

LIBERALISM
A CRITICISM OF ITS BASIC PRINCIPLES
AND DIVERS FORMS

BY
HIS EMINENCE, LOUIS CARD. BILLOT

TRANSLATED BY
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"Of old time thou hast broken my yoke, thou
hast burst my bands, and thou saidst: I will
not serve." *Jer. II, 20.*

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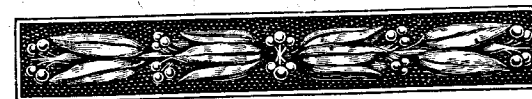
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Approval of His Eminence,
Cardinal Billot*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

IN the days when Louis Cardinal Billot occupied the chair of Dogmatic Theology at the Gregorian University, the writer was a student at Rome, and, while he never had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with this great theologian and metaphysician, he was privileged to be present at the ceremony which raised him to the dignity of the Cardinalate. Moreover, the writer had frequent occasion to note the affectionate esteem and profound admiration with which his great qualities of mind and heart were universally recognized in the years that preceded his elevation to the Sacred College by Pius X. In all who attended his public lectures or who read his great dogmatic tracts, these sentiments were intensified to the point of glowing enthusiasm. It was, in fact, a matter of common agreement then that, for sheer penetration, depth and accuracy of intellectual vision, Cardinal Billot had few, if any equals, among the foremost thinkers of the day. Nor has the lapse of intervening years brought with it any reason for altering or qualifying this verdict of appreciation. It was, therefore, with feelings of genuine pleasure, that the translator, having sought His Eminence's approval of his design to publish an English version of the Critique of Liberalism, received notice of the Cardinal's cordial consent to the project in question.

Translations so often misrepresent rather than express the true sense of an author, that no one is surprised when the privileges of translation are withheld. Hence, the writer could not fail to be touched at this mark of confidence, and to have grave misgivings as to his own ability to measure up to the standard that it implied. Besides, as is usually the case with those whose thought is remarkably keen and clear, the Cardinal's literary style has a precision and beauty that are simply inimitable, so that the translator must needs despair of conveying any adequate impression of the original. Consequently, there remains no other course than to limit one's ambitions to the modest scope of faithfully reproducing sense and substance.

Finally, in addition to the inevitable deterioration in literary form, which is practically inseparable from the process of translation, the reader must bear in mind that the present treatise labors under another disadvantage, that, namely, of being an excerpt from the *Tractatus de Ecclesia Christi* rather than an independent monograph. It comprises, in fact, all the subject-matter treated under Question XVII of that work, and loses not a little of its full significance through the absence of the appropriate contextual framework. The following observations of the writer on the subject of Liberalism aim at clearing up some of the obscurities due to the incomplete structure of the treatise as it stands.

Liberalism may be defined as that system of social philosophy which proposes unrestricted individual liberty as the panacea for all human ills. Liberty, however, is an equivocal term which admits of such a variety of senses that it is open to considerable abuse in the mouths of those who make "liberty a cloak for malice" (*I Peter*, II, 15). Let us begin, therefore, by defining the term in question.

Liberty, in its widest acceptance, signifies indifference or indeterminism with respect to a given course, or with respect to one alternative as contrasted with the other. As such it is opposed to *necessity*, which consists in a *determi-*

nation to one course to the complete exclusion of any alternative. Determination to one thing, however, may arise in three ways, and hence there are three kinds of necessity and three corresponding kinds of liberty:

1. An agent may be determined to one course rather than another, by reason of the force, violence, or coercion exerted by an *external principle*. Such necessity is called *mechanical necessity*, and is characteristic of the movement of all *inert* bodies, and even of living bodies, in the measure that the latter are impotent to resist or evade the stress of external force. Living organisms, however, are, to some degree, exempt from mechanical necessity. This partial exemption is termed the *liberty of spontaneity* and is characteristic of all *vital activity*. Thus the direction taken by a billiard ball is rigidly imposed by *action from without*, that is, by the impact of the cue; but the *uncaged wild beast* is not *mechanically necessitated* in its movements, and, in this sense, it is said to be free. True, the spontaneous movements of an animal are dependent in a general way on the various factors and forces of the environment, but the particular direction which the animal's movement takes is not rigidly imposed, in all its determinate specificity, by the *external forces* of the environment. Hence, that the animal moves in one direction rather than another, it owes to itself and not to the external forces playing upon it from without. This sort of liberty, therefore, consists in exemption from *external coercion*; it is the liberty of the wild beast, and has its widest scope in the jungle and in the forest.

2. Determination to one course, however, may also proceed from an *internal ground or principle*, and then it is called *physical necessity*. The *inner nature* or *instinct* of a brute predetermines its attitude towards a given object or action. Its instincts are *hereditary* and *specific*. Consequently, its conduct exhibits a certain kind of regularity and invariability that makes possible certain definite predictions on the basis of the law of the uniformity of nature, *e. g.* the bee always builds hexagonal cells and never any

other kind. Knowledge of these *inner laws of instinct* enables man to control and utilize the whole animal world. Physical necessity, then, is necessity emanating from an *innate law or principle*. Exemption from such necessity is called *physical liberty* or *liberty of choice*. It is a prerogative which distinguishes man from the irrational brute; for, although, in all his acts, man must necessarily seek *happiness in the abstract*, he is not constrained to accept any *particular form or concrete embodiment of happiness*. Hence with reference to particular goods such as music, kinds of food, styles of architecture and dress, etc., etc., he is *physically free*. This sort of liberty entails, as a necessary sequel, responsibility or accountableness for our conduct. The human will has perfect dominion over its conscious and deliberate acts. Hence such acts are imputable to the will as to their principal cause, and this is the foundation of accountability.

3. Finally, determination to one course rather than another may arise, in the absence of all coercion whether internal or external, by reason of *dependence on the will of another*. This necessity is called *obligation* or *moral necessity*. The superior will, upon which the inferior will is dependent, is termed *authority*. The *moral suasion* which lawful authority exercises through the intimation of rewards and penalties does not annul *physical liberty*. *Morally* the will of the inferior is *bound to obey*, but *physically* it is *capable of disobedience*. Two wills are superior to the will of the individual man, namely, the will of the Supreme Being and Creator of All, and the corporate will of the social organism: hence there are two kinds of authority, *divine and human*. Since, therefore, law is the external expression of authority, there are two kinds of laws, viz. divine laws and human laws. Exemption from all dependence upon authority is called *moral liberty* or the *freedom of independence*. This belongs to God alone, Who, as the Supreme Being and the fount of all human authority, has *no superior* whatever. Not even human authority is mo-

rally free, since even the corporate will of society is subject to the will of God, and this is still more true of the individual man who is subject to both kinds of authority, the human as well as the divine. Hence, it is only, as it were, in the *interstices* existing between the various divine laws and in those existing between the various human laws, that a man can be said to be *morally free and independent*. Thus with respect to actions neither forbidden nor commanded by divine or human law, man may be said to possess moral liberty, but, in the absolute sense, such *independence* is the prerogative of God alone.

From the time of Rousseau onward the philosophers of Liberalism have admired and envied the freedom of the jungle and the forest. Neither have they ceased to affirm man's absolute independence in the moral sense of the word. To emancipate the human individual, not only from external coercion, but also from all forms of moral suasion, has been their constant preoccupation. Their interest, therefore, is confined to the first and the third kind of liberty, but, with respect to the second kind, *i. e.* the responsible freedom of choice, they manifest either cold indifference or positive hostility.

For the liberal, therefore, *personal inclination* is the final criterion and norm of all truth, in the religious and moral, no less than in the scientific and socio-political, orders. His fundamental principle, as formulated by Zubinski, is the following: "There is no absolute self-existent standard of valuation distinct from individual volition" (*Truth*, Nov., 1918). And this is scarcely more than a paraphrase of Martin Luther's famous enunciation of the principle of private judgment: *Sic volo, sic jubeo, sit pro ratione voluntas*—"So I will, so I command, let my will stand for a reason." This gem of wisdom culled from the VI Satire of Juvenal was mouthed repeatedly and with evident relish by the Monk of Wittenberg. It represents the very acme of human perversity, where "reason panders will" (*Hamlet*, Act III, Sc. iv); where thought accommo-

dates volition, where intellect is dethroned and forced to abdicate in favor of caprice. Not the mind, but the will is made the judge of truth; and since absurdity does no violence to the will but only to the intellect, this perversion of their mutual relationship inclines the mind to hug any delusion, however preposterous, provided only it be an agreeable one, even as it likewise closes the mind inexorably against all facts and truths that are unpleasant or suggestive of moral obligations.

Luther has been hailed in song and story as the great *Liberator of the human mind*. He, we are told, unshackled man's intellect and set it free. If so, he perpetrated an atrocity upon nature itself, since the human intellect neither is nor ought to be free. By a fundamental law of nature, the mind is below truth, not above it, and the function of intellect is not to manufacture truth but to accept it, not to create its objects but to manifest them. The will alone is free, but nature intended the will to follow objective truth as presented by reason, and not to make reason the slave of its own caprice. "There is only *one* human faculty," says Gruender, "for which we claim freedom of choice, namely, the rational appetite or will. My eye, when opened and brought into contact with any visible object by means of light, is not free. I may close it and thus make it impossible for me to perceive the beauties of the landscape; but this does not argue liberty of eye, but liberty of that appetitive faculty of mine which controls the use of my eye, namely, my will. The same must be said of the other cognitive faculties of man, the imagination, memory and intellect. Though their operations are to a certain extent under the control of the will, the faculties themselves are not free... There is, I repeat, only one faculty of man which is endowed with freedom: our rational appetency or will. All other faculties, without exception, are governed by... necessity" (*Free Will*, pp. 11, 12). Unfortunately, however, the will can so abuse its freedom as to usurp the

directive function of reason, by making pleasantness instead of evidence the criterion of truth.

When the truths presented by reason entail no obligation and leave the will untrammelled, the liberal experiences no difficulty whatever in conforming to the verdict of reason. When, however, the truths that the mind proposes disturb the equanimity and complacency of his egoism by imposing duties or exacting service, the liberal is inclined to eliminate such unpleasant considerations by forcing his mind to ignore them and to tolerate delusion in their stead. God and social duty are truths of this kind, and the liberal, who is all for emancipation, and who resents restriction under any form, is necessarily the enemy of all authority, both divine and human. Hence from the very nature of things Liberalism is, at least in tendency, an atheistic and antisocial philosophy. Man, however, is essentially a creature and essentially a social being. Consequently, in asserting the complete independence of man and rejecting the restraints of divine and human authority, Liberalism is in conflict with human nature itself. A

The human race has had a beginning. It did not always exist upon this earth. Indeed, geologically speaking, man is of comparatively recent origin, since, as palæontology tells us, no traces of him are found prior to the Pleistocene epoch. On the other hand, mankind cannot have been self-productive, because that would imply that we had anteceded ourselves and acted before we existed. It remains, therefore, that we owe our origin to a Cause outside ourselves, and that createdness belongs to the very conception of human nature. To this First Cause, then, we owe our existence; and the duty of love, reverence, and obedience which nature imposes on us with respect to our parents, who are the *proximate* source of our existence, is incalculably intensified with respect to God, Who is the *ultimate* source of our existence. In repudiating divine authority, therefore, Liberalism repudiates human nature itself, and this is equally true, whether there be question

of the *immediate intimation* of divine authority through *miracles*, or of its *mediate exercise* through human representatives in the *Church*.

In like manner, dependence upon human authority is an essential attribute of human nature; for man is naturally a social being, that is, his very nature demands society as the necessary condition of survival and progress. But the social organism requires the direction of authority to unite the minds and wills of its members in a common effort to promote the public good. Human nature needs ruling and schooling, if it is to develop all its powers and enjoy the benefits accruing from civilization and the division of labor. The individual is not self-sufficient, and, apart from social coöperation under the guidance of authority, he has no other means of supplying his inherent deficiencies. Liberalism, therefore, in so far as it is subversive of human authority, is at war with one of the most fundamental needs of human nature. Even liberty itself is impossible where there is no impartial authority to coërcé might in favor of right, and to protect the weak from the greed and oppression of the powerful. In striking at legitimate authority, therefore, Liberalism proves itself to be an unnatural and inhuman system, which, under the hypocritical pretext of a general emancipation, gives free scope to the exploitation of those who have little by those who have much.

In short, Liberalism is satanic and antisocial. It is satanic because it refuses to bend the knee to God and takes on its own lips the *Non serviam* of the rebel Fiend—"Of old time thou hast broken my yoke, thou hast burst my bands, and thou saidst: I will not serve" (*Jeremias* II, 20). It is antisocial, because it is a philosophy of selfish individualism and inordinate egoism, which disregards the *human rights* of others, and is influenced solely by motives of self-interest and personal gain.

The roots of this pernicious error are to be found in the Protestant Reformation, but in its present form, as a system which actually guides the policies of modern states,

Liberalism owes its origin to Rousseau, Voltaire, and other French philosophers and economists of the period immediately preceding the French Revolution. It was then, too, that the secret conspiracy of *Freemasonry* was organized to disseminate this revolutionary gospel of *liberty, fraternity, equality* throughout the length and breadth of Christendom. Thanks to the assiduous efforts of this organization, modern society has been thoroughly *secularized*, and the influence of the Church upon public life has been reduced, if not to zero, at least to a negligible minimum. The movement has upset and permanently unstabilized practically every government in Europe, and has let loose upon credulous humanity a veritable flood of fallacious emancipations such as *divorce*, "*free thought*," "*free love*," "*free speech*," "*free press*," "*free trade*," *unrestricted competition*, "*open shop*," etc., etc. It must not be supposed, however, that all the previously enumerated reforms of Liberalism are placed in the same category, or that our condemnation is so sweeping as to cover even the good and proper sense that may justly be read into some of these terms. In our ardent devotion to *true* and *effective* liberty we yield to none. But *true* liberty is liberty to do what is *right*. There is no such thing as liberty to do what is *wrong*. Man, indeed, is physically capable of sin, but sin is not liberty; on the contrary, it is enslavement by degrading passions. Similarly, *effective* liberty is more than an empty phrase, more than a paste-jewel of rhetoric designed to embellish the periods of the orator, or to scintillate in the pages of the publicist. It consists in the actual enjoyment by the individual of his right to a reasonable share in the benefits of that public prosperity to which he has contributed through the work of his mind or hands. True and effective liberty, therefore, is essential to human happiness, and the more we have of such liberty, in thought, in speech, in writing, and in conduct, the better it will be for all concerned.

Masonic liberty, fraternity and equality, however, are the veriest caricatures of those sublime ideals to which

Catholic Christianity applies these terms. Is there question of liberty? From the days of her martyrs onward through the centuries of her greatest triumphs, the Church stands forth as the indomitable champion of *liberty of conscience*. None of her conquests have been made through earthly weapons. "The Koran or the sword" is a Mohammedan and not a Christian argument. The Church refuses to receive any but voluntary converts. She has brought light and true liberty to every country that came under the spell of her influence. By delivering mankind from the slavery of sin, and by her teaching that man is made for God alone, and that no man exists exclusively for the benefit of another, she succeeded in freeing from intolerable bondage the unfortunate slaves of pagan Greece and Rome. Without armies or navies, by the sheer moral force of her spiritual majesty alone, she constrained the barbaric despots of Europe to acknowledge the rights of the humblest of their subjects, and to constitutionalize their governments. She stood in awe of neither wealth nor power. She protected the poor from the oppression of the rich by stringent laws against usury, and she enforced the laws of God upon the mighty no less than upon the humble. Is there question of fraternity? The fraternity of Catholicity is the fraternity inculcated by the Parable of the Good Samaritan. In Masonry the duties of fraternity are restricted to the narrow circle of its membership, while all outsiders are regarded as "profane." But Catholic charity is as universal as the name implies. It knows no distinctions of creed, color, rank or race. It is the charity of Him Who said: "Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you: that you may be children of your Father Who is in heaven, Who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust" (*Matt. V, 44, 45*). Is there question of equality? In the Church of Christ there is "neither bond nor free." In her sight, as in the sight of God, all men are equal, since the *ne plus*

ultra of human destiny, the Beatific Vision of God's infinite beauty, is equally open to all, regardless of the natural or artificial distinctions that differentiate men in this world. And yet, though she strenuously upholds this *supernatural equality* of men before God, as well as their *essential equality* (in that all have the same human nature or essence), she insists no less strongly on their *accidental inequality* in natural aptitudes, talents, education and the like, an inequality expressly intended by nature for the purpose of securing the proper division of labor and distribution of functions in that social organism called the state. Hence, while she does not subscribe to the insincere and impossible Liberal program of "*equal rights*," she does insist most vigorously upon that very practicable and desirable ideal of "*equal enforcement of all rights both great and small*," and she views with stern disapproval and sorrow that despicable weakness of modern governments which suffers the rich and the powerful to violate all laws with impunity, and reserves the rigor of punishment exclusively for petty and humble offenders.

Here, however, it may be well to guard against a possible misapprehension. We are not indentifying Liberalism with Freemasonry. It was Liberalism that gave birth to Masonry and not vice versa. Liberalism was a potent factor in human affairs long before Masonry rose to power and prominence. It is, in fact, a spirit, a psychology, a mental attitude, a philosophy, which transcends the limits of any particular organization, nation, or country, and which, to a greater or lesser extent, has dominated human thought for a period of four centuries. In religion it appears as Private Judgment, in science it parades as Free Thought, in economics it goes under the names of Capitalism and Individualism, and in politics it assumes the hypocritical pose of Democracy. In short, wherever and whenever, by the aid of modern euphemisms, the ancient sins of pride, selfishness, greed and snobbery, succeed in masquerading as social virtues, there we have Liberalism.

To-day America is the scene of the clash between two rival systems of socio-political heresy, namely, Liberalism and Socialism. Neither of these alternatives is in harmony with reason or Christian revelation, and Catholics must not permit their horror for Socialism to drive them into the camp of its equally detestable rival, Liberalism. Unfortunately, little has been said or written in this country to put Catholics on their guard against Liberalism. Many of them are aware that Socialism was condemned by Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Rerum novarum*, but they do not know that the same Pope, Leo XIII, in another Encyclical, *Libertas, præstantissimum naturæ opus*, denounced Liberalism as equally dangerous to human society. "The doctrine of Liberalism," he says, "is in the highest degree pernicious to individuals no less than to commonwealths... and leads by the most direct route to tyrannical despotism." We must bear in mind, therefore, that we are between Scylla and Charybdis, and never allow the whirlpool to engulf us whilst we strive to avoid the rock of Socialism. Nor is this fear merely hypothetical, since the blunder has actually been committed by more than one Catholic writer of the present day. In their zeal for the ideals of democracy as opposed to those of socialism, they make the mistake of giving a *carte blanche* to Liberalism. Thus we find even so eminent and respected a Catholic author as Hilaire Belloc devoting an entire chapter of his *French Revolution* to a fervent panegyric on Rousseau's *Contrat Social*, a book which may be aptly styled the very *Bible of Liberalism*. In vain one looks for reservations or qualifications. There is no indication whatever that the aforesaid writer realizes that this work propounds a philosophy at variance with Christianity and common sense, that it was condemned and placed on the Index of Prohibited Books by the Sacred Congregation in 1766, or that it contains a bitter and explicit attack on Christianity in general and Catholicity in particular. One likes to think that this ill-advised encomium was due to an oversight arising from excessive

absorption in a particular viewpoint, especially since Mr. Belloc seems not to be in sympathy with Liberalistic doctrines in his other works. We might mention several Catholic writers who are far more blameworthy in this respect, but we single out this instance to show how even a well-intentioned man may be betrayed on this point into a false position. Catholics, then, in their zeal for democracy and their hostility to socialism, must not suffer themselves to be lured unsuspectingly into the awkward predicament of giving involuntary aid and comfort to Liberalism, a bitter and formidable enemy of the Catholic Church, and of occupying, in the face of Socialism, a position that is wholly and hopelessly indefensible. Socialism can never be refuted from the premisses of Liberalism. The latter dare not face the former in the field of *logic*; to the arguments of the socialist the liberal has no effective answer except the policeman's club.

From the days of the French Encyclopedists to those of Hegel and Spencer, yea even up to the present moment, the liberals have labored assiduously and tirelessly to *secularize* the machinery of education no less than the machinery of government. Outspoken Christians are *personæ non gratae* for the more important chairs of our universities; indeed, infidel and agnostic sentiments are regarded as the special badge of true scholarship and the only reliable evidence of enlightenment. Our liberal capitalists of the Carnegie brand will give money to institutions of learning only on condition that they recant their christianity and make a profession of agnosticism and non-sectarianism in its stead. With such men, the ideologies of educators are valued not so much for their intrinsic merits as for their opposition to traditional Christianity. Consistency is an entirely negligible consideration. That a materialistic objectivist like Jacques Loeb utterly contradicts the position of a subjective idealist like Paulsen, does not disturb the equanimity of the Liberal. He is not interested in *truth*, but only in the exclusion of "*orthodoxy*," "*obscurantism*,"

and "reaction," and so, atomists or monists, they are all the same to him, provided they exhibit the proper degree of scepticism on the subject of religion. God, Free Will, and Immortality are his three bug-bears, and he is willing to pay a handsome salary to any professor who can plausibly disprove their existence. Due moderation, of course, is desirable. A blunt and fanatical attack on these conceptions would be bad taste, and might react unfavorably upon the influence of the instructor. Hence, for such a purpose, the liberal must hire competent and temperate thinkers who can administer atheism and materialism in homeopathic doses. If the victim of modern education must needs be purged of his superstition, there is really nothing gained by making the process painful or alarming. Let it be gradual and diplomatic. Let it proceed in the approved and gentlemanly fashion observed by a G. H. Parker, Professor of Zoology at Harvard, as in the peroration of his Amherst lectures (delivered in 1914), he delicately breaks to the assembled audience of rapt and docile listeners, the news of that very stale and ancient verdict of materialism that man is merely matter, and not a mixture of spirit and matter, as christians have been foolish enough to suppose: "Of the nature of living substance," he explains, "we are just beginning to get a dim appreciation, but when this appreciation grows to something of an understanding, we shall feel, I believe, no more hesitancy in abandoning our old view of the separateness of self and body and accepting that of their common nature than in the past our race had in giving up Dante's paradise and its ten heavens for the depths of blue above us. Organized living material, as we meet it in the cerebral cortex, is so strictly a part of the universe and yet so strikingly different from any other aggregate of material known to us that we can look upon it at present only with vague bewilderment and yet with a hope justified by the past progress of science, that its secrets will be gradually disclosed to us" (*Biology and Social Problems*, p. 130). Here, in language but thinly veiled, we have the liberalistic

conception of "an animalistic man and a mechanistic universe." True, the professor caricatures the position of christian philosophy (which, as matter of fact, teaches the union of the soul and body to form a *single substance and nature*, and which never ascribed personality to the soul apart from the body), but the fact remains that his intention is to reject altogether the existence of a spiritual and immortal principle in man. And to Liberalism such a conclusion is peculiarly gratifying and welcome. For, from the very nature of things, the materialistic conception of human nature is presupposed as an indispensable preamble to any doctrine which makes man a law unto himself and the absolute master of his own destiny. Hence it comes to pass that, wherever Liberalism controls the tongues of educators, the human soul becomes a myth, religion a superstition and the future life a thing to be ridiculed or disregarded. At the door of Liberalism, therefore, we may justly lay the blame of eradicating from the minds and hearts of men their ancient belief in the existence of a future world of justice and retribution.

Now Socialism is not at all adverse to this premiss of Liberalism. In fact, it finds it quite consonant with its own contention. 'You are quite right,' it says to the liberal, 'in rejecting the Hereafter as a groundless superstition. There is really no heaven for man beyond the grave, and for that very reason it behooves all of us to get whatever enjoyment we can out of the present life—all of us, I say; and hence it is high time that this earthly heaven of ours should cease to be monopolized by a few coupon-holding capitalists, and become, instead, the property of the workers, who are equally entitled to happiness here below, and who cannot look forward to compensation for present privations in a future life.' To this logic, Liberalism has, naturally, no other reply than that of recourse to the bayonet and the machine gun.

Again Liberalism poses as the obsequious servant of the popular will. To gain its selfish ends, it flatteringly acclaims

the *people* as the primary source of all power and government in the state. Again Socialism gratefully accepts the admission of Liberalism: 'Yes, indeed,' it says, 'the people are the absolute power on earth and they truly ought to rule themselves, but "the people" means us workers who are 90% of the population, not you financiers and capitalists who amount to only 10%.' Here, as before, logic is wholly on the side of the socialist, and the liberal is compelled to appeal from the arbitration of reason to that of force.

Finally, the liberal is forever prating about human equality and sounding the praises of "equal opportunity." He points with great pride and self-complacency to the empty thrones of Europe, and congratulates himself on having introduced an era of true equality by overthrowing royalty and aristocracy. It is his ardent devotion to the ideal of human equality, he tells us, that makes him the implacable enemy of all distinctions based on birth. Yet, strange to say, his horror of distinctions and inequalities does not seem to extend to those which are based on wealth and property. Indeed, *private property* (being the indispensable basis of his own economic and political privileges) is quite *sacred* in his not altogether disinterested eyes. You may, if you choose, blaspheme against *God*, and he will not only forgive you, but will esteem you all the more as an enlightened and "thinking" man; yet—and this is important to remember—should you be rash enough to raise sacrilegious voice or hand against the "divine right" of his private property, you have committed the one unforgivable sin, and he will ransack the penal code from end to end and fail to find therein a penalty severe enough to fit your crime. History records the fact that, from the days of Robespierre to those of Viviani, the liberals have never scrupled to violate the private-property rights of the Church or of the landed nobility. In fact, the liberal looks upon these confiscations of property (performed in his own interest) as most virtuous acts. But let not the Bolshevik presume, on that account, to threaten the liberal with a dose of his own

medicine. For, in that case, he (the liberal) will forget all about the beauty of human equality, and clamor loudly for the blood of the scoundrel who menaces his own private property. Hence, when the socialist ventures to remind him of the self-evident fact that private property is the source of innumerable social inequalities in the economic, political, and military orders, and to suggest that property-distinctions be abolished in the interest of human equality, the liberal wisely flings logic and consistency to the winds, and is all for lynchings and deportations.

But this brazen inconsistency reveals to us something more than a mere flaw in the logic of the liberal. It gives us a thorough insight into the motive that dominates his conduct and determines his evaluation of life itself. For the liberal, clearly, the whole point of life lies in the possession of fine vesture, sumptuous dwellings, and broad estates, in the excitement of the thrilling conquests of finance, politics, sport and war, in the cultivation of art, literature, science and music, in the enjoyment of theaters, banquets, concerts and novels, in the pursuit of diversions, amusements and pastimes of every conceivable variety and kind, or briefly, in the quest of all the transitory pleasures of this world, whether of the purely æsthetic, or of the depraved and brutish type—"For they said, reasoning with themselves, *but* not aright. The time of our life is short and tedious, and in the end of man there is no remedy, and no man hath been known to have returned from the nether-world: for we are born of nothing, and after this we shall be as if we had not been: for the breath in our nostrils is smoke: and speech a spark to move our heart, which being put out, our body shall be as ashes, and our spirit shall be poured abroad as soft air, and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist, which is driven away by the beams of the sun, and overpowered with the heat thereof: and our name in time shall be forgotten, and no man shall have any remembrance of our works. For our time is *as* the passing

of a shadow, and there is no going back of our end: for it is fast sealed, and no man returneth. Come therefore, and let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures as in youth. Let us fill ourselves with costly wine, and ointments: and let not the flower of time pass by us. Let us crown ourselves with roses before they be withered: let no meadow escape our riot. Let none of us go without his part in luxury, let us everywhere leave tokens of joy: for this is our portion and this is *our* lot. Let us oppress the poor just man, and not spare the widow, nor honor the ancient grey hairs of the aged. But let our strength be the law of justice: for that which is feeble, is found to be nothing worth" (*Wisdom*, II, 1-11).

The neo-pagan liberal recalls the features of his ancient pagan prototype. What is it to him that his selfish enjoyment is paid for by the sweat and misery of many? In his insatiate thirst to acquire and accumulate the means of pleasure, he brooks no restraint, but insists that the state shall stand as indifferent spectator or referee, forbidden to show any pitying partiality for the weak, until the Darwinian struggle for existence has crowned the fittest with triumph and left the vast multitude of "unfit" prostrate beneath their feet. In time, the liberal's greed infects others, imitators spring up on all sides, and social life gradually degenerates into a free-for-all fight of all against all.

Verily, Liberalism is a fair-seeming Circe who has transformed men into pigs, and life itself into a pig-stye, where the big swine ruthlessly trample upon their smaller brethren, and thrust both forefeet into the trough in order to guzzle as large as possible a portion of the pig-wash. Well does it merit the scathing indictment that Thomas Carlyle brought against it when he branded it a "Pig Philosophy":

1. "The universe, so far as sane conjecture can go, is an immeasurable Swine's trough, consisting of solid and liquid and of other contrasts and kinds; especially consisting of

attainable and unattainable, the latter in immensely greater quantities for most pigs.

2. Moral evil is unattainability of Pig's wash; moral good attainability of ditto.

3. What is Paradise or the State of Innocence? Paradise called also State of Innocence, Age of Gold, and other names, *was* (according to pigs of weak judgment) unlimited attainability of Pig's wash; perfect fulfilment of one's wishes, so that pig's imagination could not outrun reality: a fable and an impossibility, as pigs of sense now see.

4. Define the whole duty of pigs. It is the mission of universal pighood and the duty of all Pigs at all times, to *diminish the quantity of unattainable*, and *increase that of attainable*. All knowledge, and device and effort ought to be directed thither and thither only. Pig science, pig enthusiasm and devotion have this one aim. *It is the whole duty of pigs*.

5. Pig poetry ought to consist of the universal recognition of the *excellence of Pig's wash and ground barley*, and the felicity of pigs whose trough is in order, and who have had enough. *Humph!*

6. The pig knows the weather. He ought to look out what kind of weather it will be.

7. Who made the pig? Unknown;—perhaps the Pork-butcher.

8. Have you law and justice in Pigdom? Pigs of observation have discerned, that there is, or was once supposed to be, a thing called justice. Undeniably, at least, there is a sentiment in pig nature called indignation, revenge, etc., etc., which, if one pig provoke another, comes out in a more or less destructive manner; hence laws are necessary—amazing quantities of laws. *For quarrelling is attended with loss of blood, of life—at any rate, with frightful effusion of the general stock of Hog's wash, and ruin (temporary ruin) to large sections of the universal Swine's trough*. Wherefore let justice be observed, so that quarrelling be avoided.

9. What is justice? Your *own share of the general Swine's trough*; not any of *my share*.

10. But what is '*my share*'? Ah! there, in fact, lies the grand difficulty upon which pig science, meditating this long while, can settle absolutely nothing. *My share*? Hrumph! my share is, on the whole, whatever I can contrive to get without being hanged or sent to the hulks. For there are gibbets, treadmills, I need not tell you, and rules which lawyers have prescribed." (*Latter Day Pamphlets*, pp. 315-317.)

The picture is not a nice one to contemplate, but, however revolting, it is by no means overdrawn. It portrays with faithful exactitude the frightful mess which Liberalism has made of a world that abandoned the Church in order to embrace its new gospel of social salvation. And now that world is wallowing in the mire and feeding on the husks of swine! Liberalism has degraded the masses. Even the agnostic now confesses it. "I hear no laughter among the rich," says Santayana, "which is not forced and nervous. I find no sense of moral security amongst them, no happy freedom, no mastery over anything. Yet this is the very cream of liberal life, the brilliant success for the sake of which Christendom was overthrown, and the dull peasantry elevated into factory-hands, shop-keepers, and chauffeurs. When the lists are open to all, and the one aim of life is to live as much as possible like the rich, the majority must needs be discouraged. The same task is proposed to unequal strengths, and the competition emphasizes the inequality. There was more encouragement for mediocre people when happiness was set before them in mediocrity, or in excellence in some special craft. Now the mass, hopelessly out of the running in the race for wealth, falls out and drifts into squalor... The liberal system, which sought to raise the individual, has degraded the masses; and this on so vast a scale and to so pitiable a degree, that the other element in liberalism, philanthropic zeal, has again come to the fore" (*The Dial*, Oct. 1921).

But Liberalism has not only squandered a heritage of which it robbed the poor. With respect to posterity, its boasted "progress" has been purchased at a frightful cost. Wood, coal, oil, and all the natural resources, on which the very existence of future generations will depend, have been senselessly and wastefully consumed by these promoters of modern progress, so that the time is probably not far distant when all these founts of energy available to man will disappear from the face of the earth. "Simultaneously," says Ralph Cram, "man has been dissipating the stored-up energy of the world through his mastery of thermodynamics and his precarious dominion over electrical forces, at such a rate that physical potential has been degraded in a hundred years more than in the preceding hundred centuries. Of what becomes of this fabulous force, what the permanent contributions may be to human life, he cares little. It is sufficient to him that he is the arbiter of this gigantic power, and if it is exploited and dissipated, with nothing of lasting value to show, he cares no more than any other type of spendthrift" (*The Nemesis of Mediocrity*, p. 47). *Post nos diluvium!*

And what shall we say of the *moral heritage* of humanity (that grand contribution of Christianity), a heritage of mutual good will, charity and confidence among men, of christian purity and christian morals, of christian chivalry and christian honor? This, too, Liberalism has not only cruelly exploited, but deliberately undermined and destroyed, leaving in its place the poison of class-hatred, animalism, egoism, and perfidy. For the eternal verities of the Decalogue it has given us the comfortable maxims of expediency and opportunism. For virtue it has substituted respectability and prophylaxis. Under its corroding influence, human justice has become the handmaid of finance, and human science the idolatrous devotee of Mars and Mammon, while journalism has degenerated into an infamous sycophancy that "calls evil good and good evil." For the "priestcraft" of

former times, it has substituted a new and beneficent type of leadership, exemplified in the corporation-lawyer who has made of our courts of law a byword and a hissing; in the venal editor who prostitutes his pen for hire; in the captain of industry who exacts his pound of proletariat flesh in the name of the little tin business-god, Efficiency; in the banker, whose usury has a Midas-touch that can turn the very life-blood of human hearts into tawny coin. "These be thy gods, O Israel!" Of the bloody Armageddons and fearful social cataclysms that needs must follow in the wake of this moral anarchy, when human nature has been outraged beyond the point of endurance, the liberal is loath to think. The optimism of "laissez faire" is as unserious as a baby that giggles and crows on the brink of a dizzy precipice; it has eyes that see not and ears that do not hear. Even if a day of reckoning be inevitable, the Liberal is sure that it will never dawn for him, and, as for future generations, well, like Cain, he is not his brother's keeper—*Post nos diluvium!*

What, then, is the remedy? Evidently, the last vestige of Liberalism must be eliminated from human society before it can be restored to health. But how is this to be accomplished? Socialism proposes to reform matters by building uniform stalls around the Liberal swine-trough, thus forcing the big pigs to eat peaceably beside their smaller brethren, a measure which, it is claimed, would ensure the conservation and just distribution of the pig-wash. And the Church of Jesus Christ? Ah! she would fain *undo the detestable work of Circe altogether*. To disenchant men from the fatal spell of materialism, to recall them to a sense of their human dignity and supernatural destiny, to win them to the ideals of unselfishness and self-sacrifice, to persuade them to relinquish what is trivial for "the one thing necessary;" in a word, to bring back the prodigal from the swine-trough to his Father's House, such is her program. To-day, as in the past, her clarion call of *Sursum corda*:

"Your hearts on high!" rings in the ears of Circe's sodden victims. God grant that, e'er it be too late, they may heed that call and awaken from their lethal enchantment, for "it is written: Not in bread alone doth a man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

GEORGE BARRY O'TOOLE.

St. Vincent Archabbey,
Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord,
January 6, 1922.



FOREWORD

Concerning the Error of Liberalism and its Various Forms

LIBERALISM, in so far as it involves an error in matters of faith and religion, is a multiform doctrine which, to a greater or lesser degree, emancipates man from God, from His law and from His revelation, and, in consequence, releases civil society from all dependence upon religious society, that is, separates it from the Church which is the guardian, interpreter and teacher of the divinely-revealed law.

Liberalism, I said, in so far as it imports an error in matters of faith and religion. Because, if one weighs the value of the term, it is easy to perceive how not exclusively in those things which pertain to religion and relate to God Liberalism does or might exist. True, emancipation from God was the purpose principally intended, for they "have taken counsel together against the Lord and against His Christ," saying, "let us break their bonds asunder; and let us cast away their yoke from us." (Psalm II, 2,3.) But to this

very end they have laid down a general principle, which transcends the limits of the religious order, and pervades and embraces every department of human association. Now this principle is the following: that Liberty is the fundamental good of man, sacred and inviolable, which it is unlawful to coërcé in any way; and therefore, that this unrestricted Liberty must be established: 1. as the immovable rock upon which everything that pertains to human fellowship must be organized *de facto* (as a matter of fact); 2. as the inflexible standard according to which everything must be judged *de jure* (by right); that, finally, only that is to be considered the equitable, just, and perfect condition of society which rests on the aforesaid principle of inviolate individual Liberty—iniquitous and perverse, any which is otherwise. This is what the promoters of the memorable Revolution of the year 1789 excogitated, and whose bitter fruit is being reaped throughout almost the entire world to-day. This is what holds the first, the middle, and the last place in the celebrated "Declaration of the Rights of Man." This is what for those fanatic visionaries served as a basis for the reconstruction of society from its very foundation upward, in the political as well as in the economic, the domestic, and especially the moral and religious, orders.

It will be advantageous, therefore, to begin with a criticism of the general principle of Liberalism considered in itself and with reference to the manifold applications which it has in every order of things. Starting from this point we shall have easier access to the more particular consideration of those things wherewith the present discussion is concerned, namely, religious Liberalism and its various forms, according to that which is proposed in the title of this foreword.



PART I



Concerning the Fundamental Principle of Liberalism and its Manifold Applications

THE liberty, of which there is question here, is not precisely that of which the metaphysicians treat, namely, the power of free choice, consisting in the perfect dominion which the human will has over its own acts, that is, in its active indifference—whereby it is able to will or not to will, to will this or to will that. For this sort of Liberty, which is freedom from intrinsic necessity, which entails conscientious obligations, and which binds us to the observance of the moral law, Liberalism cares not at all, and, in fact, so little does it care that many of its followers are absolute materialists, not recognizing in man anything beyond the principles of spontaneous movement according to instinct and physical determination. At all events, whether they admit or do not admit free will, understood in its proper and metaphysical sense, they do not see in it the object of their idolatry, but rather in the power to use one's own activity, whatever that activity may be, without any exterior coërcitive impeding its autonomous expansion. This Liberty, therefore, is freedom from all interference; and not only from absolute (mechanical) coäction, which is exerted by violence, and can, in consequence affect only external actions, but also from relative coäction, which is instilled by intimidation and through fear of laws, by the threat of penalties, and through social dependencies and ties, and, in a word, by bonds of any kind whatsoever whereby a man is prevented from acting, or being able to

act, in all things according to his own individual inclination. Such Liberty, they maintain, is the good *par excellence*, to which all else must yield, those things, perchance, alone excepted, which are requisite for the purely material order in the Commonwealth; the superlative good, to which all other things must be subordinated in order to preserve it intact, and which of necessity must be placed beneath all social construction, if the latter is to measure up to the true standard of goodness and equity. It will be well, therefore, to determine in a few words what verdict must be passed upon this first principle of Liberalism.



CHAPTER I

THESIS: *That the fundamental principle of Liberalism is inherently absurd, contrary to nature and chimerical.*

It is absurd I say, from the very outstart, in that it wishes the principal good of man to consist in the absence of every bond that in anywise coerces or restricts Liberty. As a matter of fact, the good of man cannot be understood otherwise than under these two aspects: to wit, either as an end in itself, or as a means to an end. Now in which of these two categories, I ask, will you place Liberty? Not in the former, I fancy. Because no matter what it pleases you to assign as an end in itself, you will surely at least concede me this, that Liberty cannot be that end.

For Liberty signifies some sort of power or faculty of acting, and every power or faculty exists, not for its own sake but for the sake of something else, at least for the sake of its operation or action; which again, in the present life, consists exclusively in the pursuit of some good, whether true or apparent. Evidently, therefore, it remains to be said that Liberty belongs to the class of goods which are means to an end. St. Augustine distinguishes such goods into the following three categories, namely, the supreme goods, the mediocre, and the minimal; and that by a very evident and obvious distinction. The supreme goods are those which no one uses ill (abuses); the mediocre and minimal goods are those which admit of both a good and a bad use, with this sole difference, that the mediocre goods are nevertheless necessary for a good life, while the minimal goods are in no wise necessary therefor. "The virtues, therefore," he says, "*by which we live aright, are the great goods; the species of corporeal things without which we can live aright are the minimal goods; the powers of the soul, without which one can not live aright are the mediocre*

goods." (Augustine, *de Lib. Arb.*, l. 2, c. 19.) Now from this it is evident that free will can by no means be classified among the supreme goods, but rather among the mediocre goods, because although there can be nothing praiseworthy or honorable in life without free will, neither is there any kind of crime or vice or harmfulness to one's self or one's neighbor, into which it may not plunge headlong through bad use. Therefore Liberty is in dire need of barriers lest it fall over the precipice, and the stronger the barriers whereby it is confined within the sphere of good for which it is ordained, so much the better is its condition. Whoever denies this by assenting to the fundamental principle of Liberalism is compelled to choose between two equally absurd alternatives. Either he will impudently affirm that Liberty in the present life is indefectible (incapable of abuse), or he will be brazen enough to assert that it would be well, nay best, if erring Liberty were to be sacredly and inviolably protected so as to facilitate even its gravest abuses. And what else is this than the very climax of insanity?

But these are merely the beginnings of this insanity. Further progress is evident in that which they add: namely, that everything else is to be subordinated to the good of individual Liberty; that, therefore, all those things which in any way limit or impede individual Liberty are inimical and contrary to human perfection; and because, as is manifest, many such fetters arise from social relationships, therefore the ideal state of man is to be found only in an *un-social* condition, where the law of pure and perfect *individualism* would reign supreme. And this, indeed, was the monstrous conception of the Revolution and its philosophers, who also, in order to give their abstract theories the semblance of justification, imagined the existence of a certain primitive condition in which man actually lived outside society, accommodating to this, their fiction, the traditions of nations concerning a Golden Age, a Saturnian Reign, a Paradise of Innocence, etc. For what, think you,

was the primeval Golden Age? An age of absolute liberty, which gradually declined into an age of iron, as men came more and more to coalesce into society. Do you not see the principle of Liberalism spontaneously and of an inevitable necessity ending in that which is contrary to nature? If there is anything evident, if there is anything manifest, if there is anything clearer than the noon-day sun, surely it is this that man is born into society, that man is by nature social, that the social state is for man the law of life, as even the needs of man's corporeal existence abundantly testify: "For other animals nature has prepared food, garments of fur, means of defense, such as teeth, horns and hoofs, or at least swiftness in flight. But man is so constituted that, none of these things having been prepared for him by nature, reason is given him in their stead, reason by which through his handiwork he is enabled to prepare all these things, for whose preparation, however, one man does not suffice. For no one man left to himself could enjoy a sufficient life. It is, therefore, natural to man to live in the society of many. Moreover, in other animals there is inborn a certain natural economy respecting those things which are useful or hurtful, as the lamb by nature knows the wolf to be its enemy. Some animals also by natural instinct are aware of the medicinal properties of herbs and of other things which are necessary for life. Man, however, has a natural knowledge of those things which are necessary for life only in general, as being able to arrive at the knowledge of the particular necessities of human life by way of deducing the same from universal principles. It is not, however, possible for one man alone to attain to the knowledge of all these things by his own individual reason. Therefore it is necessary that man should live in the society of his fellows, so that one can aid another and that different men can engage in different occupations, specializing in the inventions of reason, for example, one in medicine, another in this, another in that profession, etc." (S. Thom. *de regim. princ.* l. 1, c. 1.) But

dreaming sophists are not deterred by considerations of this sort. For the immovable principle, which they also do not blush to derive from the law of nature, forbids this. Hence they think that they are uttering a great principle when they say: Man is born free; therefore anything that restricts this native liberty is contrary to nature. Just as if one were to say: Man is born naked, therefore it is contrary to nature that he is covered with clothes. But, though we are born naked, still we are living in clothes, and I do not fancy that the madness of their insanity would ever go so far as to say that the true perfection of nature has survived only in those tribes which in Australia and Africa live in the same attire in which they came forth from their mothers' womb. Moreover, what, may I ask, does this mean, that man is born free, except that he is born without impediments to the expansion of his own activity? And with similar liberty nature has endowed the animals as well as plants, in such wise, however, that for them, as we have said above, from the moment they are born, nature provides garments and means of defense as well as other necessities. Hence, by an instinct of nature, from their very inception they shun what is contrary, and like what is conducive to their welfare, without any previous direction or instruction. Not so, however, the sons of men, not so. "Therefore, the Lord shows that herein the lilies of the field and the birds of the air are better off than man, referring the latter's indigence even to that most opulent King Solomon who enjoyed such exceptional abundance. "Behold," He says, "*the birds of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. Consider the lilies of the field, how they labor not, neither do they spin.*" Afterwards He adds: "*I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these;*" as if he, Solomon, stood in greater need in respect to victuals, attire and covering than the plants and animals." (S. Thom. *de regim. princ.* l. 4, c. 2.) And so it is in truth. The brute animals would be in a better condition than men, nay incomparably

so, if once we were to suppose that man is not a social or political animal by an institution of nature, and that he ought not to be compensated by the benefit of society for that which nature has denied to the individual as such. For the rest, are we really serious or do we aim at being facetious? For, that the liberty wherewith men are born is nothing more nor less than the most ample liberty of passing from the womb to the tomb, is perfectly plain and manifest. Insensate sophists, who has caused you to become so demented, that while continually appealing to nature, you perpetrate so many and such great outrages against nature?

But if the fundamental principle of Liberalism begins with an absurdity, and if it thereupon proceeds to that which is contrary to the most evident intention of nature, what is to be said of those chimeras which it has laid down and defined in social matters, after the fashion of a norm or directing idea? For willy-nilly, the necessity of living in society is imperative, and whether it be fortunate or unfortunate, there is now no going back to that primitive state wherein man lived as a child of the forest. Hence it behooved the philosophers of Liberalism to be solicitous for such a social structure as would leave intact the palladium of liberty, and combine together two things, which might perhaps have been considered incompatible, namely, *individualism* and the *social organism*. Et hic opus, hic labor! But nothing is hard for visionaries, nothing is hard for those who build in the air. And lo, Liberalism has ready at hand to show thee a society planned according to the rule of goodness and equity, and it, born of the *social contract*, as they call it. Because, if society is in nowise natural to men, nay if it be positively contrary to the intention of nature, according as, and to the extent that, it is opposed to the inalienable rights of liberty, then there is naught whereby it can be at all justified, except it take its origin from liberty, and is artificially constructed, premeditatedly and by express intention, for the supreme

and sole purpose of preserving liberty intact. Think, therefore, of an initial pact whereby men agree freely among themselves concerning their association under a common government and a common law. Think, especially, of the conditions of the pact being such that they exactly correspond to the end in view and to the will of all the parties to the pact. Moreover, the will of those participating in the pact is not to renounce their liberty, but merely to join together their individual liberties, so that from these joined together shall result one total liberty. Liberty is that which alone is sought, which alone is pooled in common, because all things are from liberty, by liberty, and for liberty. Of no importance, then, socially speaking, are those differences which differentiate one man from another, of no importance those natural and historical dependencies, of no importance the ties of family or those of nationality, of no importance the diversity of talents, of aptitudes, of education, of culture, of acquired rights, as they are called, or any other things of this kind. All these things are entirely extraneous to the matter of the social contract. Liberty is at stake, there is question only of liberty, and nature has endowed each individual man with equal liberty.

Hence each and every man comes into society on absolutely even terms with his fellows. Count now the individuals, and that will be the number of equal suffrages or votes: which, if they express the unanimous voice, nothing is left to be desired; if not, there remains the numerical majority (one-half plus one), which expresses the general will, and expressing the general will, it will express also the general liberty. This is the law of the community reduced to the rigorous principles of philosophy at last. And does it not seem most wonderful, most admirable?

However, not perhaps so wonderful, that amid the glare of philosophical light you may not discern the full and perfect exemplar of a chimera. Two things especially belong to the conception of a chimerical system: that it should not agree with any real beings or things; and that

the very conceptual elements of which it is composed should not cohere for the purpose intended, but rather tend to its destruction and ruin. Now both of these things are easily discernible in the system of Liberalism.

In the first place the system certainly does not correspond to real men as they exist in flesh and bone. I waive the point that no one, with the exception of a dreaming philosopher, ever thought of entering human society by means of a free pact or contract. I pass over the fact that the absolute necessity of society, a necessity antecedent every possible use of liberty, will be obscure only to one who perchance has fallen down from the clouds, and whom society has not received as a baby, nor nourished as a child, nor whom, finally, during his life-time, society has not waited upon with benefits of every kind and of absolute necessity. What of that which the very defenders of the social contract themselves testify, herein bearing witness to the truth? For how is the entrance into society free, if, by their own confession, there is now no way of returning to the state of original liberty? But overlook, if you please, all these things. Take only the social element which is adopted as the basis of the system. This element is the individual man, stripped of all differences of place, time, race and nationality, severed from all religious, domestic, corporate and political ties whether created or acknowledged as a consequence of his natural and historical evolution down to the present day. Such a one is a man who is neither modern nor ancient, neither a Westerner nor an Oriental, neither a father nor a son, neither a youth nor an old man: in a word, a man always the same in all individuals, always equal, having neither in a greater nor lesser degree the power of reasoning and of acting freely. But such a man is a mere abstraction; such a man is a merely conceptual being; such a man has his place in the tree of Porphyry, but not in the sphere of realities. And if he has no place in the sphere of realities, then neither has

that chimerical system which has constructed him for its own special use.

"Apply the 'social contract,' if it seems good to you, but do not apply it to any other men than those for whom it was made. These are abstract men who do not belong to any century or country, pure entities conjured up by the wand of Metaphysics. In effect, they have been formed by expressly prescinding from or eliminating all the differences which distinguish one man from another, a Frenchman from a Papuan, a modern Englishman from a British contemporary of Cæsar, and only that element is considered which is common to all. There is left nothing but an exceedingly scanty residue, an extract extremely attenuated, of human nature, that is to say, according to the definition of the time, a being who possesses the desire of happiness, and the faculty of reasoning, nothing more and nothing less. On this pattern are cut many millions of beings absolutely alike. Next, by a simplification quite as glaring as the first, they are supposed to be all independent, all equal, without a past, without kin, without engagements, without traditions, without customs, like so many arithmetical units, all separable, all equivalent, and one has to imagine them as assembled together for the first time, and coming to terms with one another for the first time. From the nature which is supposed to be theirs, and from the situation which has been created for them, there is no difficulty whatsoever in deducing their interests, their will and their contract. But from the fact that the contract is suitable to them, it by no means follows that it would be suitable to others. On the contrary, it follows therefrom that it will be suitable to no others, and that the unsuitableness will be extreme should one attempt to impose it upon living people; because it will have for measure the immensity of distance which separates an unsubstantial abstraction, a philosophical phantom, an unreal image without substance, from a real and complete man." (Taine, *La Révolution*, Tom. 1, l. 2, c. 2.)

"The constitution of 1795, just like its predecessors, is made for *Man* as such. But *Man* does not exist at all in this world. I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc., but as to *Man*, I, for one, protest that I have never met him in all my life; if he exists he is to me utterly unknown... But a constitution that is made for all nations, is not made for any nation; it is a pure abstraction, a scholastic elaboration made to exercise the mind according to an idealistic hypothesis, and which addresses itself to *Man*, in the imaginary regions which he inhabits." (De Maistre, *Considérations sur la France*, c. 6.)

But the chimerical character of the system reveals itself still more in this, that, while constructed for the express purpose of preserving liberty intact, in reality, it tends entirely to the destruction and ruin of liberty. This appears at once and very clearly in the case of the minorities, which are suffered to fall under the tyrannical dictation of the prevailing number, without any defense, and without any possible recourse. And yet the ideal society was to be such as would gather into one the individual liberties, so that each individual in obeying the law, would obey his own sweet will, expressed in the law and represented by the law! Nay, not only as regards minorities, but also in respect to the very majorities themselves, the same thing will appear at first glance. Because the majorities, while they prevail as regards mere arithmetical quantity, do not excel as a rule in sound reason, in wisdom or in independent judgment, nor in any or all of those things which really constitute them as men in their own right. And if one is not a total stranger to human affairs, he will easily see that such multitudes, if perchance they be admitted to the making of a law, are wont to become the dupes of demagogues, agitators, and bosses, or, to use one word, of the oligarchies which, born of individualism, subjugate those majorities and thus use them as the instruments of their domination to further their own private interests and their own personal ambition. Hence, from first to last, that

boasted liberty is, by virtue of this system, resolved into the privilege of a few demagogues, whilst for all others there remains either open oppression or slavery veiled beneath the lying appearance of emancipation. Such, I say, is the conclusion to which even a summary examination of the system leads. That, however, in view of the gravity of the matter, this may become more manifest and evident, and to the end that simultaneously it may become more and more plain, how pernicious, how noxious, how deadly is the fundamental principle of Liberalism, even in respect to the simple purpose of civil life, it will be well to take up its particular applications. This, indeed, is done in the chapter which follows.

CHAPTER II

THESIS: That the principle of Liberalism, in its application to human affairs, entails the disgregation and dissolution of all social organs, introducing everywhere the struggle for life, instead of concord for life, which alone is the law of life. And that it extinguishes all real liberties by the constitution of the despotic State, absolute, irresponsible, omnivorous, to whose will and omnipotence there is no limit.

To begin with, one should note that for a perfect and integral application of a chimerical and unnatural principle there is of course no scope whatsoever. '*Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*'—'*Though you drive out nature with might and main, nevertheless it will return*'; nor will it ever be in the power of visionary philosophers to construct a real society in conformity with their ideologies, after the

manner that a potter has power to fashion the clay, to make at will any kind of a vessel from one and the same mass of material. For as evil, if it were integral and perfect, would not even be able to sustain itself, but would fall of its own weight, so also every system that is contrary to nature is in its integrity unbearable, and thus can not be applied without meeting causes or agencies of various kinds which obstruct it, and react against it, and partially cancel the pernicious force of its principles. We must not, therefore, measure the noxiousness of Liberalism solely from the effects which we have seen thus far in real life. We must take into account what the application of the system necessarily implies, also what evil it has in fact introduced in proportion to its actual influence, that is, considering the greater or lesser latitude allowed it by the greater or lesser resistance, either of religious faith, or of mere natural righteousness, or even of the simple instinct of self-preservation, according to the different circumstances of places and persons.

Having taken into consideration, as it is only fair to do, this preliminary reflection, consider now in the first place how the application of the fundamental principle of Liberalism imports of its very nature the destruction of every minor society, natural or connatural, which, existing within the domain of the State, is distinct from the State or at least not receiving its law from the State. This, indeed, becomes most evident 'a priori' from what has been said, and it becomes still more manifest 'a posteriori,' if you consult the legal codes which have taken their origin from Liberalism, that is, from the principles of the French Revolution.

In the first place, I say, it is made evident from what has already been said. For Liberalism, for all that it is worth, intends the emancipation of the individual, for whom it desires to preserve absolutely intact that supreme and principal good of man which is Liberty. Moreover, it maintains that society is repugnant to the emancipation

referred to Liberty
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LIBERALISM

Society is
of the individual—society, that is, organized society, society formed on the basis of stable ties and laws, society, in fine, really deserving of the name society—that one society and it alone excepted, which has been constituted according to the norm of the principles of the *social contract*. Again, only that society is the society of the *social contract*, which gathers together individuals like so many arithmetical units entirely equal among themselves, and in every way independent of one another, under one common government emanating from the sum-total of the individual wills, to which society they give the name of State. The consequence, therefore, is that Liberalism is doomed, either to repudiate itself, or to proceed towards the dissolution of every society distinct from the State, not stopping a moment in its nefarious work of destruction or pulverization, until it reigns over perfectly disunited monads which are merely aggregated together in the same way that grains of corn are aggregated in the ear. Such, surely, are the conclusions to which the principles of the system lead with inescapable logic. But how they have been translated from the order of ideas into the order of facts, and still continue from day to day to be so translated, is worth our pains to set forth briefly.

The first of all societies is the society which has been instituted by God Himself, the Author of nature, a society which is beneficent among all others, anterior to all political society, attuned to the more intimate affections of the human heart, and demanded by the more evident needs of both our moral and our physical life: I mean domestic society, commonly known as the family. It, then, first, too, of all, will experience the adverse blows of Liberalism, which latter, as far as in it lies, by every means and device, by every effort, by every resource at its disposal, purposes the destruction and elimination of the family, so that one might well say that, for the legislators of the Revolution, this in truth was the Carthage to be destroyed. And Liberalism destroys it first in its foundation. For the foundation of

SOCIALLY DISRUPTIVE

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the family is marriage, and that indissoluble marriage, through an indivisible obligation binding in common both the man and the woman unto the very end. Moreover, how contrary such an obligation is to the liberty and emancipation of the individual, is easy for all to see at a glance. Nevertheless, certain prejudices still continue to be rooted in the minds of men, which do not allow the intended reformation to be carried out hastily. Hence, Liberalism will begin with the reduction of marriage to the status of a mere civil contract, sanctioned only by the civil law. Then, from civil marriage there will be an easy transition to legal divorce, and not without reason, because whatever can be bound by the authority of the civil law can also be dissolved and rescinded by the authority of that selfsame law. Finally, from legal divorce a gradual and imperceptible descent will be prepared to "free love," in which is to be found the most complete application of "the principles," and when this shall come to pass, there will not survive any more recognizable vestige of the family than exists among the brute beasts. You see, then, how Liberalism intends by every means and device to accomplish the destruction of the family by attacking its ultimate foundation. It likewise intends to destroy the family in its authority. In the first place, it does so by means of laws depriving the father of the family of the power of free disposal of his property, so that it is not lawful for him to give one of his children a greater portion than another, nay not lawful for him to disinherit even an unworthy offspring. But, secondly and especially, this is done through the laws of public and obligatory instruction, whereby the education of the children is virtually taken away from the parents, and the entire control of the public school system so completely given over to the civil authority, that no recognition whatsoever is accorded to the possible right of any other authority to intervene in respect to the discipline or course of study, or concerning the choice or appointment of teachers. And what remnant, I ask, will be left of paternal authority,

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when such legislation, reaching the ultimate term of its evolution, shall put into complete execution those things which until now it has been content merely to desire? But if the family still manages to withstand so many and such great forces of dissolution, behold finally the laws of succession, which prescribe that on the death of the father or mother the property shall be equally divided, and that each of the children shall go his own way taking with him a portion of the scattered patrimony. Hence the family has now become a merely temporary association which death speedily dissolves and disperses to the four winds. With the stability of the family estate has perished the continuity of the family down through the ages; the perpetuity of its examples and traditions has also ceased, and nothing remains of it except individuals who pass away and vanish, one after another.

In such wise, then, does Liberalism aim with ruthless and demoniac effort at the destruction of the family, and for no other reason than this, that it sees in the family, thanks to the solidity of that institution as well as the efficacy of its influence, the most powerful resistant to its own nefarious purposes. But do not imagine that other minor societies can find favor in its eyes: such, for example, as those which are called corporations, like the guilds of artisans, of laborers, and, in general, of men whom the exercise of the same art naturally associates together under determinate laws and by-laws. The individualism of the social contract does not tolerate the co-existence of such societies. But since it was easier to destroy them, for that reason, the Revolution at its very inception chose by a single decree, by a single law, by a single intimation of its despotic will, to abolish them forever. And the pretext was always the same: to preserve absolutely intact the liberty of the individual; to leave free scope for the competition of individual liberties; and that anything is contrary to the principle of liberty which either impedes or diminishes the free exchange of the labor demanded and

the wages offered, etc., etc. In vain will wise economists protest that which even ordinary common-sense at once proclaims: that such individual liberty unprotected by any resources of united force, is altogether helpless; that there is no liberty for the laboring man enabling him to labor, to acquire and to profit *according as he will*, but only *according as he can*, nor yet even thus, according to a humane and just law of organized labor, but according to a mechanical and fatal law of unbridled and destructive competition; that the case of the man who sells his labor cheerfully and voluntarily is not precisely the same as that of the man whom labor-conditions force to accept a certain wage, since such a one does not stand on equal terms with his employer, because the employer of labor can choose among many men who are forced under the stress of dire necessity to consent to a wage which continues to become more and more insufficient. Such freedom of contract, therefore, on the part of the laborer, soon ends in the liberty to die of starvation. It is a negative liberty, an abstract liberty, nay a substracted liberty. From such liberty arises the inhuman struggle for life and that dreadful curse of our age, proletarianism, the condition of that numerous class of society known as the proletariat class, who are stripped of all stable private property, and reduced, in a most miserable and heart-rending way, to a condition of hereditary want and indigence, etc. "The proletariat, that is to say, the condition of the family detached from all property, appearing (under Revolutionary law) as a normal thing, instead of as a social monstrosity." (La Tour-du-Pin, *Vers un ordre social chrétien*.) "The existence of a numerous class destitute of all property, and living, as it were, in a state of hereditary privation, is a new and unprecedented fact." (Le Play, *Ref. soc. t. 1.*) In vain, I repeat, in vain will you, or anyone else of good and sound judgment, make these and other protests. For to what purpose do you appeal to justice? to what purpose do you urge the rights of a just and beneficent liberty?

Liberty is sought for its own sake, liberty as such, liberty in its conception. And this ideal liberty does not concede the right of citizenship except to individual persons, which, in order that they may in nowise restrain, interfere with, or fetter one another, it desires to be devoid of all cohesion among themselves.

It is manifest, therefore, that it is the task of Liberalism to dissolve all the social organs into one. For, as the organs of the physical body are not molecules, or atoms, or cells, but rather limbs and members, so also the organs of the social body are not individuals, but the family, the guild and the municipality. And if these be once supposed to be de-articulated or disorganized within the organism, to which they belong, it necessarily follows that all real liberties must perish utterly. And the reason is evident, because over the disgregated and disassociated monads which individualism has introduced, nothing can now remain except the gigantic and colossal State, an omnivorous thing, which, having destroyed all inferior organization and autonomy, will absorb into itself all force, all power, all right, all authority, and become the sole administrator, procurator, instructor, preceptor, educator and guardian, until it becomes also the sole proprietor, owner and possessor. And what else, I ask, does this entail except a monstrous form of slavery? The Apostle says that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth naught from the slave, because he is under tutors and guardians until the time appointed by the father. But a worse fate has befallen that minor-child of the social contract. For that minor is not placed in such a condition that he differs naught from the slave, for a time only, but is so placed indefinitely and forever; that minor is not under a guardian constituted by the father, but under a master, to whose will and domination there is, so far as the system itself is concerned, absolutely no limit. Indeed, in its last analysis, the Liberalism of the Revolution is resolved into that proposition which is condemned in the Syllabus, under n. 39: "The Commonwealth of the

State, as the source and fount of all rights, is endowed with a kind of right which is circumscribed by no limits whatsoever."

"In the political order, Liberalism declares in the very first clause of the *Contrat social*, and in the first article of the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme*, that man is born free. Liberalism would detach the individual human being from his antecedents whether natural or historical. It would liberate him from family-ties, corporative ties and all other ties, whether social or traditional. Only because it is necessary to live in society and because society needs a government, will Liberalism establish a government for society upon the basis of one vote or suffrage to each individual liberty, and of the taking into account of these sovereign votes. The majority, expressing what Rousseau calls the *general will*, for that reason will also, after a fashion, express the general liberty. The will of the majority becomes thenceforth a decree of law against which no one at all will have recourse in regard to anything, however useful and reasonable, and no matter how precious or sacred that person or thing may be. Liberty at the very outset establishes a rule which methodically ignores all individual forces and particular liberties. Its vaunt is that it created uniquely and exclusively the liberty of each single individual; but in practice, history shows clearly that this individualism weakens the individuals. This is the first effect. Its second effect is to domineer, without any recourse of right, over all individuals not belonging to the party of the majority, and thus to destroy the last refuge of real liberties."

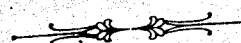
"In the economic order, sovereign liberty wishes that the concurrence of the individual liberties, whence good ought inevitably to result, should be a sacred institution. There is to be no other policy than "*laissez faire*" and "*laissez passer*," to let things be and to let things go. The law of labor must then be individual. As well out of reverence for his own liberty, as out of veneration for the machinery of the world, the workman must respect the

injunctions of the decree of Chapelier, and keep himself severely aloof from all association, corporation, or federation, from every syndicate of a professional nature, calculated to disturb the free play of supply and demand, the free exchange of salary and labor. So much the worse if the merchant of labor be a millionaire, absolute master of the fate of 10,000 workmen: Liberty! Liberty! Economic liberty, therefore, ends, by a rapid deduction, in the noble liberty to die of starvation. I should make bold to call it a negative liberty, an abstract liberty, better still, a subtracted liberty. All real liberty, all practical liberty, all free and assured power of preserving one's life, and of recuperating one's vital energies, is denied the laborer along with the liberty of association. It required the decline of liberal ideals to obtain, in the economic order, a certain degree of liberty of association. To extend this liberty, to develop and nourish it, we must obliterate every trace of liberalism that still subsists in human minds... We must either exclude all liberalism, or else forego all effective liberty." (Maurras, *Libéralisme et Liberté*, p. 5, seq.)

But, what sort of enigma, then, is this that a social system erected upon Liberty, to Liberty, and for Liberty should lead so evidently to despotism and the elimination of all real liberty? And what new kind of marvel is this, that a political doctrine founded, as they claim, upon pure philosophy, should stupidly recognize as the supreme authority the dictatorship of mere numbers? "It is necessary to refute the principle of government by number, because it is absurd in its source, incompetent in its exercise, pernicious in its effects... We have too much respect for the people to allow it to be said: It suffices to count the votes of the incompetent, in order to resolve questions of very general interest which demand long years of study, of experience or meditation. It suffices to receive and to add together the suffrages of the primaries to decide the most delicate things... Government by number tends to disorganize the country. It of necessity destroys all that which moderates

or tempers it, all that which differs from it: religion, family, traditions, classes, organizations of any kind, etc." (Maurras, *Libéralisme et Liberté*, p. 9, seq.)

And do you imagine that if there was only question here of civil liberty or of platonic philosophy, that such a doctrine would or could ever have reached so lofty a pinnacle of success? But, indeed, something else was at stake, and something else still continues to be at stake down to this very moment. What that something is, remains now to be explained forthwith.



CHAPTER III

THESIS: *That the principle of Liberalism is essentially anti-religious, raising a standard of revolt and independence against God. And that to the end or purpose of eradicating from the world the worship of God, the religion of God, the law of God, nay the very notion of Him, all those things whatsoever it has attempted under the false pretext of liberty, whether in the political or in the economic or in the domestic order, are, as a matter of fact, directed.*

THE essential irreligiousness or impiousness of the principle of Liberalism will be readily seen by anyone who duly weighs the fact that it was the cardinal principle of the French Revolution, of which has been said with truth that its satanic character was so explicit, so visible, that it is distinguished thereby from every other thing that had ever occurred throughout the whole previous course of history. "The French Revolution is unlike anything that was witnessed in past ages. It is *satanic* in its es-

sence." (De Maistre, *du Pape, discours préliminaire*.) "There is in the French Revolution a satanic character which distinguishes it from everything that was ever seen and, perhaps, from anything that ever will be seen." (Id. *Considérations sur la France*, c. 5.) Now, impiety has never been absent from the world, and impiety has always been a crime; but it had never existed before with the same characteristic trait, with the same intensity and, particularly, with the same organization. Among the ancients impiety generally proceeds in a rather peaceable manner: it discourses, to be sure; it disputes, it cavils, it ridicules; but it is devoid of acrimony. Lucretius himself scarcely ever breaks out into taunts and blasphemy, even when he traduces religion and denounces it as the fruitful source of evils. There was not then, forsooth, a religion which was worthy of exciting the anger and the fury of contemporary unbelief. When, however, the Gospel began to be preached, the war against religion began to increase. Yet still there was moderation and measure, for the pagan persecutors, in order not to fight under the standard of irreligion, were rather wont to persecute the Christians as atheists and overthrowers of the ancestral religion. Thereafter, in the centuries which follow, if any precursors of impiety appear, they are very rare and isolated, not united together by a pact, not especially agitated with the fury which we witness to-day. Hence, even the man who may be considered the father of modern infidelity, Peter Bayle, in the very worst passages of his works, still differs considerably from his successors, so little inflamed does he seem with the desire of persuading, or of making converts: doubting rather than denying, arguing for as well as against, abstaining from the tone of bitterness, as though a neutral party to the conflict of opinions. But, finally, in the eighteenth century, impiety grew into a true and formidable power. Then was first revealed that peculiar impiety characteristic of our times—the fury of impiety—and, if we be permitted the expression, the concentrated and unadulterated quin-

tessence of impiety. No longer the cold indifference of scepticism, no longer the unperturbed irony of the infidel against anodyne errors, but implacable hatred, flaming anger and frothing frenzy. They attack religion as their principal enemy, and those who are known by the name of *philosophers* pass from a hatred of Christianity into a personal hatred for its Divine Founder. In very truth, by a kind of malice which would seem to be superhuman, they hold the very person of Jesus Christ in exactly the same place and light that a personal living enemy would be held. Then, also, entering into an agreement, with united forces they swear to extirpate the *infamous one* from the world; they pledge themselves to eradicate it from the earth, so that its name may be no longer remembered. Then they rise up against God directly, saying: "Depart from us: we know Thy ways we do not desire, and who is omnipotent that we should serve Him?" (*Job*, 21:14.) But now we must pause to consider what for a long time had been the state of things in Europe. Religion, of course, had permeated the entire social body from the soles of the feet to the crown of the head, and that most intimately. For, since all of our civilization took its origin from Christianity, and the ministers of religion had obtained everywhere a conspicuous and lofty preëminence in the political state, it had come to pass thereby that everywhere, likewise, civil institutions and religious ones had become marvelously interwoven. For, of all European states can be said with more or less truth what an English historian said concerning the kingdom of France: to wit, that this kingdom was constructed by the bishops as the honeycomb is constructed by the bees. Here, then, the reason is patent why the religious fury of the impious promoters of the Revolution involved, as a necessary sequel, their hatred for the existing social institutions, as being such that the religious principle could in no wise be separated therefrom. The ancient structure for whose upbuilding both nature and religion joined together by friendly compact had labored incessantly, was

extremely displeasing to the Revolutionaries. Hence they decreed that it be leveled to the ground and utterly demolished, to make room for a new social and political order, which would be suited to their prime and principal intent of destroying all religion.

"It was not until the first part of the eighteenth century that infidelity became a real power. Thereupon it is seen to spread with incredible rapidity to every quarter. From the palace to the cabin, it insinuates itself everywhere, it infects everything; it has invisible channels, an action secret but infallible, such that the most attentive observer, witnessing the effect, is sometimes at a loss to discover the means. Through an incomprehensible sort of prestige it manages to make itself beloved by the very ones of whom it is the deadly enemy, and the very authority which it is about to immolate, stupidly embraces it just prior to receiving the blow. Soon a simple system becomes a formal association, which by a rapid transition changes itself into a plot, and finally into a grand conspiracy which covers the whole of Europe. Then for the first time is manifested that peculiar character of impiety which belongs to no other than the eighteenth century. It is no longer the cold tone of indifference, or the at most malignant irony of scepticism, it is a deadly hatred, it has the tone of anger and, often, of rage. The writers of this epoch, at least the most noted of their number, no longer treat Christianity as a human error of no consequence, they pursue it as a capital enemy, they attack it with a vengeance; it is duel to death, and what would appear incredible did we not have the sad proofs thereof before our very eyes, is that some of those men who give themselves the title of *philosophers* advance from the hatred of Christianity to an actually personal hatred for its Divine Author. They hate Him as really as one could hate a living enemy. Nevertheless, since the whole of Europe was civilized by Christianity, and the ministers of religion had attained to great political standing in every country, the civil and religious institutions became

commingled and, as it were, amalgamated in a surprising manner; in such wise that of all the states of Europe could be said with more or less truth what Gibbon has said of France, namely, *that this kingdom was made by the bishops*. It was inevitable, therefore, that the philosophy of the century would not be slow to hate the social institutions, from which it was impossible to separate the religious principle. And this is precisely what happened. All the governments, all the institutions of Europe incur its displeasure, because they are Christian and in the measure that they are Christian; an intellectual unrest, a universal discontent takes possession of all minds. In France, especially, the philosophical fury knew no bounds, and soon one single formidable voice, formed by the coalescence of so many, many voices, makes itself heard crying out (to God) in the midst of sinful Europe: "Leave us! Must we, forsooth, forever tremble before priests, and receive from them the instruction it pleases them to give us? Throughout Europe truth is concealed by the smoke of the censor; it is time for her to come forth from the fatal cloud. We will no longer speak of Thee (i. e., God) to our children; it is for them, when they become men, to learn if Thou art, and that which Thou dost demand of them. All that exists displeases us because Thy name is written upon all that exists. We wish to destroy all, and to remake all without Thee. Depart from our counsels, depart from our academies, depart from our homes; reason is sufficient for us. Leave us!" (De Maistre, *Essai sur le principe générateur des constitutions politiques*, n. 63-66.)

Now, the pretext for introducing this new social order was liberty; its codex the "Contrat social"; the means, the rule of the demagogue; the ultimate motive, however, the constitution of the *atheistic* and *colossal* State, as the supreme arbiter of all rights, the omnipotent dictator of all that is licit or illicit, permitted or prohibited, under whose auspices the infamous name and worship of God were to be abolished forever. To this point everything converges,

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to this point all else is ordained as a means; to this end the destruction of the family, to this end the destruction of the guilds, to this end the destruction of the liberties of the Communes and the Provinces, so that, namely, in the end there may be nothing left but the power of the State, without whose authorization no one can move hand or foot throughout the environs of the universe. This is the purpose intended, not civil liberty. Liberty is the pretext, liberty is the idol to seduce nations; the idol which has hands and feels not, which has feet and walks not; an inanimate god behind which Satan prepares to reduce the nations to a servitude far worse than that with which he bound the world by means of the material idols of paganism. For the rest, that which is really at issue is nothing else than religion. "We wish," they say, "to organize a humanity which can dispense with God" (Julius Ferry). And again: "From the days of the Revolution, we are in rebellion against authority both divine and human" (by human understand that human authority which depends upon God)—"Since the Revolution," exclaims Clemenceau, "we are in revolt against authority both divine and human, with which we, at one fell blow, settled a terrible account, the twenty-first of January, 1793." And again: "Many there are who speak and write of the struggle of civilization, but few there are who understand that this struggle is the last desperate stand of the Christian ideal before it finally disappears from the world, and that modern civilization is prepared to resort to any means whatever, rather than relinquish those things which it has secured at the cost of such great labor. For modern civilization and Christianity are antagonistic to each other, and therefore it is inevitable that one give place to the other. Modern progress can acknowledge no God save one immanent to the world and opposed to the transcendental God of Christian Revelation, nor other morality save only that true kind, whose source is the human will determining itself by

itself, and becoming a law unto itself." (Hartman, *Religion de l'avenir.*)*

This, then, is the final conclusion of the present article: that Liberalism seeks the overthrow of religion, when under the lying name of liberty, it enters the domestic, the economic or the political order. But its description is not yet complete. It remains to add something concerning its various forms in relation to religion. For it does not stick to one method, but knows how to temper the rigor of its demands in the presence of those whom the portent of its impiety might still offend; nay, it knows how to transfigure itself into an angel of light, and under a virtuous semblance to ensnare the incautious with certain empty sophisms. Hence, we must explain, in a few words, into how many species or quasi-species it is subdivided.

* Lest the Reader be inclined to regard this attitude towards religion as peculiarly European, and to think that the American liberal's views on this subject are essentially different to those of his European brother, the translator has taken the liberty to insert the following citation from Dr. Elliot, the famous ex-President of Harvard: "The new religion," he says, "will not attempt to reconcile people to present ills by the promise of future compensation. I believe the advent of just freedom has been delayed for centuries by such promises. Prevention will be the watchword of the new religion, and a skilful surgeon will be one of its ministers. It cannot supply consolation as offered by old religions, but it will reduce the need of consolation." (*The New Religion.*)—*Note of the Translator.*

PART II

Concerning the Various Forms of Liberalism in Religious Matters

THERE are three principal forms of religious Liberalism. There is *absolute Liberalism*; there is *moderate Liberalism*; and, finally, there is a Liberalism which it is difficult to characterize, since it consists in complete incoherence, and defies every attempt at a definition: namely, the Liberalism of those who designate themselves as Liberal Catholics. Common to all three forms is the intent to set up the emancipation of the civil order from the religious, and thereby ensure the emancipation of the State from the Church. But in the first form this emancipation is secured by means of the absolute domination of the State over the Church; in the second form it is secured by means of the complete independence of the State from the Church, and of the Church from the State. In the third form, finally, this mutual independence and separation is defended and approved of, not as a theoretical principle of justice, but as that which in practice supplies the best *modus vivendi*. What should be our estimate of each of these forms, and what their proper and distinctive characteristics are, we must now consider in due order.

CHAPTER I

THESES: *That the first form of Liberalism is reducible to Materialism and Atheism.*

THIS is the form of absolute Liberalism with which we were concerned in the preceding chapters. It conceives the State as the highest power to which humanity in its social progress can raise itself. Not only has the State nothing above it, but it has not even anything equal to it, or anything that is not subject to it. It has a supreme and universal power which nothing can resist and which everything must obey. It is the norm *par excellence*; it is the regulator of all human relationships; in respect to it no right whether individual or domestic is inviolable, and much less any sacred right of which another society might boast. For all rights are derived from it in virtue of the social will, which, being first manifested by public opinion, is then erected into a law by the representatives of the people in their parliaments. And because the social will is essentially progressive, it follows that no law nor institution possesses immutability, but all things are amenable to social progress. Always, however, the law of the State, as long as it is and remains the law of the State, exhibits the supreme rule and standard of human conduct. This is the theory, as anyone may see for himself, which more or less regulates the modern constitutions of European countries, resting as they do on the "Declaration of the Rights of Man." According to its principles, the Church loses not only all preëminence in relation to the State, but also even the character of a perfect and independent society. At most it can only continue as a simple association like any other corporation, receiving its existence from the State. And, as the State, according to its pure good pleasure and to the degree that it judges expedient, allows it to enjoy public life, so also it defines what are to be the

limits within which the rights which it concedes may be exercised, always reserving for itself "*altum dominium*." Thus, finally, it has come to such a pass that the present condition of the Church is worse from a certain standpoint than her condition under the pagan Emperors when the intermittent violence of the bloody persecutions allowed her at least brief intervals of respite. Now, however, what we must think of the intrinsic character of this theory is apparent. In the first place, it contains an implicit negation of the spirituality of the soul as well as of its immortality. For what justification would it have for conceiving the State as the supreme authority, if it did not restrict the destiny of man exclusively to the sphere of organic and material life? For whoever once admits that man's destiny is not complete in this world and that there remains for him after the present life another immortal life, is, willy-nilly, forced to admit that only a religious society can be supreme, that, namely, which guides man and aids him in securing his supreme and imperishable good. Nor is there any reason at all for anyone to assume that the end of temporal prosperity, which is looked after by the State, is that supreme good to which all else must give way and be subordinated, unless he at the same time thinks of man as being evolved from pure matter. Therefore, absolute Liberalism is equivalent to Materialism.

But the root-error whence all others spring is, properly speaking, the denial of God. For, certainly, if one for a moment supposes that there is no God, or (what comes to the same thing) that there is no God distinct from the world, it is easy to understand that man is the highest power in the universe, that is, man amplified by association, man evolved into a multitude and ranged and drawn up in the ranks of a civil community. Indeed, in such a man we find the last limit of perfection to which unproduced matter has hitherto attained. He, in consequence, is his own absolute master; he the one who lays down standards for himself and his inferiors concerning that

which it pleases him to call good or evil, just or unjust. But no greater absurdity is conceivable, where a personal God is once recognized, a Creator of heaven and earth, above all other things distinct from Him, nay above all things which are conceivable, and ineffably above them. For then, in that true and living God, of inevitable necessity, we must recognize the Supreme Lord and Law-giver of the universe, before whom man, and society, and those who preside over society must of necessity bow down. Then not the State, not public opinion, not the fads of progress, but the immutable principles of morality divinely imprinted upon our souls are to be received as the supreme rule and standard of human action both in the private and the public order. Then, finally, the highest human authority will appear to have no other right to govern or rule than a power which is subordinated to God's authority, so that it is only authorized to rule the nations in accordance with the will of that God, to whom all human authority is subject.

"Hear, therefore, ye kings, and understand: learn, ye that are judges of the ends of the earth. Give ear, ye that rule the people, and that please yourselves in multitudes of nations: For power is given you by the Lord, and strength by the Most High, who will examine your works, and search out your thoughts: Because being ministers of his kingdom, you have not judged rightly, nor kept the law of justice, nor walked according to the will of God. Horribly and speedily will he appear to you: for a most severe judgment shall be for them that bear rule. For to him that is little, mercy is granted: but the mighty shall be mightily tormented. For God will not except any man's person, neither will he stand in awe of any man's greatness: for he made the little and the great, and he hath equally care of all. But a greater punishment is ready for the more mighty. To you, therefore, O kings, are these my words, that you may learn wisdom, and not fall from it." (*Wisdom*, 6: 2-10.) Behold what sort of a conception of political power the divine Scriptures inculcate. Surely quite a different one

from the notion of a power which is the fount and origin of all right! Behold how in a political ruler they recognize no more than a minister (servant): "For he is God's minister-for good" (*Rom. 13: 4*). A minister, I repeat, applying the law which he has received, and from which, should he dare to deviate, not only is there no longer due him the obedience of his subjects, but rather a most severe castigation from God. All this is most evident, from the standpoint of rigorous logic alone, for everyone who acknowledges a God, and does not even admit of so much as the shadow of a doubt. Wherefore, that monstrous conception of the State as the supreme norm of public morality, having dominion over religious society itself, so that it concedes to the latter, takes away, limits or measures the right of the *forum externum* according to the necessity or utility of its own political purpose—such a conception, I say, coheres essentially with the absolute denial of God, that is, of the true living God, Who is something more than a mere empty idea invented to overawe the common herd.

Nor does it avail to say that this conception still leaves independent individual and private religion. For that is tantamount to nothing at all. First, because individuals are not any more self-sufficient for religious life than they are for temporal life, nay much less so, religious society being for them a necessary means, in relation to their instruction in religious worship. And therefore, to claim dominion over social religion, is, by necessary consequence, to render dependent also religion of conscience (of the private and internal forum). Secondly; because religion does not alter its nature when it passes from the public to the private order. If, therefore, in the public order it is rated among the merely human things ordained for a political end and placed under the dominion of the State, likewise in the private order it assumes the guise of a human affair, for example, of an empty opinion concerning God, who, although in reality a sort of imaginary or fabulous being, is still, nevertheless, thought to exist by

superstitious and weak-minded men. Hence, in every way, from start to finish, absolute Liberalism, that is, the kind which asserts the domination of the State over the Church, amounts to pure and downright atheism. And since this does not seem to admit of any possible evasion, the point need not detain us further. But we must now proceed to the consideration of a milder form of Liberalism, wherewith the following chapter is concerned.

CHAPTER II

THESIS: *That moderate Liberalism is reducible, if not to formal Atheism, at least to Manichæism.*

THE Liberalism of which we have spoken hitherto is so utterly at variance with the presage of its name, that one might fancy the name had been imposed by way of antiphrasis, as, in like manner, by antiphrasis, to the Furies of ancient fable was given the title Eumenides (*εὐμενίδες*, 'gracious goddesses'). For, verily, that liberty from which it takes its name, if it is the liberty of impiety, is yet much more the liberty of exquisite tyranny, of despotism far worse than barbaric. Hence its enormity has been displeasing to many, who therefore undertook to construct (pardon the expression) a more liberal Liberalism. It is the Liberalism which is commonly termed moderate, which, so far as words go, no longer defends the absolute domination of the State over the Church, but only the complete independence of the former from the latter, and their mutual separation from each other, according to the celebrated formula, "*A free Church in a free State.*" It

professes not to deny the religious order, not even the supernatural religious order, with the absolute autonomy due to it, but merely to desire that one should utterly prescind therefrom when it comes to ordering the affairs of political society. Religion and politics, forsooth, are two entirely disparate things. The field, purpose and means of civil society are quite different to those of religious society. And why should we mix up those things which from the very nature of things are separate? For the rest, we must not depart from the general principle of justice, whereby we are bidden to render to everyone his due, both to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's; so that, to wit, ecclesiastical society shall enjoy its own exclusive rights and likewise civil society, and, since there is room for both beneath the sun, let each go its own way, not bothering at all about the affairs of the other. Hear the *répertoire* of talk which the moderate liberal dispenses: "No more union between Church and State. Since the Church has no more in common with governments than governments have in common with religion, why should they meddle in each other's affairs? The individual professes after his own fashion the form of worship which he chooses as agreeable to his own peculiar taste; as a member of the State, however, he has no particular form of worship. The State recognizes all religions, assures them all of equal protection, guarantees them equal liberty, such is the regime of tolerance; and it behooves us to pronounce it good, excellent, and salutary, to maintain it at all costs, and to spread it perseveringly. One can say that this regime is of divine right. God Himself has established it in creating man free; He puts it into practice by making His sun to shine alike upon the just and the unjust. Respecting those who disregard the Truth, God will have His day of justice, which no man has a right to hasten. Each church, as being free in a free State, will incorporate its own proselytes, direct its own faithful, and excommunicate its own dissidents; the State will take no

account of these things, will excommunicate no one, and will never be excommunicated. The civil law will recognize no ecclesiastical immunity, no religious prohibition, no religious obligation; the temple will pay the impost on doors and windows, theological students will do military service, the bishops will serve on the jury or in the national guard, the priest may marry, if he will, be divorced, if he will, and be remarried, if he will. On the other hand, there will be no more civil disfranchisements or prohibitions than there will be immunities of another kind. Every religion will preach, publish, hold processions, ring its bells, and bury according to its fancy, and the ministers of religion will be all that a citizen can be. Nothing, so far as the State is concerned, will prevent a bishop from commanding his company in the national guard, keeping shop, or conducting a business; and no more shall anything prevent his Church, or the Council, or the Pope, from being able to depose him. The State does not take cognizance of anything save the facts of public order." (L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, § 1.)

This is certainly more specious, nay it will seem to many so thoroughly in keeping with the rule of equity, that nothing could be more so. However, if one considers the matter a little more attentively, he will easily see that the position is untenable by reason of the irreducible dualism which it introduces. And this, indeed, Boniface VIII had long since remarked in his Bull "*Unam Sanctam*," in the passage where he declares that whosoever asserts the absolute independence whether of the Church from the State or of the State from the Church, resists the ordinance of God, "*unless he imagines like Manichæus that there are two Principles, which we do pronounce to be false and heretical.*" And thus it is in very truth, because the doctrine logically coheres with the absurd tenets of the Manichæans, or certainly with what is equivalent thereto, whether we consider the Manichæans according to their belief that there were two gods as well as two natures in single principles, or according to their

assertion that there were also two souls in every man, "one from God, which is of its very nature that which He is; the other from the tribe of darkness, which God neither begot, nor created, nor put forth, nor cast off, but which has its own life, its own offspring and animals, and finally its own regime and ungenerated origin." (St. Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, c. 9; cf., also *De Moribus Ecclesiæ*, Lib. I, c. 10.)

And first, indeed, it is self-evident, that, if the source or principle of the whole world is one, according to the words of Ecclesiasticus (*Ben Sirach*, I, 8), "*There is one most high Creator Almighty*," one likewise will be the ordination of the universe, one the supreme purpose of creation. And it is also evident that this purpose, most sublime on the part of Him who ordains, and the most beneficial for those who are ordained, can be none other than the glory of God and the eternal beatitude of the rational creature, for whose sake all inferior things were made. Finally, it is evident that to this end or purpose every inferior end or purpose should be subordinated, provided it be true that secondary goods in respect to the primary good have the relation of means to an end, and that means are necessarily subordinate to the end. Hence, with irresistible evidence, the conclusion follows: that the political State itself falls under the one and only order of the supreme end, from which it may no more dare to prescind than, for example, a carpenter may prescind from the purpose of the architect for whom it is his duty to prepare the lumber and dispose it for use in erecting a house. I say, however, that the consequential force of this evidence is irresistible, because there is no way of evading it, except by denying the major premiss whence it follows. Whosoever, therefore, maintains that the purpose of the State and the purpose of Religion are in relation to each other utterly disparate purposes, recognizing in consequence two utterly disparate and separate powers to preside over the pursuit of each, such a one by that very fact implicitly denies the unity of

the original Source or Principle, asserts that the creator of spiritual things is different from the creator of temporal things, that there is one god by whom man is ordained to civil life and quite another by whom he is destined to religious life. Like Manichæus, therefore, he imagines that there are two origins or principles, and, if haply he differs in aught from Manichæus, it is only in this, that his attitude is still worse. For, the author of temporal things, whom Manichæus considered an evil god, he will be inclined to regard as a deity of light and progress, while the author of spiritual things, whom Manichæus called the good god, he will call a god of darkness and obscurantism. Of course, it is customary with those who are wont to concoct historical arguments against history, philosophical arguments against philosophy, and scriptural arguments against the Scriptures: it is customary with such, I say, to appeal to that passage in the Gospels where we are bidden to render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's. Now, concerning the true aspect under which the things which are Cæsar's are contrasted with the things which are God's, there is no place for discussion here, that being reserved for consideration elsewhere.* Meanwhile, however, it may be permissible to put this one question: whether, or not, Cæsar is to be regarded as a creature of God. If a creature of God, how, I ask, is he independent of God, having the right to dispose his own affairs without any regard to God, God's law, or the religion which God has instituted? But if not a creature of God, then, by your own confession, there is assumed to be some other god of temporal things opposed to the deity of spiritual things, and in truth two Principles are believed to exist in accord with the teaching of Manichæus.

And not only two first Origins or Principles, but also two souls must needs be admitted in each single man, and

* See Supplementary Note appended to this chapter.

with far greater reason for reverting to this new dualism than the Manichæans had. For the Manichæans, indeed, in as much as they were conscious of two wills in deliberating, concluded that there were two natures of two different minds, one good, the other bad. Nevertheless, they did not conceive of them as traveling their different ways simultaneously, but as struggling against each other, so that, when one prevailed, the other was forced to cease from activity: which was not so absolutely at variance with their possible reduction to one soul turning alternately now to good, now to evil, until by the victory of one tendency over the other, the whole will as one should begin to be anchored in one alternative, whereas formerly it was partially distended in opposite directions. Now, however, moderate Liberalism, by separating the civil order from the religious order, separates the citizen from the christian, the thinker from the believer, the public from the private man, the politician from the member of the church. It separates, I say, not as belligerents are separated, one of whom wishes to suppress the other, but as collaterals, each one of whom pursues his own way, and regularly discharges simultaneously with the other his own peculiar function, although they are moved forward by separate governors to disparate and contrary objectives. And this, I say, is absolutely and essentially incompatible with any reduction to unity, nor is it otherwise conceivable than by supposing in one and the same man two souls, two minds, two consciences really distinct from each other: the one atheistic, the other religious; the one believing, the other unbelieving; the one intent on temporal things without regard or respect to spiritual things, the other intent on spiritual things and, as it were, sojourning in a superlunar universe outside this world; one by whom he serves Cæsar, and the other by whom he serves God. "No wealth of eloquence can hide for long the depth of incurable misery, no words in any language have elasticity enough to harmonize or hold together such contradictions: *Free coöperation, reciprocal in-*

dependence of two powers, etc. What signify these high-sounding phrases? What follows practically from the free coöperation of soul and body, the mutual (reciprocal) independence of matter and spirit?" (L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, § 24.)

No matter which way, therefore, the problem is viewed, that mutual independence of the two powers, or the fiction of a free Church in a free State, restores a new Manichæism, theoretically indeed absurd, and practically impossible. For how is one to conceive of two forces as acting continuously on the same moveable body, unless there be subordination between them, whereby contrariety of impulse is eliminated, and the necessary unity of direction observed? And this not even the moderate liberalists themselves attempt to conceal whenever they descend from the abstract rhetoric of words to the field of concrete reality. The essentially requisite subordination of either the State to the Church, or of the Church to the State, does not escape them. But it is out of the question to admit the former; for that would involve the renunciation of the first and most essential principle of Liberalism. Hence, compelled by necessity, and not being able to maintain themselves in the apparent equilibrium of reciprocal independence, they revert to absolute Liberalism, and subjugate the Church under the hand and power of the State, as often as, in the judgment of the State itself, regard for political ends and temporal interest would seem to demand it. "It is necessary that there should be one superior power which has the right to remove all doubts and solve all difficulties. This power is that to whom it is given to weigh all interests, that upon which the public and general order depends, to whom alone it pertains to assume the name of power in the proper sense... Religious society should recognize in civil society, as being more ancient and powerful, and that of which it becomes a partner, the authority necessary to assure the union, and the supremacy which makes the interest of the State prevail in all things

and all points of discipline wherever their affairs are mixed." (Portalis, *Discours et travaux inédits*.) "One would have to admit two powers absolutely equal, whose concurrence would produce a sort of political Manichæism, and would result in perilous conflicts, or in a negation without issue." (Dupin, *Rapport sur les travaux inédits de Portalis*.)

And thus there happens to them that which is wont to befall those who, while holding fast to the root of the error, seek palliatives whereby they may conciliate for the error a better appearance. Who not only do not succeed, but, becoming lame on both sides, fall with ungraceful awkwardness into the very ditch they desired to avoid. But it is this selfsame deformity of lameness which will appear even more conspicuously in the third form of Liberalism of which we are now to speak in the last place.

* * *

Supplementary Note

Cardinal Billot gives an analytic interpretation of the "Render to Cæsar" passage in Question XVIII of the *De Ecclesia*. Lack of space, unfortunately, prevents us from quoting it *in extenso*, and we must limit ourselves to a mere summary of the principal points. He starts with the axiom that two societies stand in the same relationship to each other as their respective aims or purposes. From this it follows that the Church, which guides man to eternal happiness, is superior to the State, whose purpose it is to procure man's temporal prosperity; for compared to eternal happiness temporal prosperity is evidently a secondary and subordinate consideration: "For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul." (*Matt.* 16: 26.) On the other hand, Christ expressly stated that His kingdom was not of this world, and He also drew a sharp distinction between "the things which are Cæsar's" and those things which He committed to the providence and care of His Church. How, then, is this

seeming paradox to be resolved? The solution must be founded on a rational and objective basis, because any arbitrary adjustment would be insufficient. To get at this rational basis, we must bear in mind the philosophical distinction according to which two kinds of final causes or purposes are recognized, namely, 1. the *purpose of the doer*, and 2. the *purpose of the deed*: or, in other words, the *purpose of the worker* and the *purpose of the work*. The purpose of the worker is the subjective motive or intention which induces him to perform the work; the purpose of the work is that to which the work is *of its very nature* ordained, irrespective of the subjective intention of the worker. Thus a watchmaker, for the sake of drawing a salary (purpose of the worker) makes a time-piece whose inherent purpose it is to designate the time (purpose of the work). Now, considering the matter in hand from the standpoint of the *purpose of the doer or worker*, we find that there is *only one supreme purpose* to which all other intentions are necessarily subordinate, and this one supreme purpose is *the salvation of our souls through the service of God*. If a man's other intentions harmonize with the service of God, they are virtuous; if they are at variance with the intention of serving God, they are vicious and sinful. Hence *in the realm of conscience* the purpose of the Church, which is the service of God and the salvation of souls, is unique, supreme, absolute, universal, and must prevail over every other consideration. So far as intentions are concerned, both the individual and the state are subordinate to the Church. Here "all power" has been given to her by Christ in the words: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed in heaven." (*Matt.* 16: 19.) Hence Cardinal Billot lays down, in the first place, the principle "that the supreme good to which, through the intention of the doer, all human acts are to be referred, is the single good and single purpose of eternal happiness. Hence, whenever there is question of righteous actions of any kind

whatever, consisting in the legitimate use of anything whatsoever, in so far forth as such actions subserve the execution of the requisite good intention, we need not trouble about the distinction between direct and indirect subordination to our Last End, seeing that all such actions are direct means whereby the ascents are disposed in our hearts and we go from virtue to virtue, until the God of gods shall be seen in Sion."

If, however, we abstract from the purpose of the worker, and consider only the purpose of the work, then we find in life *two purposes* and *two orders of means*, between which there is no direct, but only indirect, subordination. "Speaking, therefore, of the *complete and total purposes of works*, there are, I say, only two such purposes which are supreme and ultimate in their respective orders, in accordance with the distinction of the twofold life which man lives: the one being the purpose of his temporal life which comes to an end with death, the other being the purpose of his spiritual life, which, begun in the present world, knows no termination in the next." Thus there are some things which are of their very nature ordained to the service of God, such, for instance, as prayer, worship, sacraments, sacrifice, etc., and all these things are called *spiritual goods* and are *directly subordinate* to the jurisdiction of the Church. Other human works, such as houses, clothing, weapons, tools, etc., are indifferent to God's service, so far as their intrinsic nature is concerned, and can only be consecrated to God's service *indirectly*, that is, only *by means of the good intention of the user*. Such goods are termed *temporal goods*, and as such they fall under the direct jurisdiction of the State, coming only indirectly (by reason of a moral issue) under the jurisdiction of the Church; for "the Church has received no political or temporal power from Christ, nor has she ever claimed for herself jurisdiction in secular things." Hence the Cardinal lays down a second principle "that, when we prescind from the purpose of the doer, and consider only the purpose of the deed or work, then there are

two purposes, and two different orders of means: on the one hand, the good of eternal salvation whereunto are referred all those means that are called spiritual, and, on the other hand, the good of this present life whereunto are referred the means that are called temporal. And that there is no direct subordination between these purposes, but rather indirect subordination, in the sense that temporal purpose (as pursued by the State) must not only not obstruct the spiritual purpose (as pursued by the Church) but must be of assistance thereto both by removing obstacles and by furnishing conditions that make for the free and expeditious prosecution of the spiritual purpose."

Somewhat akin to the foregoing difficulty concerning the relation subsisting between the Church and the State, is that other concerning the relation between Science and Religion. Unfortunately, the notion is current among scientists that the Catholic Church is hostile to the autonomy of natural science and aims at substituting authority for research. Nothing, however, could be farther from the truth, since, as a matter of fact, the *Church positively insists on the autonomy of philosophy and the natural sciences*. Nor must we seek far to find the reason. To begin with, the Church could not expect reasonable and thinking beings to accept her revealed doctrines, unless she were in position to furnish solid *motives* and *arguments of credibility*. But to serve their purpose of demonstrating the reasonableness of faith, it is imperative that such arguments of credibility should not presuppose faith, but should rest *on the exclusive basis of natural reason alone*; otherwise, the whole procedure would be a vicious circle. On the other hand, from the very nature of things, the Church must draw her "arguments of credibility" from philosophy, history, and science, and the whole value of these arguments depends upon their being established with absolute certainty *upon exclusively natural and scientific grounds*. Consequently, unless philosophy and science were bound to establish their

conclusions by investigation and research independently of all authority, Revealed Religion could not appeal to these conclusions as "arguments of credibility." It is vital, therefore, to the Church that philosophy and science should stand on their own legs and not on those of religion, and hence, as Cardinal Mercier remarks, "when in the first half of the last century De Bonald and La Mennais sought to oblige human reason to receive its first principles and its primary motives of certitude from revealed teaching, Gregory XVI, far from accepting this dutiful subjection offered to the Church, publicly reproved and condemned the mistaken loyalty of its authors... In short, philosophy and the sciences are autonomous in this sense that in their case the supreme motive of certitude is the intrinsic evidence of the object they study, whereas in matters of faith the ultimate motive is the authority of God, the author of supernatural revelation." (*Scholastic Philosophy*, Eng. version, vol. 1, pp. 22, 23.) Such is the legitimate freedom which the Church vindicates for natural science. Naturally, however, this does not mean that the scientist is free to cheat in the presentation of facts, or to attack religion by means of hasty, rash, and snapshot conclusions which are the fruit of an insane anti-religious animus rather than of careful and sincere investigation. For the rest, the God of Nature and the God of Revelation are one and the same God, and it is impossible for natural science to discover and establish any truth antagonistic to revelation, and "if," as the Vatican Council declares, "the vain appearance of such contradiction should arise, this is either because the dogmas of faith have not been understood and expounded according to the mind of the Church or because arbitrary opinion has been mistaken for judgment founded on reason." (*Const. de Fide Catholica*, cap. 4.)

CHAPTER III

THESIS: *That the so-called Liberalism of "liberal Catholics" defies all classification, having but one distinctive and characteristic trait, namely, that of complete and absolute incoherence.*

THE truth of this assertion can be shown even from the mere analysis of the terms which are joined together in that title, "A Liberal Catholic." For, a Catholic is one who professes what the Christian faith teaches, and especially that which it lays down as a veritable foundation in its catechism: that man is created to praise, reverence, and serve God, after the manner that accords with the good-pleasure of His divine will, and by this means to save his own soul. And that the other things on the face of the earth are created for man and that they may help him in prosecuting the end for which he is created. From which, consequently, it follows that man is to use them as much as they help him on to his end, and ought to rid himself of them so far as they hinder him as to it; especially since Truth Incarnate testifies that it profiteth a man naught if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul, nay that it doth profit him exceedingly to enter maimed or lame or blind into life everlasting, rather than having two hands and two feet and two eyes to go into hell, into unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished. That, therefore, false, pernicious and deadly, in the highest degree detestable, is that prosperity which is purchased at the cost of our soul's salvation; that this selfsame present life must be wholly and entirely regulated with a view to the future life, that all temporal things must be subordinated to eternal things, and that therefore the ordination of the power which presides over temporal things should be subordinate to the direction of the higher power, to whom by God Himself the pursuit

of the eternal end is believed to have been committed together with the promise of perpetual divine assistance. Is not all this involved in the principles of every Catholic, provided he does not utterly belie his own profession?

Take now the profession of the Liberal. Certainly a Liberal, in the present usage of the term, is one who professes and eulogizes and approves of and propagates the so-called immortal principles of the year 1789. We must, therefore, see what these principles contain. Now these principles, setting aside once for all that which is not proper or peculiar thereto, but borrowed from the ancient and common treasury of natural justice and equity, these principles, I say, reduced to the minimum and construed in the best light possible, proclaim the independence of human from divine things, the substraction of the civil ordinance from religious law, the divorce of the regime of temporal things from the regime which aims at the ultimate and supreme end; in a word, the removal of the orbit of the State into a sphere apart, wherein the dominion of God ceases, together with the obligation of acknowledging and worshipping Him, wherein the ordination of man to everlasting life ceases, and only the eye which regards the present life is opened, while the eye which is to show him the way to the future life remains closed. "Nothing is more laborious and fruitless than an excursion of research into the principles of '89. One encounters there an abundance of empty verbiage, of banalities and meaningless phrases. M. Cousin, who has undertaken the task of shedding light on these mysteries which bear the redoubtable and glorious name of the Principles of the French Revolution, reduces them to three: the sovereignty of the nation; the emancipation of the individual, or justice; the progressive diminution of ignorance, misery, and vice, or civil charity. Tocqueville does not contradict M. Cousin; he only proceeds to prove without the least effort that '89 discovered neither that nor anything good and acceptable that can be subsumed under the caption of '89. All ex-

isted better than in the germ in the ancient French constitution, and the development thereof would have been more general and solid if the Revolution had never put its hand or rather its knife to the task. Before '89, France believed itself to be quite free, and, long before, one has glimpses of equality before the law as the natural sequence of the practice considerably antecedent thereto of equality before God. Charity manifested itself by the exceedingly large number of charitable institutions and congregations; public education had been more liberal, more solid, and more widely diffused than at the present day... If, then, the principles of '89 are what M. Cousin says they are, wherein do they contradict the Catholic Faith? Liberal Catholics and non-liberal Catholics alike have not only respected them, but have practised and defended them." (L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, § 32.) Not these truisms, therefore, but the absolute divorce of the temporal from the spiritual and eternal, constitutes what is peculiar to the principles of '89. This is what is contained in the "Immortal Principles," and that according to the most benign interpretation of which they admit; for, in the sense of the Fathers of the Revolution, which by the way is alone consistent with the logic of things, they import absolute and complete secularization, that is, the banishment of the theocratic principle from the world, and the definitive rupture between the whole of human society on the one side and the Church, Jesus Christ, and God on the other, nay the abandonment of the very idea of God and of the last vestige of religion. "But it is time to uncover the secret arcanum of '89, and to ascertain the point at which the liberal Catholic faith will have to cease, and either become liberal or else Catholic. There exists one principle of '89 which is the Revolutionary principle *par excellence*, and for it alone the whole Revolution and all the principles thereof came into existence. One is not a revolutionary until the moment that he admits it, one does not cease to be a revolutionary until the moment he abjures it.

In one sense or another, it is the one supremely significant issue; it raises between revolutionaries and Catholics a wall of separation across which the liberal Catholic Pyramuses and the revolutionary Thisbes will never make anything pass but their fruitless sighs. This unique principle of '89 is that which the revolutionary politeness of the Conservatives of 1830 (euphemistically) calls the secularization of society; it is that which the revolutionary frankness of the Siècle, the Solidaires and M. Quinet brutally calls the expulsion of the theocratic principle; it is the rupture with the Church, with Jesus Christ, with God, with all acknowledgment, with all ingercence and all appearance of the idea of God, in human society." (Veillot, *op. cit.*, § 33.) In any case, even accepting for the time being the mitigated interpretation, who is there that does not perceive therein such an irreducibility to the fundamental principles of Christianity that any attempt at reconciliation must necessarily end in complete incoherence? Moreover, this *a priori* estimate is entirely confirmed, when the arguments of liberal Catholics are weighed one after another.

In the first place, this incoherence appears when they distinguish between abstract principles and their application, admitting that, speculatively speaking, those things are indeed true which we have said concerning the necessity of union and subordination of the respective powers, and that they, again speculatively speaking, in no wise dissent therefrom; but that the object of speculation is one thing, and what holds true in the concrete order of things quite another, because in the latter sphere there are many things entirely at variance with theoretical conditions. And so they imagine that they have compromised satisfactorily with truth by relegating it to the far-off regions of the abstract. But, with all due respect to them, those principles which they call abstract, do they or do they not pertain to moral matters, that is, do they or do they not determine the standard of human actions and the rule of right conduct; of the conduct, I mean, which in human society is rightly

directed so as to achieve the purpose of life? And if they are wholly practical dictates, as is self-evident, how is it not the height of incoherence for anyone to accept them and at the same time to be unwilling to have them practically applied? For, from the fact that the concrete order of things differs from the ideal conditions of theory, this alone follows: that it will never happen that such principles will obtain among us an actuation or realization of the same perfection as that exhibited in pure speculation. But, forsooth, with the same sort of argument I could prove that the precepts of virtue should be left exclusively in the field of speculation, because man's condition does not admit of such a high standard of rectitude. With the same sort of argument, likewise, I might demonstrate that there could not and ought not to be any application of the science of mathematics to the arts, on the ground that the ideally exact triangle of geometry has no existence in the concrete, or that the experimental effect is always at variance with the rigor of calculus.

Again, this incoherence appears in the distinction which they make between that which is properly due to the Church *de jure* (of right) and that which is *de facto* (in fact) useful to the Church, saying: that as a matter of fact, the regime of union has always been pernicious to the Church; that the Church, as a matter of fact, has never suffered greater harm than it did at the hands of those bishops of the *forum externum* (as opposed to the *forum internum* of conscience), and of its royal protectors, as the interminable quarrels with the Byzantine emperors, the Germanic kaisers, and the kings of France, England, Spain, etc., attest; that the Church, alas! is perishing on account of the temporal props wherewith she has inadvisedly equipped herself; and that consequently there remains but one saving remedy, one only haven of refuge, and that is Liberty! that Liberty it is which shall restore the lost crown to the majestic brow of the Church; Liberty on whom she must rely as on a faithful friend, nor ever part from her com-

pany on account of *a priori* principles which must, with all due reverence, of course, be left safe and intact in their utterly ideal sphere. Thus they argue, but incoherently. First, because, if the aprioristic principles give expression to an order instituted and intended by God, it is impossible that the neglect thereof should result in greater utility to the Church. Second, because the facts which they adduce prove only that man through his own perversity often corrupts the institutions of God. They do not prove that the divine ordination ought on that account to be repudiated or set aside. Third, because the historical argument sins by incomplete enumeration, giving only the evils which happened under the regime of union, and ignoring and premitting the immense benefits which so superabound that it becomes manifest that, though the protection of princes sometimes degenerated into oppression, still it was in most cases an advantage and powerful aid to the Church. Fourth, because the defect of incomplete enumeration is further aggravated by the lack of a comparison with the evils which spring necessarily from the separation, and which, as present-day experience attests, are vastly preponderant. Fifth, because there is no more lucid example of a disconnected, inconsequential and incoherent piece of argumentation, than the ultimate conclusion concerning the necessity of having recourse to liberty. For liberty, with its propensity towards evil, its proneness towards irreligion, is the actual cause of all the evil, and it is precisely this selfsame liberty which is held up as a remedy therefor—"The Church is perishing on account of the illegitimate reinforcements which she has seen fit to adopt. The time has come for her to change her attitude; her children must make her aware of the opportunity. It behooves her to renounce all her coercitive power over consciences and to deny this power to governments. No more alliance between the Church and the State... Our liberal Catholic waxes enthusiastic in unfolding these marvels. He maintains that no exception can be taken to his

position; that reason, faith, and the spirit of the times alike speak in his behalf. As regards the spirit of the times, no one will contest his assertion. As regards reason and faith, however, one need not let him off without urging certain objections, but he shrugs his shoulders and is never at a loss for an answer. It is true that outrageous assertions and outrageous contradictions cost him no qualms whatsoever. He always starts off on the same foot, protesting that he is a Catholic, a child of the Church, an obedient child; but also a man of the world, a member of the human race no longer young, but mature and of an age to govern itself. To the arguments drawn from history he answers that mankind, in its present stage of maturity, is an entirely new world, in the presence of which the history of the past proves nothing at all. But this does not prevent him in the least from exploiting the historical argument whenever it apparently bears out his own contentions. To the words of the Fathers of the Church, he sometimes opposes other words of theirs, sometimes he says that the Fathers spoke for their own times, but that we must think and act according to our own times. Confronted with the texts of Scripture, he avails himself of the same resource. Either he tears out of their context some seemingly contrary texts, or he fabricates a commentary (a gloss) to support his own sense, or finally he will say that this text was intended for the good of the Jews and for their particular little state. Nor is he to any greater degree embarrassed by dogmatic bulls of the *Roman Curia*... They are, says he, mere disciplinary formulas laid down for those times, but which have no *raison d'être* (reason for existence) to-day. The French Revolution has buried these rules along with that world on which they weighed so heavily. Constraint has been abolished; the man of to-day is capable of liberty and he wants no other law! This regime, which so disconcerts your timidity, he continues in sibylline tones, is for all that the very one which will save the Church, and the only one which can save her. For the rest, the

human race is up in arms to impose this order, it will be wisest to submit, and that, indeed, has already been done. See whether anyone would be able to oppose anything whatsoever to this triumphant force, if indeed any one had the slightest desire to do so, if indeed anyone, with the exception of yourselves, ever dreamt of doing so. Intolerant Catholics, you are more absolute than God, the Father, who created man for liberty; more christian than God the Son, who desired to establish His law for no other purpose than for liberty. You make yourselves more Catholic than the Pope, because the Pope, in approving them, consecrated modern constitutions, which are all inspired and replete with the spirit of liberty. I say that the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, approves of these constitutions, because he permits you to take the oath of allegiance thereto, to obey them and to defend them. Now equal liberty for all religions is contained therein, also the atheism of the state. It is necessary to overlook that, to pass it over; and you do overlook it, of that there can be no doubt. For the rest, why are you antagonistic? Your resistance is vain; your regrets are not only insensate, but disastrous as well. They cause the Church to be hated, and they are a distressing source of embarrassment to us liberal Catholics, your saviours, in that they cause our sincerity to be suspected. Instead, then, of drawing down upon yourselves certain and probably terrible ruin, rush to the arms of Liberty, salute her, embrace her, love her. She will be to you a good and faithful friend, and she will give you more than you can ever repay. Faith stagnates under the yoke of the authority which protects her. Obligated to defend herself, she will rise again; the ardor of polemics will restore her to life. What will not the Church undertake when she will be able to undertake everything? How can she fail to appeal to the hearts of the people, when she has been abandoned by the powerful ones of the world, to live solely by her own genius and her own virtues? In the midst of the confusion of doctrines and the corruption of morals, she will stand

revealed as alone pure, as alone firmly-established in goodness. She will be the last refuge, the impregnable rampart of morality, the family, religion, and liberty! Everything has its limits, and so even the breath of our orator gives out at last. . . .

"The Liberal has recovered his breath. So soon as he has recovered it, he resumes his discourse, and it is quite evident that what he heard made no impression on him whatsoever, if indeed he heard it at all. He adds any number of words to those which he has already spoken in great profusion, but says nothing new. It was all a most intricate medley of historical arguments against history, of biblical arguments against the Bible, of patristic arguments against history, Bible and Fathers, nay even against common sense. . . . He keeps on rehashing this cant about the modern world, emancipated humanity, the Church asleep and on the verge of awakening to rejuvenate her creed. The dead past, the radiant future, liberty, love, democracy, humanity, are interspersed therein like the false brilliants which the ladies now-a-days scatter through their false tresses. All he says subsequently appears neither more clear nor more true than the first time he said it. He becomes conscious of this at last, and so he tells us that we are separating ourselves from the world and from the living Church, which will also be well rid of us. He all but anathematizes us, and finally leaves us filled with the consternation at his folly." (L. Veuillot, *L'illusion libérale*, § 1-4.)

But, say they, such a union and subordination of the two powers, however desirable in itself, is now at least utterly out of the question; for the spirit of modern times is adverse thereto, and it is useless to struggle against this modern spirit. Prudence, therefore, requires the acceptance of the present state of affairs, whether for the purpose of preventing things from becoming constantly worse, or for the purpose of getting the best results possible under existing conditions. And this is the plea on which, when

other arguments fail, they make their last stand. The only difficulty is, as Liberatore correctly remarks, that in so doing they fall into incoherence of a still more unpardonable kind, in as much as they deviate entirely from the question at issue. For our dispute is not upon the question of whether, presupposing the contumacy of the world, it would not be well to bear patiently that which escapes our control, and in the meantime to give ourselves wholeheartedly to the task of warding off greater evils and of saving from the wreckage all possible good. But the question is whether we ought to *approve* positively of that social condition which Liberalism introduces, to celebrate with encomiums the liberalistic principles which are at the bottom of this order of things, and, by word, teaching, and deed, to promote the same, as those do who along with the title of Catholic vindicate for themselves the name of being Liberals. And they above all are the very ones who will never succeed at all, because they are lame on both feet, and, attempting in vain to hit upon some compromise, they are neither recognized by the children of God as genuine, nor received by the children of the Revolution as sincere. They come, indeed, to the camp of the latter with the countersign or password of the principles of '89, but, because they pronounce the password badly, they are denied entrance.

We read in the Book of Judges (12: 5-6) that when the Galaadites, in their conflict with the Ephraimites, had overcome the latter, they conspired to let no fugitive of Ephraim escape. "And the Galaadites secured the fords of the Jordan. And when one of the number of Ephraim came thither in flight, and said: I beseech you let me pass: the Galaadites said to him: Art thou not an Ephraimite? If he said: I am not: they asked him: Say then, *Shibboleth*, which is interpreted, an ear of corn. But he answered: *Sibboleth*, not being able to express an ear of corn by the same letter. Then presently they took him and killed him in the very passage of the Jordan." And thus, too, it hap-

pens at the entrance to the gate of the camp of Liberalism. To those who desire to enter it is said: Say then, *Shibboleth*, which is interpreted the *secularization of society*. It is all-important, however, whether their pronounciation thereof is good or bad. Now, liberal Catholics suffer from a defect of the tongue in this respect, and they are unable to enunciate the sacramental word in the proper manner. Hence they are not admitted, and they have merit neither with men nor with God, because they verify in themselves that dualism whereof the Scripture speaks: "One building up and one pulling down, what profit hath he but labor? One praying and one cursing, whose voice will God hear? (*Ecclesiasticus*, 34: 28-29.)

"They willingly swear by the principles of '89; they call them the immortal principles. It is the *Shibboleth* which gives entrance to the camp of mighty Liberalism. But there is a manner of pronouncing it, and our Catholics are not quite equal to it... This is why they pronounce the *Shibboleth* badly, and why the Revolution will not open to them. The Revolution is more fair to them than they are to themselves. It detects their Catholicity, and it does them the honor of not believing them when they try to convince it that they are no more Catholics than persons outside the Church, that nothing will come of their Catholicity, and that they will play their atheistic part very well indeed in that ideal form of government without religion and without God." (*Veillot, op. cit.*, § 32-34.)



AFTERWORD

ALREADY the presage of a better state of things has made its appearance, in as much as those who are to-day preëminent in the political and economic sciences, are coming more and more from day to day to recognize, and to acknowledge without hesitation, how disastrous was the work of the Revolution, and how deadly were the fruits of liberty, of liberal liberty, I mean, or license, the libertine liberty of the Social Contract, the liberty of the visionaries of 1789. These last, forsooth, did not hesitate to proclaim that the one and only cause of public evils and the corruption of governments was ignorance or contempt of the rights of man, of which the first is liberty with its necessary complement of equality and fraternity. "The representatives of the people, as constituted in the National Assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect or contempt of the rights of man are the sole causes of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration the rights of men, natural, inalienable, and sacred. . . . Article 1. — Men are born and remain free and equal in rights, etc., etc." (*Déclaration des droits de l'homme de 1789*.) O levity! O fatuousness! O folly! And surely, their liberty has ended in a despotism far worse than barbaric, of the powerful over the weak; their equality has ended in an ever-increasing multitude of proletariats on the one side, and an oligarchy of progressively influential millionaires on the other; their fraternity, finally, has ended in sowing the seeds of internal strife and factions, and of implacable class-hatred, among all classes of society. Nor have these things escaped the notice of certain elect geniuses of our own times. "What is the meaning in economic life of the freedom of labor, the freedom of trade, the freedom of ownership, if it be not a facility for the unchaining of all greediness to the detriment of all weakness, or, according to the expression of one publicist, the freedom that one enjoys in the forest? And what have

we gained by all these beautiful theories? Never has there been more universal unrest, never have the people been more discontented, never have conditions of every sort been more precarious. Is this the political liberty which we won? One group of citizens stubbornly sets itself against all that is claimed as a right by another group of citizens. Is this the equality? Never have we had so many proletariats, and, likewise, never so many bloated millionaires. Is this the fraternity? Never has there been so much selfishness, never so many factions, never so much fermentation of social strife, etc." (*De La-Tour-du-Pin, Vers un ordre social chrétien*, 3, § 1.)

True, there are many who still remain on the surface of the problem, not perceiving as yet the essential character of the Revolution, which is satanic. But there are others, too, who go deeper into the matter, and thoroughly understand that the religious question underlies all others that are now being agitated; that the plague of political and economic liberalism was born of the atheistic and anti-christian liberalism of which we have spoken above; that, in fine, the social order can in no wise be upheld and stabilized, until the Church resumes the direction of social affairs. It is to be hoped, therefore, that, with the assistance of divine grace, these seeds may mature to ripeness, that these principles having been theoretically acknowledged may become the foundation of a restoration. And such a restoration we welcome from the bottom of our hearts, knowing that under that pagan legislation, beneath which we now live, individual Christians, indeed, can still exist, but that there can not be any truly Christian society. Herein, then, we seek preëminently the kingdom of God and His justice, although we do not despise those other things which shall be added thereto, nor are we unaware that what is written of godliness may also be understood of the Church's influence: namely, that she is useful for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. (Cf. *I Tim.* 4: 8.)

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