; nor admit that it is right to repress truth lest it should distress the ignorant; nor exonerate official rulers from being influenced also by other, and less worthy, motives. They admit the plea that modernism is hostile to the peace of mind of the simple believer, but they maintain that a movement cannot be arrested for such a reason. They argue that what the people are ignorant of to-day will be commonplace knowledge to-morrow, that their temporary trouble will be their eventual gain, and that truth must at last prevail, while all attempts to check it will eventually redound to the dishonour of those who have made them.

They will urge, furthermore, that the Church has a duty to the great as well as to the small, to the rich as well as to the poor, to the few as well as to the many; that the learned may be scandalised as well as the ignorant, while they too have souls to save which cannot be saved by means of intellectual dishonesty.

All this may be said without questioning the primary assumption that modernism is wholly a learned movement.

But in Tyrrell we find a contrary suggestion, and he was indeed the chief, though not the only, modernist whose attention was concentrated as much on the needs of the unlearned as of the learned believer. There were fundamental necessities of every soul that had stirred him to a certain form of

modernism long before the name had been given, long before the thing had been condemned, long before he himself had come into full contact with modernism in its critical and historical form.

The unlearned are speechless, except to those who have care of their souls; it was as spiritual guide and apostle that Father Tyrrell had realised their unspoken needs. As there was to be a form of social modernism which, accepting the principles of modern society, endeavoured to render Christianity acceptable to the people, and the people acceptable to the Church, so there was a form of spiritual modernism directed to the needs of the spiritual democracy, of the simple faithful and their inarticulate wants.

The Church has, indeed, often sought to protect her children from the proud science of the world that would blind and destroy them, but she has also, not unfrequently, bewildered them with her own learning, and it was in the interests of the humble and simple that George Tyrrell first raised his voice against *the great tyranny of the modern Church, sc. the theological schools*.[1]

In an early article,[2] which he always regarded as containing the nucleus of his whole contribution to religious thought, he dealt *ex professo* with the dis-

[1] *The Church and the Future*, p. 31.

[2] 'The Relation of Theology to Devotion,' published in the *Month* of November 1899, republished in *The Faith of the Millions*, and *Through Scylla and Charybdis*.

tress caused to the souls of the unlearned by the learning of the theologian.

Roughly speaking, he writes, *the difference between the philosophical and the vulgar way of conceiving and speaking about things is that the former is abstract, orderly, and artificial; the latter concrete, disorderly, and natural. . . .*

Now, who will deny that a natural history museum does truly represent Nature? that under a certain aspect one who has studied Nature there knows more about her than he who has lived all his life in the woods? But only under a certain aspect is this true. For such a presentation of Nature is abstract and negatively unreal. Beetles do not march the fields in such logically ordered phalanxes; nor do they wear pins thrust through their middles; nor are birds' eyes made of glass, or their viscera of sawdust, or their muscles of wire . . . on the whole, the backwoodsman has a truer knowledge of Nature than a mere acquaintance with a science-manual could ever impart.

. . . . . .

Thus the use of philosophy lies in its insistence on the inadequacy of the vulgar statement; its abuse in forgetting the inadequacy of its own, and thereby falling into a far more grievous error than that which it would correct.

He goes on to apply these principles to theology, and maintains that the duty of the Church is 'to preserve, not to develop' the ideas which the simple language of the Gospel 'conveyed to its first hearers.'

Rational theology, he continues, *is in some sense an attempt to look at things back-before, in a non-human, non-natural way; and it is justified in this endeavour only so far as it tends to cure us of our terrestrial 'provincialism'; but it is not wonderful that to us things so viewed should seem distorted and unreal, the moment we forget that its use is mainly corrective—that it is medicine and not food.*

He proceeds to an almost passionate indictment of the abstract learning that serves only to crush the mind and cramp the heart; of the metaphysical theology that rather starves than nourishes the spiritual life. He defends the right of the simple soul to such statements and explanations of its faith as it can, itself, make use of; and denounces the habit of such teachers as *delight in disconcerting the mind of others by a display of rare and esoteric knowledge, especially of such knowledge as owes its rarity to its abstraction and its remoteness from the wholesome concrete reality of things, and which offers, to minds more acute than deep, a quicker road to distinction than the laborious and humbling path of general education. But, after all, destructive work does not demand much genius, nor does it need more than the merest smattering of bad logic and worse metaphysics to be able to represent the beliefs of simple devotion in a ridiculous light.*

I have more than once, he exclaims bitterly, *known all the joy and reality taken out of a life that fed on devotion to the Sacramental Presence by such a flash*

of theological illumination; and have seen Magdalens left weeping at empty tombs and crying, 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.'

Now George Tyrrell was regarded by ecclesiastical authority as one of the chief and most dangerous of modernists; and he himself said later of the article from which I have quoted:

I am amazed to see how little I have really advanced since I wrote it; how I have simply eddied round and round the same point.[1]

If this be true, and I think those closely acquainted with Tyrrell's apologetic writings will not deny it, then it was not for the rights of a restricted and learned class that Tyrrell became a modernist, but for the human rights of all; it was with what he regarded as a false learning, and not with the apostolic desire to protect the little ones, that his quarrel lay.

If we turn next to another great leader of the movement, who started from a different standpoint, and arrived at a different end, who was more exclusively absorbed in the labours of a scholar and *savant*, and less occupied with pastoral cares, we shall still find that, in his modernism, there was a certain regard for the needs of the ordinary believer; not so much for his devotional as for his intellectual needs; for the reason, knowledge, and commonsense of the plain man, who is also a Christian and a Catholic.

What distresses the mind of the faithful, writes the

[1] *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, p. 85.

then Abbé Loisy in his introduction to 'Autour d'un petit livre,' *in regard to the Scripture is the impossibility in which a man, using ordinary common sense, finds himself of reconciling what he sees the Bible to be, as a book, with what theologians seem to affirm of its absolute, universal truth.*

What distresses the mind of the faithful in regard to tradition is the impossibility of reconciling the historical evolution of Christian doctrine with what our theologians seem to affirm of its unchangeableness. What distresses the mind of the faithful in regard to the Divinity of Christ and His 'infallible knowledge' is the impossibility of reconciling the natural sense of the most certain Gospel texts with what our theologians teach, or seem to teach, regarding the consciousness and knowledge of Jesus. What distresses the mind of the faithful in regard to the redemption operated by the death of Christ is the impossibility of accepting as an adequate theory of the economy of salvation one that is founded on ignorance of the history of mankind, and of the religion of mankind. What distresses the mind of the faithful in regard to the resurrection of Christ is the simple reading of the Gospels as contrasted with the assurance of our apologists, who declare them to contain an absolute agreement amongst the witnesses, and historical certainty both in character and fact. What distresses the mind of the faithful in regard to the Eucharist, and the institution of the papacy and the episcopacy, is the effort they would have to make, and can no longer make, to find in the Gospel text a full and complete definition of

these things as they are to be found in the present ecclesiastical teaching.[1]

This is a plea for the rights of ordinary, and not of special, knowledge; M. Loisy is not referring to the rare attainments of the scholar, who can, after all, take care of himself, but to the common education and everyday wits of the simple faithful. In their case there is no justification for the old and much-worn charge of intellectual self-sufficiency; their minds are not bewildered by too much knowledge, but by the conflict between two forms of instruction, to both of which they have to submit. They must go to school, and they must go to church; they have, indeed, no wish to renounce either. Nor is it, here, the learning of the critic which oppresses them, but the learning of the theologian. As the subtleties of Eucharistic theology, forced upon them by preacher or teacher, have sometimes quenched their devotion, so the historical and scientific assertions of theology have troubled their faith. And whereas they need only accept so much of criticism as convinces their intelligence, they are asked to accept the science that theology offers them even in despite of it.

It is, of course, unquestionably true that science and history have often disturbed the faith of the uneducated, and we shall see, later on, that modernism was an attempt to put faith beyond the reach of such dangers. But whereas the faithful have no

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. xxxiii-xxxiv.

right to expect spiritual help from science, they have a right to expect it from theology, while they, unfortunately, sometimes experience the contrary, and find that a road which they had deemed passable, though rugged, as science had left it, is beset with pitfalls which are the work of theology.

Then, too, if Biblical criticism has raised difficulties in the believing mind, let us not forget that it has also solved a few. Have we not all of us, who were brought up in Christian homes, suffered in our time from that white-washing of Old Testament immorality, which was regarded as a necessary part of our religious instruction? Deeds of murder and cruelty were justified, not as the inevitable product of their day, but as carried out by the command of God. The Bible was not a history of the progressive religious education of man, but, in every part, a revelation of the highest religious truth. The morality of the Bible was representative of the absolute morality of all times; and if the God of the ancient patriarchs seemed, to the mind of the Christian child, far less honest and pure and merciful than the least worthy of his living acquaintances, he had still to believe that this was the same God whom he worshipped, though, with the advent of Christianity, the divine methods had been altered. What many minds have suffered during this process will perhaps never be fully realised, nor the relief with which they grasped at a conception of the Bible which made it reflect the moral and intel-

lectual shortcomings of its writers and their people, as well as the action and guidance of God in their history.

The parents and teachers who felt these difficulties, and struggled, in what way soever, to cope with them, were, in their measure, unconscious modernists.

In his *Question Biblique au XIX^e Siècle*, published in 1902, the Abbé Albert Houtin dealt admirably with this difficulty. Speaking of the Scriptural teaching in Catholic schools, he says :

While these debates were raging amongst theologians, exegetists, geologists, apologists, what was the ecclesiastical teaching in regard to the deluge ?

In primary teaching, and in the popular explanation of the catechism, this cataclysm was represented as having been physically and absolutely universal.

In secondary teaching it was restricted to the earth inhabited by men.

In higher teaching, complete liberty of opinion was allowed.

Thus those who received the education of the wealthy . . . enjoyed the instruction best fitted to save them from loss of faith later on. The more numerous and less fortunate children, whose faith would eventually be threatened by materialism and anti-clericalism, were taught their religion in the way most difficult to preserve it.[1]

Religious instruction in France has been, for a long

[1] *La Question Biblique chez les Catholiques de France*, Albert Houtin, p. 198.

time, very rigorously organised by the clergy; amongst Catholics in England, except the very poor, the parents have exercised their own judgment and taken a larger share in the duty. Hence the difficulty here has been a more personal one. The mother has been perplexed, in her very first lessons to her little ones, by the sense of future danger; is she to give them temporary or permanent ideas? is she, as a woman of ordinary education, to take count of her own knowledge of the ascertained facts of science and history, or is she to leave her children to find them out for themselves, and get over the difficulties, whose seed she has implanted in them, as best they can, whenever they become aware of them? Furthermore, is she to impart instruction in a form in which she herself could not accept it, or is she to say only what she can say in perfect sincerity?

In thus submitting the problem I am not suggesting the answer. It may be that many an enlightened mother will decide, in all rectitude, to teach her children just as she herself was taught; or, if she cannot do it herself, will leave the task to those who can. But in whatever way she may decide the question, a question it has been to her, and in so far as she has apprehended it she has apprehended one of the difficulties with which modernism has had to deal.

In yet another way modernism has responded to a need of the unlearned. The Church has ever declared it to be her mission to guard her children

from superstition as well as unbelief; to check credulity as well as infidelity. Yet it must be admitted that authority has been much less active in the repression of dangerous beliefs than in that of dangerous unbeliefs. Amongst many it has almost become a maxim of orthodoxy that it matters little whether we believe too much, provided only that we believe enough. It is not wise to assume that such a doctrine is *prima facie* repellent to all right-minded people; this would be to ignore the mass of sloth and indolence that weighs on our poor humanity. It is true that faith is difficult, but it is true also that credulity is easy; it is true that it needs an effort to worship 'in spirit and in truth,' but it is true also that it needs but little effort to worship with the senses and the imagination. In so far, then, as the people are not urged or encouraged by their religious teachers to produce, in their spiritual life, the highest and not the lowest, the least and not the most material conceptions of which they are capable, they are suffering from a form of injustice, and are being prepared for the loss of faith when they find higher ideals outside the Church than they have found within it.

Now, to say that the Catholic Church contains a certain element of paganism is to say that she contains every element of humanity, and the ruthless repression of all kinds of material devotions would be, in its way, a form of tyranny. But it is one thing to tolerate a belief or devotion which

is, to those who hold it, their best means of grasping spiritual truth, and it is another thing to foster this particular line of development, or even tolerate it, when it can serve no purpose of edification.

A classic instance of the non-repression of superstition is to be found in the 'Diana Vaughan' mystification, foisted on a Catholic public by M. Léo Taxil. As M. Loisy remarked :

This propaganda of lies and folly was produced and perpetuated without a single word of public reprobation from the Bishops of France. The diocesans of the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris are forbidden to read L'Évangile et l'Église, *but are now, as always, authorised to seek edification in the Catholic works of Léo Taxil.*[1]

This disedifying affair ministered to no spiritual need ; it was not a devotion permitted to the weakness of the uneducated. It was, once more, the principle of tolerating the 'too much' provided only there were not 'too little.' Yet 'too much' of the letter is inevitably productive, in the long run, of 'too little' of the spirit.

All these difficulties existed before the appearance of any definite form of modernism, and they continue to exist in spite of its condemnation ; they constitute what we may call unlearned, or unconscious modernism.

Learned modernism came forward with its explicit demands, thrusting under the eyes of Church

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. xxx.

rulers certain definitely acquired facts, or non-negligible hypotheses; but unlearned modernism had also its inarticulate demands, to be made, in whispers and sighs, to those who could and would listen.

It is true that the simple believer has suffered from an inroad of knowledge for which he was not prepared. Perhaps no wisdom or foresight on the part of his rulers could have averted this crisis, though perhaps, on the other hand, it could. Yet apart from the problems which science cast in his way, he suffered, before the advent of conscious modernism, from the subtleties of theology, which disturbed his devotional life; from the literal and unspiritual interpretation of Scripture, which shocked his moral sense; from the encouragement of low and material forms of devotion, which weakened his spiritual life; from a system of education, and a general treatment of faith difficulties, which exposed him, sooner or later, to the ruin of his faith.

He suffered, during the modernist crisis, because he was left to bear the brunt of difficulties which his superiors had declined to face; he suffered also because he cannot bear authority to be in the wrong, and had, therefore, when necessary, to close his eyes to things he saw lest he should have to admit that it was in the wrong; he suffered, again, because he was commanded to curse those who had guided and blessed him, and to refuse the food which had

nourished him. He suffers now whenever, and in so far as, he is aware that the Church is accumulating debts which must eventually be paid, and that religion is being guarded at the cost of perfect truth and sincerity.

Modernism is not, then, simply the result of a clash between faith and learning, but rather of a clash between two forms of learning.

What is commonly miscalled the conflict between faith and science, wrote George Tyrrell, *is in truth a conflict between theology and secular knowledge*;[1] it is, in fact, a conflict between learning and learning, the learning of the day and the learning of the past; the learning that is laboriously forcing its way through new facts and the learning that is enthroned on ancient axioms; the learning of humanity and the learning of theology.

The unlearned have their interest in the contest, because they have also their needs; the need of intellectual guidance on the one hand, and of spiritual guidance on the other. They do not want their ignorance preserved and defended, but only that knowledge, unconscious perhaps, but real, which they often possess in a fuller measure than the better instructed. They may suffer from the learning of the scholar, but they have suffered also from the learning of the theologian. They do not want their *prima facie* view of reality turned into a philosophy; they do not want the value of their

[1] *The Church and the Future*, p. 105.

own simple perceptions falsified by exaggeration. As George Tyrrell wrote, in an unpublished article :

The common-sense mind, which is the plain man's mind, is mainly utilitarian and materialistic. . . . We may trust the first impressions, the intuitions and the universal experiences of the plain man ; but we should profoundly distrust his philosophy, his reflection, his analysis.[1]

The ' plain man,' in fact, finds his true friends amongst those who neither despise nor flatter him ; who are in touch with his needs, in agreement with his perceptions, in sympathy with his aspirations, and not in love with his limitations.

[1] *Revelation and Experience*—A reply to Hakluyt Egerton.

CHAPTER III

CONSCIOUS MODERNISM

WE have seen that amongst the faithful at large, who took no defined part in the recent religious movement, there was nevertheless at work a certain unconscious preparation for modernism, in their sense of unanswered difficulties and unfulfilled needs. We have now to study the more conscious beginnings of the movement in its intellectual, spiritual and social forms.

Our object is to note the chief characteristics and main constituents of this movement, and for this purpose it will not be necessary to name all who took part in it, nor even to describe every particular line of work or thought which contributed to the total result. But we may distinguish four main aspects of its activity, in each of which we can learn what we most need to know from one or two of its leading representatives.

Once more we shall find that the conflict is not between science and faith, the world and the spirit, but between two kinds of thought, two kinds of learning, two kinds of philosophy, two conceptions of society.

There has been, indeed, in the past, and there

may yet be found, though rarely, in the present, a form of science which makes open and unceasing warfare on every kind of spiritual belief, and which belittles any idea incapable of strict syllogistic proof. In her battles with such scientific materialism, or rationalistic philosophy, the Church has reasonably claimed a certain delimitation of frontiers; she maintains that her own teaching should not be criticised by methods foreign to its nature, while she professes to allow, in return, all freedom to science, exercised according to its own methods and in its own domain.

Thus we still hear theologians plead, as against the charge of dogmatic intolerance, that the Church leaves her children perfectly free in matters of pure science or history; that they may, as a critic of modernism has said, visit their friends in aeroplanes, or flash messages through the air, with her full permission and blessing.[1]

The concession, as here made, is somewhat fallacious, for the aeroplane and the Marconigram are not science, but products of science; and the question is not whether we may use the material advantages which science provides, but whether we may consider ourselves unhampered by any theological consideration in our scientific investigations.

But, furthermore, the argument is, on the whole, cheap and out of date, for the reason that both

[1] See article by Mgr. Moyes in *Nineteenth Century Magazine*, December 1907.

science and philosophy have grown less and less materialistic, and have come to recognise, sometimes more fully than theology itself, that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than this world dreams of.' It is a man of science who exclaims in the words of Mr. H. G. Wells:

I want research, and the spirit of research . . . and that still, silent room of mine again, that room, as quiet as a cell, and the toil that led to light. Oh! the coming of that light, the uprush of discovery, the solemn joy as the generalisation rises like a sun upon the facts —floods them with a common meaning. . . . The practical trouble . . . is the trouble between faith and realisation. You demand the outcome. Oh! and I hate to turn aside and realise. . . . Men of my sort want to understand. We want to understand, and you ask us to make. We want to understand atoms, ions, molecules, refractions. You ask us to make rubber and diamonds. . . . Finally, I warn you, we will make rubber unnecessary and diamonds valueless.[1]

But if science has thus been groping after such a fulfilment of its own dim guesses as may lead it to the very threshold of religious truth, theology has not always advanced in the same process of spiritualisation, nor recognised the change that was taking place in the scientific world and gone forth to meet it. Thus the ground has been prepared for a conflict of a totally new order between the two; in which that sense of mystery, of great secrets and

[1] *Marriage*, H. G. Wells, pp. 502-527.

forces not to be wholly grasped by the intelligence of man, is more keenly developed in the mind of the scientific investigator than in that of the theologian. It had been supposed that the wisdom of the world was proud and earthly, while the wisdom of the Church (for it was assumed that the wisdom of the Cross was hers) was meek and spiritual. But some Catholic philosophers and scholars have come to see that the pride and earthly-mindedness are not all on one side, and that the increasing modesty of natural science would be more fittingly met by a corresponding diffidence on the part of religious science, or theology.

Section 1

Philosophy and Faith

'The more a man is united within himself and becometh inwardly simple, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labour; for that he receiveth intellectual light from above.'

The author of the *Imitation* had evidently a good many opportunities for observing the dangers of theological learning and self-sufficiency; in our own days a school of Catholic philosophy has arisen in which the principles of Christian asceticism are brought to bear on the work of Christian apology, and it is shown that humility and self-abnegation are an element of faith as well as conduct. We had been told that virtue was a matter of continual

effort, and that not to go forward was to go back; we had not been so clearly warned that our possession of religious truth was equally dependent on continuous effort.

In M. Maurice Blondel's great work *L'Action*, we get the foundations of this new Catholic apologetic, which has been called the 'philosophy of action,' or the 'new philosophy'; but whereas this work has found comparatively few readers, its principles have received not only explanation, but creative interpretation from others, more directly known to the general reader.

In his answer to *Certain Objections Addressed to the New Philosophy*, M. Edouard Le Roy gives the following account of it:

Taking things in the gross, in spite of certain divergencies which I esteem secondary, this (new philosophy) *inspires many thinkers who, being verbally opposed, are not aware of their mutual kinship. This philosophy is distinguished by a respectful and sympathetic study of special sciences* (*spécificités*), *by an attempt to view things directly, by an effort after life and reality. If this were the time and place it would not be difficult to show that this 'renaissance,' far from being restricted to philosophy, understood even in the widest sense, tends to become universal, and that its animating spirit is gradually penetrating every field of mental activity, from pure mathematics to history and religious exegesis. . . . Perhaps we have here the beginning of an era in which philosophy, definitely*

assuming her proper character, will renounce any claim to be a separate science, but will affirm a right of universal jurisdiction. . . .

As a philosophy of 'becoming' the new philosophy recognises Heraclitus as a remote ancestor, and it has been further prepared by contemporary evolutionism, which it deepens and perfects. . . . As a philosophy of liberty, the new philosophy is the culmination of a vast dialectic of systems. . . .

As a philosophy of pure experience it responds to the empirical tendencies of the last three centuries, it not only continues, but also completes and defines an ancient tradition, if it be true that a return to what is most immediate has ever been the deepest desire of the metaphysician.

As an anti-intellectualist philosophy, affirming the primacy of action and of life, it can claim as precursors Duns Scotus and Pascal, it is a continuation of the great line of mystics, it is the definite entrance of the Christian spirit into the domain of pure speculation, it opens the only way through which the criticism of the nineteenth century can pass without threatening reason with bankruptcy, it raises a defence against scepticism by the foundation of a new positivism, the positivism of the mind.

This 'new philosophy,' M. Le Roy further maintains, *has always existed*, and yet it possesses certain characteristics which constitute its newness and originality, for it is *not a philosophy of sentiment, nor a philosophy of the will; it is truly a philosophy*

of action. Now action implies certainly both sentiment and will; but it implies also something else, which is reason. . . . Light and truth must be finally sought in the unifying action of the soul.

Hence this philosophy is not exclusive of the intellect, but of intellectualism, for:

The intellectualist installs himself in a centre of light, and thence endeavours to cast on the surrounding obscurity some flashes of discursive reflection . . . reason, for him, is a thing made . . . activity . . . is a confused and provisional datum to be resolved into explicit ideas. . . .

The new philosophy repudiates this rationalism . . . which it regards as the very negation of the spirit. . . . Why prefer light to movement, when the spirit is a power of movement rather than a source of light? [1]

As another, and perhaps the most distinguished, Catholic philosopher of that school has said:

For ideas to be our own, and for them to be really ideas, we must live them. Otherwise they are but empty frames.[2]

As a religious apologetic the main principle of the philosophy of action lies, then, in its regarding faith as an adhesion of the whole being, and not of the intellect alone, to religious truth. To believe, in the religious sense, is not merely to hold that

[1] Extrait de la *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* (Armand Colin).

[2] *Essais de Philosophie Religieuse*, L. Laberthonnière, p. 46 (P. Lethielleux).

certain doctrines are true, but to turn to them with heart, will, and intelligence, as containing what is needful to the very life of the soul; while to doubt or deny is to exclude those truths, not only intellectually, but morally and actively. Hence the term of 'moral dogmatism,' which was adopted to denote the joint theoretical and practical, abstract and concrete value of revealed truth.

The characteristic of moral dogmatism *is its maxim that we cannot attain truth save by a living movement of the whole self. It has nothing in common with what is called* voluntarism, *or* dogmatism of the heart.[1]

Thus conduct and thought become inextricably interwoven in the religious process; it is with our whole being that we believe and love, and the one cannot exist in its reality without the other. Faith is no mere acceptance of certain doctrines, it is our total attitude towards them. God is the author of the entire being, which is attuned to Him by faith, and closed to Him by scepticism. To reach Him we must go out from the narrow confines of egoism; to deny Him we need only remain within them. We cannot receive spiritual truth from any teacher without active response on our own part; faith demands, not only mental docility, but moral self-donation.

Corresponding to this idea of faith is the conception of scepticism which we find in the philosophy of action. It was perhaps for the first time that

[1] *Essais*, etc., L. Laberthonnière, p. 126.

fundamental scepticism was understood by the Catholic apologist, and therefore, to some extent, met and answered, though a beginning had been made in Newman's *Grammar of Assent*. The sceptic had been reasoned with often enough before; he had been pitied or scolded; declared mad or bad; 'refuted,' in the scholastic term, or ridiculed; but he had not been answered. Nor could he be answered on those lines, for to a fundamental intellectual doubt there is no fundamental intellectual answer.

The Catholic apologist had failed to realise, first, that nothing wholly absurd can persistently or recurringly exist; and next, that in every intelligent, believing soul there still lies hid at least some possible, if not some actual, grain of scepticism. Even were this not so, even if there were in the whole world but one sound-minded sceptic, his arguments would need serious consideration, as proving, at least, that the proofs he resisted were not absolutely convincing. Much more do his difficulties deserve attention when we find that the most devout believer is not wholly, nor always, free from them.

According to the methods of 'moral dogmatism' the sceptic is not therefore commended to the care of the lunacy commissioners, nor is he condemned as *bad* in the sense of wilfully denying religious truth for some unworthy motive. It is not for his belief, or for his unbelief, that he is to be judged, but for that moral attitude which results in pure scepticism, and whose root vice is selfishness. The sceptic is

culpable, not as an unbeliever, but as a colossal egoist. He cannot find his end in God, because he has sought it in himself. The cure is to be found, not in argument, but in asceticism and self-renunciation ; the highest faith implies the highest love, and :

To love is not to take possession but to give.[1]

And again :

God is, at once, the beginning and the end, the alpha and the omega. And He cannot be the one without being the other. Hence we cannot recognise Him as our Cause without choosing Him as our End.[2]

Elsewhere Père Laberthonnière remarks that :

True criticism ever disposes us to doubt and mistrust ourselves, lest self should be an obstacle to the recognition of truth ; whereas false criticism doubts everything, mistrusts everything except *self. The former is comparable to the examination of conscience of the publican ; the latter to that of the Pharisee.*[3]

But the analysis of scepticism, and the discovery of its fundamental egotism, were part of a general conception of faith which removed it a long way from mere intellectual assurance. The sceptic has a companion as uncongenial to himself as he is uncongenial to that companion, viz. the purely intellectual dogmatist, who affirms truth from his own sole point of view just as the sceptic denies it. They may seem strange bedfellows, but they are such ; and just because they are victims of the same fallacy they can do nothing to help one another.

[1] *Essais*, etc., p. 68. [2] *Idem.*, p. 67. [3] *Idem.*, p. 39.

The minds of both are closed to what surpasses their own dimensions.

According to the sceptic, to believe in being, or to affirm it, is to be the dupe of an illusion. . . . The wise man asserts nothing, and thus avoids conflict with himself or others. In such an attitude is to be found what may be called egotistic dogmatism. . . . Such men are like those reactionaries who obstinately regard the earth as the centre of the solar system. . . . But it is interesting to note, just here, that the scepticism of the esprit fort *and the 'Bœotian' dogmatism of narrow, fanatical minds have their root in the same interior disposition, that is to say, self-satisfaction, the avowed or secret, but ever dominant conviction of being oneself at the centre of all things and possessing all the truth that can be possessed.*[1]

The lost man, according to this philosophy, is not the fighter, or the sufferer, but the *arrivé*, satisfied with what he has and seeking nothing more.

If we profess, writes M. Blondel, *to be contented with the partial knowledge we have attained; if we take advantage of the little light we have to close our eyes to further light and new demands, then we are allowing inadequate conceptions to master our minds and pervert our sincerity. . . .*

We cannot make too great efforts to rouse those presumptuous (dogmatists), who stand still themselves and stop others on the road which we must ever tread, nor flatter ourselves that we have arrived.[2]

[1] *Essais*, etc., pp. 34-39. [2] *L'Action*, p. 476.

Such principles were disturbing to those for whom faith signified nothing else than the final, immovable and settled possession of religious truth ; a possession which, once acquired, needed no further effort for its preservation. Yet such a conception of the Catholic dogmatic system was becoming daily more foreign to the minds of those within as well as without the Church. In April 1905 M. Edouard Le Roy published in the *Quinzaine* an article whose title was a question, ' Qu'est-ce qu'un dogme ? ' In it he stated the difficulties which such an intellectualistic conception of dogma, as had come to prevail, placed in the way of belief ; while he nevertheless loyally maintained the spiritual and moral value of a dogmatic system.

In a phrase that has become classic he remarked, first of all, that :

The time of partial heresies *has gone by. . . . We no longer deny one dogma rather than another. . . . It is the idea of dogma itself that raises opposition and objections.*[1]

The reasons which he sets forth for this alienation of the modern mind from dogma are, in substance, that we no longer accept any statements fundamentally unprovable ; nor do we recognise any department of knowledge which cannot be assimilated with the rest. For :

[1] This article was republished, with others concerning the same controversy, in a volume entitled *Dogme et Critique*, from which I quote (Bloud et Cie, Paris, 1907).

Reality is not made of distinct, adjacent pieces; everything is within everything; in the least detail of nature or science analysis discovers all nature and all science.[1]

Now these difficulties are, as M. Le Roy maintains, unanswerable according to the 'intellectualist' conception of dogma, and he suggests that, in the intellectual order, dogmas have but a negative signification, while their positive value is moral and practical.

Thus in regard to certain articles of faith:

'God is personal' means 'behave in your dealings with Him as with a human person.' 'Jesus rose from the dead' signifies 'Be in your relations with Him as you would have been before His death, as you are actually with a living person.' [2]

We may observe here that the writer makes no distinction between these two kinds of dogma, of which the first regards a wholly supra-sensible truth, the second a truth of mixed supra-sensible and sensible order.

M. Loisy, writing to the author, 9th May 1907, remarks:

I must admit that the critical portion of your work satisfies me better than its positive part. . . . The moral significance of most of the Christian dogmas, which is what we and our contemporaries care about, is so distant from their original signification and their theological import, that I ask myself if there is much good in suggesting a metaphysical system to serve as

[1] *Dogme et Critique*, p. 9. [2] *Idem.*, p. 26.

intermediary between old symbols and actual rules of conduct . . . and whether the religious teaching which is to prevail will not be infinitely more simple in its method and organisation than our dreams of an intelligent and living Catholicism.[1]

In these words we have a criticism of the new philosophy in its dealings with the historic problem; the point on which certain of its apologists fell short, as some of us dare to think, of a complete and courageous application of its own principles. There had been, perhaps, from the outset, a tendency to separate too completely the domain of science from that of philosophy; and the same mistake was made later in regard to history.

Thus M. Maurice Blondel writes:

There is no more resemblance between scientific formulas and philosophical conceptions than there is between the qualities perceived by the senses and the calculations of the learned on these same perceptions. If heat, as we feel it in our organs, is heterogeneous in relation to the degrees marked by the thermometer or the theories of thermo-dynamics, so are physical hypothesis and metaphysical explanations heterogeneous. We cannot pass from the one to the other. . . . It is as impossible to have agreement or conflict between science and metaphysics as it is impossible for two lines to meet that are traced on different planes.[2]

[1] *Quelques Lettres sur des questions actuelles*, pp. 75, 76.

[2] *Lettre sur les exigences de la pensée contemporaine*, p. 6 (Saint Dizier—Imprimerie G. St. Aubin, etc., 1896).

Yet, on the other hand, their hostility to the *cloisons étanches*, or what we call in this country 'water-tight compartments' system of knowledge, led these philosophers to overlook the existence of certain undeniable barriers that separate one science from another, and to refuse to each one its legitimate autonomy in its own domain.

Thus M. Blondel writes elsewhere :

No one of the special sciences is absolute master in its own home. . . . (The historian) *must keep his researches in perpetual dependence on ulterior questions which he is not capable of deciding alone or of deciding at all.*[1]

In a chapter on 'L'histoire, son insuffisance,' we find Père Laberthonnière treating the historic problem in like manner.

First of all he shows us, with irresistible force and justice, that our faith, as Christians, cannot rest on a basis of purely historical truth. Yet, when he goes on to tell us that *in the Gospel, as in the teaching of the Church, Christ does not offer Himself to us as a past fact, of whose reality we should have to assure ourselves . . . but as a present reality, which is for us the way, the truth, and the life,*[2] we feel that two orders of knowledge are being inadequately distinguished ; that, unless we may depend on the brutal historical value of certain facts, Jesus of

[1] 'Histoire et Dogme,' from the *Quinzaine*, 16th January to 16th February 1904.

[2] *Le Réalisme Chrétien et l'idéalisme Grec*, pp. 122-123.

Nazareth cannot be for us 'the way, the truth, and the life.' We need not personally verify all those facts, yet confidence we do require in their actual historic happening.

Later on we are told that :

The existence of Alexander or of Cæsar is simply a matter of historical certitude . . . whereas the divine quality of Christ is the object of faith.[1]

Yet it is from history we learn those facts on which we base, not indeed our theological or our spiritual conception of Christ, but the knowledge from which we pass on to our faith in His Divinity. It is from history we learn 'what manner of man He was.'

Holding, as they did, to the unique spiritual value of the Gospel records and facts, these Catholic apologists were tempted to restrain history in its dealings with them. But they could not escape the inevitable alternative—was history to be carried out on its own principles, or not ? was it autonomous, or was it not ? Christ lives in history or He does not. If He does live in history, then history must, so far, treat Him as it treats other historical personages.

Admirers of Bonaparte might claim that his life also could only be understood by those in sympathy with his character ; but, while granting this, we could not allow that the facts of his history were to be qualified or interpreted in accordance with the views of his admirers.

[1] *Le Réalisme Chrétien et l'idéalisme Grec*, p. 124.

The philosophy of action was wholly admirable in its application of asceticism to faith ; in its treatment of scepticism ; in its sense of the unity of the spiritual life, and of its unceasing activity, if it be life at all ; in its denunciation of the evils of intellectualism and the vices of a certain form of orthodoxy. It had only to apply its own principles to the end in order to recognise that the self-detachment needed for the apprehension of spiritual truth is needed also for that of scientific or historic truth. These deeply Catholic apologists were right when they showed us that history neither proves nor explains the spiritual signification of a fact ; they were wrong when they restricted history in its dealings with the fact itself.

Section 2

History and Faith

In the Preface to what I will venture to call the most important of his contributions to the modernist movement, M. Loisy writes :

Once for all it must be said that the position of a priest occupied with the scientific study and teaching of Biblical exegesis fifteen or twenty years ago was a terrible one, if he were open-minded and truthful. He beheld an enormous field of study which had not been hinted at in his previous instruction, namely, the unfinished but extensive work accomplished by Protestant and Rationalist exegesis ; the confused, but ever more

definite outlines of the great history of Christian origins, a history as unknown and little understood to past ages, from the strictly historical point of view, as that of the earliest Eastern, Greek, and Roman antiquities. He was faced by the necessity under which Catholics lay of contributing to this, as to every other development of human science, under pain of intellectual excommunication, and because they would otherwise abandon the future of Christian faith to such a crisis as it had not undergone since its first existence.

The more enlightened men of the preceding generation, perceiving the difficulty of the task, had confined themselves to a few timid efforts. Some, it would seem, had actually despaired of the future of Catholicism in our country, and had chosen to die, honourably and peacefully, in positions which they knew to be untenable. One difficulty paralysed them. The venerable word tradition, *almost synonymous with Catholic faith, appeared to them to cover, as with an impenetrable shield, the whole inheritance of the past; and they knew, too, that the leaders of ecclesiastical opinion (I do not say the rulers of the Church) were not disposed to take count of the exigencies of an intellectual evolution which in no way touched them. What had been the fate of the representatives of political liberalism? What had been the reception accorded to intellectual liberalism? It was, indeed, no longer a question of theoretical liberalism; but of the practice of liberty, and the recognition of truth. But is not everything regarded as liberalism and concession to error by those*

who cannot, or will not, learn anything outside their supposed tradition, nor understand anything that does not flatter their insatiable appetite for domination?

In spite of everything and everybody, a movement arose on several sides, at the same time; and as it was imperatively demanded by circumstances, it lasted and grew in spite of every opposition. All the questions were raised, one after the other; first that of Biblical inspiration; then those of the origin of the Pentateuch, of the character of the historic books of the Old Testament, of the origin and character of the Gospels, particularly that of St. John; lastly, the question of dogma, its origin and development, of the relations of the Church and the Gospel, and of the general philosophy of religion.[1]

In the position, as here so graphically described, we may note, first, the undeniable existence of this crisis, a crisis which was bound, eventually, to be absorbed by Christianity, or to absorb it, but which could, by no possibility, leave it untouched and unaffected; secondly, the utter unconsciousness of the imminence of this crisis on the part of the rulers of the Church and the mass of the faithful. To the unbelieving critic this ignorance could be matter of indifference or amusement; to the Catholic apologist it could be nothing less than appalling. That the simple and uneducated should be guarded from danger until the difficulties had been laid, was in every sense desirable; but that the danger should

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, pp. xv-xviii.

be supposed to be annulled by denying it, and that those who had, *ex professo*, to deal with it should be regarded as mere noxious innovators, was a symptom fraught with anxiety. To face the danger and still not to fear it would be a sign of faith and no sign of ignorance; to deny the danger and therefore not to fear it was a sign of ignorance and no sign of faith. Historical modernism was grounded on the belief, or at least inspired by the hope, that Catholic Christianity could accept all the ascertained truths of history, and yet keep its own; those who condemned and rejected it thereby implied that such a reconciliation was impossible. It was not a question of the certainty or uncertainty of particular statements and positions; of the sound judgment, good will, and personal dispositions of individual critics; all these were secondary considerations. The true question was simply as to the acceptance, or non-acceptance, of strictly scientific and historical methods in the study of the Bible, of dogma, of the Church, of Christian origins, and of all such subjects, regarded from the historical standpoint, in their strictly human aspect. Was there, in fact, to be such a thing—not as Catholic exegesis, which is, in itself, a contradictory expression—but as a Catholic exegetist? A protected history, or a protected criticism, was a mere plaything; was the real article to exist within the bounds of the Catholic Church?

M. Loisy has related to us[1] the sufferings he under-

[1] *Choses Passées*, Fascic. I.

went during his course of theology at the Seminary of Châlons-sur-Marne. His difficulties were not primarily philosophical, or theological, or social, or spiritual; he could have lived harmoniously his twofold life as a Catholic priest and a scholar, if he had not been asked to be positively untrue to his conscience in the latter capacity. He was to learn from his ecclesiastical superiors, and not from his own heart, that the two positions were incompatible.

This point is one of importance, and explains not only M. Loisy's earlier hopes of working a reconciliation between the Church and modern thought, but also the eventual abandonment of those hopes. Had his first difficulties arisen from the perception of certain vices of Church government, those vices would not, later on, have constituted a reason for despairing of the Church. The starting-point of his modernism was different from that of the philosophical school of which we have just spoken, as it was different from that of Tyrrell, of whom we shall presently speak. He did not, like them, begin with an effort to revivify religious thought within the Church, and thus open her gates to the fresh knowledge and ideas of the day; he began where they ended, and went on where they began. He was first a *savant*, though, at the same time, a devout Catholic priest; and it was when he found that his convictions as a *savant* raised difficulties against his faith as a Catholic that he sought some way to

reconcile the exigencies of both positions. It was in this endeavour that he was baulked by those elements of the traditional Catholic teaching which it was the aim of the 'philosophy of action' to spiritualise and transform.

This is not the place in which to estimate the value of M. Loisy's purely critical work; it is his contribution to the modernist controversy with which we are concerned.

First of all, we find him inexorable as to the rights of history in its own domain. Probability is probability, and certainty is certainty; the hypotheses of science can be accepted with their measure of probability, the facts of science must be accepted with their measure of certainty. A text, however precious to theology, that is proved to be an interpolation, or that is discovered to hold a different sense from that which has been traditionally ascribed to it, must be frankly acknowledged to be an interpolation, or to possess that ascertained meaning, whatever the consequent inconvenience to the theologian; while another text must be taken in all its literal signification, if such signification be its true one. Thus he points out that theology is on a false track when it would demonstrate the doctrine of the Trinity *by the word of Genesis, 'let us make man to our image and likeness,' etc.*, while, on the other hand, it is equally misleading when *perfectly clear texts, such as the complaints of Job and of the psalmists on the annihilation of man by*

death, the assertions of our Saviour and the apostles on the coming end of the world, the Johannine word of Christ, 'The Father is greater than I,' are not supposed to establish what they naturally signify.[1]

As he says in his Introduction to the work from which we quote:

The Gospel exists independently of us; let us endeavour to understand it in itself, without regard to our needs and preferences.[2]

In a letter to Mgr. le Camus, Bishop of La Rochelle, he remarks:

You display a kind of coquetry, Monseigneur, in pointing out certain contradictions of the Evangelists, and you cast little darts at theologians who are too rigid on the doctrine of biblical inspiration. When one takes up criticism one cannot take too much of it; and perhaps it would be wiser to leave it alone than to take so little.[3]

Next we find in M. Loisy, with all his radical criticism, a strong element of conservatism, which often brings his reading of Scripture remarkably close to that of the simple, untaught mind. This conservatism is evinced, not in his maintaining texts to be genuine because they have long been regarded as genuine, but in his attributing to them, in certain cases, their simplest and most evident meaning; in his acceptance of facts in their *prima facie* appearance, without that veil of mystery and interpreta-

[1] *L'Évangile et l'Église*, p. 169.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 14.
[3] *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 70.

tion which had been cast over them. In this way many deeds of the Old Testament are stripped of the veneer with which the moralisations of religious teachers had invested them, while Gospel events stand out in a simple every-day character of which theology had often robbed them. In this, of course, M. Loisy was not unique, but presented the reaction of modern criticism to simpler and wholesomer methods; yet it distinguishes him, not only from the traditional Christian apologist, but also from some of his fellow critics, who had certain presuppositions to justify.

A third characteristic of M. Loisy's modernism is its profoundly Catholic character.

As M. Harnack has remarked, he writes in 'L'Évangile et L'Église,' *the history of Western Christianity, from the fifth century, is made up of the relations which existed between two factors; the spirit of piety, which would make of religion a personal affair, and the spirit of government, which would make of it an official matter, regulated in all things by the sovereign authority of the Roman Pontiff. The extreme issue of the first tendency is religious individualism; of the second, ecclesiastical absolutism. From their mutual balance results the life of Christianity, which would promptly disappear if either of these tendencies ceased to counteract the other, Protestantism subsisting, as a religion, on the remains of hierarchical and traditional organisation, Catholicism drawing its life from the ardour of interior piety at least as much as from the solidity of*

the hierarchical order or the rigour of central administration.[1]

An interpretation of the Gospel in the interests of Liberal Protestantism was as unhistorical as that of Catholic traditional theology.

Fourthly, while there was nothing in M. Loisy's conception of history to disagree with the fundamental principles of the 'philosophy of action,' whose proper domain lay beyond all questions of history and was untouched by them, he was not in sympathy with its treatment of the historic problem in itself, or in its relation to dogma.

In fact, history, as such, needed no explanation, since it dealt with events and not with theories; while any interpretation of dogma that fitted itself to the exigencies of the moment could be but a temporary palliative. This was what Newman, too, had seen, though not with the knowledge of the subject that M. Loisy possessed. Hence with the ruthlessness of science, which, as the reflection of nature, possesses some of her characteristics, he pressed home what he believed to be the certainly acquired positions of criticism, whatever their effect on theology; Jesus Christ did not formally institute the Church, nor her theology, nor her cult; nor did He teach the Catholic doctrine as to His own Divinity; and so forth in regard to other truths.

Furthermore, dogma itself has a history, and this history must be studied like any other history. Re-

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 149-150.

ligion is a fact of which the meaning is its own, but of which the outer happenings and ascertainable origins belong to the domain of history. Hence it is not only the Gospel records that are, in their historical aspect, the material for criticism, but the process of religion and theology from the Gospel onwards.

Thus historical criticism follows on the steps of history, whithersoever history has a right to enter, and history can claim to deal with every visible event that has taken place upon the earth; every scene, every word, every conflict; every human action that has been recorded in what way soever, and can be ascertained from those records. There is a history of thought, as there is a history of action.

If M. Loisy had stopped here; had set forth the claims of history in relation to theology, and had done no more, he would not have been a modernist, because he would not have touched the problem of the consequent relations of faith and criticism. But he did not stop here, and it was because he maintained and defended the realities of revelation, as well as the truths of history, that his career as a Catholic apologist came to an end.

M. Loisy's method of apologetic was not by way of *reconciliation*, the term usually adopted in such cases; he did not aim at a reinterpretation either of dogma or of history. His method consisted rather in rigourously depriving each factor of the elements which did not belong to it, and restoring them to

their rightful owner; in this way the innermost realities of faith were not interfered with by the critic, while the facts of history were not coloured by the theologian. Furthermore, if history has been, of late, a disturbing element to Christian belief, it has also been, in some respects, its confirmation and support. For if it has made plain a process of change, it has also shown a process of development that is a manifestation of life; the history of religion remains the history of a fact, and a fact whose significance history does not attempt to understand or to lessen.

Thus:

The impartial critic will find that the history of the Israelite nation consists in a series of events ordinary in the life of nations, and in the action of religious men of character much more than ordinary; the whole, events and men, converging in a work greater than themselves, that is to say, in the monotheistic religion.[1]

This is no mean result of criticism, in the religious any more than in the historic order.

But what we allow to the past we must allow also to the present; and as the Israelites saw, in the religion they professed, something narrower and less spiritual than that which it was to become, so may present-day Christians not guess the glory that is yet to be revealed.

For any who have followed the movement of Christian thought from its origins it is evident that neither the Christological dogma, nor that of grace, nor that of the

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 43.

Church are to be taken as doctrinal summits, beyond which the believer neither perceives nor ever will perceive anything but the blinding perspective of infinite mystery. . . . The conceptions that the Church presents as revealed dogmas are not truths fallen from Heaven, and preserved by religious tradition in the exact form in which they first appeared. The historian sees in them an interpretation of religious facts, acquired by a laborious effort of religious thought. If they are divine in origin and substance, they are human in structure and composition. It is inconceivable that their future should not correspond to their past.[1]

And again :

Dogmatic formulas are in the same case as the words of our Saviour, and we have not proved that they relate to no object because we find, at a given moment, that the reality goes beyond them.[2]

May we not hope, when we behold *the transformation that has taken place in the apparent sense of formulas, that the theology of the future will suggest a still more spiritual notion of their contents.*[3]

As M. Loisy himself remarked to one of his correspondents, his apology might be incomplete, but at any rate it was an effort, *not only to explain the Catholic cult, but to find its foundation in the most indisputable reality of the Gospel, and in the most intimate necessities of religion.*[4]

[1] *L'Évangile et l'Église*, pp. 158-159.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 167. [3] *Idem.*, p. 165.
[4] *Autour d'un petit livre*, pp. 258-259.

But this defence of religious faith was rejected by the official rulers of the Church to whom it was offered, and M. Loisy has now cast away the key which he forged with so much zeal and judgment and sincerity, and under the stress of so much pain. Some may be tempted to pick it up and try it, though its owner has spurned it; the more so as the counter remedy, offered by the theologian to the believer, was not a solution, but a denial of the problem.

Anyhow, two significant points of this apologetic are established for all time; first of all, the recognition, by history and criticism, of the Christian religion as a fact, whose course, as known to history, is marked by strong and persistent vitality, and whose inner meaning is no way disproved by any, even the most destructive, achievements of criticism; secondly, the lesson that no religion, be we as certain, by faith, of the divinity of its origin, as we are certain, by our senses, of the rising of the sun, can touch history, or use history, or depend on history, without, in so far, becoming subject to the laws of history.

Section 3

Theology and Faith

George Tyrrell differed from the Catholic apologists of whom we have been speaking in that he himself had at one time succumbed to the difficulties with which he dealt; he had been an agnostic before

he became a Catholic. He had not, indeed, in his pre-Catholic days, acquired any great familiarity with the work of modern criticism, but his mind would have as readily accepted the difficulties it raised against traditional religious teaching as any others.

Yet religion was the ruling passion of his life; the one thing which gave it, in his eyes, dignity, meaning, and any kind of joy. Hence, when the force of spiritual realities began to make itself felt in despite of all his sceptical tendencies, he sought the Church, not as an end, but as a means; not as, in herself, the great world of spiritual reality, but as the entrance to that world.

In the same way he embraced her theology, and even her philosophy, from the outset, as weapons of apologetic; as means whereby the arguments of anti-religious philosophy and science might be met and conquered. Hence the first years of his life as a Catholic were devoted to the assiduous and hopeful study of scholastic philosophy and dogmatic theology; St. Thomas Aquinas being his chief master and teacher.

He has himself related the disappointment he experienced in the course of his scholastic training,[1] but he nevertheless became a theological expert, and preserved, to the end, his belief in the value of a sound theology. Hence his work in the religious movement of the day was largely directed to the

[1] See vol. i. of *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell.*

readjustment of its claims and the statement of its limits.

The characteristics of his teaching are, first, a very strong sense of the transcendental character of religion; secondly, a definitely Catholic, as opposed to an individualistic outlook; thirdly, as in the 'Philosophy of Action,' a firmly anti-intellectualist temper; fourthly, a full, at times almost too full, recognition of the part played by the will in an act of faith; fifthly, a deep sense of the supremacy of conscience and of the sense of righteousness, as the basis of religion; sixthly, a profound spirit of mysticism; seventhly, a perception of the needs and rights of the ordinary mind, and of the duty of religious teachers to minister to those needs and respect those rights.

At the basis of his religion we find, not a creed, but that which it is the object of a creed to express, a sense of *the spirit world, the will-world, that is real to us beyond every other. In it our soul lives its inmost life, and finds its deepest rest or unrest according as it succeeds or fails in adjusting itself to its laws.*[1]

And it is not by knowing, but by willing, that we apprehend that spirit-world.

We are, each of us, a single 'willing.' . . . Through that world to which our body belongs, and of which our senses, memory, and understanding take account, we are made aware of other wills. . . . It is in our felt

[1] *Lex Orandi*, p. 11.

relation to these other wills that our spiritual life and reality consists. . . . Wherever we find another will accordant with our own in any particular, we experience a sense of re-enforcement and expansion of our spiritual life and being. . . . On the other hand, there is a sense of spiritual impoverishment and contraction wherever we recognise a will-force in opposition to our own.[1]

Yet,

We cannot take mere will-union as an end in itself, or as a decisive motive of action. We may not seek rest in agreement, without asking 'Rest in what?' 'Agreement with what?' Throughout the whole universe of will-attitudes the difference of evil and good, false and true, fair and foul, passes like a two-edged sword. 'Right' is a rule of choice clearly higher than the blind and impotent rule of love, which would pull us in every direction at once, and lead us in none. . . . We may err and falter in our judgment as to what is true, fair, or right; we may turn away from our duty when we know it; but we can never falter in our conviction as to the absolute and imperative character of these will-attitudes; we can never doubt that we ought *to be in sympathy with men of good-will and out of sympathy with the insincere, the selfish, the low-minded. Now this imperative character of the Absolute is simply the force of that supreme, eternal, eventually irresistible Will, which we call God—that Will to which the whole will-world must be subordinate, and in union*

[1] *Lex Orandi*, pp. 12-13.

or agreement with which each created will is saved and realised.

. . . . . .

Love is, after all, the very substance of our spiritual life . . . and is to the will-world what gravitation is to the physical. But above all wills there is the will of God ; and above all loves there is the love of God ; and in this the life of religion consists.[1]

The Church was then, for him, the visible and invisible society of wills, tending ever to a more perfect adjustment of their attitude to one another and the Supreme Will ; and her teaching was the guide and the expression of life, but not life itself. As we live our natural life before we discover or formulate its laws, so we live our spiritual life before it expresses itself for us in the creed ; and as there is ever something in nature which is better known by those who feel the beatings of her heart than by those who describe and analyse her laws, so there is something in the spiritual life better known to those who love and practise it than to those who talk and reason about it. Theology has the uses and the limitations of science, though she has also limitations of her own, being science only in a relative sense.

In religion it is the impulse of the spirit—of the religious sense—that drives us to action and experiment, and enables us thereby to build up a system of religious doctrine for our practical guidance. . . . The Christ

[1] *Lex Orandi*, pp. 14-15.

of the Gospel betrays no direct interest in doctrinal speculation for its own sake; but solely in those spiritual instincts of Eternal Life whose theoretical expressions and justifications are of altogether subordinate interest.[1]

Theology has, then, a subordinate, and not a primary use and end; it subserves the life of prayer and devotion, which, in its full and true sense, is the life of spiritual action.

But Christianity is not only religion, it is also a revealed religion, and it is the fact and the contents of revelation around which modern difficulties have chiefly clustered. But those difficulties, in Father Tyrrell's estimation, were only insuperable so long as revelation was taken to mean a *revealed theology*; that is to say, not an infusion of divine experience, but a set of dogmatic propositions. The mistake was easily made, because dogma follows on spiritual experience as surely as science follows on natural experience, and to resist all formulation of such experience would be to cut ourselves off from the knowledge of the fullest manifestations of spiritual life that man has known, and hence from participation in those experiences.

Yet it must ever be remembered that revelation is an experience, and not a dogmatic treatise:

Revelations are but the epoch-making super-normal experiences of God-inspired souls, by which some unexplored tract of the Beyond is laid open;[2] and all

[1] *The Church and the Future*, p. 43. [2] *Lex Orandi*, p. 69.

revelation : *so far as it is from God's inspiration, is a word to the heart and not to the head.*[1]

To turn to his unpublished essay on the subject :

Thus the creeds of the Church are directly the creation of her collective human mind, but guided by her collective religious experience—by the spirit of Christ that is immanent in all her members. This, no doubt, modifies the truth-value of our Creeds. They are not divine statements, but human statements inspired by divine experience. Inspiration does not mean infallible, absolute, final truth. A true hypothesis does not exclude a truer. A useful symbol leaves room for a more useful.[2]

The fullest of all the revelations of God to man was made through Christ, but the records of that revelation are precious, every word of them, as preserving for us, not the theology, but the spirit of Christ. Hence those records have an absolute and abiding value as the history of a supreme divine experience, while the dogmas in which they are encrusted have but a relative one.

The Gospel shows us Christ as teaching indeed with authority, but not from authorities *as the Scribes ; as one inspired with the prophetic spirit like those prophets whose sepulchres were built up in scholastic commentaries that guarded the bones of their teaching, but could not enshrine its spirit. . . . It is He who says :*

[1] *Lex Orandi*, p. 50.

[2] From *Revelation and Experience*, an unpublished article.

'*Learn of me*,' *not* 'to be,' *but* 'because I am *meek and lowly of heart*.'[1]

Yet if creeds and dogmas are but relative to something more living, neither are they mere accessories of religion.

In regarding the 'institutionising' of Christianity as a corruption; in vainly hoping to perpetuate and generalise the 'inspirational' phase, Protestantism seems to me to ignore universal and natural laws.[2]

For the spiritual life is something greater than even all of us together can wholly apprehend; and so much the more do we therefore need that co-operation which depends on common knowledge and a common creed.

It is one thing to admit, as I do, that our religious experience involves the whole truth of the supernatural and divine order; that an infinite mind could, as it were, deduce all that truth from its analysis. It is another thing to say, as I do not, that our minds are equal to that task, or can ever apprehend that truth otherwise than in symbols and anthropomorphic hypotheses.[3]

It was, then, the usurpations of theology which were, in Tyrrell's view, largely accountable for the difficulties of the simple faithful, in so far as theology thus interfered with the natural and direct expression of their faith by subtleties which rendered that

[1] *The Church and the Future*, pp. 43-44.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 60.
[3] *Revelation and Experience.*

faith unreal ; and it was, again, theology which was responsible for the difficulties of the scholar, when it forced its way into the realm of scientific knowledge and claimed to be a science with, or over, other sciences, whereas, in its scientific character, it possessed but relative truth. It was the very transcendency of the spiritual world over every other kind of reality that robbed theology, which was but its stammering expression, of any right to transcend other sciences, since it could never adequately formulate its own object. Yet given this relativity, theology answered to a spiritual as well as an intellectual need ; it was a formulation of divine truth by means of which the experience of the whole Church could become, in greater or less measure, the experience of each one, and by means of which that experience could be preserved and developed.

The plain man, he wrote, *is not wrong when he treats the creed as practically and equivalently the word of God ; when he guides his life and action by it, and so realises a rich inward experience. He is wrong when he ceases to be a 'plain man' and tries to be a theologian ; when he deduces conclusions from the articles of the creed, considered as divine statements, and imposes their categories on the whole realm of human knowledge in the name of God.*[1]

Tyrrell's aim, therefore, was not to defend theology from the difficulties raised by science or criticism,

[1] *Revelation and Experience.*

but to show that the realities underlying the statements of theology and its dogmatic formularies were independent of the vicissitudes of theology. It was not man who had made those realities; it was not man who had revealed them; but it was man, though under the guidance of God, who had made the forms in which the revelation of those realities was expressed. Theology, as a science, could grow in clearness and perfection, revelation was something given and not made.

We forget, he writes at the close of 'Lex Orandi,' *that the issue is not directly between faith and knowledge, but between theology, which is one part of the field of knowledge, and the rest of the same field. Faith were imperilled if theology were an exact, necessary and adequate intellectual expression or embodiment of faith, and if, as such, it came into demonstrable conflict with the indubitable data of history or science or philosophy. . . . The Church cannot be a child again; yet her progress is ever towards a more deeply intelligent and deliberate appropriation of that infused simplicity of aim, spirit, and method that characterised her childhood. To this end it was needful that the first simple forms of thought and life in which her spirit was manifested should give place to an organic complexity in which the unity of that spirit was seemingly lost, to be eventually found and recognised as persisting unbroken under all these diverse manifestations of its inexhaustible potentiality; that ever and again she should learn through solicitude about many things the sovereign value of the*

one thing needful, of that best part which shall not be taken from her.[1]

George Tyrrell's apologetic, like that of M. Loisy, found no favour with the rulers and teachers of the Church in whose interests he made it.

Section 4

Social Ideals and Faith

The Church has ever professed her indifference to pure politics, her acceptance of all forms of government, her interest in the poor rather than the rich. In the days of slavery, if she did not absolutely condemn the system, she prepared the way for its extinction, and obviated its essential vices, by her persistent maintenance of certain inalienable rights of every man, whether slave or master. She repudiated, before the world had done so, the principle that any class of men existed for the sake of another ; and if, in spite of her efforts, *justice* fell short in the fulfilment of its duty, she brought in *charity* to make good its defects, and gathered the oppressed under her wing when human society offered them no refuge. Her works of mercy were exercised in the days when works of mercy were not, as now, a fashion and a glory.

But long continued patronage is demoralising to the benefactor as well as the benefited ; it is a form of power which those who wield it are not in a hurry

[1] *Lex Orandi*, pp. 207, 215.

to relinquish. They forget that it is a far greater work to enable a man to take up his bed and walk, than to support or carry him. But it is also a work of greater self-detachment, for, as power passes from the giver to the receiver, the latter becomes independent of the former in proportion to his acquired strength. How far humanity has been guided and inspired by the Church in the process of civilisation and of an ever-increasing respect for the rights of each one, and how far it might have followed the same line of progress without her, is a question which need not be treated in this place. The fact remains that society *has* advanced in these respects, and that the needs of the poor and of the working classes are no longer the same as in the Middle Ages.

The result of this change of circumstances has been, and is even now, a certain suspiciousness on the part of the people in regard to a power which still endeavours to protect when protection is not needed; a suspiciousness akin to the sensitiveness of young men and women whose parents try to lock them into the schoolroom when they are grown up. The people have grown somewhat resentful of charity, now that they have learned to demand much more in the name of justice; and they would rather find in the Church sympathy with their new rights and aspirations than pity for their past helplessness.

For a time this democratic sensitiveness manifested itself in a form of violent anti-clericalism, not to say anti-religiousness; this was something in the nature

of the aggressiveness of a boy in his first school suit of clothes. But as independence became assured, and the prejudiced character of the anti-religious movement became apparent to the common sense of the average man, he found that he still needed religion after all; only the need must be satisfied without the compromise of a liberty which he also needed. In fact, the people saw that the Church could still find room for them and that they still had need of her.

This was a crucial moment, and the question was how far the Church was prepared for it. She had ever declared her sympathy for learning, but had also, at times, repressed it when it snapped her leading-strings; was she ready now to serve the people in its new character, a people that still needed light and guidance, perhaps, indeed, more than ever, but that would not repudiate its political creed in order to obtain them?

It was in an effort to meet this crisis that the Church begot, within herself, the forces of social modernism.

But we have here to distinguish between two movements, of which the second was not strictly a religious movement at all, though it has sometimes been mistakenly coupled with the one that was. The first of these movements was an endeavour to christianise the rising democracy; to inspire their social aims and ambitions with a religious ideal; to find for the working classes, no longer oppressed,

but now emancipated and conscious of their own dignity, a place and a home in the Church which had been formerly their refuge in necessity.

This movement had for its leader in Italy a Catholic priest, Dom. Romolo Murri, and in France a Catholic layman, M. Marc Sangnier. In England it has been led by members of the Anglican Church, lay or cleric.

The second movement had other aims and methods. Its object was not to christianise the people, or find place in the Church for their social needs, but to use Christianity and the Church as means of social progress; to adapt the organisation and ideals, which had been directed to other-world ends, to the furthering of objects immediate to our present existence. This movement claimed Gospel precedent for its action, but was not prepared 'to suffer the loss of the whole world to save its own soul.'

In the *Lettere d'un prete modernista*, whose author was the chief writer and instigator of the Italian periodical *Nova et Vetera*, we have the best statement of the programme of this movement:

We have not, he writes, *two religions in our soul . . . so that if our confidence in a better future . . . is directed to the ideals proposed by humanitarianism, there is no room in us for another religious faith in that spiritual future which dogmatic Catholicism promises us in Paradise. Hence if the young clergy begin to cherish democratic ideals, to interest themselves with profound sympathy in the struggle of labour and*

the improvement of the condition of the proletariate, to aspire for that great economic revolution which will follow the progressive socialisation of production and the distribution of riches, I believe that so much faith and so much enthusiasm are withdrawn from the sterile hopes of ascetic Catholicism and monastic abnegation in the pallid ideals that lie beyond the grave.[1]

Farther on he says :

We, neo-Catholics . . . refuse every inheritance of medieval asceticism and proclaim the unrepressible rights of life. . . . This is why we aim at a return to early Christianity. . . . Jesus proclaimed the ideal of the progress of the world.[2]

This conception of early Christianity, and of the message of Jesus, was not quite in harmony with the latest critical positions.

Jesus made no profession of science, writes M. Loisy, *and the apostles were uncultivated men ; the New Testament is not a treatise of social economy, and the Apocalypse was not written to improve the condition of the proletariate.*[3]

Elsewhere he writes :

The Gospel contains no formal declaration for or against the constitution of human society in time. The necessity of human right is not to be deduced from the Gospel any more than the foundation of that right ; both exist independently of the Gospel, which is not

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 67 (Libreria Editrice Romana), 1908.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 124.
[3] *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 146.

required to create them and can only influence their spirit . . . the Gospel rather abstracted from the question of human right and political and social economy than it endeavoured to regenerate them.[1]

In so far, then, as modernism was a religious movement, this form of socialism cannot be reckoned to belong to it ; yet, by a strange irony, its upholders have not been so rigorously condemned as those for whom religion was the main motive of their social efforts.

The Christian democratic movement, which is really, and not falsely, to be reckoned as an element of modernism, was, in its way, a form of apologetic, though of practical rather than theoretical order. The problems with which it dealt were those suggested by the political transformations of the day, regarding such questions as property and its rights ; class distinctions and their possible disappearance ; the future of socialism ; and, above all, the respective value of this-world and other-world ideals.

From the strictly modernist and religious standpoint it was not a question of whether socialism was the best form of government, or whether democratic institutions were in themselves preferable to any others, but of whether both democracy and socialism could find a place in the Church ; whether, that is to say, she not only recognised the existing social forms and distinctions which had prevailed during the greater part of her history, but whether she

[1] *L'Évangile et l'Église*, pp. 32-33.

regarded those forms as essential to her own existence. It was not uncommonly supposed that she did; and that, if democracy were eventually to prevail, her history must come to an end; she had no place for democracy, nor democracy any use for her.

This was the conception of the Church against which the Christian democratic movement was directed. Its leaders maintained that the Church belonged to the people and that the people needed the Church. They saw the public danger of absorption in material objects, yet they were firmly convinced that social amelioration was not incompatible with spiritual growth. They believed, many of them, in the future of socialism, but they believed also in the future of Christianity; hence they could see no issue without some fusion of the two.

Furthermore, they knew that men care for a thing in proportion to the labour they devote to it and the sacrifices they make for it; hence some form of lay activity within the Church was necessary if the laity were to be interested in her. Yet such activity could not, given the modern democratic views, be carried on in absolute subordination, without any element of self-government. Hence, while not interfering with the hierarchic order, they maintained the need of lay activity, and invited the working class to show that they cared for their religion by doing something to promote and serve it.

The answer which they received from the official

rulers of their Church was that their adversaries were right and they were wrong. In a *motu proprio* of 18th December 1903, which gave a 'Fundamental Rule for popular Christian action,' Pius x. told the Italian group that it was *in conformity with the order established by God that there should be, in human society, princes and subjects, patrons and proletariat, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, nobles and plebeians;* while any concerted Catholic action, independent of ecclesiastical authority, was, by various regulations, rendered illegitimate.

The French social movement, entitled the 'Sillon,' under the leadership of M. Marc Sangnier, was condemned in a letter of 25th August 1910, addressed by Pius x. to the French bishops. Having first rebuked the movement for its evadence of the guidance and authority of the bishops, which would alone have been a grievous breach of Catholic discipline, the letter goes on to point out the positive errors into which it had further been precipitated :

The Sillon proposes to itself the raising and regeneration of the working classes. Now in this matter the principles of Catholic doctrine are established, and the history of Christian civilisation is sufficient to prove their beneficial results. Our predecessor, of happy memory, recalled them in certain classic pages, which those Catholics who are occupied with social questions should always study and keep before their eyes. He taught, in particular, that a Christian democracy 'should maintain that distinction of classes which is

proper to a well-constituted city, and should seek, for human society, the character that God, its author, has given it.'

Thus such an ideal of human brotherhood as should result in an ideal of social equality was set aside, not on grounds of impracticability, but of theoretical iniquity; and it was declared, in the name of the Church, that the actual condition of human society was nearer to the ideal of God for mankind than any possible condition that would obliterate class distinctions.

M. Marc Sangnier determined on submission as M. Murri had determined on resistance. Some of the associations were dissolved; others placed themselves under episcopal direction. The work was at an end.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY AND CHRISTOLOGY

MODERNISM is not a science, but a movement; it is not one apologetic, but many streams of apologetic; it is not a solution of difficulties and problems, but a recognition of their existence, and an endeavour to meet them.

On the whole, problems are seldom, if ever, solved; they are rather left behind, and eventually regarded as one of the constituents of acquired truth. The puzzle of to-day is an element of the knowledge of to-morrow; it is not answered, but assimilated. It seemed like a rock across our path, it was really a step in the ascent; we did not climb it to come down on the other side and walk round it, we climbed it to find ourselves at a higher level. Our temporary perplexity was a stage in our progress; it was the denial of that perplexity which would have been a prejudice to our advance in truth.

Among the many religious problems which have recently been agitated two have been specially conspicuous, and remain yet as insistent as ever. They have been grappled with from this side and from that; sometimes it is plain that the apologist is at grips with the problem, at others we are at least dimly aware

that an element of sophism has crept into the debate. In the former case the struggle, if not final, will in any case be fruitful, in the latter it will be comparatively barren of results ; yet in either case something more will be achieved than if the difficulty had been simply ignored.

Those two unsolved problems of modernism have arisen from the rapid development of the historical and critical spirit, and its relation to revealed religion. First of all we have the difficulty which arises from the very connection of history with any form of revelation ; next we have a development of this problem in the difficulty which arises from the relation of Christ, as an object of history, to Christ as an object of faith.

I

History

In an unpublished paper,[1] read by Baron Friedrich von Hügel to a learned society, he thus states the former of these two problems :

On the one hand, he says, *every theology, which is not content with a piecemeal illuminism, or with moving in an obvious circle, finds itself constrained to appeal to the witness of historical documents of various kinds, to invite the historical and critical examination of their contents and evidence ; and to admit that,*

[1] 'The Place and Function of the Historical Element in Religion.' L.S.S.R., 1906.

should there be no cogent historical proof for, still more should there be conclusive historical proof against, the phenomenal factualness of a certain central nucleus of events (for at this stage there is as yet no question as to the spiritual substance and meaning of these events), then its faith would either have to go altogether, or to find its immediate occasion and material in another set of phenomenal happenings.

. . . . . .

But, on the other hand, the average practice of every theology tends to appeal to historical criticism, as long as criticism supports it, or attacks one of its rivals; and to ignore or oppose criticism, of precisely the same type and cogency, as soon as the criticism concludes against the phenomenal factualness assumed to underlie, of necessity, this or that doctrine of this theology.

We have seen three schools of apology at work on this question. M. Loisy defends Christian truth by a still fuller infusion of the historical spirit; by showing that theology as well as revelation are, on one side, in history, as they are, on another side, independent of it, and that it is only in so far as they are within the domain of history that they are affected by its discoveries. Father Tyrrell meets it by his general treatment of theology; and the 'philosophy of action' suggests a spiritual solution.

In the following passage from *The Mystical Element of Religion* we have Baron F. von Hügel's answer to the problem:

We take it then that mankind has, after endless

testings and experiences, reached the following conclusions. We encounter everywhere, both within us and without, both in the physical and mental world, in the first instance, a whole network of phenomena; and these phenomena are everywhere found to fall under certain laws, and to be penetrable by certain methods of research, these laws and methods varying indeed in character and definiteness according to the subject-matter to which they apply, but in each case affording to man simply indefinite scope for discovery without, and for self-discipline within.

And all this preliminary work and knowledge does not directly require religion nor does it directly lead to it; indeed we shall spoil both the knowledge itself, and its effect upon our souls and upon religion, if religion is here directly introduced. The phenomena of Astronomy and Geology, of Botany and Zoology, of human Physiology and Psychology, of Philology and History are and ought to be, in the first instance, the same for all men, whether the said men do or do not eventually give them a raison d'être *and formal rational interest, by discovering the metaphysical and religious convictions and conclusions which underlie and alone give true unity to them, and furnish a living link between the mind observing and the things observed. Various as are these phenomena, according to the department of human knowledge to which they severally belong, yet they each and all have to be, in the first instance, discovered and treated according to principles and methods immanent and special to that department.*

And the more rigorously this is accomplished, both by carrying out these principles and methods to their fullest extent, and by conscientiously respecting their limits of applicability and their precise degree of truth and of range in the larger schemes of human activity and conviction, the more will such science achieve three deeply ethical, spiritually helpful results.

1. *Such science will help to discipline, humble, purify the natural eagerness and wilfulness, the cruder forms of anthropomorphism, of the human mind and heart. This turning to the visible will thus largely take the place of that former turning away from it. For only since the visible has been taken to represent laws, and, provisionally at least, rigorously mechanical laws characteristic of itself, can it be thus looked upon as a means of spiritual purification.*

2. *Such science again will help to stimulate those other, deeper activities of human nature, which have made possible, and have all along preceded and accompanied, these more superficial ones ; and this, although such science will doubtless tend to do the very opposite, if the whole nature be allowed to become exclusively engrossed in this one phenomenal direction. Still, it remains true that perhaps never has man turned to the living God more happily and humbly, than when coming straight away from such rigorous, disinterested phenomenal analysis, as long as such analysis is felt to be both other than, and preliminary and secondary to, the deepest depths of the soul's life and of all ultimate Reality.*

3. *And finally, such science will correspondingly help to give depth and mystery, drama and pathos, a rich spirituality, to the whole experience and conception of the soul and of life, of the world and of God. Instead of a more or less abstract picture, where all is much on the same plane, where all is either fixed and frozen, or all is in a state of feverish flux, we get an outlook, with foreground, middle distances, and background, each contrasting with, each partially obscuring, partially revealing, the other ; but each doing so, with any freshness and fulness, only in and through the strongly willing, the fully active and gladly suffering, the praying, aspiring, and energising spiritual Personality, which thus both gives and gets its own true self ever more entirely and more deeply.*

. . . . . .

In such a conception of the place of science, we have permanently to take science, throughout life, in a double sense and way. In the first instance, science is self-sufficing, its own end and its own law. In the second instance, which alone is ever final, science is but a part of a whole, but a function, a necessary yet preliminary function, of the whole of man ; and it is but part, a necessary yet preliminary part, of his outlook. Crush out, or in any way mutilate or deautonomise, this part, and all the rest will suffer. Sacrifice the rest to this part, either by starvation or attempted suppression, or by an impatient assimilation of this immense remainder to that smaller and more superficial part, and the whole man suffers again, and much more seriously.

And the danger in both directions—let us have the frankness to admit the fact—is constant and profound : even to see it continuously is difficult ; to guard against it with effect, most difficult indeed. For to starve or to suspect, to cramp or to crush this phenomenal apprehension and investigation, in the supposed interest of the ulterior truths, must ever be a besetting temptation and weakness for the religious instinct, wherever this instinct is strong and fixed, and has not yet itself been put in the way of purification.

For religion is ever, qua *religion, authoritative and absolute. What constitutes religion is not simply to hold a view and to try to live a life, with respect to the Unseen and the Deity, as possibly or even certainly beautiful or true or good : but precisely that which is over and above this—the holding this view and this life to proceed somehow from God Himself, so as to bind my innermost mind and conscience to unhesitating assent. Not simply that I think it, but that, in addition, I feel bound to think it, transforms a thought about God into a religious act.*

Now this at once brings with it a double and most difficult problem. For religion thus becomes, by its very genius and in exact proportion to its reality, something so entirely sui generis, *so claimful and supreme, that it at once exacts a two-fold submission, the one simultaneous, the other successive ; the first as it were in space, the second in time. The first regards the relations of religion to things non-religious. It might be parodied by saying : 'Since religion is true and*

supreme, religion is all we require ; all things else must be bent or broken to her sway.' She has, at the very least, the right to the primacy not of honour only, but of direct jurisdiction, over and within all activities and things. The second regards the form and concept of religion itself. Since religion always appears both in a particular form at a particular time and place, and as divine and hence authoritative and eternal ; and since the very strength and passion of religion depend upon the vigorous presence and close union of these two elements ; religion will ever tend either really to oppose all change within itself, or else to explain away its existence. Religion would thus appear doomed to be either vague and inoperative, or obscurantist and insincere.

And it is equally clear that the other parts of man's nature and of his outlook cannot simply accept such a claim, nor could religion itself flourish at all if they could and did accept it. They cannot accept the claim of religion to be immediately and simply all, for they are fully aware of being themselves something also. They cannot accept her claim to dictate to them their own domestic laws, for they are fully aware that they each, to live truly at all, require their own laws, and their own, at least relative, autonomy. However much man may be supremely and finally a religious animal, he is not only *that ; but he is a physical and sexual, a fighting and artistic, a domestic and social, a political and philosophical animal as well. Nor can man, even simply* qua *religious man, consent to a simple finality*

in the experience and explication, in the apprehension and application of religion, either in looking back into the past; or in believing and loving, suffering and acting in the present; or in forecasting the future, either of the race or of himself alone. For the here and now, *the concrete 'immediacy,' the unique individuality of the religious experience for* me, *in this room, on this very day, its freshness, is as true and necessary a quality of living religion as any other whatsoever. And if all life sustains itself only by constant, costing renovation and adaptation of itself to its environment, the religious life, as the most intense and extensive of all lives, must somehow be richest in such newness in oldness, such renovative, adaptive, assimilative power.*[1]

Those are the words of one as profoundly Catholic in his faith as sincere in his scientific and philosophical attitude.

A common argument, raised by the orthodox apologist against any such attempt to meet historic difficulties frankly and honestly, is based on the obvious fluctuations of criticism; its forward and backward and sideway movements; its alternations of destructive and constructive achievement. 'Let us wait,' says the theologian, 'till the critic has done; till he knows himself what to think; by that time we, on our side, shall be ready with our answer.'

To this it must, unfortunately, be replied, first, that the day for which we are to wait is a day that

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 44-47. I have to thank Baron F. von Hügel and Mr. J. M. Dent for the use of this long quotation.

will never dawn. Science, with its fluctuations, will come to an end only when man comes to an end. The difficulties of to-day will not be the difficulties of to-morrow; but the difficulties of to-morrow will be as surely the difficulties of to-morrow as the difficulties of to-day are those of to-day. Meanwhile there is but little comfort in the assurance that posterity will possess the answer to our difficulties; nor is a pain proved non-existent because it changes its place.

Such a form of argumentation is inspired rather by the wish to confound the outsider than to help the believer. If critics make many mistakes they also make many genuine discoveries; and though the orthodox apologist may claim his right to deny the latter in virtue of the former, the plain believer, who is seeking no mere controversial triumph, will not be relieved, in this way, of his perplexity.

But there is another fallacy concealed in the same argument. It is therein suggested that the Christian believer need take no count of scientific theories that are as yet but theories; more or less probable, it may be admitted, but not demonstrable or certain, even in the opinion of those who support them.

Yet this, surely, is to forget that it is as much a law of the mind to admit as probable what it sees to be probable as to acknowledge the certainty of what it sees to be certain. If I have not made up my mind on some question I may still see how far more likely is one solution than its opposite; I

cannot blind myself to this likelihood, nor repudiate any opinion which has, in my mind, many chances of being true. I have, in fact, to acknowledge what is probable as being probable, just as I have to accept what is certain as being certain.

Hence at no stage of a scientific process can a mind familiar with it be wholly unmoved by its vicissitudes. The reasonable hypotheses of the specialist must be, in some measure, the reasonable hypotheses of all those who know what he is about. We need not be more convinced than his proofs warrant us in being, but we have to admit so much probability as they possess.

II

Christology

To the modernist the Christological problem is the culminating point of the historical problem. There are indeed men who have, even lately, sought a refuge from ecclesiastical abuses in a return to the Gospel, pure and simple ; but they cannot be called modernists. It is of the very essence of modernism to unite, with the belief in Christianity, a recognition of the main actual data of science and history, and the latter element is lacking to those who believe that in going 'back to Christ' we can go back to certain unchanged and unassailable positions. As things are at present, the ecclesiastical problem is light in comparison with the Christological question.

It will be easier to estimate our present position if we

take a glance at the past, and make a rough summary of certain points of Christian theology, which were never questioned until the results of criticism made themselves felt, and which are even now unquestioned by many, in the very face of those results.

First of all, the historical fact of the Resurrection was not only an article of our Creed, but was also a main proof and support of it. In such sense was interpreted the text of St. Paul: 'If Christ be not risen our preaching is vain, and your faith likewise is vain.' These words were taken to signify that, if we could not be sure that the dead body of Christ actually rose from the tomb, the very foundation of our faith was insecure.

Secondly, we were taught that Christ definitely affirmed His own Divinity. Indeed the very fact of His making this profession was used as an argument against unbelievers, for He was certainly no imposter, which He would have been had He falsely proclaimed Himself God.

Thirdly, in virtue of the Hypostatic Union, He possessed, even as man, a certain omniscience. Not only did He know then all that we know now, but He knew immensely more, He knew all that we possibly could know, and far more besides. He, consequently, of course, knew all that would happen to Himself in the course of His life; any kind of disappointment or disillusion was out of the question. All this was not only theologically true, but was to be found in the Gospel; for all our theology about

Christ was merely the explication of Gospel history. If He spoke, in those records, as though He only possessed the knowledge of His own time, that was in no way because only such knowledge was present to His mind, but because He had to speak to men in their own language.

Fourthly, the Church was His direct foundation; her hierarchy and her sacraments were His direct institution; every one of her definitions was, explicitly or implicitly, included in His teaching.

The existence of many schools and countless volumes of theology is a proof that, even without the work of criticism, there were many possible points of view in regard to these as to other doctrines, and it is not to be supposed that the work of theology had been brought to a close. But as criticism made, at last, its way within the Catholic Church, such was the position which it encountered.

Let us now see how this teaching is affected by the corresponding critical assumptions. Those assumptions are not, indeed, in all respects final; critics differ amongst themselves; and M. Loisy, from whom I am about to quote, has his scientific as well as his theological opponents. Yet, in spite of certain varieties, it is impossible to deny the existence of a general harmony on some points, and Christian apologetic cannot afford to wait, in the hope of critics making a few more mistakes.

M. Loisy, whether impregnable or not in all his views (a matter beyond the judgment of the present

writer) is the most valuable exponent of the critical position from the Catholic point of view, for the reason that he is acquainted with both sides and conscious of their impact.

The Easter message, he writes, *that is to say, the discovery of the empty tomb and the apparitions of Jesus to His disciples, in so far as such facts are taken as physical proofs of the Resurrection, is not an indisputable argument, from which the historian draws entire certitude that our Saviour was bodily resuscitated. The given case allowed of no complete proof. The risen Christ belongs no more to the order of present life, which is that of sensible experience, and consequently the Resurrection is not a fact which could have been directly and formally ascertained. . . . The empty tomb is an indirect and not a decisive argument, since the disappearance of the body, the only fact ascertained, admits of other explanations than the Resurrection. The apparitions are an argument direct, but uncertain in its signification. . . . The risen Jesus appeared and disappeared in the manner of spirits; during the apparition He was visible, palpable and audible as a man in his natural state. Can such a mixture of qualities inspire entire confidence in the historian who approaches the question without preliminary faith? Evidently not. He will reserve his adhesion because the objective reality of the apparitions does not define itself with sufficient precision. The critical examination of the accounts will confirm him in his doubts. . . . The fact of the apparitions will appear to him incon-*

testable, but he will not be able to estimate exactly their nature and bearing. Regarded independently of the faith of the apostles, the testimony of the New Testament offers only a limited probability. . . . But is it not inevitable that any natural proof of a supernatural fact should be incomplete and defective? [1]

In his 'Letter to an Archbishop on the Divinity of Christ,' he says:

Jesus himself lived on earth in the consciousness of His humanity, and He spoke according to that consciousness; He lived in the consciousness of His Messianic vocation, and He spoke according to the consciousness He had of that vocation. . . . The Divinity of Christ is a dogma which has grown in the Christian consciousness, but which was not expressly formulated in the Gospel; it existed only in germ in the notion of the Messias, son of God. No principle of theology, no definition of the Church oblige us to admit that Jesus made any formal declaration of it to His disciples before His death. It is, on the contrary, very conformable to the spirit of Catholic tradition to suppose that this revelation was gradually affirmed.

. . . . . .

The revelation of the Messianic secret was really made by the Spirit who acted on the community of the first faithful. . . . The many heresies on this subject could not have existed without some cause. If the belief had been clear from the first it would not have made its way with so much difficulty. For the historian the

[1] *L'Évangile et l'Église*, pp. 74-76.

work of Christian tradition is a continuation of that of the writers of the New Testament. The whole represents the continued effort of faith to lay firmer hold of an object that surpasses it. This effort moves gropingly ; it does not at once attain its term ; one may say that, in a sense, it has not attained it yet, but it follows ever the same line, placing Jesus ever higher, and giving a more comprehensive idea of His mission in proportion as a larger aspect of the world and of humanity opens itself out to the eyes of a more intelligent faith.[1]

As to the knowledge of Christ, speaking at once as critic and Christian apologist, M. Loisy says in the same letter :

But can it be, theologians object, that Christ ignored His own future and the future of His work to the point of believing in the near end of the world, and telling His disciples that they would behold it ? Did Jesus not penetrate the secret of things past and future ; knowing all that God knows, with the exception of possibilities that were never to be realised ? This unlimited knowledge of Christ is not a fact of history, nor is it even a certain datum of patristic tradition. The critic only knows this thesis in the history of theology. Where, indeed, should he seek the thought of Jesus save in His authentic teaching ? He could only ascribe unlimited science to Him on the historically and morally inconceivable and disconcerting hypothesis that Christ, as man, had God's knowledge, and deliberately abandoned His disciples and posterity to ignorance and error re-

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, pp. 116-120.

garding countless matters that He could have revealed without the least inconvenience.[1]

As to the relations of the Church to the Gospel :

The former is a continuation of the latter, and if the Gospel message be substantially true, the Church, which has the care of it, is the organ of truth. But some ask for a more formal institution, they would wish to find express declarations of Christ in reference to the ecclesiastical organism, its government and its cult. They seek the traces of such institution in the Gospel, but only find very questionable ones in which criticism perceives the influence of the Christian on the strictly Evangelical tradition. They do not seem to see that the divine institution of the Church is a matter of faith without historic proof, and that the apostolic tradition, rightly understood, supposes that the Church was founded on *Jesus rather than* by *Him.*[2]

Now it is impossible to deny the fact that all this was a severe shock to those who had received their religious education on the old lines. It was not merely their intellectual convictions that were disturbed, the change affected their devotional attitude as well.

Nor has the shock spent itself, for the problem has not, as yet, grown less acute. I think we may even say that our former beliefs have been disturbed to a greater extent than the assured results of criticism would warrant, for we are affected, not only by

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre,* pp. 138-139.
[2] *Idem.,* p. 161.

what has been done, but by our apprehension of what may yet be done. We have been asking ourselves where the work of demolition will end; and though not only the existence of Jesus Christ, but the leading facts of His life and characteristics of His teaching have emerged with greater, and not less, certainty from the unfettered researches of criticism, it is not surprising if those who are not themselves critics have sometimes wondered if anything at all would remain.

In his little work, *Jésus et la Tradition Évangélique*, in which M. Loisy resumes the state of the question, he mentions this negative apprehension, though to show that it is based on an exclusively literal exercise of criticism. True historic criticism, he maintains, has regard not only to texts, but to those things which the texts signify.[1]

The doubt, then, of which we speak, has not a strictly scientific basis, yet there is nothing in its existence to cause us surprise.

Many and various have been the theories and solutions proposed during this time of crisis. Prominent among them is that one which rests on the distinction between Jesus, as an historical figure, and Christ as an object of faith.

The existence of the Church, writes Professor Percy Gardner, *has from the first depended on the possibility of bringing the two sets of facts into relation with one another. The Church is the Church of Jesus-Christ;*

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

and a lover of paradox might say that it is built upon a hyphen.[1]

The cardinal importance of this distinction is maintained by two schools, of which the one lays more stress on the connection which exists between the 'Eternal Christ' and his manifestation in the Jesus of history; while the other interprets the idea of Christ in an almost purely mystical sense, with little or no relation to the historic records.

The latter of these two theories, insisting as it does on the conception of Christ as soul of the Church, lends itself to further development in an impersonal sense; Christ becomes the soul of the Church in such sense that He is nothing else but her soul, and Christianity is made independent of Christ.

The theory which Professor Josiah Royce sets forth in his *Problem of Christianity* is a radical reconstruction of Christianity, such as might logically succeed to this purely mystical doctrine of the 'Eternal Christ.'

The literal and historical fact, he writes, *has always been this, that in some fashion and degree those who have thus believed in the being whom they called Christ were united in a community of the faithful, were in love with that community, were hopefully and practically devoted to the cause of the still invisible, but perfectly real and divine Universal Community, and were saved by the faith and the life which they thus expressed.*[2]

[1] 'Jesus or Christ,' *Hibbert Journal* Supplement, 1909.

[2] *The Problem of Christianity,* p. 425.

Others maintained that all we need look for in Christ is a certain unique manifestation of the love of God, and the love of man, which would make of him the Supreme Mediator; while others, again, declare that it is precisely this notion of *uniqueness* that has to be eliminated, that what we learn from Christ is not the doctrine of His own Divinity, but that of 'the veritable unity of the divine and human nature.'[1]

And meanwhile, with whatever qualifications, the Eschatological view of the Gospel was daily gaining ground, and if it placed new difficulties in the way of the old forms of belief, it also furnished one more amongst the many solutions offered of the vital problem. For to some it has seemed that in this latest reading of the Gospel history we complete the circle, and come back to the earliest and simplest and most obvious interpretation of the words of Christ, and the significance of His life. We rub our eyes as we find that, while we were torturing texts into some strange meaning, it is in their plain sense that we find what Christ really said and intended.

As M. Loisy has said in regard to the parables:

Though tradition has understood them otherwise, they are, in fact, in no sense profound allegories; they are fables with a moral application, whose meaning does not outrun their apparent signification.[2]

[1] See article of Professor Henry Jones, *Hibbert* Supplement, 1909.

[2] *Jésus et la Tradition Évangélique*, p. 170.

The same, according to the Eschatological view, is true of many other sayings of Christ, and the result has been, to some minds, a picture more human and living in its historic aspect, and not, for this, less susceptible of divine significance in its religious aspect.

And yet, whatever may be the ultimate readjustment of Christian belief in accordance with sound and abiding human knowledge, modernism has had the courage to recognise that the lesson is not yet ended. Even, it may be said, were a final answer to our difficulties at hand, it is not in the nature of things that we should be able completely to apprehend that answer. For those who simply rule all forms of traditional Christian belief out of court, the problem does not, of course, any longer exist; for those who rule all the inconvenient facts of historic criticism out of court, it never has existed; for the modernist, who maintains that neither of the contending forces is to be ruled out of court, judgment has necessarily to be suspended. For, as I have said, even were all the elements to hand from which judgment might be drawn, the mind is not in a condition to rest in that judgment. For the appeasement of a mental, as of a physical, crisis, time must intervene. We not only believed, but, what is far more vital, we prayed according to a certain conception of the object of our faith and prayer; that conception has been troubled and altered, and even if it be destined to rebirth in a

form as noble and spiritual as before, we ourselves are bruised in the process. Our minds can no more be instantly cured, even by the removal of the difficulty, than a wound could be at once healed by the extraction of the bullet.

But it may also be said that the elements of a sound judgment are not all to hand as yet, and that our salvation lies in recognising this fact. The transformation that Christianity has to undergo is, indeed, of a very fundamental nature; that transformation which is undergone by every form of science and every form of faith whenever the Ptolemaic is supplanted by the Copernican theory. God is first worshipped by His people because they believe Him to be their own God, and not the God of any others; He is next worshipped by His people because they see that their God is not only their own, but the God of the whole universe. This change from monolatry to monotheism is the change of a religion from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican conception. Christianity is undergoing that change. We have not, eventually, found the world any smaller because it forms part of a larger system; Christianity will not prove less important because it is not only *religion* but also *a religion*, with a particular as well as an universal character. The first result of this perception is a sense of confusion; the second result may be the discovery that a mistake as to our proportions lay at the very root of our difficulty, which could not be removed save

by a rectification of that mistake. It is God whom we seek in Christ; and it is in the life of Jesus of Nazareth that, for us, the primary, classic and supreme revelation of God has been made. This is a fact that criticism has never questioned and never will question. Our difficulties begin when Jesus Christ must not only be to us the chief manifestation of the Divinity, but must be it in such a way that those who are without Him are without any such revelation. The mystical Christ of the Church is God, and God belongs to all men, and is revealed in a greater or less degree in every religion. The connection between that mystical Christ, who is God, and the Jesus Christ of history, is the special faith of Christianity; the connection between the mystical Christ, by whatever name He may be known, and the Divinity itself, is a faith that reappears in many other religions. Christianity will be better understood in proportion as we understand those other religions; nor will it be a smaller thing because it belongs to a larger whole.

To be, writes George Tyrrell, *as it were 'possessed' by Jesus is to be possessed by the Spirit of God.*[1]

Again:

What are the categories and concepts of Jesus to us? Are we to frame our minds to that of a first century Jewish carpenter, for whom more than half the world and nearly the whole of its history did not exist; to

[1] *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, p. 267.

whom the stellar universe was unknown; who cared nothing for art or science or history or politics or nine-tenths of the interests of humanity, but solely for the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. And even in regard to this supreme interest is it His religious ideas, His apocalyptic imagery, that we are to take over, and not rather the spirit of which they were the inadequate embodiment. . . . Would the military genius of the past tie us down to his weapons and methods of warfare? Would he not have desired and hoped that every generation should, while retaining his spirit, improve on his methods? And would not such improvements be the work of his own spirit?

. . . . . .

There is no special difficulty in admitting that the dawn of a new epoch should be associated with the name of some individual who, however much the product of his time and sensitive to its spirit and needs, creates a new synthesis of all he has received, with some new and original contributions of his own. . . .

. . . . . .

There come periods when a change of direction or of level is the condition of progress, and such new epochs are associated . . . with the name of some individual who, conscious of the impasse, *discovers a way out and draws the whole world after him. It is no scandal to us that only those who come within the sphere of that man's influence enjoy the advantages thereof. But it seems intolerable that only those who have heard the name and the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth*

should attain eternal life ; that two-thirds of present humanity, and nine-tenths or far more of past humanity, should fail of salvation.

Yet this would follow were the personality that spoke in Jesus that of a man, and not that of the Spirit which speaks to every man in the mysterious whisperings of conscience.[1]

And yet to recognise that Christianity shares something that is common to all religions is not to attenuate or efface its particular character. To do this would be, not to readjust our conception of the old thing, but to substitute for it a new one. Thus, to take one instance, Christianity without Christ is not a new Christianity, but a new social ideal. So, too, Christianity with a mystical but no historic Christ, is not a new Christianity but another religion, whether a new one or the revival of an old one. Again, Christianity with an historic Christ serving as pattern and moral ideal, but no mystical or divine Christ as object of worship, is not a new Christianity, but an adaptation of Christian teaching to other religious or moral systems. The person of Christ, the history of Christ and the worship of Christ are essential elements of the Christian religion as it has always been understood ; even if the word Christianity has been used in a looser sense. Its central object is not a mythical figure that has been divinised, nor a mystical figure that can be wholly detached from its historic connection, nor

[1] *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, pp. 270-272.

an historical figure that is regarded as teacher and prophet. Its central figure is one that truly entered into the realm of history, and that has truly become an object of worship. Jesus Christ lived and worked and spoke and died, or Christianity is robbed of its essential historic element; Jesus Christ is still, in some sense, our Teacher, our Master and our God, or Christianity loses its essential religious element.

In so far then as we are thinking, not of Christianity in the vague, undefined sense, but of the Christian religion with all that it necessarily involves, it is better to face the alternative frankly, and to recognise that certain changes are not properly changes at all, but are the substitution of one thing for another. Some have shrunk from this alternative because they felt that they could not do without Christianity, and they feared that this would be the consequence of an attempt to present it in its old form. But, in fact, Christianity has a better chance of survival in its old than in any of its new forms, provided only that its historic element be honestly treated as history, so that it is not always under the necessity of covering a rotten place with a cloak of ignorance. Or even did the more subversive alternative impose itself on some minds, did they feel that Christianity, *as a religion*, must go, it may be that precisely through letting it go they would find out that it could and must remain; in the empty place it had left they would learn its true proportions.

For it is perhaps, after all, as I have ventured to suggest, largely a question of proportions. That 'spirit of immobility' which, as Fogazzaro's 'Saint' declared, infests the Catholic Church, and, indeed, all Churches, is ever roused to opposition by the suggestion that our world is moving round the sun; that our scheme of life, or knowledge, or faith must carry us round within a yet wider scheme of things. Yet this is the direction in which knowledge ever moves; and if faith is other than knowledge, faith and knowledge are, nevertheless, inseparable companions; neither can go on living without the other. Theology has a new task in a new age; and if it had no task then it would have no further reason for existence.

The theological work of the first Christian centuries, wrote Abbé Loisy, *was, in its measure, a criticism, so far as criticism then existed, but it was a true criticism exercised on religious tradition and on the science of the time. Now that a more reflective and methodical criticism has become necessary, unless we suppose that the Catholic Church has lost the gift of faith and intelligence that permitted her to construct the religion of past centuries, we have a right to believe that she will succeed, by the same means, in building up the religion of the future, and safeguarding and explaining its fundamental principle, which is the double revelation of God in the world and in man, the religious notion of the living God and of the Christ God.*[1]

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre,* p. 154.

Theology has not yet fully entered into her task —but the task awaits her. Mankind is not less interested in its own world since it found out the subordinate position of that world in relation to the universe. The Christian Church has to accept the same experience, to learn the same lesson, and to find, we may trust, that its meaning is not thereby lessened; that spiritual values grow greater by participation.

Ecco chi crescerà i nostri amori! (Par. v.).

CHAPTER V

CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT MODERNISM

QUITE recently, in regard to the Kikuyu controversy, a letter appeared in the *Times* repudiating the term Modernism as applied to the liberal movement in the English Church.

As a matter of terminology, wrote the Rev. Alfred Fawkes, *is it too late to protest against the use of the word 'Modernism' to describe the position of English Liberal Churchmen? In theology, as in other departments of knowledge, science is the same for us all, but 'Modernism' is historically a Latin movement, represented by men of Latin race, in the Latin or Roman Church. It suggests M. Loisy and the Vatican as unmistakably as the 'New Theology' suggests Mr. R. J. Campbell and the City Temple.* Suum cuique. *Suggestion counts for much in such matters; from a confusion of names it is easy to pass to a confusion of thought and things.*[1]

These words are not written in a spirit of hostility to the Catholic modernist position, yet they do actually repudiate, not only the term, but the thing itself, as differing in some essential manner from any apparently kindred position amongst Anglicans.

After our consideration of the questions in the

[1] *Times*, 19th February 1914.

last two chapters, questions essentially constituent of the modernist movement, it is almost difficult to appreciate the reason for this rigorous distinction between the Catholic and the Protestant, or the Anglican, movement. The crucial problems of modernism are so obviously problems of the Christian faith itself, and not of any particular form of it, that it is hard to understand how it can be regarded purely as a product of Romanism.

But if we turn again to the same writer, and to one other, we shall find that their chief motive for insisting on this distinction is their profound disbelief in any possible future of Roman Catholicism, and their conviction that the Catholic modernist movement was essentially a struggle between light and darkness, liberty and tyranny, modern thought and a hopelessly antiquated and effete conception of authority. In fact, modernism is peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church just because it had no business there; its main characteristic is, in a sense, its very incongruity and hopelessness.

Thus Mr. Fawkes says elsewhere:

As a movement, Modernism was a product of the Interims-Pontifikat *of Leo XIII.*

. . . . . .

He (the modernist) *recognised the modern mind as a factor of the situation with which he had to deal. His mistake lay in thinking he could change its direction; he found that he had harnessed the chariot of the Sun.*

. . . . . .

(But) *the divergence between the Catholic and the modernist position is fundamental. In every age a modernist school has faced the Papacy with a 'thus far and no further'; in every age the protest has been brushed aside by the logic of ideas and of events.*

. . . . . .

For there is no arguing with a theocracy.[1]

Further on he continues:

The days of an institution which can no longer adapt itself to its environment are numbered. This is overlooked by those who stop short at the contention that it was impossible for the Church to come to terms with modernism. It may have been so. But, in this case, the inference is inevitable: the Church is near its end.

A Church, however, may stand for one of two things: its polity, or the men and women who compose it. In the former sense, Rome, it may be, will go the way of Alexandria and Antioch. . . . But the religious future of Latin Christendom—of the 250 millions who now look to Rome for guidance—is another matter. For, whatever may be the case with its local and temporary forms, there is no reason to think that Christianity is incapable of adapting itself to the changed and changing life of the world. In the reformed Churches, because of their more elastic structure, the transition from the letter to the spirit is easier than in the unreformed.[2]

[1] *Studies in Modernism*, by the Rev. Alfred Fawkes, pp. vii-viii.

[2] *Idem.*, pp. ix-x.

In the Dean of St. Paul's we have another and more bitter representative of the same view. He has not the sympathy of Mr. Fawkes for the efforts of Catholic modernists; he has, furthermore, some quarrel with their opinions as well as their position; but his chief indictment of them is for the absurdity and inconsequence of their action in endeavouring to buttress a rotten structure, and to remain members of a Church governed according to despotic principles while they pretend to liberal views. In the Church of Rome there is no possibility of accommodation to the growth of modern knowledge.

The exigencies of despotic government, he writes, *supply the key to the* whole *policy and history of the Papacy; Rome has finished her life. . . . A more vital question for those, at least, who are Christians but not Roman Catholics, is in what shape the Christian religion will emerge from the assaults upon traditional beliefs which science and criticism are pressing home.*[1]

That the writer goes on to repudiate certain critical positions, and to state, subjectively rather than objectively, what he holds tenable and untenable, does not concern us here.[2] The substance

[1] See article on 'The Meaning of Modernism,' by Dr. Inge, *Quarterly Review*, April 1909.

[2] Thus he adds: *In the first place we do not feel that we are required by sane criticism to surrender nearly all that M. Loisy has surrendered.* (But what if, in its further process, sane criticism showed that we *had* got to surrender all that M. Loisy surrenders?) *We believe that the Kingdom of God which Christ*

of his criticism is that the *Pascendi* is a natural and lawful development of Roman Catholic teaching, while modernism is an illogical and unlawful effort to combine contradictory things; it is an effort as unjust to science as it is illegitimate from the ecclesiastical point of view; and it is, furthermore, a mischievous attempt to prolong the life of a useless institution.

To the Catholic modernist these are strange accusations. If the problems we have considered are not as vital to Reformed as to Catholic Christianity; if the relation of Christianity to its historic origin, the connection of Christ, the object of worship, with the Jesus Christ of history, be not questions as vital to Protestant as to Catholic Christianity, in what then does Protestant Christianity, as a faith, consist? We are not pronouncing an opinion on the solution of these problems, but on their existence; and is not their existence as grave a consideration to the English as to the Roman Catholic Church?

preached was something much more than a patriotic dream. We believe that He did speak as never man spake, so that those who heard Him were convinced that He was more than man. We believe, in short, that the object of our worship was a historical figure. Nothing has yet come to light, or is likely to come to light, which prevents us from identifying the Christ of history with the Christ of faith, or the Christ of experience. Those who have followed M. Loisy's writings closely will see that Dr. Inge has somewhat missed their signification. The points he raises are just those with which M. Loisy dealt in his apologetic—Christ, for him, was, according to that apologetic, an object both of faith and of history.

It has been said of Protestantism that it is *the only religion, at least of the West, in which one can become an Atheist without noticing it, and without doing oneself the least violence.*[1]

Would there not be some truth in this judgment if, for instance, the Christological problem did not affect its whole constitution as profoundly as it affects that of the Catholic Church ?

Yet there is a certain amount of truth in the contentions of the writers from whom we have quoted, for it is, indeed, in the Catholic Church that modernism has had its classical manifestation ; there it has exhibited itself in its most acute form, and there it has reaped the most acute consequences ; there it has been most passionate and eager, and there it has been most vigorously opposed. From the recognition of this truth we may draw one of two conclusions, either, on the one hand, with Mr. Fawkes, that modernism has no future in the Catholic Church, and, with Dr. Inge, that its existence therein is preposterous ; or, on the other hand, that, just because of the intensity of its character, it is more properly alive in that place than in any other.

According to the second of these alternatives, modernism does not exist in the Reformed Churches only in the sense that it is not to be found there with all its virtue, or all its malignity, according to the favourable or unfavourable view that may be taken of it.

[1] *L'Irréligion de l'avenir*, p. 131. M. Guyau.

Protestantism is not so highly organised as Catholicism; it is, in a sense, a headless body, whose life is equally diffused through all its parts; it leads, therefore, a less fully conscious existence, and is not always aware of the vital changes it is undergoing. If it is not possible for it, as Guyau suggested, to survive without a God, it is nevertheless conceivable that it might survive without a Christ; though it would then be as Protestantism, and not as Christianity, that it would survive. In this sense Protestantism and Christianity are *two*, whereas Catholicism and Christianity are *one*.

For Catholicism, on the contrary, is an organism with a single brain, wherever that brain may be situated, and it has, consequently, collective as well as individual sensation. It is aware of all that takes place in any part of itself, and is proportionately capable of action and reaction. It is not disturbed in one place without being disturbed in the whole; its crises assume at once an universal character.

The Catholic Church possesses, furthermore, a great variety of levels, and though these levels are differently affected by any new influence, the sensation of each one is, to some extent, the sensation of all.

There 's no bottom to the Catholic Church, writes one of our novelists; *everything that 's in stays in.*[1]

Yet through her brain centres she feels in every one of those parts. It is not only her learned, but

[1] *Illumination*, Harold Frederic.

also her unlearned, who are affected by the new breath of knowledge; it is not only her devout, but also her indifferent. It is possible to be orthodox within her fold, and know nothing about it, because we are thus in complete and automatic harmony with the whole of her being; it is not possible to be unorthodox without knowing all about it.

If, then, it be part of the process of knowledge not only to change, but to know that we are changing, this highly developed consciousness will be a factor in the process of truth. The very hindrance offered to its advance will serve some purpose, for we shall not pass so easily from one position to another as to leave things behind that ought to have gone with us and will have to be fetched again afterwards.

If it be asked, then, why a man remains in prison, and keeps on shaking his chains and tugging at his bars, it can be replied that there is at any rate this advantage in the chains and the bars, that they make us clearly aware of the fact that we are striving to move; and the pain of the liberating process may be well repaid by the definiteness of this knowledge. When there is no positive external restraint on our professions and opinions we may, with an agreeable, but inexact vagueness, wander a good way from our post, and think we are still beside it.

Hence, though modernism be as much a Christian as a Catholic movement, it has attained its most

definite manifestation in the Catholic Church, even apart from the fact that some of its chief leaders have been Roman Catholics.

The English Church and other Protestant Churches have not been without representative men to recognise this truth. But perhaps none have done so with a greater fulness of understanding and sympathy than Archdeacon Lilley, formerly Vicar of Paddington.[1] He is among those who have unfalteringly met the tide of criticism full face; and if he turned with special sympathy to the study of Catholic Modernism, it was not from lack of attachment to his own Church, but because he felt that the problems which every Church had to confront were being faced and felt in the Roman Church with such special force and insistency, that there, more than anywhere else, could one estimate the strength of the problems in themselves, and their effect on the Christian faith.

Thus he writes in the Introduction to his collected essays: 'Modernism, a Record and a Review':

Most of the papers which are here collected have appeared during the last five years in various magazines and reviews as occasional notices of its progress. They were written to call the attention of members of my own Communion to a theological movement which seemed to me, both by the freedom of its method and the boldness of its conclusions, to have more promise

[1] Now Canon of Hereford Cathedral and Archdeacon of Ludlow.

of religious fruitfulness than any which had found clear and articulate expression within our own borders. I knew indeed how many among ourselves, and especially among our younger men, were feeling their way to an application of the same apologetic method; and I hoped that an example of courage and faithfulness in the pursuit of truth which had been an inspiration and encouragement to myself might encourage and inspire them also.

. . . . . .

The modernist movement has introduced a new note into the Roman Communion. Among vast numbers of the clergy of France and Italy especially, the life of study has become the natural pendant to the life of prayer. In no other communion of the Christian world is there such a ferment of thought about the things of religion, or such an earnest and serious pursuit of positive knowledge. Even Protestant Germany, which has so honestly laboured in the interests of theological progress for a whole century, is turning with astonishment and admiration to this veritable renaissance in Rome. It remembers that it at least enjoyed the freedom of the University chair in attempting the work of theological renewal. But here are men who have to work under the jealous and uninterrupted surveillance *of reactionary Orders, or in some petty seminary professorship, or amid conditions of solitude and poverty which would daunt all but the bravest and most enthusiastic spirits. And yet they have never compromised their vision of truth nor minimised*

the conclusions which the ascertained facts forced upon them. They are sustained by a simple and passionate love of truth, and by a certainty which fills them with a kind of despotic inspiration that all truth is of God. For them the results of positive theology seem to blend almost naturally and without effort with the immediate certainties of mystical religion. They possess that peculiar chemistry of the spirit which men seem to acquire in crises of enthusiastic faith, and which harmonises the most conflicting elements of their knowledge in a generous and satisfying unity. It is on this account that they have not only succeeded in discovering the religious value of the new learning for themselves, but are undoubtedly destined to be its spiritual sponsors with every communion in Christendom.

. . . . . .

One thing only can be prophesied of this movement, but that may be prophesied with certainty. The track which it is clearing for theology is the only one which theology can safely follow in the coming days. And in clearing that track, it is preparing a mutual intelligence between the sundered branches of Christendom which is possible on no other terms. Protestant theology, which was scholastic to the core, separated from the main body of Christian tradition in refusing adhesion to certain dogmas as intellectually false, as out of accord with the revelation given in Scripture intellectually conceived and interpreted. Protestantism indeed, as a religious movement, had gone deeper than

its apologetics admitted. It had really denied certain dogmas because religious experience seemed to prove them valueless and even injurious to the life of religion. But modernism holds that life may be trusted to slough its old skin, and that when it does so in obedience to the needs of nature it may find that every expression of the old life needs to repeat itself in some worthier and more developed form in the new. With the sense of the absoluteness of God's self-revelation in life, of the supremacy of the life and Spirit of Jesus Christ as the norm of that revelation, and of the relative value of all its various forms as it expresses itself through the religious life and thought of humanity, all motives to schism will have vanished. In proportion as these conceptions gain ground, and they cannot by their very nature gain ground in one Christian community without affecting all, the reunion of Christendom will pass from the stage of a vague sentimental desire to that of a rational and highly practical aim.[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 4, 17-18, 22-23.

CHAPTER VI

THE OFFICIAL CHURCH AND MODERNISM

IF there could possibly have been any doubt before the year 1907 as to which Church would exhibit the modernist crisis in its acutest form, there could be none after that date. On 3rd July 1907, and again on 8th September of the same year, Rome pronounced distinct and emphatic judgment on the work of her own children. The Decree of July, *Lamentabili sane*, contains a list of errors, drawn, accurately and inaccurately, from the works of some of the chief modernist writers, above all from those of M. Loisy; the Encyclical, *Pascendi gregis*, of September, which first gives the official title of *Modernism* to the entire movement, consecrates many pages to the exposition and refutation of what it treats throughout as a coherent system, brings various charges against the personal character and motives of its promotors, and announces the policy with which it is henceforth to be met. The Decree is objective in tone, the Encyclical personal; the Decree is a statement of doctrine, the Encyclical is also a manifestation of temper and spirit, but in both documents certain main positions are definitely set forth, and an attitude of distinct

and uncompromising opposition is declared, not only to some or many special points of the recent apologetic, not only to its critical or its philosophical or its theological results, but to the whole of it, *en bloc*, and to every manifestation and detail of it.

The first question that may arise in the minds of those who read these words, unless they are already closely acquainted with the documents in question, is how it was possible to strike, with one blow, so many different things; that is to say, how it was possible to blend in one condemnation the very distinct schools of work and thought which we have been considering. How could they even be classed under one appellation?

The proceeding was, indeed, unscientific; an accusation which its authors, in their slight estimation of science, would have no desire to repel; yet it was not really unintelligent. In the *Pascendi* modernism is termed, not a heresy, but a 'compendium of heresies,' and the modernists are reproached with 'laying the axe, not to the branches and shoots, but to the very root, that is to faith and its deepest fibres.'

Now it would be impossible for any impartial student of the Decree and Encyclical on the one hand, and the works of those who are condemned in them on the other hand, not to perceive that the Decree, in particular, is extraordinarily elusive, the clauses often containing some particle that casts uncertainty

over their full meaning; and that both documents fail conspicuously in giving a fair account of the writings to which they tacitly refer.[1] Therefore, for acquaintance with the works of the philosophical, critical, and theological schools, of which we have already spoken, it is not to those pronouncements that we should go. Yet in its apprehension of the recent religious movement in its totality, the mind of the official Church was not altogether unjust. For it is, indeed, at the very foundations of faith that modernism has expended its labours, just as it is at the very foundations of human science and truth that the engines of the Church are directed in its condemnation. It has been given to us, in our day, to witness some intermingling of the roots of human and divine knowledge; an experience as full of awe-struck joy to those for whom all knowledge is, at its deepest, a form of religion, as it is distressing to those for whom religion is a thing apart, with dominion over human knowledge in general, but no kinship with it. Modernism was the recognition of this intermingling, an intermingling that could not be effected without some perturbation of the soil; the Decree and Encyclical are the denunciation, not of the intermingling in itself, of which they do not take account

[1] On this matter consult *Simples Réflexions*, etc., of M. Loisy, *The Programme of Modernism*, translated from the Italian with introduction by A. Leslie Lilley (Fisher Unwin), and two letters in the *Times* of 30th September and 1st October 1907 by George Tyrrell.

either to deny or affirm it, but of the recognition accorded by some members of the Church to its occurrence.

To have gone on in complete unconsciousness of the change that was taking place would have betokened, in the ruling element of the Church, a startling lack of life and perception ; for, as we have already noticed, the Roman Catholic Church is an organism with brain centres and dependent organs. To have seen what was happening, to have met it with the open arms of recognition and sympathy, to have made this movement her own by accepting and enduring as well as guiding its action, would have been, on the part of the Church, a line of conduct surpassing the elevation and force of the human elements of which she is composed.

We have all felt, in times of crisis, that had we, in the past, lived steadily up to the best that was in us, we should have more light and strength for meeting our emergency than we actually possess. The same is to be said of any collective body. The Church carries with her the burden of her own past, with all that it contains of evil and weakness as well as good and strength ; in the hour of danger she can only act according to her character as she has made it ; every fault that has crept into her system must tell ; God cannot be expected to overrule her own human elements.

Thus it was inevitable that the rulers of the Church should perceive what was happening ; and

it was also inevitable that, even had they been endowed with immeasurably more wisdom and disinterestedness than they actually possessed, they should have, to some extent, recoiled from the changes that were going forward. And when we add to this the further motives for resistance drawn from vices and abuses accumulated during centuries of government, their action can hardly surprise, nor, in every respect, distress us.

In the first place, the Church had never acknowledged the complete autonomy of science and history, even in their own domains. For it cannot be said that such autonomy is recognised when the science in question can be called to order at any instant if, even while dealing strictly on its own lines with some part of its own subject, it touches on a point in which the teaching of the Church is likewise interested.

Thus one of the condemned propositions of the *Lamentabili* is the following :

As it is only revealed truths that are contained in the deposit of faith it appertains in no respect to the Church to pass judgment on the assertions of human science, and this view is greatly enforced throughout the *Pascendi*, where, also, the words of Pius IX. are quoted, that 'it is the duty of philosophy not to command, but to serve.'

The modernist attitude in this matter was so incomprehensible to Rome that their respect for the rights of science was taken to imply, not only

that science was independent of faith, but that faith was dependent on science. Thus the *Pascendi* maintains that, according to the modernist, *science is to be entirely independent of faith, while, on the other hand, and notwithstanding that they are supposed to be strangers to each other, faith is made subject to science.*

In this way the modernist is also charged with robbing faith of the support and proof it can find in natural science :

It is a fixed and established principle among them that both science and history must be atheistic, and that within their boundaries there is room for nothing but phenomena ; God and all that is divine are utterly excluded.

And again :

When they write history they make no mention of the Divinity of Christ, but when they are in the pulpit they profess it clearly ; again, when they write history they pay no heed to the Fathers and the Councils, but when they catechise the people they cite them respectfully.

It is impossible, in the face of these documents, to maintain that a Catholic historian, or critic, or man of science is in the same position as one who is not a member of that Church ; for it is not enough to have the chance, with good luck, of never drawing any conclusions that the Church may condemn, it is the whole conception of his *métier* that must be different in one who accepts this rule of conduct.

An historian may afford to be silent and not say what he sees ; he cannot afford to be blind and not see it. He can afford to keep his faith under difficulties, and believe that, in deeper faith and wider knowledge, contraries will be reconciled ; he cannot afford to say that no difficulties exist. He can, in all honesty, admit the limitations of the human intelligence, the insecurity of many scientific hypotheses, the possibility, indeed the certainty, of much readjustment and change in all branches of knowledge, but he cannot refuse to assent to what is probable as being probable, any more than he can refuse his assent to what is evident as being evident. Hence, in the principle of subordination here set forth, we have an *impasse* between science and the authority of the Church ; an *impasse* which, as Catholics, we had always been taught could not exist.

As M. Loisy remarks :

The question is always as to the rights of criticism ; rights that the Church contests in regard to the Bible, rights that the critic, having acquired them, will never renounce.[1]

While the Church thus limited the independence of science, she asserted the strict scientific and intellectual character of dogma, and allowed of no relative, or moral, or spiritual, or symbolic conception of its value. From this followed a condemnation of any theory of vital evolution ; a condemna-

[1] *Simples Réflexions*, p. 33.

tion which, in the mind of most students of the two documents, affected the teaching of Newman as well as that of more recent apologists. Thus the *Pascendi* cites, amongst modernist errors, the theory that :

The progress of dogma is due chiefly to the obstacles which faith has to surmount, to the enemies it has to vanquish, the contradictions it has to repel. Add to this a perpetual striving to penetrate ever more profoundly its own mysteries.

Along with the doctrine of evolution is condemned the notion of the whole body of the faithful having an active share in the life and growth of the Church. As it is said in the *Pascendi* :

Note here, Venerable Brethren, the appearance already of that most pernicious doctrine which would make of the laity a factor of progress in the Church.

So, too, any form of apology that would begin its work with the individual conscience, that would open the way to God by showing the soul its own need of Him, is brushed aside :

They endeavour, in fact, to persuade the non-believer that down in the very depths of his nature and his life lie the need and the desire for religion, and this not a religion of any kind, but the specific religion known as Catholicism, which, they say, is absolutely postulated *by the perfect development of life.*[1]

Indeed, the attempt to convert the mind through the heart is a pernicious method, for *everything that*

[1] *Pascendi.*

leads the heart captive proves a hindrance instead of a help to the discovery of truth.

One inconvenience of modernist doctrine, in the official view, is that it suggests the possibility of true spiritual experiences *being met with in every religion. . . . With what right can modernists claim true experiences for Catholics alone? Indeed, they do not deny, but actually admit, some confusedly, others in the most open manner, that all religions are true.*

. . . . . .

In the conflict between different religions, the most that the modernists can maintain is that the Catholic has more truth because it is more living, and that it deserves with more reason the name of Christian because it corresponds more fully with the origins of Christianity.[1]

The last of the detailed charges brought against the modernist is his desire for certain reforms in the Church. Those reforms are thus summarised in the *Pascendi*:

Their general directions for the Church may be put in this way: Since the end of the Church is entirely spiritual, the religious authority should strip itself of all that external pomp which adorns it in the eyes of the public. And here they forget that while religion is essentially for the soul, it is not exclusively for the soul, and that the honour paid to authority is reflected back to Jesus Christ who instituted it.

At the conclusion of his *Simples Réflexions* on these two documents, M. Loisy thus expresses himself:

[1] *Pascendi.*

The Pope says truly that he could not keep silence without betraying the deposit of traditional doctrine. At the point at which things have arrived his silence would have been an immense concession, the implicit recognition of the fundamental principle of modernism ; i.e. *the possibility, the necessity, the legitimacy of evolution in the manner of understanding ecclesiastical dogmas, the papal infallibility and authority included as well as the conditions of their exercise. Now the respective positions have been fixed ; the Roman Church, supported by the notion of an absolute revelation, which gives divine authority to her constitution, her belief, and her practices, refuses any concession to the modern spirit, to modern science and to modern society, which, on their side, cannot recognise the absolute character of this revelation, nor the absolutism of ecclesiastical infallibility and authority. The divorce is complete. Science had already realised it for herself, and society tended more and more to the same attitude. The Church has now proclaimed it officially by the voice of her Chief.*

For the moment it is impossible to see when and how the thought and society of our days may become reconciled with the faith and constitution of Catholicism. Nor is it the time to examine their reciprocal wrongs —which are not all on the same side—and which have brought about the separation which the supreme Pontiff has now definitely sanctioned. Time is a great master, without whom no truth bears fruit in this world. But it is not to those who have their

backs turned to one another that a treaty can profitably be suggested.

These are sad words, though not wholly devoid of hope. They were the words of one who had ended his task as a Catholic apologist and was about to dedicate the rest of his life to purely scientific labours.

More passionate and tense was the protest that came from another quarter. It was to the cause of religion and of Catholicism that George Tyrrell had consecrated his life; the Catholic Church had been, to him, the great bulwark against infidelity, and his anger was in proportion to his early hopes. Nor did he regard the action of the Holy See as so inevitable as it was in the eyes of M. Loisy. In two letters to the *Times*, of 30th September and 1st October 1907, he set forth his reply, and as the Encyclical had stated that the enemies of the Church, against whom it was directed, were her own children, so he declared that they were her own rulers.

He remarks, at the beginning of his second letter, that his words are the utterances of one *who feels no particular pride in claiming to know the scholastic system inside as well as out; who has passed his* ad gradum *in scholastic divinity; and who once suffered a good deal of harrassing for what was considered his excessive zeal for the Thomistic revival of Leo XIII., and received in consequence the condolence and moral support of Cardinal Mazzella, of Father Billot, S.J.—then, as now, the light of the Roman College—and of*

many other coryphæi of militant neo-scholasticism; of one, finally, who only abandoned the system because he found in it principles that carried it beyond itself to something wider and better. Anyhow, the Encyclical is there for every one to read and study.

In his first letter he thus summarises the character, spirit, and contents of the *Pascendi*:

With a touch of not the fairest special pleading, the root-principle of this 'compendium of all heresies' is called 'agnosticism' and even 'atheism,' which latter term is rarely, if at all, qualified by the prefix 'scientific' that would rob it of its sting. This so-called 'agnosticism' by no means denies that the divine and the real are knowable; but merely that they can be known by the scientific faculty, the Verstand *of Kant, the* ratio *and* intellectus *of the schoolmen, as distinct from the reason and higher spiritual powers. Modernists deny that mere science can get beyond the phenomenal or attain to the essence and substance of reality. . . . They pretend to reach God by higher modes of cognition; but, since there are none such in the philosophy of the school, it is plain that modernists are, because they ought to be, agnostics and atheists.*

. . . . . .

Let us now glance briefly at some of the positions asserted or denied by the Encyclical. It condemns the doctrine that religion originates in man's soul, or otherwise than from outside, i.e. *through the deductions of the intellect from natural or 'supernatural' phenomena; that it derives from 'a certain movement of*

the heart' or from a sense of God, immanent in the soul, such as mystics and mystical philosophers talk of; that beyond the bounds of outward and inward experience accessible to science and history there is a Reality 'unknowable' for science, but given to the higher consciousness 'prior to any judgment of the mind, and appealing to a certain sense.' This inward sense of God, this 'life of religion,' is for modernists a faculty which it is the purpose of religion and revelation to cultivate. This is described as 'philosophical raving,' for it implies that God can be reached otherwise than through the argument from causality applied to natural and supernatural phenomena. The notion that God reveals himself in and through such subjective experiences, and even in the voice of conscience, is called 'most absurd'; for St. Augustine's doctrine that all Divine impulses, in the present order, are 'supernatural,' and are elevated to the dignity of graces, is ignored. To admit it would favour the modernist heresy which views 'the religious conscience as a universal law, on a par with revelation, to whom all, even the head of the Church, should be subject, whether in matters of doctrine or discipline'; and which, as Newman says, drinks first to conscience and then to the Pope. We may not hold that religious systems and revelations 'are mere explanations of man's religious sense.' Nor, again, that faith, co-apprehending certain phenomenal facts and personalities along with and under their Divine significance (which is its proper object), idealises and rearranges the

said phenomena so as to bring out their significance still more ; and that, thus transformed, they are outside the competence of science, which needs to discriminate between their idealised and their original form. Thus, it is not that faith first sees the divinity of Christ and then unconsciously rearranges the Gospel-history to bring out this truth ; but that reason starts from the miracles of the Gospel-history and so argues to the divinity of Christ. The notion that Christ's religion or revelation was the expression of His own inward experience of 'a process of immanent life,' and was not derived from some almost locally external source, is curiously anathematised as 'stupendous and sacrilegious audacity.' Apparently, what is in man is necessarily of men, and therefore God cannot be in man as co-factor of his spiritual life. If so, the usual doctrine of grace is dangerously near to 'modernism.' The doctrine that dogmas, primary or secondary (as Newman classes them), in which the mind formulates the Divine objective of religious experience, are 'inadequate notions thereof' ; that they 'do not contain absolute truth' ; that, as such, they may vary and develop — all this theory, based on St. Thomas's doctrine of analogy, must go overboard as a 'vast mountain of sophistries, destructive of all religion.'

That religious formulas 'should be vital, and should live with the life of the religious sense,' that they should follow and not lead in the process of spiritual development, is mere insanity. In believing in a certain 'intuition of the heart,' in 'a sort of experience higher

than any rational experience,' modernists 'only differ from rationalists in order to agree with Protestants and pseudo-mystics.' One cannot help wondering where St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa, and a host of canonised contemplatives differ from pseudo-mystics. Yet to pretend to get at God except through the argument from causality is 'to pave the way to atheism.' With their symbolism and their inner experience, modernists have no right to deny truth to any religion, even to Paganism. 'For how can they deny the religious experiences which a Turk might claim, or show that true experiences are the monopoly of Catholics? Indeed, they do not deny it, but more or less openly claim truth for every religion,' 'and can only contend that Catholicism is more true because more vital.' The heaviest adjectives and adverbs are brought to bear on such suppositions; as also on the theory that spiritual fruitfulness can, under certain conditions, be a test of doctrinal truth; or that way, truth, and life are one and the same in the spiritual order.

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Coming to theology proper, the opinion that religious formula is 'inadequate,' that it 'at once reveals and conceals a truth which it strives to compass but never succeeds in compassing' is repudiated as 'manifestly the greatest of errors.' The Church and the Sacraments were immediately instituted by Christ visible on earth, and not merely by Christ abiding invisibly in the Christian community. The extremest Augustinian form of Biblical inspiration is reaffirmed. God

is the author, nay, the director, of the sacred Scriptures, in which there can therefore be no scientific or historical errors; and to say that He accommodated His scientific utterances to the ideas and ignorance of His hearers is 'to attribute convenient and serviceable lying to God himself'—a notion peculiarly shocking to the scholastic mind, with its fastidious sense of veracity. Then we are told that 'Church authority comes into the Church from God outside,' and not immediately from the Holy Spirit immanent in the Church, or from the 'collective religious conscience' to which the whole Church should be subject, as to God, and which 'it is tyranny for its rulers to spurn.' 'Not content with separating Church from State, modernists, though they do not say so, must, from their principles, think that, as the phenomenal aspect of faith is subject to science, so the Church on its temporal side is subject to the State.' The alternative, that both should be subject to something higher than either, is not faced. The individual mind of the Pope, not the collective mind of the Church, is, of course, the sole immediate subject of Divine guidance and the ultimate source of dogmatic authority. There is no need of 'finding some middle way of reconciling the full rights of liberty and authority.' It is untrue that 'the end of ecclesiastical power is simply the good of souls, and that therefore external pomp should be abolished. Religion looks to souls, but not only to souls; and the honour paid to authority redounds to the honour of Christ.' Is this Pius X. who speaks, or some purple 'dignitary'? All vital,

as opposed to merely mechanical, evolution of dogmas, Christology, Papacy, sacraments, cultus, and Scriptures, is roundly denied. Laymen do not, by their learning, modify the collective mind of the Church, and so help (as Newman supposed) in the imaginary 'development' of dogma; nor do they understand their own intellectual exigencies better than the Pope does —pretensions that are deluged at great length with satire and ridicule, strangely out of place in a Papal Encyclical. The taunt of 'apriorism' is turned back against the historical critics, who are not, as they pretend, forced to the evolution hypothesis by the pressure of evidence; but wantonly start with the hypothesis and then invent or doctor the evidence. The sacred books were all written by the traditional authors. The Pentateuch and the Synoptics did not gradually grow to their present form. The arguments of later Biblical writers, drawn from the Prophets and earlier writers, are always objectively valid, and do not rest on false readings and mistranslations. The ancient doctors of the Church excelled the modern Biblical critics in genius, learning, and sanctity, and approached the Scriptures in a believing, not in an atheistical, spirit.

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The need of reform in seminary studies; of hindering the multiplication of new devotions; of giving to laity and priests a share in Church management; of decentralisation; of reforming the Index and other Roman Congregations; of insisting more on 'active' than on 'passive' virtues, or more simplicity and

poverty on the part of ecclesiastics; of abolishing or modifying enforced clerical celibacy; of criticising legends and relics—all this is ruthlessly condemned. For the supposition of such reforming tendencies is that the Church can and ought to develop; that the institutions, teachings and principles of the apostolic age were not final and sufficient for all time; that more is needed than an 'instauratio omnium'—*a going back to the old lines.*

One more protest of importance came from an Italian group, and was entitled the *Programma dei Modernisti*.[1] It was scientific and philosophical in character; it dealt ably with various misunderstandings and misrepresentations in the ecclesiastical documents, above all with the charge of modernism being a system invented to support certain philosophical presuppositions; it also set forth the irresistible facts with which the movement had had to deal in its new apologetic.

This is not a detailed history of modernism, therefore many subsequent events will need no mention. It may be said in brief that the blow, to all appearances, went home. Condemnation followed condemnation on the part of rulers, while submission followed submission or rebellion succeeded to rebellion on the part of subjects. The action of the Pope was a good deal applauded in certain anti-Catholic or atheistic quarters, as well as by a section

[1] *The Programme of Modernism*, published by Messrs. Fisher Unwin, with a preface by the Rev. A. L. Lilley.

of the Church itself; while many outsiders asked why these modernist maniacs tried to combine elements that were fatally antagonistic. The policy of the *Pascendi* was crowned by the imposition of the celebrated anti-modernist oath,[1] which all priests with the care of souls are now forced to pronounce, save in places where the civil authority has raised formidable objections. The general verdict has been that Rome triumphed and modernism succumbed. This is the question which will occupy the remaining chapters of this work. But there is first one other subject, of vital moment, to be considered.

[1] See later chapter and Appendix VI.

CHAPTER VII

MODERNISM AND AUTHORITY

IN that article on 'The Meaning of Modernism,'[1] to which we have already referred, Dr. Inge having said, in one place, that 'the exigencies of despotic government supply the key to the *whole*[2] policy and history of the Papacy,' adds, later on, that 'Rome has finished her life,' and that the modernist question possesses vital importance only for those who are Christians, but not Roman Catholics.

If I return to this aspect of the question it is, this time, from another point of view, in order to see how far the conception of authority, that has prevailed in the Roman Catholic Church, renders the modernist attitude illogical, inconsistent, or even dishonest.

Shortly after the appearance of the Encyclical *Pascendi* a Catholic prelate wrote a justification of it in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine*,[3] and therein treated, in particular, of the question of 'spiritual

[1] *Quarterly Magazine*, April 1909.

[2] The italics are mine, M. D. P.

[3] December 1907. The article is that one by Mgr. Moyes to which reference has already been made.

democracy,' pleading that the opposition of the Church to the principles of democracy, as applied to her own constitution, and directed to the admission of the general body of the faithful to any active share in her teaching and government, in no sense implied her aversion for democratic forms of government in purely political matters. He maintained that there was an irreducible difference between the two things, a difference begotten, in the first place, of the diversity of object and end with which spiritual and temporal governments were concerned; and, in the second place, of the widely different sources from which they emanated.

To the Catholic Church, he wrote, *the founding and the commissioning of the Church was the personal work of Christ, who not only laid her foundations in the Apostles and charged her to teach the nations, but sent down upon her His Holy Spirit for the purpose. Her powers are thus derived from Christ and His Apostles, and her constitution in the matter of teaching, ministry, and government, is necessarily Christocratic and Apostolic, and the theory of her being a spiritual democracy, or a fold in which the sheep ultimately commission, teach, and control the shepherds, would be to her a complete perversion and inversion of the divine order.*

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In civil government the end to be attained, the temporal welfare of society, is one within the lines of the natural order, and therefore quite within the rational

reach and competence of men themselves to attain it. Nothing is more natural than that in such a sphere the powers of government should be given by God in their natural endowment to the people, and through them to their rulers, and every citizen may be said to carry in his brain and in his right arm his eligibility, if not his claim, to the suffrage. But in the spiritual domain, by the very nature of things, the position is reversed. The end to be attained—the soul's salvation —is supernatural and beyond the reach of our natural capacity, since Christ alone can effect it. In the society established for the purpose it was just as logical that the constituent and controlling powers should come downwards from Christ and His Apostles to its rulers for the people, as it was that in the State they should come upwards from the people to the rulers.

The doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings is here abandoned in deference to modern ideas, and Catholics may hold what view they please as to the source of civil government, provided they eschew any democratic conception of ecclesiastical authority. Yet St. Paul taught that 'all power is from God,' that all governors are the 'ministers of God,' and did not suggest the difference here taken for granted. And if it be true, as it surely is, that a certain interpretation of the Divine Right of rulers is as compatible with a republican as with a monarchical form of government, is not this by reason of the distinction which has to be made between authority, spiritually conceived, as representative of God's Will

and Good, and hence of the general will and good, and authority formally conceived, as the king or assembly, in which external power is vested and by which it is exercised? Yet the same distinction has to be made, with quite as much force, in regard to ecclesiastical as to civil authority; in both cases it possesses an official and accidental as well as a spiritual and essential character. Putting aside all critical and historical difficulties as to the foundation of the Church, and the Gospel origin of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, this unqualified assertion of the Divine character of ecclesiastical government contains its own inconsistencies. Father Tyrrell, who was properly the theologian of Catholic modernism, had pointed out this fallacy long before the article in question was written:

It may be well, just here, he writes, *to remember what that official theory is. Christ and His Apostles are held to have delivered the complete* Depositum fidei (i.e. *the dogmas, sacraments, and other essential institutions of Catholicism as now existing*) *to St. Linus and the episcopate united with him; who in turn have transmitted it infallibly to their successors, without substantial increment but only more fully 'explicated,' illustrated, systematised. As Christ stood outside, over and above His disciples (as a shepherd over his flock, who is not himself part of the flock), and as they were purely passive and receptive of His teaching and guidance, so it is maintained that the teaching Church (the Pope and episcopate) is related to the*

Church taught. It is not the whole *Church which is the adequate* Christi Vicarius *and* Pastor ovium, *but only a part of it. The organ of the spirit is not the collective mind of both sections, which is gathered up, formulated and imposed by the episcopate; for this would be to make the episcopate only the organic head or principal member of the Church; it would be to make the whole Church, and not only the episcopate, the 'principium* quod' (e.g. *I, who think, am the 'principium* quod' *of my thinking; my mind, which thinks, is the 'principium* quo' *of my thinking*) *of ecclesiastical teaching, and the episcopate merely the 'principium* quo'; *it would be to allow that the religious thought of the laity had an independent value as something more than a mere reflex and record of episcopal teaching; it would be to conceive the Church as being fundamentally (with a sort of logical priority), though not formally, a democracy—much as Suarez holds all forms of civil polity, however originating, to be democratic in their juridical root. So far historical criticism points to the conclusion that ecclesiastical polity has* de facto *developed from a loose federation of loosely organised communities, of a strongly democratic type, into the present highly centralised ecclesiastical empire, in which all the teaching power has been vested in the Pope, and practically taken away from the episcopate and the Ecumenical Council. No other development was perhaps logically possible as soon as the bishop came to be regarded as teaching like a prophet or apostle, from his own mind, in virtue of*

a supernatural charisma, and not merely as gathering up, formulating and, in virtue of his official authority, imposing on individuals the divinely guided mind of the whole community. The somewhat analogous relation of the Pope to the universal community of bishops was bound to be interpreted in the same way ; and from being merely the divinely appointed and assisted principium quo *of their collective authority, whose function was to gather up, formulate and impose on individuals the mind of the collective episcopate, and therefore of the whole clergy and laity, he became a sort of apostle or prophet, an external head in regard to whose functions the Church is not co-operative (as is a body with its organic head, the two making but one* principium quod), *but passive and receptive. True, he does not claim to be, like prophet or apostle, a fount of new revelation ; but he does claim to hold and declare that* depositum fidei *whose adequate receptacle was formerly thought to be only the collective mind of the episcopate, if not of the whole clergy and laity.* L'Église c'est moi *expresses the whole tendency of this development, and exaggerates the achievements rather than the aspirations of the Vatican Council. To-day, therefore, Catholics are to look to Rome, not because Rome thinks what the* Orbis Terrarum *thinks, and feels the pulse of the world, but because the* Orbis Terrarum *must shape its thought to the local thought of Rome, and because the brain of the Church is not considered to be diffused over the five continents, but to be concentrated in the Vatican.*

In practical working, however, it is not the Pope personally who governs Catholic thought and opinion, but the various congregations and commissions whom he 'consults' and whose decisions he may adopt or reject.

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According to 'officialism' Christ instituted the Church so as to secure for future ages and all nations the same privileges in the way of doctrinal guidance enjoyed by His first disciples. They quote: 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world,' and 'As the Father hath sent me, so I send you,' etc.

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We must first notice that the officials themselves are forced to admit that these texts prove too much, and have to grant a qualification which robs them of all their prima facie *force. For they were addressed to men inspired to reveal new doctrines, and the power which they received was Christ's own wonder-working power. Now these powers of revelation and wonder-working are not claimed for the Pope and the episcopate even by the extremest 'official' theologians.*

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If, then, the Pope to-day were to arrogate to himself absolutely all that was said to St. Peter and the Apostles he should consistently arrogate inspiration and wonder-working. We should have a right to ask him—What sign showest thou? Can you heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead? We should have a right to demand apostolic sanctity in his life.

It is then only in some remote, ambiguous, secondary sense that such words can be referred to the Pope or the Church of to-day. So applied, they are more misleading than enlightening.[1]

If this be a just estimate of ecclesiastical authority, then there is a Divine Right of Popes as truly as there is a Divine Right of Kings; as truly, but not more truly. There is a Divine Right of ecclesiastical government as truly as there is a Divine Right of republican government; as truly, but not more truly.

But Monsignor Moyes has told us that it is not only by reason of its divine source and sanction that the government of the Church can admit of no democratic element, but also because of the end for which it exists, which is beyond the natural powers of man to attain. Anybody is eligible for a vote in the political order, because every one knows what he wants and can use means to obtain it; but no one, save by the merits of Christ, can work the salvation of his own soul.

There is a curious confusion of ideas on this point. It is not as being himself God that the Pope can help us to save our souls, but only just in so far as he is the representative of God. It is, absolutely, more within our power to save our soul than to save our life or property, for no outside force can hinder us from doing the first, while superior strength can hinder us from doing the second. In so far as

[1] *The Church and the Future*, pp. 29-31, 50-53.

spiritual salvation is beyond our natural powers, it is because a divine end can only be obtained by divine help ; yet the Church, in her official character, is but a means for the imparting of that divine help. We absolutely need God's assistance in the work of salvation ; we only relatively need that of the Church.

Again, it is not because men are in need of authority that they have no right to influence it, but rather just the contrary. In proportion to the width and depth of our human sympathies do we desire association with our fellow-beings, which entails some form of social *consensus* or authority ; in proportion to the width and depth of our religious sympathies do we need association with those who are religious, and consequently some form of religious authority.

The more we consider this question the more it would appear as though it had been the fundamental one in the whole recent controversy ; that it was, indeed, that conception of Church authority, which was criticised by Father Tyrrell and supported by Mgr. Moyes, which checked the modernist efforts to meet new difficulties by a more living apologetic ; which guided the pens of those who wrote the *Pascendi* and inspired its measures of repression.

And yet it must not be supposed that this problem is only a Church problem ; it is, in some sense, an universal one ; though precisely by reason of the highly organised constitution of the Catholic

Church it becomes, therein, more acute. It would, perhaps, be more profitable to society at large, and to other Christian Churches, to recognise this fact, and study the question of authority as it works itself out for good and for evil in the Roman Church, than to put the subject aside as though it were her own peculiar difficulty derived from her own absolutist form of government. It is far too cheaply and readily assumed that the evils of authority are remedied by changing its seat. The problem exists in one form at St. Petersburg, and in another form at New York; it exists in one form in a monarchy, and in another form in a Trades Union. And so, too, it exists in one form in the Roman Church, and in another form in any kind of Church whatsoever.

Yet in the Roman Church, in despite of all that its official world may declare, it does most assuredly exist; it is the root problem of the whole modernist controversy; and it is a problem which the governing element cannot solve, because it is the rights of the governing element that are in question.

We have only to recognise the full force of this problem, and its influence in late events, to perceive the inconsistency of that charge of unreason and insincerity which has been levelled against modernism.

'If the modernist does not want to obey,' say 'orthodox' Catholics, certain Protestants, and most unbelievers, 'why does he not leave the Church?'

The answer is that he does want to obey, but in

the right, and not in the wrong, way. He not only accepts the principle of authority, but knows and declares his need of it. He wants neither to be the Pope, nor to remove, nor, as many orthodox theologians do, to make use of the Pope. He wants to obey the Pope, but to obey him in just measure; to render him a reasonable and spiritual service. The Pope is, to him, a means and not an end; God could rule His Church in some other way, but whether He will ever do so is a question not vital to the problem. Meanwhile the Pope is there, and it is not his person or his office that constitutes the difficulty, but the idolatry which is offered to the first and the abuse which is made of the second. To over-estimate the dignity of his person is to lower the dignity of the Church; to exaggerate the rights of his office is to weaken the principle of authority itself.

Now even in our own lives, and day by day, the growth of this twofold abuse has been perceptible. The authority of the Pope has been strained to the point of destroying its own sanction, for subordinate authority has been set at naught in its interest, which means that the element of self-will has been allowed to prevail in high places, and we know that self-will is destructive of authority. The examples are many and to hand; the action of the Holy See in France at the time of the separation was one of the most marked instances, but the daily and growing pressure of the hand of Rome on the

Catholic world, through her close regulation of episcopal action, is a fact of which the bishops themselves could give abundant testimony if they would.[1]

The result has been what Father Tyrrell pointed out in some celebrated letters to an English Catholic paper. He there described the Church as a train, of which :

All the motive power, so far as the doctrinal movement of the Church is concerned, resides in the Pope. It is only as united with him that the bishops can be roughly compared to the carriages of a train in which the faithful are borne along to their destination.[2]

Some years later he wrote, yet more uncompromisingly, in 'Medievalism' :

If there is still an episcopate, it is not the fault of the Curialists, or their new theology.

. . . . . .

Why must I trouble about the bishops at all, if I must first find out whether they agree with the Pope? Is it not as though a Protestant were to say that his supreme rule of faith was the episcopate so far as in agreement with the Bible? Do you not see that this is equivalent to saying that the Bible, and the Bible only, is his rule of faith? Do you not see that your own expression[3] *means that the Pope, and the Pope*

[1] See Appendix II.

[2] *Weekly Register*, 24th May 1901. See *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, vol. ii. chap. vii.

[3] This book is addressed throughout to Cardinal Mercier, and refers to the words the latter had employed in his Lenten Pastoral of 1908 against Modernism.

only, is the rule of Faith? that we must sit in judgment on our bishops and test their orthodoxy by this rule?

But the new theology drags the bishops into the formula to conceal the fact that the whole constitution of the Church has been turned upside down by this new-fashioned individualistic interpretation of the papacy.

Your bishops are simply on parade at a papal ceremony. You may call *them 'co-judges' and 'co-definers'; but they are not. . . . If they teach by transmitting what they learn from the Pope, so does every simple priest and every lay catechist. Let us not pay ourselves with words. The episcopate singly and collectively has passed over to the* Ecclesia discens *and the Pope alone is the* Ecclesia docens. *'La tradizione son io.'*[1]

Yet once more it must be noted that it is not the Papal Office itself which is at fault, but the interpretation that has grown up of its meaning and prerogatives. Time and again there has been a disposition, even in the outside world, to look to the papacy as a power that might be of value to the cause of humanity at large; and this surely because, in its ideal conception, it should represent authority in its purest and most disinterested form. The Pope is the only monarch who has *called* himself the *Servus servorum Dei*; and if the office has not been true to the name, that is because the office has not been true to itself.

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

In his letter on the foundation of the Church, M. Loisy writes :

I said (in 'L'Évangile et l'Église') *that Christ did not found a hierarchy of domination but a hierarchy of devotion and service. It never occurred to me that this assertion could startle some minds. Remembering what Jesus was during His ministry, and that He said He had come not to be served but to serve; giving credence to the title 'servant of the servants of God,' which the Roman Pontiff has retained; knowing the nature of every kind of actual human society that is conscious of the rights of humanity; I forgot the ingenious theory according to which Christ chose a cross for Himself and reserved a throne for His vicar.*[1]

But why, it may be asked, is it that the growing claims of official authority have been thus unchecked in their development in the Catholic Church, while in all other forms of society they have been opposed by the counter-claims of the people ?

Some will again reply that it is because absolutism is ingrained in the Roman Church, which would die of a moderate interpretation of her authority. But there is another answer, based on that view of her constitution which we have already suggested. It is because of her immense variety of levels, and the complexity of life which she includes, that the evil can grow, for a long time, without absolutely demanding a remedy. In the Anglican Church the level is more even and sustained than in the Roman

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, p. 178.

Church; in political society the wants are more plain and defined; in the Roman Catholic Church we have mankind in every stage of development, and their requirements are proportionately different. The savage needs liberty, but not in the same form as civilised humanity needs it; the ignorant need light, but not in the same way as the educated; the weak have rights, but cannot exercise them as do the strong. And so, in reverse order, the civilised, the educated, the strong, need authority, but in a more enlightened form than their simpler brethren.

It has been too often the mistake of reformers to insist on giving to everybody what they want themselves. Liberty and independence consist in the free use of one's own limbs and not in measuring one's strides by those of the tallest man.

As I have said elsewhere:

There is an obedience inspired by genuine love of the ideal; by the desire for self-donation in a cause higher than that of individual self-interest . . . and no criticism of authority will be solid and useful that fails to take count of this tendency to obey—this two-fold tendency—one springing from the natural sloth and dependence of many characters; the other from an ideal of self-devotion.[1]

If authority seek its own ends, and not the good of those for whom it exists, it does wrong. Yet those who obey may not always be the worse for

[1] See *Hibbert Journal*, January 1914.

doing so. To them that authority may stand for a wider life than they could attain without it. Hence the submission, and even, in some cases, the puzzled and doubting submission which has been rendered by the mass of the faithful to the decrees which we considered in the last chapter, need no more imply that authority was right than that they are wrong. In so far as those decrees were directed against facts or truths, however certain, with which they had no acquaintance, the act of authority could be accepted without intellectual or spiritual loss. Even had they enough knowledge to cause them some anxiety of mind, they might still feel, in all sincerity, more sure of the Church, which, for them, is also the official Church, than of anything else. They have not to bear the burden of a resistance for which they are not fitted.

This consideration is at once comforting and saddening. For if it is good for the people that they should not suffer from the mistakes of authority, it is bad for the whole body that the unquestioning loyalty and obedience of the simple should serve a false end; that they should be led to reject truth, believing it to be a lie; still more that they should be ordered to condemn those whom their best instincts tell them to venerate.

Worse still is it if this obedience be exploited from motives of worldliness; if it be not only the mistakes of authority which the ignorant are serving, but also its ambition. Yet this is sometimes

the price that they, in all innocence and unconsciousness, pay for their peace of mind.

Hence it may be said that there is, in every form of society, a class for whom the problem of the limits of authority is non-existent. Yet there is also, in every form of society, a class for whom it does exist; and there are times of crisis in which it makes itself specially felt. And in every case the same question arises: when, if ever, may the members of any society resist the authority that is duly constituted over that society? The answer surely is: whensoever the said authority is seen to be false to its own principles, so that obedience would defeat the end for which the society exists.

If I must here again quote my own words, it is because I cannot well say differently what I have recently said. The object of religious obedience *is to unite us with one another, and to unite us all, individually and collectively, with the Divine Will. Hence its aim is the destruction of self-seeking and self-interest, and the absorption of our narrower life into a wider and more universal one. In so far, then, as we follow this aim purely and disinterestedly, we shall know when authority is fulfilling its duty in our regard, and when, on the contrary, it is guiding us to a false issue. That it should demand the sacrifice of our private interest is of the very reason for its existence; that it should demand the sacrifice of our universal interests is to contradict every motive for obedience.*[1]

[1] See *Hibbert Journal*, January 1914.

As M. Loisy has said :

Jesus served His apostles ; the apostles and their successors should be the servants of the faithful. Thanks to the Gospel, modern nations begin to understand that the only raison d'être *of authority, in human society, is the good of the collectivity, that is to say, of all those who form part of the society. The government is for the service of the governed. A nation does not exist for the good of its government, but the government exists for the good of the nation. It would be strange if the Church, through whom this truth has penetrated the world, should deny it in her own case, and claim for her hierarchy a right that is other than a duty or a service to the community. Is it not the needs of the latter that have justified the development of the former? And are not those needs the supreme law of any further evolution of ecclesiastical power?*

. . . . . .

Some minds, endeavouring to penetrate the secrets of the future, are asking themselves if the Catholic Church, having expanded the principle of authority to its extreme limits, will not soon become less political and more Christian in character, and, while keeping its unity and its constitution, follow the general line of progress of civilised humanity.[1]

These words were written before the appearance of the Encyclical *Pascendi*, which was so direct a move in the opposite direction. Yet it was never

[1] *Autour d'un petit livre*, pp. 179-181.

to be expected of authority that it would fix its own limits, nor, indeed, would such limitation serve great purpose, since what authority could loosen, authority could likewise bind again.

Which of the judgments was infallible?
Which of my predecessors spoke for God?
And what availed Formosus that this cursed,
That blessed, and then this other cursed again? [1]

If the problem of authority had come forward, on its own merits, before the modernist movement arose, the history of that movement might have been a different one. The problems of science were not those of history, and the problems of philosophy were not those of either, but the problem of the rights and limits of authority was the problem of all of them, for it was in virtue of the prevailing conception of ecclesiastical government that the Catholic historian, critic, and philosopher, were silenced and repressed.

And yet the authority which adopted such vigorous measures for the suppression of its own subjects was not inexorably closed to the pressure of outside influences. Thus Germany obtained certain exemptions in regard to the enforcement of the 'Anti-Modernist Oath,' and in a letter addressed to Cardinal Fischer, Archbishop of Cologne, the Pope says:

In our conversations with you, my dear brother, we

[1] *The Ring and the Book*—the Pope.

tolerated an exception, and admitted that priests teaching in the faculties of theology were not to be obliged to take the oath.[1]

Yet this same oath was regarded elsewhere as an absolutely essential pledge of orthodoxy, and forced on the rest of the Church in spite of any conscientious difficulties.

Two other German protests, supported by political, not religious, arguments, met with like respect, first on the occasion of the Borromean Encyclical *Editæ*, 26th May 1910, which was offensive to Protestant feeling; and next on that of the *Motu proprio* of 9th November 1911,[2] restraining the right of the laity to summon clerics before civil tribunals.

In these instances it was manifest that authority could yield to certain forms of persuasion; though it was always persuasion from without, and not from within. Yet can the Catholic subject feel himself under a positive obligation to submit to a law from which others are dispensed in deference to the representations of a civil power not even professing the Catholic religion?

Again, when ecclesiastical authority claims obedience in the name of God, it should surely not attempt to enforce that obedience by the weapons of man. The days are, indeed, gone by in which it could invoke the aid of the sword in support of a religious

[1] Published in the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 16th January 1911.

[2] *Quantavis diligentia*, published in the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, 12th November 1911.

principle, yet it can and does, even now, employ other weapons as undivine, such as the Press or human forms of argumentation. A power that claims the right to condemn a newspaper has surely not also the right to subsidise, or sanction, or support another newspaper; and a power that, in virtue of more than human enlightenment, represses the results of human thought, must surely not justify its action by human argument. If 'the king can do no wrong,' it is because he renounces ordinary claims while asserting extraordinary prerogatives.

Yet the Vatican has had its newspaper organs, and the *Pascendi* defends its authoritative pronouncements by a series of arguments.

In his reply to the Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Mercier, George Tyrrell says, with some justice:

Your Eminence is aware of the recent censures declared against those who speak and write in favour of Modernism, or Modernists, or against the Encyclical Pascendi. *Is it quite generous to assail men by name who can defend themselves only by what you consider a rebellion against legitimate authority—to strike those who are bound hand and foot?* [1]

Revolutions are never planned beforehand, or they would, according to our limited human outlook, be planned with more method and less waste; the objects would be obtained without the loss of blood and strength that ordinarily takes place, and that seems actually to delay the end in view.

[1] *Medievalism*, p. 24.

Modernism was a kind of revolution, and it, too, was not planned beforehand. Problems of science, history, theology and philosophy, pressed forward, singly and *en masse*; organisation was impossible; each force struggled for itself, and it would have been as impracticable to shape them all to one issue as to concentrate the force of an earthquake.

But had such organisation been possible; had it been feasible for the different sections of modernism to unite in the insistence on one point, which should be vital to all, that point would have been the character and limits of ecclesiastical authority. Historians were checked in one direction, philosophers in another, but it was, in each case, their ecclesiastical rulers that checked them. This was the question on which they could have united; not denying the essential need of some form of authority, but insisting on its limits.

The remedy, therefore, unless it come in some catastrophic and unforeseen manner, which is quite possible, can only be brought forth by the spiritual activity and life of the faithful. Nominal Catholicism is highly propitious to the continuance of ecclesiastical despotism; active and spiritual Catholicism must be its death. The *Pascendi*, and the decrees that have followed on it, stand for the principle of passivity in faith and religion; in proportion as religion becomes more living, with the life of mind, and will, and heart, the form of faith it inculcates must pass away.

As George Tyrrell pointed out:

The aim of the theological party is to persuade the uneducated and half-educated multitudes . . . that those who refuse the new-fangled dictatorial conception of the papacy, i.e. *of a privileged private judgment to which all must submit—have no alternative but absolute self-sufficiency.*

The alternative . . . is Catholicism, the subjection of the private and individual to the public and collective mind of the Church.[1]

[1] *Medievalism*, p. 38.

NOTE

The events related in this chapter are curiously significant in the light of later history. The struggle between two conflicting conceptions of authority is surely very similar to the contest between the political ideals of the Allies and those of Central Europe. The respect shown, by the Vatican, to German protests is not unlike symptoms that have manifested themselves during the war. Altogether, a certain sympathy is apparent between the representatives of absolute ecclesiastical authority and those of autocratic militarism.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FAILURE OF MODERNISM

SECTION 1

Defections

(a) *M. Loisy*

IN his review of George Tyrrell's posthumous work, 'Christianity at the Cross-Roads,' M. Loisy writes:

Between the Modernism of this book and that of 'L'Évangile et l'Église,' *there is all the distance that lies between ardent mysticism and the calm examination of a given belief, or institution, or position. . . . Both may rest in the graveyard of heresies.*[1]

And M. Loisy and Father Tyrrell were, perhaps, the two greatest modernists of a distinguished band.

As to his own life, which had been stretched and tortured and broken in the cause of modernism, M. Loisy thus relates the close of his career as a Catholic priest:

Why was it that, in November 1893, *the bishop protectors of the 'Institut Catholique,' the pope, Leo XIII.,*

[1] See *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses*, 15th July 1911.

and Cardinal Rampolla, did not say to me: 'you have the mind of a lay savant. *The Church gives you back your word. Go; she does not curse you, do not curse her.' How I should have blessed her! In* 1908 *too many sad years had gone by; my life had been taken, and not used; and then, too, the dismissal was not gracefully given. I am the less bound to gratitude.*

The sentence of excommunication was decreed by the Holy Office on March 7th, 1908, *and announced the same day* Urbi et Orbi. *To myself it was never notified; I read the news in the papers of March 8th. My first feeling, which is not yet dead, was one of immense relief. With great commotion, by way of reproach and condemnation, of ostracism, and, as far as possible, of extermination, yet in truth and deed, the Church was restoring to me the liberty that I unwisely handed over to her thirty years before. In spite of herself, but effectively, she gave me back to myself, and I was almost tempted to thank her.*

. . . . . .

I found but one fault in that liberating excommunication; it came twenty years too late. I was, indeed, only fifty-one years old, but many of my years could have counted for double. It was to end my days with my family that I had retired to Ceffonds. I expected nothing more of life, and excommunication could not restore hope. It only assured, or seemed to assure me, a tranquil end. My interior peace was complete. To recall the memory of such quiet of soul I had to go back

to the days of my first youth, when, without any preoccupation as to the future, without anxiety of mind or conscience, I helped my mother in the care of the poultry and garden. I returned to the country, and took up again the simple life and modest employments I had always loved. My resolution was to continue my studies on the New Testament, to comment the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of St. Paul, and to crown the series of my publications by a book on the founding of the Christian Church.

He recounts how he was then called to the chair of the History of Religions in the *Collège de France*, and how the duties of this office somewhat altered his plan of work ; but he resumes :

If it is given to me to complete my study of Sacrifice . . . it is very probable that I shall discuss anew the genesis of Christianity. . . . This work is not superfluous. The impartial and dispassionate study of the religious past of humanity is not without its use for the solution of the grave problems which are agitated in contemporary society. I shall employ in it the strength and time that remain to me, serving France in her old college, my safe refuge, my highest honour and my last love.[1]

Nothing could be more pathetically complete, and, to all appearance, irrevocable, than this farewell.

In the last paragraph, with its explanation of the motives for continuing the study of Christian origins, we are made finally aware that France has taken

[1] *Choses Passées*, pp. 365-379 *passim*.

the place of the Church, that the ideals of the professorship have supplanted those of the priesthood.[1]

M. Loisy's life is well known, apart from what he has told us. His worst enemies would not dare to affront the storms of indignation with which any aspersion of the purity and sincerity of that life would be met. In his most difficult moments he could never have been charged with a single incorrect or ignoble action. In his life as a *savant* he was sincere; in his life as a Catholic priest he was loyal. Were those years, of which he speaks with sorrowful regret, as wholly wasted as he deems them to have been?

What, after all, it may be asked, has been the gain to the Church in a life such as his? So far from learning what he tried to teach her, the result of his endeavours has been to harden her the more against a department of truth to which she was already hostile. Without him, she would perhaps not have pronounced herself so quickly, clearly and emphatically; she might have waited, she might have endured.

And if religion has gained nothing, has not science suffered loss from years partly wasted, during which a futile struggle diverted a keen mind from the exclusive pursuit of scientific truth?

These questions cannot, unfortunately, be answered with a downright negative; and M. Loisy's abandonment of the cause stands for one of the failures of modernism.

[1] See again *La Religion*, referred to in Preface.

Yet, on the other hand, if the cause for which he worked be not as wholly dead as he deems it, may it not be that the Church which rejected him will never forget the facts he brought before her? that if she struck him, indeed, as kings were wont to slay the messenger that brought unwelcome tidings, the truth of those tidings is ever before her?

And, from the point of view of human knowledge, has science also not been enriched by the work of one who has helped to give religion, apart from all other and more essential aspects under which it may be regarded, its place as an object of science, and has thus, perhaps, advanced the day when faith and knowledge shall burst their intervening barriers and blend?

There was a time when scientific detachment stood for indifference to all but external facts; and such detachment can hardly be exempt from some element of hostility to religious experience. But history has now widened and spiritualised its character; and seeks to follow the course of ideas as well as that of outward events. M. Loisy, as a Catholic critic, made faith an object of science just as he made science the study of faith. To the purely intellectualist believer this is to make science supreme and faith subordinate; for to him the understanding of the thing counts for more than the thing itself. But, according to the principles of a more spiritual philosophy, the object is the abiding element, whose meaning can never be exhausted,

because reality is inexhaustible; while criticism is judge, not of the thing itself, but of our knowledge and understanding of the thing, and of its manifestations in human history. There was room in the science of M. Loisy for the recognition of faith, and the articles of faith, as facts and objects, whose full meaning it did not pretend to fathom; whose existence it had no inclination to deny; but whose temporal origins and manifestations it had a right to investigate.

There was room in the faith of M. Loisy for the recognition of science as a light, which need not indeed penetrate to the depths of religious experience, but might nevertheless examine, record, and correct the human expression of that experience.

But if he could not, as a believer, deny the existence of the religious fact, neither could he, as a scholar, reject the historic estimation of that fact. He was condemned for attempting to unite his faith, as a Catholic, with his judgment as an historian; but the union had been made, and it was not he that failed, nor the position itself that proved untenable.

(b) *Tyrrell*

M. Loisy thus bade farewell to Modernism with, as we may hope, years of work before him; George Tyrrell was only parted from the cause by death. Though he was but forty-eight years old he evidently suspected, at the beginning of the year in

which he died, that his end was near ; and as if to give a last mark of fidelity to the cause of Catholicism, in the sense in which he had embraced it and worked for it, he added a clause to his last 'Will and Testament,' in which he said :

If I decline the ministrations of a Roman Catholic priest at my death-bed, it is solely because I wish to give no basis for the rumour that I made any sort of retractation of those Catholic principles which I have defended against the Vatican heresies. If no priest will bury me, let me be buried in perfect silence. If a stone is put over me let it state that I was a Catholic priest, and bear the usual emblematic chalice and host. January 1*st*, 1909.[1]

He had certainly known his moments of utter disheartenment, almost to the point of despair, yet he never unsaid or unwrote, nor, if we may venture to judge from his whole attitude, *unthought* those words with which he had closed his answer to Cardinal Mercier.

If the Roman Church still holds me, it is because, in spite of the narrow sectarian spirit that has so long oppressed her, she cannot deny her fundamental principles ; because, as a fact, she stands for the oldest and wisest body of corporate Christian experience ; for the closest approximation, so far attained, to the still far-distant ideal of a Catholic religion.[2]

In these words we have, at once, the statement

[1] See *Autobiography*, etc., vol. ii. p. 434.

[2] *Medievalism*, p. 185.

and the logical defence of his position. Not science, in any of its forms, but religion, had been the end and interest of his life. Yet religion, as he understood it, was for all the world, and not only for a section of it; a true religion must be the religion of mankind, must have place for all human truth and knowledge, for all human effort and achievement. A form of religion that could only maintain its status by professed ignorance of what the world was doing was not an universal religion. Thus not only on the grounds of scientific truth, but on the grounds of the right of all mankind to religious faith, he maintained the modernist position, a modernist being, for him, in the words we have already quoted:

A churchman, of any sort, who believes in the possibility of a synthesis between the essential truth of his religion and the essential truth of modernity.

Yet if Tyrrell held fast to the end, it was not from any illusion as to the actual success of the movement. He saw, as plainly as M. Loisy did, that in its action on the Church to which he belonged it was a failure.

What tyranny, he exclaimed, in the last lines that he ever wrote, *ever voted its own destruction or admitted a truth fatal to its interests. Will the Roman bureaucracy, that exploits even the Papacy, ever resign their revenues and their ascendency? Modernists do not believe it for a moment. Their whole hope is in the irresistible tide of truth and knowledge, which must at last surround and overmount the barriers of ignorance, buttressed up by untruthfulness; and, above all, in*

such inward and living Christianity as may still be left in a rapidly dying Church.[1]

And his last word is one of desperate hope, not in the situation, but in what the situation may bring forth; not in modernism itself, but in modernism as the transition to something else.

Are we not hastening, he says, *to an impasse—to one of those extremities that are God's opportunities* ?[2]

Modernism is the extremity, and the opportunity is of God and not of man. The conclusion was not foreign to that conception of revealed religion on which he had so continuously insisted, as of a Divine treasure which man could receive and hold, but not measure or estimate.

(c) *Other Farewells*

We might relate the story of a good many other defections, if it were our task to give a complete history of the failure of modernism in this respect. But for documents and details we may again refer those who desire further information to the work of Monsieur A. Houtin, and confine ourselves to type rather than detail.

Monsieur Houtin himself had quitted the ranks a good while sooner, in 1903, when two of his works were placed on the Index. He could abandon the cause with a certain facility, for his studies, he tells

[1] *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, p. 280.
[2] *Idem.*, p. 282.

us, were leading him slowly, but surely, 'to the assurance that a specially revealed religion does not exist and never has existed.' [1]

A defection to which the element of tragedy was lacking was that of Professor Salvatore Minocchi, a scholar and Biblical student, whose career as a modernist had been interspersed with reactionary intervals, and who quitted the Church in 1908, denouncing the honesty of those who remained in it.[2]

In the defection of Dom Romolo Murri, and, in France, of M. Pierre Dabry, we have types of the failure of modernism as a Catholic social movement.

Murri was one of those who had made the greatest efforts to combine the work of social reform with fidelity to the Church; but his endeavour was vain. He was excommunicated in 1909, on his election as deputy to the Italian Chamber. In four articles, published in the *Messagero* of 15th, 16th, 20th, and 21st April 1909, he set forth his position as politician and Catholic priest. In sum he declares himself Catholic, but anti-clerical, and appeals to Catholicism as a living, spiritual force, whose proper field of exercise is the living world and not the dead past.

M. Pierre Dabry left the Church on the occasion of the condemnation of the 'Sillon.'

In a letter to the *Paris Journal*, of 29th May 1910,

[1] *Histoire du Mod. Cath.*, p. 7. See also Appendix III.
[2] See Appendix IV.

he explained his motives, saying, amongst other things :

Everything in the Church is anti-democratic, its actual form, its methods, its habits, its attitude to the questions of the day ; its actual form, by which a society where all were at first brothers, and held their goods in common, has ended in the absorption of individuality, the crystallisation of all thought, all will, and all right in one person, that of the Pope, . . . its method, which is to impose everything authoritatively, and formally, . . . its habits, which are the effete heritage of a monarchical age, . . . its attitude to questions of the day . . . in which it never fails to adopt the most reactionary and retrograde position.

The Church, as it now is, has the appearance of a foreign element in contemporary society.

. . . . . .

I had identified the love which I bore the people with the love which I bore the Church. The people shall now have it all.

Section 2

Submissions

The ranks of modernism were thinned, not only by defections, but also by submissions, and of these there were many different types of various grades of respectability.

Some men submitted from motives of fear, or convenience. They cared enough for the cause to

go on as long as it demanded a reasonable amount of effort and trouble, but not enough to sacrifice the whole peace of their lives. Their conduct was not, perhaps, heroic, but if we had a right to expect and demand heroism we should have no reason to prize it as highly as we do when we meet with it. It is one of the demands we may justly make of ourselves and not of others.

Another class submitted from the nobler fear of conscience, a cowardice of which none need be ashamed. The conscientious motive in this *débâcle* is one which the world at large has failed to recognise, for the simple reason that the world at large does not quite understand the ordinary Catholic conscience. To such a conscience it appears that obedience is the first and the last duty; and it is conscience itself that dictates submission, though the submission is rendered to an external authority.

There will always be a large class of men, in every community, belonging to this category. They are not slaves, because it is a law they have freely and spiritually chosen. Yet they will submit, not indeed against, but notwithstanding, their own better judgment, because that judgment has, once for all, accepted the authority of the Church as the highest law of conduct.

To interfere with the good faith of souls such as these would be as unwarrantable as to endeavour to shake the confidence of a young child in its parents.

Another class submitted in deference to ties of

family or spiritual affection. There were sons who would not break their mothers' hearts; husbands who would not pain their wives; directors of souls who would not trouble the peace of their spiritual children.

In some cases this might imply a choice of the easier way, but not in all. Each man has his own sphere of duty, and it is not for an outsider to pronounce as to which duty is, in any particular case, paramount. 'Should So-and-so break his father's heart by writing in a certain modernist periodical?' was the question once asked of the present writer by the mother of a young modernist. Let those who will reply with an emphatic *Yes*; others of us will hold that the question has to be answered in the young man's own conscience, and that it is not their part to condemn him if his answer be the opposite.

Another class has submitted on motives of asceticism. The broken life, they think, will do more for the cause of God than resistance; 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church'; silence is more potent than speech; man can do nothing, God can do everything, and His ways are not our ways.

Others submitted because to hold out would have been to close every outlet of apostolic effort for ever. Their work for souls lay in the Church, and nowhere else, and, as they lived for that work, to abandon it would be to deprive life of end and purpose.

Or else they were inspired by the desire to avoid the 'scandalum pusillorum.' The common mind would misunderstand their resistance and suffer harm.

Others submitted because of the unclearness of the issue. To avow themselves modernists would have been to compromise themselves, not only for what they did believe, but also for much with which they were in positive disagreement. It was at least as truthful to say they were not modernists as to admit that they were.

Others submitted, at least to the extent of remaining silent, on a principle of tolerance and comprehension. Any pronouncement, either for or against, would be premature. Modernism was not a fixed position; the action of the Church was an element in the total process; the duty of the Catholic was to work silently, when he could, and to wait.

Others felt themselves spiritually unable to hold out. Whither should they go? Life without the sacraments would be a life of spiritual isolation in which they could not thrive. Their weakness justified their submission, nor was it a weakness so contemptible as some may think. The 'door-step policy' was one, as Father Tyrrell, who had experienced it, maintained, that was not lightly to be recommended. Too often it led to a total spiritual detachment and indifference.

A last motive for submission was that of despair, at least so far as the existing official element of the Roman Church could be considered. In the eyes of

some her government was incurably local in its outlook and egotistic in its character. They made up their minds that the cause was, for the time, ended.

I quote the following words from the private letter of one who had adopted this attitude long before the days of modernism. He entered the Church in 1867, and says :

Looking back on it all from to-day I see it was—as I felt it then to be—an end . . . *the 'layman of sorts,' he is not wanted in our Church, in our day. I neither resist or rebel, under pressure of what has been, or what is, but one word has seemed to me to describe the situation for the individual :* inter mortuos liber. *And, if* liber, *only because the very nature implanted in one's own existence was so.*[1]

Section 3

Suppression of Collective Effort

There had been, at the end of the last century, a refreshing outbreak of religious activity amongst young Catholic laymen in France and Italy. Some had devoted themselves to intellectual, others to social enterprises. Amongst the former, some had founded newspapers and magazines, of avowedly Catholic as well as scientific character, most of them unexceptionable in their tone towards authority ; the latter class devoted itself to the religious

[1] The writer of these words was Mr. Edmund Bishop—no longer living.

as well as the material betterment of the condition of the working classes, in a spirit of democratic sympathy.

All these efforts were doomed to extinction, the former because they sought room in the Church for modern thought, the latter because they asked a place for the modern democracy.

The French weekly *Demain*[1] did not await positive condemnation, but suspended its issue after the appearance of the Syllabus *Lamentabili*.

More grievous yet to the Catholic cause was the effacement of the Italian *Rinnovamento*,[2] a periodical to which some of the greatest living names had contributed; which maintained, throughout its lease of life, a high intellectual, scientific and spiritual level, never descending to the lower and more sordid grounds of discussion. Its editors had nothing to gain from their labours but the reward of advancing the cause of religious truth; and they had much to lose. They finally judged it better, after various adverse pronouncements of authority, to close their work in December 1909.

The condemnation of the *Annales de Philosophie Chrétienne*, edited by Père L. Laberthonnière, is still more recent, and even less explicable, if the whole world did not know that there are other, more political motives at work in such acts of repression than simple zeal for orthodoxy. It was the organ

[1] Published in Lyons, 1905-1906.
[2] Published in Milan, 1907-1909.

of a deeply spiritual conception of Catholicism, and if it had a weakness it was on the side of orthodoxy, in its treatment of the critical question, and its attitude to the even unjust acts of ecclesiastical authority. It was true to its own nature in dying at the word of that authority, as it had been true to its spirit in living for an ideal of the Church that would free her from the influence of any political party or ecclesiastical sect.

The condemnation of the *Sillon*, to which reference has already been made, was one of the most startling of the ' group ' repressions, inspired by the *Pascendi*. It was the first instance of the condemnation of a work which was wholly apostolic in character ; for the *raison d'être* of its existence was not democracy or socialism, but the union of Catholic Christianity with democracy and socialism ; or rather its introduction into those classes who would accept no other political ideal.

The submission of M. Sangnier was not cowardly or illogical, as those who had appreciated his democratic, but not his Catholic, sympathies maintained.

He did not believe he could do the work against the Church, though he had been able to carry it on without her. His object had been to inculcate the use of religion, and of the Catholic religion, to every form of society ; to remove the prejudices of the working classes, and make them feel that they too could find a spiritual home in the Church, without sacrificing what they regarded as their civil and

political rights. He had not asked the Church to be democratic; he had invited the democracy to be Catholic. It was impossible to continue an apostolic work in the face of hostile authority, and, as he was mainly an apostle, he had no alternative but to abandon his efforts. Those of his *confrères* who acted otherwise did so, probably, because the apostolic and religious end had been secondary to the social aim in their programme.[1]

Thus perished a very noble religious and moral enterprise.

Section 4

Mingling of Incongruous Elements

The failure of modernism was brought about by adhesions as well as defections. As I have said elsewhere[2]:

The 'modernism' that includes all those aimed at in the Pascendi *has no collective* Credo *and no collective* Programme. *There are, amongst its ranks, at one end devout and convinced Catholics, as there are, at the other end, freethinkers with scarcely a belief in any God but Humanity; there are men to whom religion is all, and men to whom it is little else than a means of social welfare; and between these two extremes there are many intermediate shades.*

If not a conscious strategy it was certainly, in its

[1] See Appendix V.

[2] *Hibbert Journal*, January 1914.

practical results, a successful manœuvre, which thus forced into one category the religious and the non-religious; it was a manœuvre likely, alas! to be as fatal to the general religious spirit of the Church as it was convenient to the official temper of those from whom it originated. For what, after all, can be worse for the cause of religion than to ignore or despise the distinction between the religious and the non-religious? and what can be, at last, more fatal to the Church, which properly exists in the interests of religion alone, than to thus under-estimate her own true cause?

The so-called 'left wing' of modernism was not, in actual truth, modernism at all. It was a form of socialism that found the modernist at war with some of the obstacles that lay in its own path. To the social modernist the opposition of the Church to modern democratic principles was wrong, as excluding certain elements of human life and society from the benefits of Christianity; to the non-religious socialist it was wrong in the way that any form of resistance to his principles was wrong. The former sought to secure his inalienable right of membership of a Church to which he remained irrevocably loyal; the latter endeavoured to destroy a force that opposed his efforts, or, at most, to keep it, in a subordinate character, as a means of social service. They were at one in their endeavour to break down the hostility of the Church to the democracy; but not in their reasons for doing so, nor in the object they would attain thereby.

Again, in regard to certain ascetic ideals, they were rejected by the non-religious socialist on the grounds that every form of asceticism was rejected, implying, as it did, an ideal of well-being that transcended the capacities of mortal human life ; they were only distasteful to the religious socialist in so far as a material form of self-control was made to do duty for its spiritual counterpart, or in so far as certain practices were being despotically imposed without deference to the general life and sentiment of the Church.

Thus, for instance, the question of ecclesiastical celibacy, which was not properly a modernist question at all, was pressed forward by the non-religious party as one of its main questions. It is a question, indeed, which has been treated both seriously and tactfully by a Catholic party in the Church [1] ; yet, in itself, it was not a modernist problem, nor handled by the chief leaders of modernism. From their point of view the question entered only in the way that many other subsidiary questions entered, namely, in so far as it regarded the right of authority to impose a law, and refuse at any time to discuss it, whatever the mind of the general body of the Church might be on the subject ; or in so far as such a law was maintained for political, or economic, or worldly, rather than spiritual motives, and in defiance of any consideration of resulting evils.

As a principle of sheer anti-asceticism, the con-

[1] We refer, in particular, to the work of Dr. Gennaro Avolin of Naples in the *Battaglie d'oggi* and the *Nuova Riforma*.

demnation of celibacy could not be acceptable to the genuinely Catholic spirit; nor even to those whose sympathy goes forth to every form of religious enthusiasm. The ideal of celibacy has made its appearance in most religions, and it is evidently the outlet for a certain form of religious aspiration.

Nor, again, could the crusade against celibacy inspire in the Catholic mind the kind of enthusiasm which has been displayed in some quarters, where those who set the law aside are not merely treated with the same respect as before, which treatment would certainly, in many cases, be just and reasonable, but are exalted to the rank of heroes for not continuing to do something more difficult than the opposite.

Advocated on these lines, the abolition of celibacy, whether right or wrong, was not a modernist question, and its adoption could only tend to the confusion of issues.

The effect of this blending of heterogeneous elements has been to rouse, in the general mind, a suspicion that religion, to the modernist, was a pretext and not an end; while the official ecclesiastical world has been as ready to charge him with endeavouring to make use of the Church for democratic purposes, as it has been indulgent to other parties who have made use of her for the support of ancient forms of political power; for the 'Catholique athée' has met with an indulgence that has been refused to the 'Christian democrat.'

Another note of the non-religious party, in its less dignified elements, was a tendency to rejoice and make capital out of sordid and scandalous details—for which, indeed, they could have quoted precedent in high quarters, but which was not in keeping with the principles for which modernism had set up its fight.

Lastly, we have the strong anti-transcendental bias of a certain section, which has been falsely identified with modernism. In some cases this anti-transcendentalism has been pure and moral in its tendencies; yet, as exclusive of other-world ideals, and of definite theistic or Christian belief, it cannot be termed religious.

We may quote some of the characteristic utterances of this school from articles by a one-time priest, a man of simple and elevated life, who wrote in the *Revue Moderniste* of Geneva under the pseudonym *Aschenbrödel*.[1] In a conversation with M. Wilfrid Monod, pastor of the Oratory of the Louvre, Paris, which conversation he reports in the said *Review* of February 1910, he describes his own attitude and that of other Catholic priests who have received what he calls the 'baptism of modernism,' and whose religious views have been, he maintains, more fundamentally transformed than those of Protestant modernists.

Such men, he says:

Having freed themselves from the nightmare of a

[1] Dr. Giovanni Pioli.

faith rather imposed than living . . . arrive ordinarily at such a transformation of religiosity as resolves it into its simple psychological and irreductible elements, by means of which they reconstruct a moral edifice of religious and Christian inspiration, but erected on a naturalistic and human basis. The last step of their religious evolution consists almost always in recognising the divinity of nature, which struggles continually for the realisation of an immanent design of perfection, and which we must second by the use of the best elements of our personality and of our institutions.

Criticising the Protestant attitude, as not sufficiently radical, he remarks :

The scholastic saying, 'less in degree is not different in kind,' is not less true in the realm of religious transcendentalism. Our spiritual orientation is fundamentally the same whether we admit a minimum *or a* maximum *of abstraction of the divine from the universe, and of external intervention of God in the life of humanity.*

He goes on to relate how he passed out of the stage of historic Christianity ; and continues :

I thus plunged into the very heart of a religious vision of life, of humanity, of the world, and began slowly to form an optimistic and panentheistic belief. It was in the course of this evolution, which was not rationalistic, but vital and moral, that I came in contact with erratic obstacles, not even specifically Christian in their origin ; such as the external intervention of a personal God in history, the Hebrew-Christian

revelation, Christology, Mariology, Demonology, the sanction of an individual life beyond the tomb. . . . You must know that in my optimistic conception of life—which is shared by many friends—there is no place for the idea of moral shortcoming or objective sin. The very idea of evil, of a greater or less diminution of human personality or of nature, cannot be conciliated with my theistic, optimistic conception of life.[1]

This philosophy has much in common with that which we found in the *Lettere d'un prete modernista*, but if we adhere to the definition of modernism which Father Tyrrell gave, and which has been accepted by its principal leaders, this is not modernism at all.

. . . . . .

This meeting of waters was, without any doubt, disastrous to the vitality of Catholic and Christian modernism.

Section 5

The Anti-Modernist Oath

In many cases silence would have been the answer of Catholic priests of modernist sympathies to the pronouncements of the *Pascendi* ; they would have been contented to wait till better days came round. But authority had determined on a more active course of procedure, and the plan was to oblige every one to definite acceptance or rupture. Although the

[1] *Op. et loc. cit.*

possibility of merely verbal acceptance was undoubtedly taken into account, we can only conclude that it was not regarded as an unmixed evil.

On 8th September 1910 the Holy Father published the *Motu proprio*, entitled, from its first words, *Sacrorum Antistitum*, in which he recalled the directions of the *Pascendi*, declared that the evil against which it had been directed was still vigorous, and laid down new prescriptions for its extirpation. Some of those prescriptions will be considered later, but the one which now concerns us is the oath which was imposed on bishops and priests throughout the Church, whether they had shown signs of modernist proclivities or not.

It was an unique occasion in the history of the Church, for the laity were, according to the spirit of the *Pascendi*, overlooked, while the only member of the entire ecclesiastical order who was assumed to be free from heresy was the Pope himself. To enforce an oath on the rest of the ecclesiastical world was not necessarily to declare all heretics, but it was surely to imply that there was no certainty as to the sound faith of any one. The Pope was not a heretic, but all the rest of the Church might be.

The text of the oath itself [1] was susceptible of a

[1] See Appendix VI. As there is no official English version of the oath, I give my own translation here and in the Appendix. There are slight verbal differences between sentences as quoted in this chapter and as given with context in Appendix. Those differences are for the sake of greater definiteness in the quotations.

good deal of latitude of interpretation; many of its declarations could be sincerely made by any Catholic modernist, while others were so flexible in their terminology that they could have been accepted according to one meaning if not according to another.

But, on the other hand, there were certain definite statements that could not be made by those convinced of the truth of corresponding critical positions; while there were others directly contrary to the spirit of recent Catholic apologetic.

Thus any Catholic could declare his adhesion to *the truths defined, affirmed, and declared by the* infallible *magisterium of the Church, particularly those points of doctrine directly opposed to the errors of the time.*

The word *infallible,* which I have underlined, qualifies the whole sentence, because, in so far as the Church is infallible, every Catholic accepts her decisions; the question is as to the nature, the domain, and the limits of her infallibility.

Next it is declared that:

God . . . can be known, and consequently demonstrated, with certainty, by the natural light of reason, by means of the things that have been made . . . as a cause by its effects.

The whole spirit of this assertion is contrary to that philosophy which would seek God inwardly, rather than outwardly; which would seek Him with the whole being, and not only with the syllogistic faculty.

Then comes the clause as to the proofs of Christianity and revealed religion :

I admit and acknowledge the external proofs of revelation, that is to say divine facts, and first of all miracles *and* prophesies, *as very certain signs of the divine origin of the Christian religion. And I hold these same signs to be eminently proportionate to the intelligence of all men at all times, even in our day.*

This was directed against the efforts of Catholic critics to show that the truth of revelation did not stand or fall with the historic proofs for the accuracy of long past miraculous events.

Next, it must be declared *that the Church . . . was directly and immediately instituted by the true and historic Christ Himself, during His life amongst us. . . .*

This is an assertion contrary to that critical position according to which the Church was a consequence of the teaching and life of Christ, but not founded by Him in the way that Leo XIII. founded the Biblical Commission, or Bonaparte the French Empire.

Then comes the clause directed against the theory of doctrinal development :

I sincerely accept the doctrine of faith as it was transmitted to us by the Apostles and the orthodox Fathers, and with their sense and interpretation of it. Therefore I absolutely reject the heretical supposition of the evolution of dogmas, according to which the sense of these dogmas can be altered to

a different one from that which the Church first gave them.

In these words we have an assertion that is actually contrary to every theory of vital and organic development, though they might possibly be twisted in other ways.

Next :

I profess sincerely that faith is not a blind religious sense springing from the dark depths of the subconscience . . . but a true assent of the intelligence to truth acquired from outside by the teaching that is received.

This is a re-statement of that purely intellectualist view of faith, which makes it so impossible to meet the objections of the agnostic and the sceptic. Here again the words may be susceptible of another interpretation, but the spirit of the clause is unmistakable.

Next comes a declaration of *adhesion of the whole soul to all the condemnations, declarations, and prescriptions contained in the encyclical* Pascendi *and the decree* Lamentabili *; especially in all that concerns the history of dogma.*

This declaration could not be made without an implicit condemnation of the modernist leaders ; nor could it be made by one who had himself taken any part in the movement, without disavowing his own action.

Then follow certain clauses regarding history and criticism, one to *reprove the error of those who maintain that the faith proposed by the Church can*

be contrary to history . . . another to condemn the opinion of those who *divide the personality of the Christian critic . . . and maintain that provided he does not directly deny any dogma he may establish premisses whence would follow the conclusion that those dogmas are false or doubtful.*

It would not have been impossible for a critic to accept the wording of this clause; M. Loisy's contention, as a Catholic apologist, had always been that history and dogma were independent of one another.

Respect for rationalistic exegetists is next reprobated, and then comes the following clause:

I reject the error of those who maintain that the savant . . . must be free (in his research) *from all pre-conceived opinions as to the supernatural origin of Catholic tradition* . . . and the same is maintained in regard to the interpretation of the Fathers.

Here it is a question of whether history is to be pure history, or history controlled by theology; and a claim is made for the exemption of Christian and ecclesiastical documents from the ordinary methods of procedure.

Lastly, the one who takes the oath has to declare himself entirely free from 'modernist error,' with various explanations of the nature of that error, which would, however, make it possible for many to say that they were not modernists according to the definition of the term there laid down.

The anti-modernist oath was almost universally accepted, and the only effective resistance was made in Germany, where the political power had to be considered, and certain exemptions were tolerated.

On two grounds this oath might have been opposed; by modernists, as a denial of philosophical or scientific truth; by non-modernists as an insult to their faith, and as an outrage to the dignity of the episcopacy and clergy. In point of fact, opposition was offered by neither side, and it continues to be regularly taken. The clergy could rightly have looked to the episcopacy to lead the opposition if any was to be offered; the bishops were not in a position to organise any concerted action, even if they had wished to do so. Without some co-operation the individual could do little good to the general cause by personal abstention; and could plead that it would entail a wholly futile martyrdom.

Others, again, adopted the attitude of which there was a classic example in another Church: 'Will you sign the thirty-nine articles?' 'Yes, if you will give me a pen.' It was not their affair to correct the absurdities of a government, but to get along as best they could in spite of it. An individual is helpless in front of an organisation; he cannot divert the engine one inch from its path, and his bones are only ground to such fine powder that not all the zeal of the early Christians could gather them together again.

This was the spirit of a group of French priests, who addressed an anonymous protestation to the French episcopacy in October 1910.

Then, again, to refuse was not only to refuse to deny what a man believed, but to refuse also, by reason of the elusiveness of the document, to affirm, on certain points, what he did believe.

Of course there was likewise a large mass of the ignorant and unspiritual, as well as of the simple and devout, who were ready to sign anything they were told to sign.

In fine, if it was a moment in which both modernists and non-modernists might reasonably have raised a protest, it was also a moment in which no one was prepared and organisation was hardly possible.

The anti-modernist oath constitutes one more milestone on the path of modernist failure.

Section 6

Isolation and Dishonour

The fight for truth, said M. Loisy in his Preface to 'Autour d'un petit livre,' *was not a ranged battle, but a combat of free-shooters, in which each one took part at his own risk and on his own responsibility.*

And a little further on :

It was not an honourable spectacle for the Church of France, that of the pursuit of disinterested workers as though they were wild beasts. For ten years, without support from the world, which had nevertheless

some reason to encourage them, they raised their eyes to the thrones on which were seated the Bishops, appointed by the Holy Ghost to the government of the Church; did the heart of a father beat under the pectoral cross? was the mind of a doctor of the Church to be found under the golden mitre?

These words were written seven years before the issue of the anti-modernist oath, but they furnish a good description of the state of things which succeeded it, save that the bishops, too, then found themselves amongst the hunted, and only one huntsman remained.

George Tyrrell wrote in 1907:

What can be more Quixotic than to defend those who regard one's defence as a wanton attack, and who, like delirious patients, try to strangle those who would serve them? . . . Securus judicat orbis terrarum *—the obvious, the surface presentment of Catholicism, as accepted both by the official Church and her enemies, is surely more reliable than the dreams of these dreamers scorned by both alike.*[1]

These words, also, were even more true in regard to the state of things in 1910.

To the world at large Catholic modernism was coming to be regarded as a defeated cause, whose last dignity would consist in the acknowledgment of its defeat. This cause had got mixed up with disreputable elements; it had lost some of its own greatest partisans; it had been betrayed by many

[1] *Through Scylla and Charybdis*, p. 15.

of its members ; it was distinctly unsuccessful, and unsuccess comes very near, in the eyes of the world, to disreputability. Added to this, the unfrocked priest rouses a curious prejudice even amongst those who had no respect for his cassock ; there is about him a suggestion of isolation and helplessness which rouses the meaner instincts in the human as in the feathered poultry-yard. Again, the cause had almost lapsed into silence ; and the world believes in noise and self-assertion.

In fact, there were many prepared to endorse the judgment of M. Loisy with which this chapter opened, and to relegate the remains of Catholic modernism to the cemetery.

Yet, even so, a further question might arise, for there is a yearly death of Nature into the silence and darkness and cold of winter, which is previous to the next rebirth. And ideas have died before now, leaving their seed behind them.

CHAPTER IX

THE TRIUMPH OF ANTI-MODERNISM

FOR those who would rather not believe in the complete extinction of modernism the aggressive vitality of anti-modernism is a hopeful sign. For anti-modernism is not Catholicism, and it is not orthodoxy, it is just anti-modernism and nothing else. It was born on 8th September 1907, a vigorous infant; its health has given, so far, no anxiety, nor are there, as yet, any definite signs of old age or decline. It is hard, then, to believe that a temper or spirit, whose very essence consists in opposition to something else, is actually existing on pure unreality; nor that each time the anti-modernist oath is pronounced there is not implied, thereby, an act of faith in the existence of modernism.

The character of anti-modernism is more easily defined than that of its opposite; but in describing that character I must beg my readers to understand, once for all, that I am not describing Catholicism, or, to be still more definite, Roman Catholicism; nor am I speaking of Catholics or Roman Catholics. Even in these days it is possible to be a Roman Catholic and know nothing about modernism; to

have no scrap of interest in it, and yet be as free of the anti-modernist temper as any modernist.

And again, a man may be a Roman Catholic in the genuine sense of the word, and yet also an anti-modernist, not *because* he is a Catholic, but, as some of us will say, *in spite of it*, or, at least, *besides* it.

Lastly, and this is an important point, a man may be, and often is, an anti-modernist *without* being a Catholic, or, at least, without being more than a nominal one. He may be, at heart, profoundly indifferent to every form of religion, Catholicism included, and yet have excellent reasons for being an energetic anti-modernist.

In this chapter, then, I am speaking of a definite profession or temper, which exists in the Catholic Church, but is not an integral element of it.

The first characteristic of anti-modernism is a devotional attitude to the Papacy which is akin to personal idolatry. The growth of this devotion has been plainly noticeable for some years past, and is positively startling to those who were brought up in the spirit of old English Catholicism, a Catholicism as genuine as that of any other country. I have myself seen an Italian picture, given away at the altar rails, and stamped with the double inscription :

Gloria Mariæ Immaculatæ !
Gloria Pio Decimo !

In the year 1904 was published in France a little pamphlet entitled, *De la Dévotion au Pape*, with the

Imprimatur of the Archbishop of Tours. This pamphlet was honoured by a letter of thanks to the author, the Rev. Arsène Pierre Millet, from Cardinal Merry del Val, on behalf of the Pope, in which it is stated that the work manifests the 'very intelligent filial piety' of a 'true Catholic and exemplary priest.'

The pamphlet has as its text, Mark xii. 30, 'Thou shalt love (him) with all thy mind, with all thy will, with all thy heart and with all thy strength'; and since the Pope is the representative of God, and more our Father than any one after God, these words are referred to the sentiments we should cherish for his person.

The Pope is *the Father of all humanity, the Father of the simple faithful, as also of the priests and bishops themselves.*

. . . . . .

We are to love him, though in a subordinate degree, as God Himself . . . with all our mind, with all our will, with all our heart, with all our strength. . . .

Although there is not an absolute parity, yet in a certain sense one may say that, as the Tabernacle is the home of Jesus the Victim, so the Palace of the Vatican at Rome is the home of Jesus the Teacher; that it is from this Palace, or rather Sanctuary, that since His Ascension Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Divine Word, speaks to the world by the mouth of His Vicar, whether he be called Peter, or Pius IX., or Leo XIII., or Pius X. What can be more beautiful

or touching than this parellelism? When we prostrate ourselves at the Tabernacle before the sacred hosts therein contained we adore our Lord in His Eucharistic Presence, which is substantial and personal—when we fall at the Pope's feet to offer him the homage of our mind, and to accept his teaching, it is again, in a certain way, Jesus Christ whom we adore in his Doctrinal Presence. In both cases we adore and confess the same Jesus Christ. Whence it follows by rigorous consequence that it is as impossible to be a good Christian without devotion to the Pope as without devotion to the Eucharist.

If, therefore, we truly love the Pope, nothing will be dearer to us than the Pope's will; and even when obedience to the Pope means sacrifices, we shall never hesitate to follow any direction whatsoever emanating from Rome. Every objection will be silenced, every reasoning will go for nothing, every hesitation will yield before this unanswerable argument: 'God wills and commands it because the Pope wills and commands it.' Let us enter into the joys of the Pope; let us rejoice in his success and glory in his triumphs, but let us also share his anguish. . . . By the mere fact that he is the Vicar of Christ and His principal co-operant, he is an elect Victim and is ex officio *nailed to the Cross. . . . Pope and Victim are two inseparable qualities.*

The pamphlet concludes with a quotation from Mgr. Gay [1]:

[1] *De la vie et des vertus chrétiennes.*

All the devotion to Jesus as Priest, Shepherd, and Father that enlightened faith can inspire is summed up practically and effectively in devotion to the Pope. . . . If one is devout to the Angels the Pope is the visible angel of the whole Church. If we are devout to the saints, the Pope is on earth the source of sanctity, and is called 'his Holiness.' If one would have a devotion to the sacred Scriptures, the Pope is the living and speaking Bible. If it is a duty to be devout to the Sacraments, is not the Pope the sacrament of Jesus by the mere fact that he is His Vicar?

Here the Blessed Eucharist and the Papacy are compared, not only as fundamental doctrines, but even as fundamental *objects of devotion*. A dogma may at least be confined to the intellect, a devotion calls on the heart and soul and the entire being. To hold a false dogma is to be heretical; to cultivate sincerely and believingly a false devotion is to be idolatrous and to worship strange gods.

In this treatise on papolatry, we are invited, not only to believe, but also to adore. We are not actually told to *pray* to the Pope, but prayer would be a logical consequence of the devotion inculcated. Even to think *of* the Pope brings us nearer to God, while to think *with* him is to think with God; and this latter statement is not made with any restriction to his official and *ex cathedra* character. In fact, we are invited to practise a new devotion to the spiritual presence of the Pope, as we were taught to cultivate the remembrance of the presence of God.

We are to live with him in spirit ; to seek him and adore him, only in a lesser degree, as we seek and adore Christ in the Blessed Eucharist.

An example of the theory of this pamphlet, reduced to devotional practice, was made in the following meditation, a satire, and yet a genuine application of the teaching it contains. The meditation is according to the method of St. Ignatius Loyola, which is in use in most devotional works :[1]

First Prelude.—(*Composition of Place*)—*The Pope seated on his throne in the Vatican, surrounded by Cardinals and Monsignori, myself prostrate at his feet.*

Second Prelude.—(*Petition*)—*Holy Father get me grace to love thee with all my mind, with all my will, with all my heart, with all my strength, and with all my wealth.*

Point 1.—*The Knowledge of the Pope—how near it comes to divine omniscience—how varied—how detailed—how superior in each field of science to the knowledge of the best experts in that same field—how unfailing—how convincing.*

Colloquy.—*O Mind of the Holy Father, kindle in my mind a light from your glorious and unfailing light—have pity on my ignorance—bestow on me one spark of your immense wisdom.*

Point 2.—*The Charity of the Pope—how tender to those who believe in him—how indulgent to heretics*

[1] It was published in the Italian periodical, *Nova et Vetera.*

who do not believe in him—how fundamentally merciful and patient with modernists who pain his fatherly affections.

Colloquy.—*O Heart of the Holy Father warm my heart—make me love those who love you—make me love heretics and modernists in the way that you love them, but in no other—make me love you above all on earth, next only to the Blessed Eucharist.*

Point 3.—*The Power of the Pope—how immense—how unlimited—how wise and just in its exercise—how irresistible in its effects.*

Colloquy.—*O Will of the Holy Father, humbly I bow down and adore thee, in all that thou appointest I accept thee—in all that thou workest I submit to thee—be thou the Will of my will, the Law of my soul, the Norm of all my inmost aspirations and desires.*

If this composition savour of irreverence, yet is not the irreverence of the satire based on the irreverence of the work which suggested it ? and is not the prayer itself a reasonable deduction from the doctrine ?

Another characteristic of anti-modernism, very directly inculcated by the *Pascendi*, is that of timidity and fear. A priest is more afraid of being called a modernist than of being accused of negligence in his sacerdotal obligations and duties. He does not fear to be charged with carelessness in the work of stimulating his people in their spiritual life, or rousing them to moral reform, if he can prove

that he is warning them, in season, and out of season, against the dangers of modernism. He has the diocesan council of vigilance, instituted by the *Pascendi* for the extirpation of modernism, ever in mind; he is like a shepherd who should be too much afraid of being bitten by the sheep-dogs to have time to look after the sheep; his pastoral solicitude is transformed into anti-modernist zeal. I have had personal acquaintance with the case of a young man, turning back to the Church after years of religious and moral indifference and unbelief, and exhorted by the priest to whom he addressed himself, not against the worldly dangers to which he had succumbed, but against a modernist priest who had been one of the few saving influences in his life.

There was another instance, of historic fame, which occurred at the deathbed of George Tyrrell. The Abbé Bremond was neither modernist nor anti-modernist, and when called to the assistance of his dying friend he put aside every consideration but the last spiritual needs of that friend, and ministered to his soul as a priest should minister to any soul in its last necessity. He was rebuked and suspended for not being more emphatically an anti-modernist, and less emphatically a Catholic priest.[1]

Abbé Bremond was certainly at that moment lacking in another characteristic of anti-modernism,

[1] See *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, vol. ii.

which is an overmastering solicitude for one's own skin. It is not conscience, but the *Pascendi*, that makes a coward of the anti-modernist, who will never rush into St. Paul's extreme and make himself anathema for his brethren. There is, on the contrary, a race to see who can go farthest in professions of self-saving, orthodox zeal, for the ones in front may always charge those behind with remissness. And it is a zeal which brings its own reward, for anti-modernism has often proved a useful ladder to ecclesiastical ambition, by which some, otherwise inconspicuous, personalities have risen to unexpected heights.

Last amongst the characteristics of anti-modernism we may number its spirit of suspiciousness and its keenness for the denunciation of others. The anti-modernist profession is one in which place and use can be found for some of the basest qualities of human nature, nor is it only the modernist who has had occasion to experience this fact. It is one element of its strength that its victims dare not complain, for to complain would be to render themselves liable to the suspicion of being, not what they really are, *anti-anti-modernists*, but of having lapsed into modernism itself. So bishops, and even Cardinals,[1] suffer, in great part silently, the insolence and abuse

[1] Thus Cardinal Ferrari, Archbishop of Milan, who had himself condemned the *Rinnovamento*, became, in 1911, the object of attack on the part of a violently anti-modernist paper, the *Riscossa*, which itself enjoyed the special patronage of the Vatican.

of the sect; Catholic journalists endure the condemnations brought on them by their anti-modernist rivals; ecclesiastics in positions of authority tolerate, in their close neighbourhood, the persons of those they know to be spies.

How long is this travesty of our religion to be endured? 'O God! one wants a gale out of Heaven, one wants a great wind from the sea!'[1]

Shall the once-thronged city, exclaimed George Tyrrell, *lie deserted and the Queen of the Nations be made a widow, and the streets of Zion mourn because there are none to come to her solemnities, because her gates are thrown down and her priests in tears and her virgins in rags, and she herself oppressed with bitterness? Shall her gold be tarnished and her fine colours faded and the stones of her sanctuary lie heaped at the street corners, and all this because she has let her sucklings perish for thirst, and refused the bread of life to her little ones, to the starving millions of our modern civilisation who wander harassed and worried as sheep having no shepherd; or because, for the scarlet rags of a secular splendour departed long since and for ever, she has forgotten her true glory, and has walled herself round with stone and iron, and narrowed the borders of her tent, and from a world-embracing religion as wide as the heart of Christ has shrivelled herself up to a waspish sect, glorying as none other in her rigidity and exclusiveness?*

Is this what Catholicism has come to—so grand a

[1] *The New Macchiavelli*, H. G. Wells, p. 62.

name for so mean a thing? Is this the religion of all humanity and of the whole man; of the classes and the masses; of the Greek and the barbarian; of the university and the slum; neither above the lowest intelligence nor beneath the highest; neither a burden to the weak nor an offence to the strong; the religion not so much of all 'sensible' men—for all are not sensible, as of all honest men—for all can be and are naturally honest; a religion unencumbered and unentangled with contingent and perishable values, free as an arrow in its flight straight home to the universal conscience of humanity? [1]

[1] *Medievalism*, pp. 184-185.

NOTE

It is worth noting that the exaggerated deference for the Head of the Church, which was exercised regardless of intellectual difficulties, has been very obviously checked by political differences. Pious people, who could not in the least understand why Tyrrell or Loisy should hold out on historical or scientific or theological questions; who multiplied their own professions of obedience in proportion to the recalcitrance of the modernist; have not hesitated to criticise papal action that trenched on patriotic interests. They were not afraid to say that the Pope should not meddle with what did not fall within his province. This was exactly what the modernist had said in regard to other matters.

Does not this show that the root question of the modernist controversy, as of our actual political and social crisis, is that of the mutual relations of authority and life? People understand what concerns themselves, and know how to criticise and rebel; they condemn others for not submitting in matters to which they themselves are indifferent, and of which they are totally ignorant.

The lesson of it all is that such problems demand radical treatment. If we had a sound philosophy of rightful authority and obedience we should know the difference between right and wrong obedience; we should not uphold our own claims and ignore those of others.

CHAPTER X

THE FUTURE OF CATHOLICISM

THOSE Catholics who have passed through the modernist crisis, and remain Catholics, find themselves, at present, in an anomalous position. By their ecclesiastical superiors they are either condemned or coldly tolerated; by their co-religionists they are regarded, for the most part, with dislike and mistrust, only a few of the mass of the faithful reserving their opinion, and judging neither those who condemn nor those who are condemned. In the outside world a variety of opinions prevails in their regard, but, on the whole, few that are distinctly favourable; among the sympathisers the greater number hold that the Catholic modernist is, generously perhaps, but vainly, prolonging a hopeless contest. Yet it is with the disappointments and fears, and with the yet abiding aspirations and hopes, of that little remnant that this work must close.

This is not because of any personal interest which surviving modernists may possess, nor because of the much-battered cause they still represent; but simply because it is in the minds of that remnant

we can best hope to discover any essential and abiding element of modernism, containing the seed of future potentiality, if, indeed, such element exist. It is, in fact, in the mind of the Catholic modernist that we may expect to find the worst, as well as the best, that can be said for the future of Catholicism regarded from the modernist standpoint; that is to say, for the future of a Catholicism not antagonistic to the intellectual and social condition of modern humanity.

To the surviving Catholic modernist it is, then, first of all plain that all 'waspish sects' must perish, and that, if it were the fate of the Catholic Church to wholly degenerate into such a sect, its end would be in view. Now it is a 'waspish sect' that outruns even the most tyrannical prescriptions of authority in its spiteful zeal; that cringes to rulers and denounces the suspect; that makes pretence of the critical spirit in works of sheer misinterpretation; that, in Catholic newspapers, indulges in currish yapping at the heels of great men, or even at their graves; that feigns the love of truth when no sacrifice is needed for its acceptance; that imputes motives, that uses the noblest confessions against the one who makes them, that spits venom, in fact, at every religious ideal that is beyond its understanding, and, still more, beyond its moral and spiritual capacity.

Every 'waspish sect' must die, and anti-modernism cannot live. It would not have survived

as long as it has done were it not supported, on the one side, by the faith and loyalty of the simple and devout, who obey without questioning the justice of the command; and, on the other side, by that remaining dignity which ecclesiastical authority possesses, in spite of its abuses, and will continue to possess, so long as it in any way fulfils its one essential task, which is to minister to the spiritual needs of the whole Church.

If, then, Catholicism were anti-modernism and were nothing more, the hopes of the Catholic modernist would, in all logic, be dead. And if they are not dead it is because he persistently refuses to give 'so grand a name' to 'so mean a thing.' He knows that anti-modernism must perish; he believes that the Catholic Church will survive.

As for modernism, that too will perish, because, in so far as it is in any sense a creed or profession, it is the creed or profession of a crisis, and will be absorbed, along with that crisis, into whatsoever the future may bring forth. And yet, unless Catholicism, nay, Christianity itself, be an illusion, modernism must stand in religious history for the classic expression of a certain religious attitude, the attitude of those Catholics or Christians who have maintained that religious faith must not only tolerate the co-existence of independent scientific, or historic, or philosophic truth, but must allow the play of such truth on her own domain wherever its rays can penetrate. It is the classic expression of that

attitude because the occasion was unique; for the first time science had found its way into the very sanctuary of Christianity. In the midst of panic and indignation; in defiance of official vetoes; in despite of the discouraging advice of those who held that the choice had to be made between faith and science, the modernist declared himself for both; unswerving in his fidelity to the Church, he pronounced against her closing of a single chink to the entrance of natural light. His apologetic may not always have been adequate, and it was never complete; but he put an end to the tactics of compromise, to the politics of half-and-half acceptance, while he maintained that faith could survive the consequent ordeal. His temper was not always perfect, and he displayed the faults incident to human nature on such occasions; faults that are, however, in themselves accidental and insignificant, and that even serve the cause, in their own way, by checking the adhesion of those who would join it for purely personal motives.

It is not, however, because of its incompleteness that modernism must die—incompleteness is of the nature of such a movement; nor is it because of the human imperfections of its leaders, which could be more than fully balanced by the faults of their opponents. It must die because it is but the concentrated expression of a phase of religious life, and must therefore pass away along with that phase. Whatever it has accomplished will survive its own

destruction, and will live on, not only in spite of that destruction, but even in virtue of it.

The vital question, then, for the Catholic modernist, is not: 'Will modernism live?' but: 'Will Catholicism live?' a Catholicism, that is to say, that is not merely an anti-modernist sect, but a religion of all mankind; a Catholicism that does not prolong a precarious existence by the denial of facts.

Here an observation must be repeated once more in reply to an argument frequently advanced by the theologian. It is urged that science is ever changing, and higher criticism still more; and that it is absurd to ask the Church to accept half-baked food. When history has ended her work then the Church may begin to take count of it.

The answer is that neither history nor criticism demands a fuller measure of assent than its proofs warrant. No one asks the Church to regard as certain what is merely probable; she is only asked to tolerate truth according to its degree of assurance, and not to declare what is *probably* true to be *certainly* false.

It is clear, then, to the modernist, that the Church cannot continue to subsist in virtue of her rejection of any form of truth; and if it may be reasonably asked whether the Church will live or die, it cannot be reasonably asked whether she will continue to live and cease to breathe.

Nor will mere compromise avail her. Criticism has to be met full face, and what we withhold

to-day she will return and fetch to-morrow. There was, at one moment, a school of Christian apologists who made up their minds to let the Old Testament go overboard, and concentrate all their efforts on saving the New. But they found that the feet of those who had buried the first were at the door to carry away the second, if, indeed, the acceptance of criticism was to be regarded as death. The Catholic Church more wisely refused to yield one thing any more readily than another, though she endeavoured to preserve all by methods that could not be permanently maintained. It is, after all, a somewhat wretched position to wait on in the hopes that certain hypotheses will eventually be rejected by science as by faith; the mere possibility of their gaining ground, rather than losing it, is surely as damaging to the security of faith as their actually having done so. We have all of us, in proportion to our knowledge, and no further, a right to judge and estimate the results of history and criticism; but we shall do it with more sincerity and success if we are not obsessed by the fear of losing the right to believe if a certain result prove true. We take it, then, that the Catholicism which is to survive must do so by her own native strength, and not in virtue of artificial support rendered by science and history of her own making.

But there is the further question as to the manner in which the Church may surmount the present crisis, and what changes her passage into the future

life of mankind will necessitate. Here a certain variety of opinion may prevail, while the actual issue will probably be different from all that has been guessed or predicted.

Some will say that it is, after all, but a new phase of a very old struggle. Again and again the Church has resisted truth, but truth has nevertheless made its way, and found, at last, its place, even in her own schools. At this moment it is the Church, and not science, which is the defaulter; but the Church is as sure to survive as truth is certain to prevail, and if she never goes so far as to admit she was wrong, she will, nevertheless, end by being right.

Others will take a graver view of the situation, and will look for a process more revolutionary in character before the transformation can be effected. Many of the recent pronouncements and much of the recent legislation they regard as more purely reactionary in character than has obtained in the past. The *Pascendi*, they consider, represents, not the best that might be expected of the official Church in these days, but the worst. They look rather to such a change as that which took place in the passing of Judaism into Christianity than to such slighter revolutions as have occurred on various other occasions, as, for instance, in the acceptance of Aristotelian philosophy, or of the scientific truth of the Copernican system.

Others, again, look for some very vast and fundamental transformation, in which Catholicism will be

conquered by humanity and made to serve its religious needs, rather than humanity by Catholicism. The question of reunion will be absorbed in greater questions, for the Church will yield up her treasures to mankind, and occupy a different position in the future of the world. Yet there is nothing in any one of these views, even the last, contrary to the profession of the Catholic faith and the belief in the Catholic Church.

For the rest, it is no business of the modernist to prophesy, and, indeed, if we could see what was coming it would probably not be much worth seeing. It must be remembered that, if religion be anything at all in itself, and not merely a department of sociology, then its object is a world of realities beyond this one. We may deny the existence of those realities, but then we should also deny that religion has an object of its own. The modernist is in the same position as every other kind of religious believer when he maintains that religion comprises the action of spiritual forces and influences on man, as well as his own response to those forces and influences. If religion have a basis in reality man has not only something to do, in its regard, but also something to receive ; and if he can foresee the first he cannot foresee the second. There is an element working from outside as well as from within.

But if he cannot know all that is to happen, the modernist nevertheless maintains that he knows this much, namely, that the notion of faith must undergo

a transformation from that which is implied in the official repression of modernism. He has been charged with immanentism, but there was a strong element of anti-transcendentalism in the arguments by which he was condemned. For those arguments suggested a completeness of understanding of the religious truths with which they dealt which allowed but small latitude to that sense of mystery, which is properly the transcendental sense.

In face of intellectual difficulties there are two conceptions of faith; one according to which we believe in defiance of such difficulties, and are even prepared to maintain an assertion in spite of evidence to the contrary; the other, according to which we maintain our faith in religious truth as something that lies beyond the reach of those difficulties. The former is the conception of faith implied in the imposition of the anti-modernist oath; the latter is the conception of faith against which it was directed.

If history and criticism had dealt with truths of immediate practical import, it would not have been possible for their facts to be neglected; with the best will in the world, no one could have taken an oath to deny the existence of some new scientific acquisition in use in daily life. But, with truths that are more remote, what Newman has called 'notional assent' may prevail; and it has thus been possible for men to deny what they know, without full consciousness of what they were doing. But if modernism has done anything for the life of

the Church it has prepared the day when 'notional' must yield to 'real' assent in matters of faith, and when that element of insincerity must be eliminated.

For we all feel, at bottom, that we cannot ignore the knowledge of others any more than our own, and that we cannot, consequently, give full interior adhesion to a profession of belief that demands the exclusion of any department of human science.

Late events have somewhat belied the confidence with which we used to reject certain charges made against the Roman Catholic Church. We were encouraged to declare that we were in no sense priest-ridden; that our obedience to ecclesiastical rulers was a reasonable and enlightened service; that there was nothing in our profession of faith to hinder the fullest acceptance of every form of truth; that the Church was our guide in faith and morals, but left us, outside her own department, the fullest intellectual freedom.

It is a little difficult to maintain, under the present régime, that the layman possesses any civic rights in the Church to which he belongs; that his obedience is that of a full-grown son, and not that of a servant or a child; that his attitude towards the Head of the Church is free from all suspicion of servility and idolatry; that our intellectual freedom goes beyond the bounds of the most material form of scientific truth, the right, as Monsignor Moyes suggested, to fly in an aeroplane, or send a message by wireless telegraphy.

It is also impossible to deny that certain lines of religious thought and apologetic, which seemed, whatever their inadequacies may have been, essential to the religious life of the future, have been rejected *in toto* by the official guardians of the Church.

Thus we have seen that a Catholic philosophy which stands almost alone in the depth and penetration of its understanding of the sceptical position, and which demonstrates the claim of Catholicism to respond to the needs of the whole spiritual nature of man, has met with scant official encouragement; though no substitute for its apologetic has been suggested, and sceptics still exist.

Then Catholic critics arose, who acknowledged the full rights of criticism, and yet held that religion and Christianity were facts which criticism neither lessened nor denied; on which it cast, indeed, its own light, but a light which need not extinguish that of faith. They did not find God shut up in the pages of a historical text-book, but they did find that all history was part of a Divinely controlled process. But because they could not make history the servant, and the lying servant, of theology, they too were condemned and rejected. Yet the Church has found no substitute for their apology, and criticism is still at the gates.

We see too that there has been a spirit of exclusiveness and pride at work in the Church, which has closed her heart to some of the legitimate needs and aspirations of humanity. Authority is willing

to patronise the weak, but not to allow them to grow strong; it rules, but it will not serve; it takes its honours but shirks its responsibilities; it claims spiritual honour and earthly privileges. Yet the democratic principle has still to be reckoned with, and the people are yet demanding their rightful place in the Church.

All these difficulties the Catholic modernist must recognise, and yet he knows also that those forces, which the Church has endeavoured to strangle, are forces that have arisen within her as well as outside; and it is, to his mind, her own soul that is striving towards a fuller existence, and her own new life that is struggling with the old.

A religion to be truly Catholic, to be educative of all sorts and conditions of men and of every stage of man's religious progress, must represent every phase of the religious Idea, from the lowest to the highest, and not the highest alone. The process of the race repeats itself in the individual. Man does not begin, but ends by being spiritual and personal; first that which is earthly, afterwards that which is heavenly; milk for babes, meat for the strong. . . . A Catholic religion will lead the soul through externalism to internalism. Ideally the value of the lower is absorbed into and saved by the higher. Practically, in existing Catholicism, it is not so. We find these different sorts of religion ranged side by side, each subsisting with its own alloy —the religion of fear, the religion of hope; the religion of external and of internal obedience; the religion of

abstract and exclusive mysticism, and that of inclusive and world-embracing mysticism. . . . So it is that, in existing Catholicism, the various phases of the Idea, each with its particular alloy and limitation, are somewhat violently held together by a continual synthetic effort, so as to constitute a manuductory system, by which the growing soul is brought to the perfect state of the Christ-possessed personality. This has been the work of instinct and experience, rather than of design directed by a recognition of the laws of religion. It has all the imperfection and clumsiness of tentative groupings. But it gives us good reason to think that Catholic Christianity is more capable of conforming itself to the exigencies of a historical science of religion than any of those forms that have narrowed themselves to the development of some particular element of Catholicism, even though it be the highest.[1]

The modernist who believes, in spite of all, in the future of Catholicism, must have *the continuous sense of the ever necessary, ever fruitful, ever bliss-producing Cross of Christ—the great law and fact that only through self-renunciation and suffering can the soul win its true self, its abiding joy in union with the Source of Life, with God Who has left to us, human souls, the choice between two things alone: the noble pangs of spiritual child-birth, of painful, joyous expansion and growth; and the shameful ache of spiritual death, of dreary contraction and decay.*[2]

[1] *Christianity at the Cross-Roads*, pp. 277-279.

[2] *The Mystical Element of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 395.

So that the modernist will gladly admit that, whatever his hopes in the future of Catholicism may be, there are outstanding problems yet unsolved, and that the case, as he leaves it, is incomplete. Yet this lack of finality is not discouraging to the modern mind, depressing as it may be to that attitude of dogmatic certitude which it is, in the opinion of the modernist, doomed to supplant.

Is it not possible, writes one of the younger representatives of the severely orthodox temper, *that we are entering upon an age of Positivism . . . upon a generation which will not have its theology watered down, but is ready either to totally abstain, or to take it neat. . . .*

Tell us what you want us to believe, and we will see about it. With full consciousness of the rashness of attempting to trace tendencies anywhere, I would still maintain that this is the modern demand.[1]

This is a new form of the old argument—atheism or an infallible Church—daily doubt, or a Papal pronouncement every morning—no God, no Christ, no Eternal Life, or a complete and final doctrinal system, in which we can find all we want to know about them.

The demand is neither 'modern' nor 'ancient,' it is the demand of every man at one age of his life, and of some men during the whole course of their lives. It is because the Catholic Church contains a large proportion of souls who would, indeed, thus

[1] *Some Loose Stones*, by Rev. R. A. Knox, pp. 12-17.

express themselves that the *Pascendi* has not occasioned greater distress.

There is a period in the life of the individual, and there is a period in the life of a people, when it must be narrow to be strong. The passage from this exclusiveness to a wider life is indeed a form of death ; yet the results of that stage of narrow concentration are not lost, but carried over into a larger environment.

Thus the reactionary hero of one of Dostoevsky's novels exclaims :

Every people is only a people so long as it has its own God and excludes all other gods on earth irreconcilably ; so long as it believes that by its god it will conquer and drive out of the world all other gods. Such, from the beginning of time, has been the belief of all great nations, all anyway who have been specially remarkable, all who have been leaders of humanity. There is no going against facts. The Jews lived only to await the coming of the true God and left the world the true God. The Greeks deified nature and bequeathed the world their religion, that is, philosophy and art. Rome deified the people in the State, and bequeathed the idea of the State to the nations. France throughout her long history was only the incarnation and development of the Roman God, and if they have at last flung their Roman god into the abyss and plunged into atheism, which, for the time being, they call socialism, it is solely because socialism is, anyway, healthier than Roman Catholicism. If a great people does not believe that

the truth is only to be found in itself alone (in itself alone and in it exclusively) ; if it does not believe that it alone is fit and destined to raise up and save all the rest by its truth, it would at once sink into being ethnographical material, and not a great people. A really great people can never accept a secondary part in the history of Humanity, nor even one of the first, but will have the first part. A nation which loses this belief ceases to be a nation.[1]

And yet it would be wrong to suppose that at any age, or stage, of mental development, the soul is as exclusively passive and receptive as Mr. Knox would depict it. Behind the docility there is, if there be spiritual faith at all, a certain power of discrimination, and it is because the soul has found something for itself that it can learn more from others. Furthermore, there is ever the principle of growth to be reckoned with ; the child grows to manhood, the people acquire knowledge and education. If that generation, of which Mr. Knox speaks, be indeed growing up around us, then their children will have to go through an even more severe crisis than we have outlived.

The transition from the child's religion, writes Baron Fr. von Hügel, *so simple, naïve and unself-conscious, so tied to time and place, and particular persons and things, so predominantly traditional and historical, institutional, and external, to the right and*

[1] *The Possessed,* p. 234. How strangely appropriate are these words to the representatives of national self-sufficiency with whom we are at war.

normal type of a young man's religion, is as necessary as it is perilous. The transition is necessary. For all the rest of him is growing, body and soul are growing in clamorous complexity in every direction; how then can the deepest part of his nature, his religion, not require to grow and develop also?

. . . . . .

But the crisis is perilous. For he will be greatly tempted either to cling exclusively to his existing, all but simply institutional, external position, and to fight or elude all approaches of its reasoned, intellectual apprehension and systematisation; and in this case his religion will tend to contract and shrivel up, and to become a something simply alongside of other things in his life. Or he will feel strongly pressed to let the individually intellectual simply supplant the institutional, in which case his religion will grow hard and shallow, and will tend to disappear altogether. In the former case he will, at best, assimilate his religion to external law and order, to Economics and Politics; in the latter case he will, at best, assimilate it to Science and Philosophy. In the first case, he will tend to superstition; in the second, to rationalism and indifference.[1]

'Tell us what you want us to believe.'

The Catholic modernist can only answer this question by recapitulating those points of his faith for which, throughout the crisis, he has done battle.

[1] *The Mystical Element of Religion*, Fr. von Hügel, vol. i. pp. 54-55.

Religion is, for him, the supreme interest of life; but it cannot be lived alone, and he needs a Church. This Church can be no academy of ideas, intellectual or social; it must be practically, as well as theoretically, adapted to the needs of all, great and small, rich and poor, learned and ignorant.

Neither Church nor State can exist without some principle of unity; hence he believes in authority, and accepts the existing ecclesiastical hierarchy, not as its only possible, but as its actually present instrument in the concrete order.

He believes in Christianity as the highest form of religion which man has attained; he worships Christ as God; and he believes that, in the historic Christ, the Divinity was manifested.

He believes that God reveals Himself to man in diverse manners; he believes in the sacramental system; he believes in prayer; he believes in sacrifice; he believes in obedience to rightful authority; he believes in the humble, daily practices of the Catholic life.

On the other hand, he does not believe in the Church as an end, but as a means; she is, for him, the porch of entrance to eternal life, she is not, unless taken in a very widely mystical sense, eternal life itself. Living within her he accepts her doctrines, her customs, her regulations, in the same way as he accepts the Church herself—that is to say, relatively to that wider life for which she exists. He does not believe in ecclesiastical

authority save as existing for the general good, and as representative of the light and guidance imparted by the Divine Spirit to the whole Church. The rulers of the Church are her servants; they are personally as much subject to the rest of the Church as the humblest of the laity.

He does not believe that Jesus Christ, as known to history, can be known otherwise than by historical methods; nor that a religion can at once find its own proofs in history, and regulate the process of history in finding them.

He does not believe that any of the doctrines or practices of the Catholic life have been exhaustively comprehended, or finally explained; and he believes in an unending process of spiritual development, in which each individual soul as well as the whole Church takes part.

He believes, lastly, that he has a place in the Church, because he maintains that it is the Church's own life that is stirring within him; and he believes in that life as contained in no fixed form or quantity, but as the outpouring of infinity.

And hence the fixity of the revelation, and of the soul's assent to it, will be as the fixity of a fountain-head, or as that of the successive evolution and identity of the human body. The fixity, in a word, will be conceived and found to be a fixity of orientation, definiteness of affinities and of assimilative capacity.

. . . . . .

Thus the very same acts and reasons which com-

pletely bind me, do so only to true growth and to definite expansion. I shall, it is true, ever go back and cling to the definite spacial and temporal manifestations of this infinite Spirit's personality, but I shall, by this same act, proclaim His eternal presentness and inexhaustible, self-interpreting illumination. By the same act by which I believe in the revelation of the workshop of Nazareth, of the Lake of Galilee, of Gethsemane and Calvary, I believe that this revelation is inexhaustible, and that its gradual analysis and theory, and above all its successive practical application, experimentation, acceptance or rejection, and unfolding, confer and call forth foreign and dramatic freshness and inexhaustible uniqueness upon and within every human life, unto the end of time.[1]

As protagonist of the reactionary movement in religious philosophy, Mr. Knox says, in the work from which we have already quoted:

The enlightenment of the nineteenth century has not yet spent its force; but if I am not mistaken there will be a reckoning. There will be a common-sense reaction, which will immolate the Synoptic problem upon the embers of the Homeric problem, and an intellectualist reaction, which will bury the appeal to mystical experience under the ruins of Psychical Research.[2]

The 'common-sense reaction' is, indeed, ever with us, nor have we to wait for its manifestations. But surely those who are not blind to the signs of the

[1] *The Mystical Element of Religion*, vol i. pp. 72-73.
[2] *Some Loose Stones*, p. 215.

times are aware of a movement in quite the opposite sense, and feel already in their faces winds that blow from undiscovered lands, where many strange guesses and forebodings may find scientific fulfilment.

'It doth not yet appear what we shall be,' but may we not reasonably hope that it will be something more than we have been hitherto; and that our movement will be onwards and not backwards? The hope of the Catholic modernist is that his Church will take part in that movement; or that she will, at least, be the chief religious element in its constitution.

In spite of the clamorous contradiction of my reason and common-sense, wrote George Tyrell, *I cannot even yet bring myself to believe that it is too late; I cannot resign myself to the thought that what has been built up by the labour of so many centuries, at the cost of so much suffering and sorrow, is now doomed to destruction as a mere encumbrance. I will not face, because I can so hardly resist, the impression that the rich and varied experience in good and evil of so notable a section of humanity as has been gathered within its walls is to be as water poured out on the ground, or as a column of vapour dispersed in the broad air. I cannot, or at least I will not, believe that the persecuted minority, who in every generation have striven loyally against the overwhelming forces of ecclesiastical corruption and abuse, have laboured in vain, or that we shall never reap in joy the harvest that they have sown in tears. Can it*

be that the Church which so many legions of martyrs, saints, thinkers, and scholars have enriched with their very best, with their heart's blood and their spirit's anguish, is to fall the prey of a selfish and godless bureaucracy? that the gates of hell so long resisted are at last to prevail against her and shut her up into medieval darkness for ever? Is she to have neither lot nor part in this new world that is struggling painfully to the birth, and so sorely needs that quickening inspiration of divine breath which it was her mission to impart?

. . . . . .

My faith in the Church . . . is part of my faith in humanity, whose prospects seem not less desperate. The very word 'Catholic' is music to my ears, and summons before my eyes the outstretched, all-embracing arms of Him who died for the whole orbis terrarum.[1]

[1] ***Medievalism*, Conclusion.**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Some Works on Modernism

A bibliography of Modernism is a task which I should not dare to undertake. It would have to contain works in most living languages, and its length would perhaps astonish even those who are fairly well acquainted with the subject. An enormous amount of this literature is, of course, doomed to be eventually forgotten, yet even of the more important works it would be difficult, at this stage of the question, to make an exhaustive inventory; nor do I care to furnish a selected list, and thereby appear to set myself in judgment as to the merits of the works I include or omit.

I therefore prefer to follow a purely personal course, and name just one or two books that I consider valuable, for one reason or another, in the study of Catholic modernism.

I

First of all, it is but a duty of justice, and a law of courtesy to mention a work which I reckon to be as valuable for its documentation of the facts of the movement as it seems to me, in spite of my personal respect for its author, inadequate in its appreciation of the life and spirit of the movement.

I speak of the *Histoire du Modernisme Catholique*, by Monsieur Albert Houtin. (Paris, 1913. To be obtained of its author, 18 rue Cuvier.)

II

There is an admirable little German study of modernism, from a Protestant standpoint, by Professor Karl Holl of Berlin:

'Modernismus.' *Religions geschichtliche Volksbücher.* (Tübingen.)

The author begins with the origins of modernism in Germany, where Döllinger, Möhler, and Hefele were its forerunners, in their endeavour to obtain a place in the Church for modern intellectual life. They stand for liberal Catholicism, a movement whose traces have been effaced in the deeper tracks of modernism. The work of these men was, at least in great part, accomplished before the Vatican Council. Hermann Schell and Franz Xavier Kraus may be reckoned among the closer ancestors of modernism, and to these names may be added those of Franz Xavier Funk, and Professor Albert Ehrhard, the latter alone still living, and author of a well-known work, *Der Katholizismus und das zwanzigste Jahrhundert.*'

In other countries Professor Holl considers M. Loisy as the chief scientific, and George Tyrrell as the chief religious exponent of modernism; and he manifests special respect for these two men, as having both of them been free from all illusion as to their position. The movement itself he regards, though he states his opinion with much moderation, as essentially Protestant in character and inevitably doomed to failure in the Roman Church. Yet he respects the spirit in which some of its leaders affronted failure, in so far as they did so, not merely in fanatical support of a hopeless cause,

but in virtue of their faith in higher powers than their own.

He considers the encyclical *Pascendi* a logical pronouncement on the part of Roman authority. If in detail it was not just, it nevertheless correctly apprehended the essential characteristics of modernism, which are profoundly antagonistic to the main positions of Roman Catholicism.

III

Il Modernismo, Dott. Angiolo Gambaro, 1912. (Private Circulation.)

This study, in pamphlet form, is, as its author tells us, the preliminary sketch of a larger work ; it was delivered as a thesis for the laureate at the University of Bologna, 9th December 1911.

It is a scholarly discussion of modernism, in its remote and immediate origins, as in its various characteristics and features. The account of its Italian origins is particularly useful and interesting. The sympathies of the author are sufficiently indicated in the text from Renan he has appended to his lecture :

Deux choses sont certaines ; le catholicisme ne peut périr ; le catholicisme ne peut rester tel qu'il est.

IV

Quelques enseignements du Modernisme, by P. Lobstein, Professor of Protestant Theology at Strasburg. (Émile Nourry, Paris, 1911.)

Professor Lobstein studies Catholic modernism in the works of Tyrrell, and points out the lessons which

Protestantism may learn from him. He does not admit that the Reformed Churches have been without reminders of these truths from their own members; but he holds that Tyrrell has expressed them with a peculiar force and earnestness, while Protestants have tended to overlook them.

The chief points to which he calls attention are :

(1) the conception of solidarity in Catholic modernism;

(2) its sense of growth and evolution in regard to the revelation of the Gospel ;

(3) its notion of religious authority ; and

(4) Tyrrell's distinction between revelation and theology.

v

Ce qu'on a fait de l'Eglise. (Paris, Félix Alcan, 1912.)

An anonymous work of over 500 closely written pages. It is Catholic in profession and spirit, and contains an exhaustive enumeration and exposition of ecclesiastical abuses, intellectual, moral, social, and spiritual. If its length is somewhat intimidating it is nevertheless valuable for reference. Its authors declare their abiding devotion to the Church, and commence the work with an ' Humble Supplique ' to the Holy Father.

vi

A little work which deserves very special attention is the following :

Catholicisme et Critique : Réflexions d'un profane sur l'affaire Loisy, by M. Paul Desjardins. (Cahiers de la Quinzaine, Paris, 1904.)

In the test case of M. Loisy the writer of this acute

and penetrating survey sees displayed the characteristic attitude of the Church of the day towards criticism and science. It is not, he maintains, scholasticism that blocks the way, but intellectual frivolity and sentimentality.

What strikes one, in reading the apologetic works of the nineteenth century, is their worldly tone and absurd confidence. They display a superficial and 'purely literary' education. Nothing could be better calculated to extinguish the taste for exact truth (p. 12).

M. Desjardins shows the origin of this temperament in Chateaubriand, de Bonald and de Maistre, and cites instances of their appeal to sentiment and pious beliefs in defiance of facts. The result is a kind of constitutional inability to appreciate the rights of knowledge and the irresistibleness of facts ; such men live in a world of their own making ; a world which they deem necessary to the existence and preservation of faith :

If a Catholic desire to sanctify himself, he is member of a body—if he desire to seek or to reflect, he is alone.

M. Desjardins then enumerates four main characteristics of M. Loisy's mentality.

1. In criticism he is purely a critic ; in history purely a historian. Scientific truth for him is absolute so far as it is obtainable :

The word boldness *has no meaning when applied, not to opinions, but to the recognition of facts ; it is not truth that is bold, it is minds that are timid* (p. 34).

M. Desjardins maintains that the Abbé Loisy was more free, in scientific research, from the influence of old views than Renan himself :

His historical criticism is as free as it could be ; it is quite free (p. 34).

2. M. Loisy distinguishes the Gospels as historic documents from the Gospels as theological and religious documents.

3. On the theory of doctrinal development, adopted from Newman, M. Loisy finds an answer to the difficulties of the critical position in its relation to faith.

Yet M. Desjardins also perceives that this theory, which is 'an essential piece in the Catholicism of Newman is adventitious to the Catholicism of M. Loisy.'

4. M. Loisy's last characteristic is his firm intention to remain a faithful Catholic :

What a magnificent secret of invulnerability M. Loisy might have revealed to his co-religionists had they sufficiently apprehended actual conditions to profit by it (p. 80).

M. Paul Desjardins concludes his study with some reflections on the total situation. He discusses the various ways in which the Church might possibly have met the intellectual movement of the day. The last and best way would be *to teach young priests . . . how to conduct an honest research* !

. . . . . .

The case of Loisy proves . . . that the need of the Church is not so much to carry on scientific labours, as to raise within herself a public capable of intelligently appreciating those labours (p. 101).

The final lesson is that the Church exists primarily, not to find or seek scientific truth, and still less to repress it, but to minister to the spiritual life of her children. It is not the critics who have robbed the Gospel and Christian tradition of their religious and mystical value.

VII

Modernism, a Record and a Review, by A. Leslie Lilley, one time Vicar of St. Mary's, Paddington, now Canon of Hereford and Archdeacon of Ludlow. (London, Sir Isaac Pitman, 1908.)

This collection of essays is dedicated by its author 'To my dear friend and fellow-countryman, George Tyrrell,' and there is an eloquent 'Epistle Dedicatory.' The volume contains articles and criticisms on various works and events of the modernist campaign. Mr. Lilley possesses a deep and familiar acquaintance with intellectual France, and is singularly competent to treat of the movement as it manifested itself in that country. He is one of the few English writers who has attentively followed its course in the lands of its origin.

VIII

Modernism, by M. Paul Sabatier. (T. Fisher Unwin, 1908.)

In February and March, 1908, M. Sabatier delivered three lectures on modernism in London, by the invitation of the 'Jowett Lectures' Committee. A translation of the same was published by Messrs. Fisher Unwin. In these lectures there was given an account of the movement in France and Italy, an explanation of its character, a justification of its existence. M. Paul Sabatier has had personal acquaintance with many of the modernist leaders, and has devoted a part of his life to the dissemination of their ideas.

IX

Studies in Modernism, by Rev. ALFRED FAWKES. (Smith and Elder, 1913.)

This collection of essays is not strictly confined to the subject of modernism, but contains many articles dealing with its events and persons from the time when it first excited interest in England.

X

I would also gladly call attention to a work whose importance cannot be wholly gauged by the attention it has excited, viz. :

Catholicism and the Modern Mind, by MALCOLM QUIN. (Edward Arnold, 1912.)

It is not a work on modernism, but the author, in his comprehensive advance from Positivism to Catholicism, an advance in which he carried with him the best of what he was leaving, touches inevitably on many of the main modernist problems. He shows that scientifically, morally, socially and spiritually humanity needs the Catholic Church; he shows, too, that the Catholic Church exists in a human environment, and can afford to reject nothing that is, in the best sense, human.

XI

Il Cattolicismo Rosso, GIUSEPPE PREZZOLINI. (Napoli, Riccardo Ricciardi, 1908.)

To the author of this work modernism appears as an essentially equivocal movement, and he is one of the

most able advocates of the view that a Catholic modernist is objectively, if not subjectively, in a dishonest position. The interest of the movement lies, for Dr. Prezzolini, in its ideas, which are immeasurably greater than its men, and than their own conceptions of the questions at issue.

For him Christianity and Catholicism, around which the war is waged, are but passing manifestations of two great abiding human elements; elements contrary to one another, but ever co-existent, the internal and the formal, the individual and the mechanico-social elements of human life. Modernism is a retrograde movement, because it attaches itself to a passing form of this two-fold life. The modernist is like the aristocrat, whose day is gone by, and the movement is a crisis due to 'the idleness of an unemployed nobility.'

In fact, it would have been better for the Catholic Church to have succumbed entirely at the time of the Renaissance, than to have lived on after absorbing its Paganism.

In his criticism of the various currents of modernism there is a bewildering blend of insight and non-comprehension; and in places the author cites anonymous writers, who have no authority to represent anything but their own views, as though the whole cause could be estimated from their statements. He also manifests a certain inadequacy in his treatment of some points on which leading modernists have expended a great deal of thought and careful exposition; thus he does a good deal less than justice to the modernist application of the law of evolution to religious truth, and wholly overlooks Tyrrell's very radical criticism of Newman's theory of development. There was, he considers, only one bond

of union between the different modernist elements, and that was a purely accidental one—namely, the fact that the same authority blocked the way for all of them; a point on which the present work is partially in agreement with him, though for different reasons and with a different conclusion.

The finest point in this work is its expressed reprobation of compromise and half-hearted convictions; and he rightly indicts that form of modernism which seeks, beyond all, to be *modern*.

Thus, in one place, he writes:

I am persuaded that the nobility has perished for lack of nobles; the clergy have failed because they were not religious (p. 64).

And again:

As primitive Christianity shows us, the true tactics of those who believe in themselves consist in conquering, and not in humouring the world.

But modernism is even more hopeless than Catholicism, for it is an effort to prolong the existence of a perishing Catholicism by making it untrue to its own principles. For Catholicism there is but the one alternative, to uphold its own mythology, or to succumb to criticism (p. 238). Modernism has endeavoured to preserve Catholicism, along with a truth that was deadly to it.

XII

Der Katholische Modernismus. Dr. Josef Schnitzer. (Zeitschrift für Politik, Band v., Heft. 1, Berlin.)

Valuable, in particular, as a study of German modernism, and also contains a good analysis of the anti-

modernist oath, with the history of its vicissitudes in Germany.

XIII

Lendemains d'Encyclique, by CATHOLICI. (Paris, Émile Nourry, 1908.)

A scientific and intellectual defence of modernism, somewhat on the lines of the Italian reply, but of a more popular and a less scholarly character.

APPENDIX II

Slighting of Episcopal Authority

I

In the Encyclical *Pascendi* bishops are urged to exert all efforts for the repression of dangerous literature, and are furthermore directed to take no count of the fact that a work may have received the approval of another diocesan.

Nor are you to be deterred by the fact that a book has obtained the Imprimatur *elsewhere, both because this may be merely simulated, and because it may have been granted through carelessness or easiness or excessive confidence in the author, as may sometimes happen in religious Orders.*

II

On the occasion of the decree of 8th August 1910, which prescribed an earlier age for the first communion of children than had been customary in the Church, a French bishop pointed out, in a private letter, the injustice of passing such regulations without any reference to local authorities. In France it implied a disciplinary revolution; yet the new law was imposed without consulting the French episcopacy:

What renders the promulgation of this decree yet more painful, wrote the Bishop in question, *is that it is sprung upon us suddenly, that its absolute and imperious wording*

allows of no attenuation; that it permits of no gradual enforcement and plunges us into a revolution whose violence and dangers its promotors do not appear even to suspect; that in condemning the synodal statutes of all French dioceses, without exception, it slights and neglects the laborious and fruitful labours in which the French episcopacy has, for more than a century, expended its fullest intelligence, zeal, and devotedness, etc.[1]

III

The history of the passing of the Law of Separation in France must be studied elsewhere. It furnishes the most important instance of the slighting of local ecclesiastical authority.

[1] Quoted in *Ce qu'on a fait de l'Eglise*, p. 89.

APPENDIX III

Monsieur A. Houtin

Monsieur Houtin gives a brief, documentary account of his rupture with ecclesiastical authority in a brochure entitled *Mes difficultés avec mon évêque.* (It may be obtained of the author, 18 rue Cuvier, Paris.)

His first difficulties arose from his treatment of the question (a burning one in France) of the apostolic origin of the French sees. He tells us how, being at the time professor in the Seminary of Angers, and having discussed with some freedom, before a learned society, the 'Legend of S. René,' his small pupils were secretly warned against his influence, and would endeavour to rectify the orthodoxy of their master by pious phrases added to their exercises, such as 'S. René, pray for us!'

From the question of the apostolicity of the Churches of France Monsieur Houtin passed to graver and more fundamental ones.

I think, he writes, *there can be nothing sadder in the world than the feelings of a priest when he discovers that his dogmatic theories are mercilessly refuted by certain clearly established facts.*

He had lived in perfect security and finds that there are valid objections to his beliefs.

He thought that the clergy, to whom he proudly belonged, were the guardians of civilisation and of science; he sees that for centuries they have struggled to maintain super-

annuated notions, and to defend their privileges and their revenues in defiance of progress.

Monsieur Houtin endeavoured, for a time, to obtain some humble post where he could prosecute his studies without abandoning the priesthood, but without, at the same time, being exposed to the complications which would ensue on his returning to the diocese of Angers. He relates the failure of these efforts, and the subsequent refusal, on the part of his bishop, to grant him a *celebret*.

APPENDIX IV

D. Salvatore Minocchi

In No. 1 of the *Studi Religiosi* of 1907, Dr. Minocchi defended the decision of the Biblical Commission in regard to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, and also severely criticised Father Tyrrell's much abused letter as contrary to the dogmatic teaching of the Church.

His own attitude towards exegetical and theological subjects made these criticisms somewhat astonishing, and his later development has not served to lessen the astonishment. (See *Rinnovamento*, April 1907, i. pp. 482-485.)

APPENDIX V

STATEMENT MADE BY M. MARC SANGNIER TO THE *Temps* ON THE OCCASION OF THE CONDEMNATION OF THE 'Sillon.'

'SOME months ago the "Sillon" movement was definitively constituted by the creation of a committee of democratic action and a union for civic education. I am merely one of the elected members of the boards of directors of these associations. Of course I agree that this new organisation is no longer in conformity with the indications of the Encyclical, and that it therefore ceases to have any *raison d'être* and must be dissolved. For my own part, I shall carefully avoid in my newspaper, *La Démocratie*, and in the whole of my public life, everything which might appear to be contrary to the teachings of the Church. I know that my attitude will disappoint certain anti-Clericals, and especially, perhaps, certain reactionary Roman Catholics who counted upon my not submitting. But I do not regret having to suffer for my faith, and I hope that God will accept the offering of my grief, since I shall be happy if by this sacrifice I may still serve the cause to which I have devoted my life, and help to give to the Republic a moral inspiration and to the democracy a Christian spirit. Since I am, and intend to remain, above all a Roman Catholic, the question does not even arise whether I shall or shall not submit to the discipline of the Church. Consequently,

and without awaiting more formal orders from the Pope, who in his Encyclical declares that he appeals to me as a father to his child, I shall cease to direct the movement of popular education which, under the name of the "Sillon," trained young Roman Catholics to be good citizens, and tended to develop in them the moral virtues and religious faith. I might have been tempted to abstain from all public action even in the political sphere, for there is nothing more painful than to see yourself attacked with increasing violence by the most opposed parties, who seem to be joining in a common effort to crush you. But I think that that would be cowardly. I intend to labour for the good of my country so long as I have the means.'

APPENDIX VI

FROM THE *Motu Proprio* 'SACRORUM ANTISTITUM,' IN WHICH ARE GIVEN DIRECTIONS FOR THE EXTIRPATION OF MODERNISM AND THE TEXT OF THE ANTI-MODERNIST OATH.

I

Directions for the Administration of the Oath.

IN order, then, that every suspicion of the secret approach of modernism may be prevented, We not only wish that what has been prescribed above should be fully observed, but We ordain, moreover, that individual professors, before commencing their classes at the beginning of the year, should lay before the Bishop the text which each proposes to follow in his course of teaching and the questions and theses to be dealt with; that during the same year he follow the programme marked out in each case; and that if he is found to depart from sound doctrine, this should be considered a sufficient cause why the professor should be immediately removed. Finally, We ordain that, besides the profession of faith, an oath should be taken before his own Bishop in the subjoined form, and bearing the signature of him who takes it.

This oath, following the profession of faith, according

to the form prescribed by our predecessor, Pius IV., of holy memory, with the added definitions of the Vatican Council, must be submitted to their own Bishop by

1. The clerics who are to be promoted to Major Orders, to each of whom must first be given a copy of the profession of faith and also of the form of oath to be pronounced, with the addition of the sanction, so that they shall know it well beforehand, as well as afterwards, in case it should be violated ;
2. Priests destined to hear confessions, and preachers, before they receive the faculty to exercise those offices ;
3. Parish priests, Canons, and beneficed clergy before they take possession of their benefices ;
4. The officials of the Bishop's Curia and of ecclesiastic tribunals, not excepting the Vicar-General and the Judges ;
5. Those who have been chosen to be Lenten preachers ;
6. The officials of the Sacred Congregations and of the ecclesiastical tribunals of Rome, in the presence of the Cardinal Prefect and the Secretary of the Congregation or tribunal ;
7. The Superiors of religious Communities and Congregations and the professors before taking up their offices.

The documents containing the profession of faith and the oath will be preserved in the Episcopal Curia and in the offices of the Roman Congregations. If any one—which God forbid—should dare to violate the oath,

let him be reported immediately to the tribunal of the Holy Office.

II

The Form of the Oath

I firmly embrace and accept, singly and in general, all those points of doctrine which have been defined, approved, and declared by the infallible magisterium of the Church, and particularly those directly opposed to the errors of the day.

First, I declare that, by the light of natural reason, God, the beginning and end of all things, can be certainly known through those things that were made, that is to say, through the visible creation, as a cause is known by its effects, and that His existence can even be thereby demonstrated.

Secondly, I admit of external proofs of revelation, and acknowledge certain divine facts, in particular miracles and prophesies, to be most convincing signs of the divine origin of the Christian religion; and I hold them to be perfectly proportioned to the intelligence of man in all ages, and also in our own day.

Thirdly, I likewise firmly believe that the Church, which is the guardian and teacher of revealed truth, was immediately and directly instituted by the true, historic Christ during His life on earth, and was established upon Peter, the prince of the Apostolic hierarchy, and his successors for ever.

Fourthly, I sincerely accept the doctrine of faith in the same sense and meaning as it has been transmitted to us from the Apostles through the orthodox Fathers; and I therefore absolutely reject the heretical suggestion

of the evolution of dogmas, according to which they would pass from one sense into another different from that which the Church first held; and I likewise condemn the erroneous substitution of a philosophical theory, or of a conception originating in the human conscience by gradual human effort and susceptible of indefinite future progress, for the Divine Deposit, delivered to the faithful custody of the Spouse of Christ.

Fifthly, I positively hold and sincerely profess that Faith is not a blind religious sense springing from the depths of the *sub-conscience*, under the influence of the heart and the impulse of the moral sense and will, but a true assent of the intellect to truth received by the hearing from outside, by which we believe in virtue of the supreme, Divine veracity those things to be true which are said, attested and revealed by the personal God, our Creator and our Lord.

Furthermore, I reverently submit, as is fitting, with my whole soul to the condemnations, declarations, and ordinances which are contained in the Encyclical Letter *Pascendi* and the Decree *Lamentabili*, especially in all that regards the history of dogmas. I thus reject the error of those who affirm that the faith proposed by the Church can contradict history, and that Catholic dogmas, in the sense in which they are now understood, cannot be reconciled with the true origins of the Christian religion. I also condemn and reject the opinion of those who say that the personality of the Christian savant is twofold, that of the believer and that of the historian, so that he may hold as a historian what he denies as a believer, or may build up premisses from which it would follow that certain dogmas were false or doubtful, provided he did not directly deny them.

I likewise condemn that manner of judging and interpreting the Holy Scriptures which, putting aside ecclesiastical tradition, the analogy of Faith and the directions of the Holy See, adheres to rationalistic commentaries, and, not less imprudently than boldly, accepts textual criticism as the one and supreme rule.

I also reject the opinion of those who hold that a professor of history and theology, or a writer on such subjects, should first strip himself of his preconceived opinion of the supernatural origin of the Catholic tradition and of the Divine assistance promised for the perpetual preservation of each revealed truth, and that the writings of the Fathers should be interpreted on strict scientific principles, without any regard to sacred authority, with the same freedom of judgment as is exercised in the investigation of profane documents.

Finally, I declare myself in general free from the error by which modernists hold that there is nothing divine in sacred tradition, or what is worse, interpret it in a pantheistic sense, so that there remains nothing but a simple and naked fact, similar to ordinary historic facts, the continuance, namely, during subsequent ages, in virtue of the industry, skill, and intelligence of men, of a school initiated by Christ and His Apostles.

I also firmly hold and will hold to the end of my life the faith of the Fathers regarding the certain *charisma* of truth which is, was, and ever will be in the *Episcopacy of Apostolic Succession* (Iren. 4 c. 26), so that we cannot believe what seems best and most fitting according to the culture of each age, *but must never believe* or understand the absolute unchanging truth otherwise than as

it was preached by the Apostles from the beginning (Præser, c. 28).

I pledge myself to faithfully, entirely, and sincerely keep and inviolably hold all these things, and never to depart from them in teaching, speaking, or writing.

Thus I promise, thus I swear, so help me God.

INDEX

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