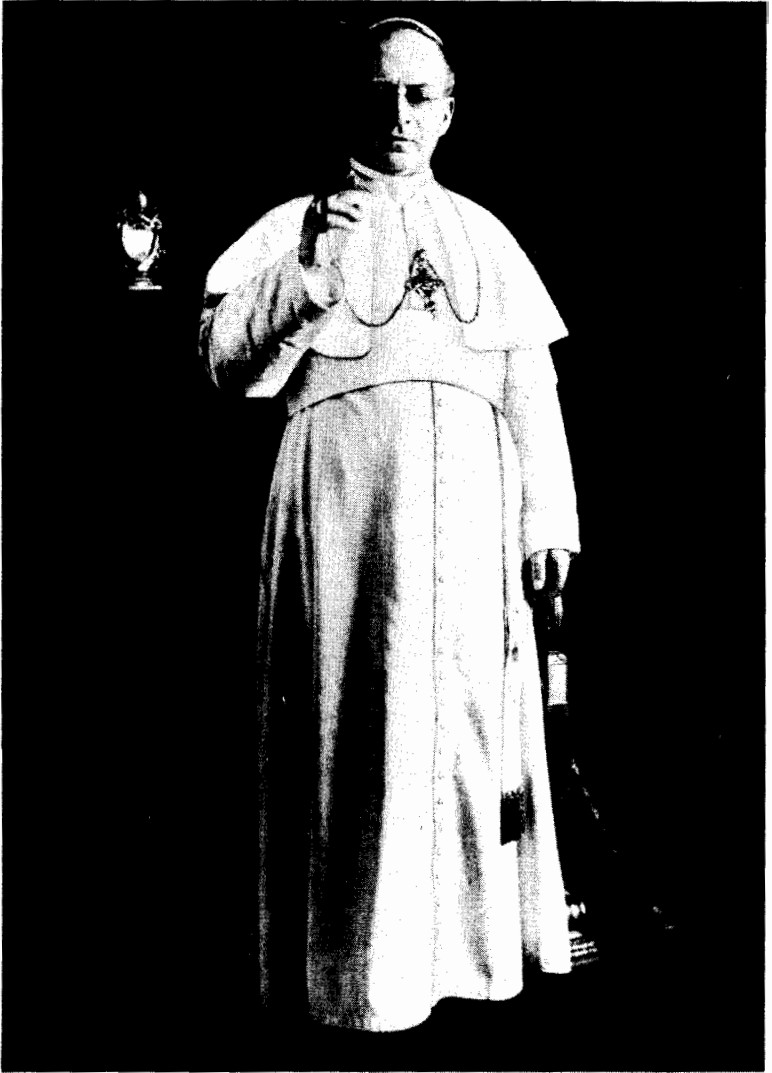


**POPE PIUS XI
AND
WORLD PEACE**



POPE PIUS XI

Wide-World Photo

POPE PIUS XI
AND
WORLD PEACE

By
LORD CLONMORE



1938
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FOREWORD

The purely political opinions expressed in this book, much as they may interest and command attention, cannot be publicly endorsed by me.

One may take a detached view of the world's concerns, and mark the ebb and flow of political forces. From the vantage point afforded by the study of such a life as this, we can watch the tide that has gone on mounting up till it has reached high-water mark during the life of Pius XI, when he is well-nigh spent with his labours to direct the Christian world towards peace in a renewal of religious life. He showed from the beginning of his reign that he understood the world crisis which is upon us ; that it would end, if left to the violent handling of extremists, in utter wreck. As we witness the struggle of right against might, of justice and charity against wrong and hate, the words of the old Greek chorus ring in our ears : "Sing woe ! sing woe ! but let the good prevail." The battle is stern and deadly the cost, but the undaunted Pius XI, Father of all the faithful, inspires hope and courage ; the final triumph, as in the worst periods of the Church's history, will rest with the power of the Cross. *Regnavit a ligno Deus !*

These thoughts are suggested as we read the pages in which Lord Clonmore passes in review the events of the Pontificate of Pius XI.

To the Catholic, the Pope, Vicar of Christ, will seem at times to recall to mind another white-robed figure thorn-crowned and stricken by unwitting or heedless enemies who cry : "Prophesy" ! If he remains silent, like Christ before Herod, if he will not "speak out" to please their fancy, they revile him ; if he does speak, but not in accord with their desires, he is a fascist ("identified with totalitarianism"), or a socialist. More deplorable is such treatment when it is meted out

to their father by disloyal sons. Benedict XV was pilloried as a partisan during the Great War by both Allies and by the Central Powers.

Any sensible man, if he has experience of Rome, and has regard for just procedure, is aware that *audi alteram partem* is a principle of right strictly observed by the Curia Romana. He knows that in a dispute or conflict the uninvited arbiter, uninformed of the reasons of the disturbance, simply rushes in to add fury to the strife. A rash "post-War Catholic", who wants "reform in the political organization of the Church", and thinks that only elderly men have place in her government—he would prescribe a retiring age for every Pope—declares with amazing boldness unanchored by fact that the present Pontiff—a hard, autocratic, discourteous man—has usually taken the first step in a conflict where a conflict has looked possible (*sic!*). Strange medley of inaccuracy and nonsense! I must admit the impeachment levelled at me personally by the youthful journalist in question. I am "an elderly man". But I pray that I may have corrected the fault of immaturity by a quarter of a century of priestly work in England and by further years of service in Rome and in our colonies, as well as by renewed efforts in Westminster to contribute to the good of my country. Possibly, therefore, I am in a position to recommend this balanced work of Lord Clonmore as a corrective of the inaccuracies and twisted interpretations of the writer of a modern press scoop.

At least I may be allowed to speak of the aged Pontiff Pius XI as I see him and as I knew him, with all the reverence of a respectful, devoted son.

Few, I hope, will be unprepared to consider sympathetically this my short tribute to a great man and a great Pope—a tribute which comes from my sincere reverence for the exalted spiritual office he holds and from my deep attachment to his personality.

Achille Ratti became Pope Pius XI almost fifteen

years ago at the age of sixty-five, after being Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan for less than a year. He was known for the greater part of his life mainly to the world of science and literature, and lived in the atmosphere of libraries. As a representative librarian he visited this country, where he was known at the British Museum, at Oxford, and at the Manchester Rylands Library. He was indeed a great and versatile scholar.

To another limited circle he had become known as an Alpinist, a climber of prudent courage and of surprising strength. The calm decisiveness of the mountain climber was a characteristic of the Pope throughout his life. Nothing disturbed his serenity, though he was a man of keen, delicate feeling as his sick-bed discourse, broadcasted at Christmas 1936, pathetically proved.

His practical spirituality, hidden from the world at large, was manifested in the early days of his priesthood by his apostolic zeal for souls and especially by his services to the poor. His genial humanness was seen when the man of learning could unbend and enjoy a game of billiards with his young men in their clubs. He was a real father to the neglected children of Milan, and particularly to the little, almost outcast, chimney-sweepers of that city. He became all things to all men in order that he might win all to Christ.

His administrative abilities found scope when he was appointed by Pope Benedict XV to settle the Church affairs of the new Republic of Poland in April 1918. His labours there as Apostolic Delegate were astonishing. People said that they had never known what hard work was till they saw what he did and what he made them do. In that multi-lingual country he had to talk in half a dozen languages and in that complicated political atmosphere he had to cope with pro-German and anti-German difficulties without being partizan. His endurance was tremendous in his journeys through the snows and the floods.

All the while he never neglected his religious duties and he answered every letter. He declares that not answering letters is a dire disease. I have had the letters of children and trivial communications from England sent from the Vatican for my opinion about the answer to be given. He was crowned Pope on February 12th, 1922. Now on a world-wide scale, his breadth of outlook, his determination and versatility, his interests in science, in art, in modern inventions—like wireless and the cinema—and in the press, had full scope. He gave an impetus to the work of the Missions and showed an intimate knowledge of the customs of the native races evangelized by the Church, especially of African problems. He told me that he was the first person in Italy to read Stanley's *Through Darkest Africa*, an advance copy of which was sent to the Librarian of the Ambrosiana in Milan. In his student days he was known as "Africanus", because of his interest in the exploration and development of the Dark Continent.

His great Encyclicals are monuments of spiritual and social doctrine as well as evidence of unlimited solicitude for all classes and races. His famous letter "*Quadragesimo anno*", on the labour question, places Pius XI in the foremost rank of social reformers. I think that the passionate devotion of the last four Popes to this question of social reform, and their determined vindication of the rights and dignity of the individual against absolutism of every sort, ought to be more widely known, and, besides this, their defence of family life and of the home.

Personally, in my intercourse with the Holy Father, I found him always simple, affable, easy of approach, and paternal. He always showed himself the common Father of all the faithful, especially to those crowds of pilgrims (one million and a quarter are said to have visited the Eternal City in 1925, the year of Jubilee) who flocked to Rome to show their veneration for the Apostolic See. Pius XI had a special regard for

England. He expressed to me his admiration for the spirit of fair play and equity which animates our Colonial officials in their administration. On one occasion in private audience I heard him speak of England as the classic land of liberty, as evidenced by Magna Charta and *Habeas Corpus*. I remember also the warm welcome he gave to 400 officers and men of the British Navy whom I was once privileged to present to him in the hall of St. Clement in the Vatican. He passed down their ranks and gave his hand to each and spoke to them of the sea, of its fascinations, of its perils. Then pointing to the fresco of St. Clement being cast upon the waves, he reminded them that the Pope was also a man of the sea, often like them in perils of the deep, being tossed in Peter's bark by the storms of life. This truth was brought home to me when in October 1936 I learned from his own lips and saw from his weary eyes how the sorrow caused by the tragic sufferings of his children in Spain had overwhelmed even his calm spirit and dauntless optimism.

I am sure that many outside the three hundred millions of his own flock throughout the world will appreciate a dispassionate account of the life and work of a great man and an amiable character, who is also one of the greatest successors of St. Peter. Such an account is given us in this book by Lord Clonmore. He is at no pains to hide his loyalty to the Church and his devotion to the Holy See. At the same time he is careful to adhere to facts, and to give the evidence of documents. He is downright in the expression of his religious convictions and of his political judgments. But few can be offended by his manly straightforwardness and racy humour. We wish this book the success it richly deserves, and we trust it may remove many prejudices and show to all the moral grandeur of the Pontificate of Pius XI.

✠ ARTHUR,
Archbishop of Westminster.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I want to thank my friend and colleague Dr. Denis Gwynn for his help and advice, and for his permission to make use of his biography of Pope Pius XI, and of his most interesting works on the Church in England and France. I also want to thank Mr. J. G. Lockhart for allowing me to make many quotations from his *Life of Lord Halifax*. I am indebted to Father Benedict Williamson for much valuable information which appears in his book on the Lateran Treaty, and to Mr. George Barnard and Captain Francis McCullagh for allowing me to make use of their books on the Mexican Persecution.

I should also like to express my thanks to Father O'Hea, S.J., who has kindly supplied me with much valuable information in regard to the Lille controversy, and to Mr. John Epstein, whose little book, *Must War Come?*, contains a remarkably interesting summary of Pope Benedict XV's peace policy.

When writing a topical biography of this kind the author is at an unpleasant disadvantage, for time and events move faster than his pen; the book was completed in the summer of 1937, since which date the Vatican has recognized General Franco's government, and a noble declaration has been signed by some eminent Anglicans and Free Churchmen in support of General Franco's cause. The second chapter on England contains some disillusioned statements as to the Anglican Church's attitude towards the persecuted Christians of Spain, but the author wishes to express his appreciation of the declaration and of the motives of those who signed it, for it has done much to remove the lamentable impression produced by the earlier and less happy efforts of a different set of Churchmen.

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Pope Pius XI and World Peace

CHAPTER I

THE LEGACY

IN August 1914 a strange excitement swept over Europe; there was war, and many thought it a good thing. Violent articles in the newspapers, military bands, patriotic songs, they all swept the people onwards. At the moment it seemed very grand, and even promising poets became infected with the general enthusiasm.

Two men, perhaps the wisest of their age, looked on with dismay. One of these was Marshal Lyautey, the creator of French Morocco, a man of surprising originality, and one of the greatest soldiers and administrators that European civilization has produced.

"They are mad," he said, when the news reached him, "they are mad! A war among Europeans; it is civil war. . . . It is the greatest piece of idiocy the world has so far committed."

The other was Pope Pius X, and he died soon after, a broken-hearted man, having vainly tried to bring the rulers of Europe to their senses. The Emperor Franz Josef had asked the aged Pope for a blessing on his armies, but was quickly put in his place. "We bless peace," came the answer, "not war."

Meanwhile, jingoism held full sway on each side, and the Press availed itself to the full of its anti-social opportunities. Dirty Huns, dirty Russians, dirty

Austrians, dirty French, dirty English, they must all be killed with every circumstance of horror. After a time, however, the excitement subsided, and the people saw what sin and suffering modern warfare really entailed; it looked as if Pius X had not been a reactionary sentimentalist, or Lyautey a provincial-minded colonial. A conflagration had been lit, and nobody knew how to put it out; worse than that, it was spreading.

Pius X, the peasant Pope, was succeeded by the heir to an Italian marquisate, Cardinal della Chiesa, who took the name of Benedict XV. He was a small man, with an ascetic face, an aquiline nose, and observant eyes. He was to have a short and sad pontificate, striving for peace and the preservation of civilization, but defeated in his aims by the dull wits and selfish ambitions of the men who controlled the world. Eight years later he died, surrounded by the ruin and misery which those in power had brought on the peoples entrusted to their care.

If we are to study the life and work of Pius XI, we must first of all make a short study of this man, his predecessor. Papal policy never moves by leaps and bounds, as has so often been the case in national policies since the war, but a clear line of continuity can always be traced.

"The Pope", declared Innocent III, "is the sovereign mediator on earth." An unpopular claim, and men grow humourless with rage at the thought of it. Nevertheless, Benedict XV did not fear to make it once more; had the Governments listened to him the horrors of yesterday, today and tomorrow would almost certainly have been averted.

His methods must be understood.

"In this present conflict as a general rule," wrote Cardinal Gasparri, in a letter to the Belgian Minister at the Vatican, "one side accuses and the other denies, and the Holy See consequently, being unable

to conduct an inquiry and find the truth, cannot make any pronouncement."

Great difficulties there were, but the Pope had no intention of being silenced. Under the circumstances, to try and delve into particular rights and wrongs would be only likely to lead to injustice and inaccuracies, and might well lower the prestige of the Holy See. There was another way open, the way of impartiality, warning the leaders of each side of their terrible responsibility, and of their duty to aim at peace and not at war. As the Pope said of himself in his letter *to the Belligerent Peoples* on August 1st, 1917, his aim was to "maintain an absolute impartiality towards all belligerents, as becomes him who is the common father", and later in the same letter he said :

"We who have no private political aim, who listen not to the suggestions or interests of any of the belligerents . . . now again throw out a cry for peace, and We renew Our pressing appeal to those who hold in their hands the destinies of nations."

Before we go any further it may be as well to say a word about papal Encyclicals, for we shall often have to discuss them as we go along, and some of my readers may be unaccustomed to them. Most of these documents are of considerable length, and are usually addressed to the whole Church—indeed, to the whole world.

They are known by the first few words with which they begin, and in the majority of cases these are in Latin. The Encyclicals are written in full, rounded periods, sometimes with an almost baroque exuberance, and one feels that they would have delighted the heart of Dr. Johnson. That lively journalist Mr. George Malcolm Thomson, in his spiteful and highly entertaining pamphlet on the Lambeth Conference of 1930,* contrasts the ambiguous character of its report with the trenchant decisiveness of papal pronounce-

* *The Lambeth Conference.* (Faber & Faber.)

ments. The one drawback of the Encyclicals is that their baroque qualities, though delightful to the initiate, are apt to alarm the man in the street, and to make him look on them as period pieces, while all the time the exuberant façade is the prelude to all kinds of riches, spiritual, political, social and psychological, for when the Pope speaks, he speaks.

To return to 1914. On September 8th, five days after his coronation, Pope Benedict issued a letter in which he "implored the rulers of the peoples to be satisfied with the ruin already wrought", a request which certain prominent men resented, as they felt it was a little uncomplimentary to themselves. This letter was only the prelude to his Encyclical *Ad Beatissimi*, a magnificent production which appeared on November 1st.

"The combatants are the greatest and wealthiest nations of the earth", it said; "what wonder, then, if, well provided with the most awful weapons modern military science has devised, they strive to destroy one another with refinements of horror? There is no limit to the measure of ruin and of slaughter . . . who would imagine as we see them thus filled with hatred of one another, that they are all of one common stock, all of the same nature, all members of the same human society? Who would recognize brothers, whose Father is in Heaven? . . . Day by day the mighty number of widows and orphans increases, and with the interruption of communications, trade is at a standstill; agriculture is abandoned; the arts are reduced to inactivity; the wealthy are in difficulties; the poor are in abject misery; all are in distress."

Lyautey was indeed being proved right; there was madness and civil war and more besides. To our war-weary world this all seems clear; whatever may be in store for us, war is not fashionable in Europe at the moment. In 1914 this was not the case; all the belligerent peoples were still busily grateful to their rulers

for the blessings showered on them. Disillusionment was slow in coming.

The Pope had, however, no illusions. "Surely there are other ways and means whereby violated rights can be rectified", the Encyclical goes on to say, "let them be tried honestly and with goodwill, and let arms meanwhile be laid aside. It is impelled with love of them [the belligerents] and of all mankind, without any personal interest whatever, that We utter these words. Let them not allow these words of a friend and of a father to be uttered in vain."

The Pope did not merely see the actual horrors of the Great War and the cruel futility of the conflict, but he also saw it was producing evil fruits for the future, for hatred, the most destructive and irrational of all forces, was on the increase.

"In reality never was there less brotherly activity amongst men than at the present moment. Race hatred has reached its climax; peoples are more divided by jealousies than by frontiers; within one and the same nation, within one and the same city, there rages the burning envy of class against class; and among individuals it is self-love which is the supreme law overruling everything."

These words were written towards the end of 1914; unfortunately, so great was the commotion in Europe that those who should have done so did not apparently have the time to attend to them, for they were too busy doing things of lesser importance. It is interesting to compare the pessimism of the Papacy with the complacent optimism of so many newspapers published at that time. And yet, just think of the horrors that have taken place in the last twenty-two years, the massacres, the cruelties, the oppressions, and you will see that the Encyclical was grimly prophetic, for not only was the manhood of many nations going with heroism and self-sacrifice to a shambles such as had never been seen before, but

dragon's teeth were being sown as well. From the dragon's teeth a beautiful crop would soon be growing; the Russian revolution, with its holocausts, its famines, and its lovely sisters in Mexico and Spain; to say nothing of Bela Kun's bloodbath in Budapest, the social conflict in Italy, ending in the violence and cruelty of the early days of Fascism; and then the oppression of Germany by France after Versailles, which in its turn caused the growth of the Nazi movement, with its terrorism and concentration camps.

Mere warnings are not enough, so in July 1915 the Pope appealed to the combatants to initiate *pourparlers* for peace; this attempt of his, far from being the action of some high-minded but unpractical busybody, besides being dictated by Christian charity, had its full share of common sense. The Catholic Church, which besides its saints, who are not very numerous, houses many a scoundrel within its walls, has had more experience of human nature than any other body in the world. For over a period of close on two thousand years it has had to deal with humanity under every variety of circumstance, often enough when in a truculent or vicious state. In consequence, behind the baroque façade of Catholic pronouncements, one usually finds a shrewd knowledge of men as they really are.

On this occasion the Pope laid his finger on the psychological aspects of the situation, aspects which were ignored to a surprising extent by the treaty-makers at Versailles four years later.

"Nor let it be said that the immense conflict cannot be settled without the violence of war", he declared. "Lay aside your mutual purpose of destruction; remember that Nations do not die; humbled and oppressed, they chafe under the yoke imposed upon them, preparing a renewal of the combat, and passing down from generation to generation a

mournful heritage of hatred and revenge. Why not from this moment weigh with serene mind the rights and lawful aspirations of the peoples? Why not initiate with a good will an exchange of views, directly or indirectly, with the object of holding in due account, within the limits of possibility, those rights and aspirations, and thus succeed in putting an end to this monstrous struggle, as has been done under other similar circumstances? Blessed is he who will first raise the olive branch and hold out his right hand to the enemy with an offer of reasonable terms of peace. The equilibrium of the world and the prosperity and assured tranquillity of Nations rest upon mutual benevolence and respect for the rights and dignity of others, much more than upon hosts of armed men and a ring of formidable fortresses. This is the cry of peace which breaks forth from Our heart with added vehemence on this mournful day."

We know what was the result of the Pope's appeal; not only did it fall on deaf ears, however, but a secret obstacle was placed in the Pope's way. In the same year the secret Treaty of London was signed, and in this there was a clause by which Great Britain, France and Russia pledged themselves to support Italy, which at that time suffered from a Government still under masonic influence, "in not allowing the representatives of the Holy See to undertake any diplomatic steps having for their object the conclusion of peace". Signor Salandra has tried to explain this clause away, but I have not yet met anybody who was in the least convinced by his explanations.

Meanwhile the Pope continued in his policy of impartiality, though there was a slight deviation from this in the case of Belgium; this came up in an address which the Pope made to his Cardinals in Consistory in January 1915, when, having once more explained his duty to remain impartial, he went on to say:

“As is only natural, Our thoughts turn insistently to where We note more vividly in Our children their reverent affection for the Father of the faithful ; and of this, as far, for example, as concerns the beloved Belgian people, one proof is to be found in the letter which We addressed recently to the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines.”

Later in the same speech he said :

“Concerning those who behold their fatherland occupied by the enemy, We understand most well how heavy it must be for them to be subject to the foreigner. But We would not that the ardent desire to recover their independence should drive them to thwart the maintenance of public order, and thus greatly injure their condition.”

The Pope's attitude in regard to Belgium was explained by Cardinal Gasparri, in his letter to the Belgian Minister at the Vatican, from which we have quoted earlier in this chapter.

“The Chancellor of the German Empire,” he said, “von Bethmann-Hollweg, declared openly in public Parliament on August 4th that Germany in invading Belgium was violating its neutrality contrary to international law . . . in this case the German Chancellor himself recognized that in the invasion of Belgium a violation of neutrality was committed, contrary to international law, justifying it simply on the grounds of military necessity. It follows that the invasion of Belgium is directly included in the words used by the Holy Father in the Consistorial Allocution of January 22nd last, when he condemned openly every injustice by whatever side and for whatever motive committed. It is true that in the meanwhile Germany has published some documents of the Belgian General Staff by means of which she claims to prove that previous to the war Belgium had failed in the duties of neutrality which, therefore, at the moment of invasion did not exist

any longer. It was not the business of the Holy See to decide this question of history, nor, for its purpose, was there any necessity for a decision. For the reason that, even admitting the German point of view, it would always remain true that Germany, on the confession of her own Chancellor, penetrated into Belgian territory with the consciousness of violating its neutrality and, therefore, committing an injustice ; and that suffices for Germany's action to be comprised directly in the words of the Pontifical Allocution."

On this point only did the Pope deviate from his policy of strict impartiality, because in this case there was conclusive evidence that an injustice had been committed. All through the war he hoped that he might be able to act as peacemaker, and it was therefore of the greatest importance that by no indiscretion or favouritism should he do anything liable to impede his exercising that role. It is worth noting that on that point alone did the British Government justify its declaration of war on Germany. We firmly believed that in going to war we were honourably fulfilling our obligations ; most of us are still inclined to believe that we were right. Nevertheless, we know what the results were. And looking back over the last twenty-two years, one grows increasingly tempted to agree with the views of Mr. Christopher Hollis in his interesting and highly provocative little book *Foreigners Aren't Fools* :

"The situation", he said, "was rather that Germany could only be expelled at the expense of a world war that would shake all civilization to its foundations. And, granting the disease, yet it was not unreasonable to ask whether the remedy was not worse than it. Nor is such a plea a plea that physical evils are worse than moral evils. Taking the whole argument up on to the moral plane, a wise man in 1914 might well have argued that the record of the

nations was such and the inevitable effects of war propaganda were such that, even if the Germans had broken their word to start the war, it was most likely that the Allies would break theirs to finish it. And he would have been right. He would have said to himself, 'There is the certainty of enormous immediate evil if we go to war. Is there a sufficient probability of the war-created mentality producing at the end of it a decent and lasting peace—a sufficient probability to justify us in submitting ourselves to the certain evil?' ”

The Pope's plea for peace in 1915 had failed ; it had fallen on deaf ears on one side, and been hemmed in by a secret treaty on the other. He knew that he must now bide his time—and waited for two long years—while Europe writhed in her agony, till there seemed a chance of success. We do not know what that shrewd little man in white was thinking all that time. But one can imagine that he must have known moments of great sorrow and bitterness as he saw the results of the nationalist madness that had refused to be guided by his Christian common sense.

At last the time seemed ripe. Cardinal Gasparri, the Secretary of State, and Monsignor Pacelli, who was Nuncio at Munich, were in close touch with the situation, and it looked in the summer of 1917 as if the Central Powers would agree to the evacuation of Belgium ; von Bethmann-Hollweg, the German Chancellor, made a statement to Monsignor Pacelli on June 26th that Germany would be prepared to restore the independence of Belgium, but his condition was that it should be genuine independence, without interference from any Power. On July 19th a resolution was passed in the Reichstag that seemed to confirm this statement.

The Allies, however, seemed rather embarrassed by the Vatican's latest move. The Pope had said in his note :

“We desire to come down to more concrete and practical proposals, and to invite the governments of the belligerent peoples to agree upon the following points, which seem as though they ought to be the bases of a just and lasting peace, leaving to their charge the completion and the more precise definition of these points.”

The points were seven in number—Right instead of Force, Lessening of Armaments, Arbitration, Freedom of the Seas, Condonation of Damages and Cost of War, Evacuation of Occupied Territories, and the Fair Settlement of Territorial Questions. To anybody who is not a knave or a lunatic, the wisdom, indeed one might say the necessity, of these points is obvious ; unfortunately, the political game does not always attract the best elements in the nations. The Pope might be quite right, but his terms were not what the Allies wanted at that moment ; only the King of the Belgians, among the heads of the Allied States, sent a friendly reply to the Vatican.

What was happening among the Allies ? There was very much the situation that Mr. Hollis suggests in the paragraph I have quoted. They might have gone to war on the most honourable grounds in 1914, but by 1917 there were other aims in view, and the evacuation of Belgium was no longer the centre of interest. M. Poincaré said as much, and declined to be drawn into discussion. “That is not at all what we want, and the danger is that we shall be involved far more deeply than we desire.” The French are usually cynical, and always a little short-sighted, but hypocrisy has never been one of their characteristics. Mr. Lansing replied to the Vatican on behalf of President Wilson, and with some vulgarity of style explained that the aim of the United States was to overthrow the Kaiser and his Government ; the Allies were all supposed to share the same aim, though one finds it hard to see why vast numbers of men should be sent

to their death merely in order to cause a revolution in Germany.

It will also be remembered that two years earlier a secret treaty had been signed in London, to which we have already referred.

Besides the evacuation of Belgium and France, the Pope stipulated that there should be a complete restitution of the German colonies ; Mr. Lansing gave a full agreement to this, adding, though he had not been asked to do so, that the United States neither intended to conquer or annex territory nor to dismember empires. Like so many American sentiments, this was a very uplifting one, and the Allies hastened to show that they were equally high-minded. Nevertheless, Germany is still without her colonies, the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire led eventually to the nightmare of Smyrna, and the dismemberment of the Austrian Empire to the starvation of Vienna and the "paternal" reign of Bela Kun in Budapest.

A peace of equality between the combatants at that time would not only have saved great numbers from death and mutilation, but would also have saved Europe from the complications and calamities which have resulted from the humiliation and crippling of the Central Powers at Versailles. The worst horrors of the Russian revolution might also have been averted ; in a letter from Colonel House to President Wilson, written on August 19th, he says that the Russian Ambassador was much disturbed by the Pope's overtures and the question of how the President would react to them, for, he goes on to say, "if the Allies brush aside the Pope's overtures, he considers it inevitable that there will be a schism not only in Russia, but in other countries as well".

The Pope ended his note with some solemn words :

"Think of your heavy responsibility before God and men ; upon your resolves depend the repose and the joy of innumerable families, the life of thousands

of youths, in a word, the happiness of the peoples to whom it is your absolute duty to assure these boons. . . . May Heaven grant that, in deserving the plaudits of your contemporaries, you will gain also for yourselves the name of peacemakers among future generations."

Unfortunately, the deaf adder had stopped up her ears. The Allies continued to evade the Pope's uncomfortable proposals, and things changed in Germany; von Bethmann-Hollweg was succeeded as Chancellor by Michaelis, the German General Staff's candidate, who eventually sent a reply conceding nothing. The carnage was to go on for another year.

At this point you may put the book down with annoyance, and say that it is too one-sided to be worth reading; all this business of the best of all possible popes in the worst of all possible worlds reads a little too like a fairy story. On second thoughts, however, the events of the years 1914 to 1918, when looked back upon after a certain lapse of time, do show up those who were responsible for what was taking place in a rather lurid light. Whatever one's religious convictions, the Pope is the leader of the largest Christian body in the world, numbering over 300,000,000 souls. His headquarters is in Europe, and a large proportion of Europeans belong to his flock, but though he lives in Rome his office is strictly international in character. This being so, when a terrible war started in Europe, nobody was in a better position to act as mediator, and he repeatedly offered to do so, laying down with commendable common sense on what lines the mediation should be conducted; on each occasion his offer was rejected, and, as we have seen, special measures were taken early in the war to ensure that his offers should come to nothing. I do not venture to say who was most to blame; the matter is too complicated for that, and this book is not an essay on war guilt; it looks, however, as if a number of people

were responsible for an untold amount of unnecessary death and havoc and suffering. There is not even the excuse that a worthy peace was made at the end of it all; even the most thoughtless would not venture to praise what was done at Versailles.

If I may digress for a moment, I should like to speak of one great statesman who was not afraid to stand up alone against the wolves of national opinion in his efforts to hasten the end of the struggle. On November 29th, 1917, four months after the Pope had made his peace proposals, the general public were surprised at a letter which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* above the name of Lord Lansdowne; the ideas of the letter had been in his mind for over a year, as they are substantially the same as those expressed in a memorandum which he made for the Prime Minister in November 1916, but to most people, even his friends, the letter came as a shock.

“We are not going to lose this war,” he wrote, “but its prolongation will spell ruin for the civilized world, and infinite addition to the load of human suffering which already weighs upon it. Security will be invaluable to a world which has the vitality to profit by it, but what will be the value of the blessings of peace to nations so exhausted that they can scarcely stretch out a hand with which to grasp them?”

“In my belief, if the War is to be brought to a close in time to avoid a world-wide catastrophe, it will be brought to a close because the people of the countries involved realize that it has already lasted too long.”

He went on to state very many points that must be borne in mind if a true peace was to be made; they bore a close resemblance to those contained in the papal note. The Pope was not quite alone among the statesmen of the world.

CHAPTER II

THE MAKING OF THE MAN

WHILE these things were taking place, a middle-aged priest worked day by day in the Vatican Library, a building which in its day had surprised Macaulay, to whom popery was always a little startling.

“All light and brilliant”, he found it—“nothing but white and red and gold ; blazing arabesques, and paintings on ceiling and wall. And this was the Vatican Library ; a place which I used to think of with awe as a far sterner and darker Bodleian !”

To Macaulay’s stern mind the Library seemed a little frivolous :

“The books and manuscripts are all in low wooden cases ranged round the walls ; and as these cases are painted in light colours, they harmonize with the gay aspect of everything round them, and might be supposed to contain musical instruments, masquerade dresses, or china for the dances and suppers for which the apartments seem to be meant. They bore inscriptions, however, more suited to my notions of the place.”

The last sentence is particularly enjoyable.

This man was the prefect, Monsignor Ratti ; he was well known in the public life of Rome, and a number of prominent men from various countries had met him on their visits to the Vatican ; but perhaps those who knew and liked him best were one or two friends who had climbed with him in the Alps, some learned men in the world of books, and many poor men in

Milan, to whom as children he had taught the Catechism, when they visited him in the convent chapel that he served. One day he would be famous as Pius XI, the Pope who steered the Church through some of the most critical years she has known since she emerged from the catacombs under the Emperor Constantine.

He was rather bald, a little corpulent, with an alarmingly firm mouth, and kind eyes that looked at you steadily through gold-rimmed spectacles; the mouth showed the firmness of a man who could endure as alpine climbers must endure, and the eyes had pored over ancient manuscripts, finding marks and signs that would remain hidden to you and me, besides seeing riots in the streets of Milan, and the conflict that goes on inside men, as he listened to their confessions in the days before he came to Rome.

Those who had dealings with him at the Vatican Library remembered a calm, courteous man, who never seemed in a hurry, and was always ready to help. He himself once described the Vatican Library as "a permanent international congress of learning". He had done much to produce the easy-going and friendly atmosphere which is necessary for such an institution to run freely.

But there was more than international learning going on inside that library; international affairs were never far off, for it was closely connected with the diplomatic work of the Vatican. A special passage led from it to the Pope's apartments, and along this the prefect often went, to be consulted by the Pope on questions of international policy. He had a deep knowledge of history, after many years of research, and was also a good linguist, so that his advice was of no little importance. As he advised he also learnt, and in this way was being trained for a diplomatic mission of difficulty and danger, on which he would one day be sent, away from the quiet, scholarly life to which he was accustomed.

What was the previous history of this man who during the world war was one of the Pope's main advisers, and who would one day himself make the surprising claim, "with the assistance of Divine Grace, the destiny of the human family lies in our hands"?

There was little that was spectacular about it, beyond the fact that he had brains and character. Those of you who have entered Italy from the north will remember the great plain of Lombardy; perhaps like me you have revengeful memories of it, for the journey across it is remarkably boring; after the beauty and variety, the desolation followed by vivid colours of the Alps and the lakes, the plain, which one reaches so suddenly, seems dull and hot and monotonous; very fertile, very well cultivated, but unpleasantly like a vast market garden. Here and there are small towns, with red-tiled roofs, and large churches with domes and campaniles, but otherwise there is no change; the monstrous new station at Milan comes as quite a relief at the end.

In one of these little towns Monsignor Ratti was born. Desio is between Milan and Como, about ten miles to the north of Milan. His parents were of peasant stock, who had moved in to the town, and his father, Francesco Ratti, had a job as manager of a silk-factory, belonging to the brothers Conti; this factory eventually went bankrupt, so that Ratti had to find work with other firms, and it is now an orphanage. I have seen the photographs of his parents; his mother had soft black hair parted in the middle, above a thin, gentle, intelligent face, and his father must have been a burly man, with thick black hair and beard, and the steady eyes and firm mouth that his son has inherited.

He was born on May 31st, 1857, and was christened in the church just by his parents' house, a large Renaissance building not unlike the Brompton Oratory, but with an octagonal dome. He was given the names

Ambrose Damien Achille. It will be remembered that St. Ambrose was the sturdy Bishop of Milan who was chosen while still a layman for the office, and only reluctantly submitted to consecration, but having done so did not fear to demand public penance from the Emperor Theodosius who had been responsible for the massacre at Thessalonica. The boy was, however, known by the name of Achille.

He was the fourth of five sons ; the eldest eventually became a station-master on the Northern Railway at Milan, and the two who came after him went into the silk trade ; Achille was rather different from his brothers, and more interested than they were in the lessons which they received from Don Volontieri, an old priest who used to teach in Desio. A communal school had not yet been established in the town, and Francesco Ratti could only afford to pay for a year's education for his sons.

There had been many priests in the Ratti family, and it looked as if Achille was likely to end in the priesthood. He had an uncle a priest, Don Damiano Ratti, who from the first took an interest in the boy. Achille and his brothers used to stay with him in the hot weather at Asso, a pleasant place near Bellaggio, overlooking the Lake of Como. When he was there he learnt about books from his uncle, but he also learnt to love the mountains, which were to be the friends of his spare time for many years. Don Damiano noticed the boy's attraction towards the priesthood, and offered to pay for his education.

There have been over two hundred popes, and it would be interesting to trace the histories of the kindly men who made sacrifices to educate them when young, for a large proportion of them came from humble homes. Anyway, Don Damiano, living quietly in his retired parish, with its groves of chestnut trees overlooking one of the most beautiful lakes in the world, did not spend his money in vain ; Achille did

well ; he had good brains, and seemed to enjoy work, but in spite of the efforts of over-pious people to slander him, was the opposite of a prig. Those who were with him also noticed that he took far more interest in outside affairs than the rest of the students.

He was strong in body, and his love of mountain-climbing in his holidays developed when he was young. He did not, however, take to strange antics, like St. John Bosco, another product of Northern Italy at whose canonization he would one day preside, who used to walk the tight-rope in the village squares of Piedmont in order to collect money to educate himself for the priesthood.

The little seminary of St. Peter Martyr, the great seminary at Monza, the college of St. Charles at Milan, he went through them all, and later, when he had been offered a lectureship in mathematics at Turin, this was vetoed at the express wish of the Archbishop of Milan, who had been watching his career with considerable interest, and he was sent to Rome to complete his studies at the Lombard College.

At last the great day came, and he received the priesthood on December 20th, 1879, in the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome. Fifty years later there would be a little procession of motor-cars in the early morning from the Vatican to that Basilica ; Pope Pius XI was on his way to say Mass, on the occasion of the jubilee of his priesthood ; it was also the first time that a pope had publicly left the Vatican since the day when they became prisoners after the taking of Rome.

Life in a seminary is not an easy one. A priest's life is always difficult, for he must give up the very things that make life happy for the average man—a wife, children, a home ; candidates for the priesthood must, therefore, be tested to the full, for it is no light thing that they are undertaking ; to make their training easy would be cruel, not kind. Achille Ratti had, however, stayed the course, and finished well.

Catholics who read this book may like to know where he said his first three Masses ; they were at the Church of St. Charles on the Corso, at St. Andrew's on the Quirinal in the room of St. Stanislaus Kostka, that handsome little Polish prince who "darted like a kingfisher" across history, and at St. Peter's tomb.

Achille Ratti studied for three more years ; he became a Doctor in Canon Law at the Gregorian University and a Doctor in Theology at the Sapienzia. He also became a Doctor in Philosophy, and we are told that in the examination for this he gained full marks.

Just after this examination a strange little incident occurred. Personally, I am always sceptical about the significance of such stories, but still, similar events often seem to occur in the lives of great men, and are interesting. After his success in the philosophy examination, Achille Ratti was received by Pope Leo XIII ; he was presented by Father Liberatore, a distinguished scholar who had been one of the examiners. As the young man knelt before him, the Pope allowed his hand to rest for such a long time on his head that those who were watching were struck by it. Perhaps the Pope was gifted at that moment with a strange insight into the future.

CHAPTER III

THE MAKING OF THE DIPLOMAT

DON ACHILLE RATTI returned to Milan in 1882, and was appointed professor at St. Peter's Seminary, where he had once been a student. He was to teach sacred eloquence (a pleasant old-fashioned name) and dogmatic theology, and till the term started was given temporary work as assistant priest in the small parish of Barni in Valassina. In regard to his lectures, Monsignor Fontenelle describes him as "among those who, impatient of summary generalizations, indulge in an hour of synthesis only after years of patient analysis".

Five years after his return a vacancy occurred among the doctors of the Ambrosian Library in Milan; Don Ratti applied for the post and was accepted. The doctors all belong to the Oblates of St. Charles, a congregation of secular priests living under a rule (in London they have a house in Bayswater, founded by Cardinal Manning), and he was admitted as a member. This was a turning-point in his life; had he not been accepted by the Ambrosian, it is unlikely that he would ever have been called to the Vatican Library, and his career would probably have been very different.

The Ambrosian Library was opened in 1609; its founder was Cardinal Frederick Borromeo, a nephew of St. Charles of the same family, who played a leading part in the life of the Counter-Reformation, and also became Archbishop of Milan. With the one exception of the Bodleian at Oxford, it was the first genuinely

public library in Europe. Not only did Cardinal Borromeo present to it his own collection of books and manuscripts, but he employed eight learned men to travel and collect treasures in Europe and the Holy Land ; they do not seem to have been idle, as when the Cardinal died in 1631 the library contained 14,000 manuscripts and 30,000 printed volumes.

On the original foundation there were nine doctors, who were to teach Latin, Greek and Italian, to publish works of original research, to keep in touch with learned men in other countries, and to be ready to help students who came to consult them. Soon after the foundation a gallery of pictures and sculpture was attached, with a school of art.

In 1907 an anonymous guide-book to the Library was published, which is now known to be the work of Don Ratti ; in it he says :

“That Borromeo’s passion for books had given zest and acumen to his researches and produced in him a keen appreciation of the manuscripts which came his way is clear from the instructions which he never failed to give his representatives and colleagues. His knowledge of Latin and Greek had made him familiar with the intellectual treasures of the classical past. Latin in particular, then the common language of the learned throughout the civilised world, kept him in touch with his contemporaries in every land. The Eastern tongues, with which he was also acquainted, and which he wished to make known in the West, disclosed another vast field of knowledge hitherto unexplored.” And later: “Each doctor is further under the obligation of publishing from time to time the result of his researches in some periodical. For this purpose they have a printing-press capable of producing not merely Latin and Italian texts, but also works in Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Persian, Armenian, etc. ; and provision is also made for extending invitations to natives of

the various Eastern countries, so that the doctors may have the opportunity of profiting by conversation with them."

When Don Ratti was appointed, the Library and galleries had expanded enormously since the days of Cardinal Borromeo ; it contained 250,000 volumes and 15,000 manuscripts ; the volumes will be noticed to have increased far more than the manuscripts, though among the latter is the largest collection of palimpsests in the world, including the text of Cicero's *De Republica*, which was lost for many years, and rediscovered by Cardinal Mai. The endowments had not kept pace with the books and treasures, and it had been necessary to reduce the number of doctors to four ; at one time it had been so low as two.

The Prefect of the Library was Monsignor Ceriani, a famous orientalist, brilliant in brains and short in temper ; he was an old friend of Don Ratti's, who had often consulted him, and had been advised by him to apply for the post, but it is not improbable that the new librarian had some trying moments. His special work was to deal with the large number of visitors, so that the old prefect should be free to probe among the ancient manuscripts, for there were still many treasures among these about which hardly anything was known.

Don Ratti soon had other work on hand, besides helping visitors and preventing them from annoying Monsignor Ceriani ; he started to write a history of the Milanese Church. There was abundant material, from all sides of the question ; not only has Milan produced a number of great churchmen, starting with St. Ambrose, and has also played a definite part in the history of Christendom, but she even has a liturgy of her own. If you go to her cathedral, with its columns like the stems of giant trees, at half past nine on any morning you will find High Mass in progress, and as you watch you will find that the ceremonies are different from those you have been accustomed to see in Catholic

churches ; the Ambrosian rite is more elaborate and perhaps more graceful than the stern and restrained Roman rite. In connection with this liturgy he eventually published a work of considerable scholarship, the *Missale Ambrosianum Duplex*.

His study of the Church history of Milan was to be of more than scholarly interest. As the earlier period, starting with St. Ambrose, was certain to need an overwhelming amount of research, he decided to start with the second volume, from the sixteenth century onwards. That century produced many an odd figure, and perhaps one of the strangest of these was St. Charles Borromeo. Nowadays we all wilt a little at the word "saint" ; it somehow brings up the picture of some unpractical idealist who was too busy making himself uncomfortable to attend to anything else, although as a matter of fact most of the Western saints have been remarkable for their hard-headedness ; St. Charles was as hard-headed as any of them. He was one of those who are, as the saying is, "born to the purple". Coming of an old family, by the age of twenty-two he was practically the leading statesman of the papal Court, and it was through his work and influence that the final sittings of the Council of Trent took place, all before he was twenty-five years old, and before he had been ordained to the priesthood. Later, as Archbishop of Milan, he was intrepid in reforming his diocese, so much so that he narrowly risked being assassinated by his fellow Christians ; he always kept up an external show of magnificence, and in doing so was quite right, but behind this he lived an austere and mysterious life of prayer.

His correspondence as Cardinal Secretary of State and as the reorganizer of the Council of Trent was very great, for he was brought into touch with many countries, most of which were at the time in a highly disturbed state ; the information collected was to be of real interest to Don Ratti, and was also destined

still to be of practical value, when he became adviser to Pope Benedict XV, in a Europe even more gravely disturbed, and beset with problems strangely similar to those of the sixteenth century.

During these quiet years at the Ambrosian, Don Ratti was also doing spiritual work. Besides his ordinary duties as a priest, Mass, meditation and the Divine Office, he was chaplain to the Convent of the Cenacle. This had a large chapel open to the public, where every week he used to teach the catechism to numbers of poor children who came to see him there because they liked him and he understood them. In the records of the chapel there are the names of 630 children who were prepared by him for their first Holy Communion. He also used to preach there and hear confessions, both in German and Italian; among other clients, there were at that time a number of young chimney-sweeps who used to wander down to Milan from the Tyrol, rather like the boys who come over every year from Brittany to sell onions in England, and local tradition has it that they all used to visit their friend at the Cenacle Chapel soon after their arrival.

He always enjoyed this work, and it was no mere side-line in his life. "Here," he would say when in the chapel, "I indeed feel a priest."

There is an event of those years that is worth mentioning and which foreshadows a greater event which took place twenty years later. Milan had become a large industrial city, with the cruel and inhuman conditions that industrialism brings in its train; many of the big men in industry had that contempt for the rights of man which was so often the case among nineteenth-century liberals. It was not surprising that in 1898 there were violent riots, very like the Commune in Paris. Those who could fled from Milan; Don Ratti, however, remained where he was, in Milan, as he was once more to do in Warsaw twenty years later. He

offered his services as mediator to both sides, and was also able to put matters right with the police in an episode that is in many ways rather funny ; the revolutionaries broke into a Capuchin friary, locked the poor friars up and dressed themselves in their habits ; having done this, they started firing out of the windows. The astonishment of the police can be imagined, and without Don Ratti's intervention the results would have been far more serious.

Anti-clerical forces were about at the time, and anti-clericals were in control of municipal affairs. The real meaning of this word is not usually understood in England. One is apt to imagine that an anti-clerical is merely a sensible man who does not wish to have the clergy meddling in his private life, any more than those even greater dangers, the lawyer and the doctor. As a matter of fact, on the Continent it means something far more definite, just as the Continental liberal was often a less amiable and freedom-loving man than Mr. Gladstone. Anti-religious would be a more accurate description.

Don Luigi Sturzo, who is, I think, the ablest living critic of Fascism, and of whom I shall say more later, sums up the attitude rather well when he refers to theories that

“affirmed the judicial and moral superiority of the State over the Church, the tendency to carry to its ultimate logical consequence the tradition known as State jurisdictionalism, implying that the State should have power over ecclesiastical institutions, such as religious communities, marriage, pious foundations, parish schools, benefices and ecclesiastical appointments—over all the public activities and ordering of the Church.”*

This problem was just as acute before the arrival of Mussolini and the blackshirts ; it was at times more acute.

* *Italy and Fascism*, p. 16. (Faber & Gwyer, 1926.)

The Archbishop of Milan, who had been watching him, realized that he had in Ratti a man of uncommon ability, and employed him in a negotiation that needed considerable diplomatic skill. The enemy of religion is not usually as utterly stupid as one might expect, and he realizes that the schools are the most important place to attack. This had happened in Milan. It seemed possible that some arrangement might be come to, and at last, after plenty of unnecessary talk and negotiating, the authorities were persuaded to give way; Ratti persuaded them to allow him, and 100 volunteer priests under his control, to give religious teaching in the schools. The following year the permission was revoked on the flimsiest pretext, for authorities of that kind can be as fickle as coquettish women, and once more Ratti had to use his tact and skill to put things right. He was beginning his delicate work of adjusting the delicate relations of Church and State, a problem from which he would never be quite at peace for the rest of his life.

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy; he could work hard, but he could play as well. Billiards were an almost daily amusement, and his holidays he always spent in mountaineering; he had learnt to love the mountains when he used to stay with his uncle at Asso.

He was a member of the Alpine Club, and won fame for himself by climbing the highest peak of Monte Rosa from the Italian side; this was dangerous and exciting, and had never been done before—indeed, it was believed to be impossible. Monsignor Ceriani was, apparently, not told of the exploit. In the appendix I give the account in Don Ratti's own words, so that in this little piece of autobiography you may catch a closer glimpse of the man himself.

The years went quietly by, and slowly and unconsciously Don Ratti was being prepared for his real work. Nobody had an inkling of what was to come.

Why should they? It is a far cry from being a librarian in Milan to being the Pope of Rome.

Meanwhile he continued to be a man of books. Besides his three big volumes on the Church of Milan, he published a number of papers in the *Historical Archives of Lombardy*, and articles in learned journals. There was also an attractive little pamphlet, *Two Iconographical Maps of Milan, Based on the Vatican MSS of the XVth Century*, with many notes by the editor, but which is of special personal interest, because of its dedication to his mother. It runs :

“It is to you, mother of a rare and ancient pattern, I dedicate these (the oldest known) maps of our great and loved Metropolis of Lombardy, our mother-city, and also the few pages in which I explain them. I dedicate them to you, on your feast-day, and I like to think that some learned man, perhaps even some generations hence, will there read your name, and find in it a testimony of the love and veneration which your children had for you.”

His mother moved into Milan with his youngest brother after his father's death, and he always tried to go and see her every day.

He corresponded with many learned men, some of whom came to see him at Milan, and in connection with his work he visited England, France and Austria. In 1891 he was in Vienna and Budapest, and in 1893 in Paris, where he met Zotenberg, Omont and Delisle. In this year he accompanied his friend Monsignor Radini-Tedeschi to France, when he was the official bearer of the Cardinal's hat to the Bishop of Rodez; at the reception he was introduced to M. Carnot and M. Poincaré.

In 1899 he was in Rome, and wrote from there to Ceriani :

“The real nut to be cracked here is the Vatican

secret archives. I have for some days had in hand all the data that inventories and registers can provide, but on a number of points they can give me no help, and I have had to ransack the documents themselves. There are about sixty boxes full of parchments of every form, colour and origin, a real orgy of palaeography and a regular Babel of history."

Of his first visit to England in 1900 unfortunately very little is known, apart from a visit to the John Rylands Library at Manchester, but this is a good place to mention his second visit in 1914, when as Vice-Prefect of the Vatican Library he was its representative at the Roger Bacon celebrations. He spent some time in Oxford, where he was continually delving into the treasures of the Bodleian, and he paid a second visit to the John Rylands Library to examine the manuscripts. In London he spent several days over the books and manuscripts at the British Museum and at the London Library in St. James's Square. It was a disappointment to him that he just missed seeing his old friend Dr. Hagberg Wright. He is reported to have said Mass in Westminster Cathedral; little did he know that twenty-three years later he would, when in danger of death, be prayed for in that building by a great crowd of devoted Londoners.

He also undertook work in Milan in connection with pictures. He had made researches into the best modern methods for restoring them, and he was thus able to give valuable advice for saving Leonardo da Vinci's fresco of the Last Supper in the Dominican Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie; in later life, after he had moved to Rome, he published essays on the work of Leonardo da Vinci and Luini.

In March 1907 Monsignor Ceriani died, full of years and learning; he had his difficult side, but there must have been much to love in that eccentric figure, and during their twenty years of collaboration a deep friendship had formed between the two men. Ceriani

had even paid Ratti the compliment of making his confessions to him.

Ratti was appointed as his successor, as everybody had expected, and was given the title of Monsignor. Being Prefect of the Ambrosian meant increased responsibility, so it was necessary to give up his chaplaincy at the Cenacle convent ; it came as a wrench, for he loved his children and that side of his life. Though a man of books he was always first and foremost a priest, and that was where his heart lay.

He was not to preside over the Ambrosian for long ; in November 1911 he was summoned to Rome, to be Vice-Prefect of the Vatican Library, and to face a more complicated world than the world of books. He was to meet even harder and more secret nuts to crack than the secret archives which had fascinated him in 1899.

CHAPTER IV

THE DIPLOMAT

THE first two years at Rome were calm and uneventful. The pontificate of Pius X was drawing to its close, and the cataclysm that brought on his death was only dimly on the way. In England and France there was apprehensive talk of the militaristic frenzy that was taking hold of Germany, but the world in general seemed reasonably settled and prosperous. There were, of course, the Balkan troubles, but except for those directly concerned, they did not loom very large in Europe; nobody had any idea that a world-wide disaster was going to be brought about in an unknown Balkan town.

Monsignor Ratti was busy on the old manuscripts, which for years he had been hoping to investigate. He also established special studios for restoring parchments, and brought out the essays of Leonardo da Vinci and Luini, which we have already mentioned, and the *Missale Ambrosianum Duplex*, a work of great importance for liturgical scholars, but not likely to appeal to a wider circle.

He still spent his holidays mountaineering, and in the autumn of 1913 made what was to be his last great ascent, of Capanna Relaccio. In 1914, as we have described, he visited England.

The Prefect of the Vatican Library was Father Ehrle, a Bavarian Jesuit; he had for some time been uneasy about holding the appointment, which was not strictly in accordance with the Jesuit rule, and when

war broke out in August 1914,⁶ he resigned. It was still uncertain in which direction Italy would turn, and he felt that, as a German, his presence in the Library might injure the harmonious atmosphere by which he set such store ; the post would be better held by an Italian. The Pope accepted his resignation with regret, and Monsignor Ratti was appointed as his successor.

Shortly afterwards Pius X died, and Cardinal della Chiesa, the Archbishop of Bologna, was elected Pope. Up to then he and Monsignor Ratti had seen hardly anything of each other, but during the next few years there was to be a close connection between them. A sketch has already been given of the papal policy during the war, in the framing of which the Prefect of the Vatican Library is believed to have been a constant adviser. A wise man once said, "History is not made by mobs, but by quiet men in studies" ; he was not far wrong.

The papal policy was consistent all through ; the Pope aimed at peace, and would be content with nothing else. He threw all his influence against Italian intervention, and issued another appeal for peace just afterwards ; we know with what results. And yet the Governments were once again beginning to realize the importance of the papacy ; even Protestant Powers began to send representatives to the Holy See. The Dutch Prime Minister, whose aims were always on the side of peace, said at the time :

"There is no more important diplomatic centre for the exercise of influence to bring about peace than the Vatican ; the Pope is one of the great Powers ; his influence to bring peace to a suffering mankind as soon as possible cannot be over-estimated."

In March 1917 the Allies in the West received a shock ; the Czarist régime collapsed and Kerensky's Provisional Government took its place. Kerensky was too weak a man for the situation ; he could not hold

the Army by oratory alone, and the soldiers refused to fight any longer ; besides, the awful misery of the people made peace absolutely necessary for Russia. Two determined men seized power, who had recently returned from exile ; one Ulianoff, who took the name of Lenin, and Braunstein, a Jew, known as Trotsky ; they were cruel and ruthless, but efficient and strong.

In March 1918 the Bolsheviks made the peace of Brest-Litovsk with Germany ; peace was what they wanted, and they were prepared to pay for it. They surrendered vast tracts of country—Finland, Esthonia, Livonia, Courland, Lithuania, and Russian Poland. This surrender was of the greatest importance both for Catholicism and for Europe.

I am afraid that I must now digress a little and give a short lecture on Poland ; at first I may seem to be wandering from the point, but this is not really the case ; Poland is going to have a good deal to do with our story, just as she has played a far more important part in the history of Europe during the last eighteen years than is usually remembered.

No European country has been so badly treated, and no country has remained so true to her grand traditions. The third partition took place in 1795. Statesmen often tend to be cynical and corrupt, but on this occasion the men in power surpassed themselves. Russia did best out of the pretty little deal, as she was able to seize the greater part of the old Polish kingdom, along with 16,000,000 inhabitants ; Austria came second, with 5,000,000, and Prussia third, with 3,000,000. A few signatures, Poland had disappeared from the map of Europe, and the fate of over 20,000,000 men and women had been decided for them. Poland had for centuries been the battleground on which Swedes, Germans, Russians, Mongols and Turks liked to fight, and by the end of the eighteenth century the Polish people were too weak and exhausted to resist the wrong that was being done to them.

The Poles under Austrian rule came off best ; there were bad patches of political oppression, but on the whole life was tolerable. Under Germany things were less tolerable ; the land which Polish families had held for years was colonized by uncouth Prussian farmers who dragooned the people in the hard, unimaginative Prussian way. Under Russia things were not tolerable at all, and the bulk of the Poles were under Russia ; there had for centuries been a rivalry between the Poles and the Russians ; the latter had bided their time and they now took their revenge. Not only was there a cruel political oppression, but there was religious persecution as well, for the Russian Orthodox, with their belief in Moscow as the third Rome, hated the ancient Rome ; they distrusted it for political reasons, and they also disliked the clear Latin habits of thought which are part of the Catholic heritage. There was a constant underground movement against the Czarist Government, which in turn responded with the knout, the gallows and Siberia. In 1863 there was an unsuccessful insurrection, and in consequence 20,000 Polish men were sent in chains to Siberia, under sentence of lifelong imprisonment ; many of them did not arrive there alive.

And yet, through all the suffering of the last century, the Polish spirit remained alive, waiting for the resurrection which came at last. Though the Russians did their best to suppress it, they kept their language, and though it was a criminal offence to have books of them they remembered their national poetry and legends. The Poles knew how to wait.

There was one Pole with a strange mystical side to his character who had suffered terribly for his country, but who believed that she would one day be free ; his name was Joseph Pilsudski.

He had a strange life. He was born in Lithuania in 1867, but was of Polish blood. He could remember seeing his mother weep, when he was a boy, because

his brother was being sent to Siberia merely for having a friend who was accused of revolutionary propaganda. When he was a little older, he met with the same fate himself, and was treated with the greatest brutality. After five years of misery he was released, and made his way to London, where he lived in complete poverty in the East End, plotting for his people. Later he returned to Warsaw, and founded an anti-Russian paper, but the secret police traced him, and he was imprisoned once more. He pretended to be mad, and was sent to an asylum after a year; he eventually escaped, through the help of a doctor on the staff who was a fellow conspirator.

The news of his escape spread far and wide among the Poles, and he became a national hero, but his goal was still far off. Then he had an idea. As he watched the course of events, he became convinced that before very long there would be war between Russia and Germany; Poland would then have her chance. He moved to Austrian Poland, where life was more free, and official sentiment was hostile to Russia, and there he raised a volunteer army. Just think of the difficulties and dangers, and you will see what an achievement this was. The Austrian Government realized what was happening and at first were naturally suspicious; still, they knew what was probably going to happen in Europe, and if they were humoured, these volunteers of Pilsudski's might come in useful one day.

When the war came, the Austrian Government found that their lenient policy with Pilsudski and his men had been quite right; what was known as the Polish Legion offered their services, and though they were provided with disgracefully insufficient equipment by the Austrians, they became famous for their courage and strength; there was some curious quality in their leader, temperamental though he was, which could command obedience and devotion.

We know how Russia collapsed and Germany

became dominant in Poland ; their rule was better than that of the Czars, but it was bad enough. Pilsudski defied the Germans, and forbade his men to take an oath of allegiance to the German Emperor ; for this he was arrested, sent to Germany, and imprisoned in the fortress of Magdeburg. The Germans were a little puzzled as to how to deal with this man, for there was no doubt he had a great and mysterious power with the Poles. Von Bessler, the German governor of Warsaw, had described him as "the soul of Polish opposition", and when he had been sentenced to death for disobeying orders, Austrian intervention had saved his life, for it had been pointed out that his execution would send Poland up in flames. When he was in Germany attempts were made to conciliate him and to find out his plans but he wisely remained silent ; he wanted something better than Poland ruled by a Council of State under German control.

Another collapse came, in Germany this time ; after the German revolution, Pilsudski returned to Poland, and few men can have had such a reception from their own people ; there was not only hero-worship, there was affection and friendship as well.

Another man had arrived in Warsaw rather earlier in the year ; he was surprised to find himself there, and he was also a little surprised at the ovation that he received. It was Monsignor Ratti, of the Vatican Library ; the re-emergence of Poland was an event of first-rate importance for the Catholic Church, and Ratti was chosen by the Pope to act as his Apostolic Visitor. His wide historical knowledge made him a suitable man for dealing with what promised to be a very complicated situation ; at the close of the Seven Years' War Monsignor Grampi, the Prefect of the Vatican Library, had been sent as Visitor to Poland, and afterwards he had written a full account of his experiences, containing a store of valuable information ; some years before, though he did not then realize its importance

for him, Ratti had studied this account, and afterwards had published an essay on the subject.

Though there had been no Papal Visitor in Poland for a long time (the last Papal Nuncio, Monsignor Archetti, had been compelled to leave Warsaw a hundred and twenty-five years before), the Popes had steadily championed the Polish cause against Czarist cruelty and oppression ; a spirited protest was made by Gregory XVI in 1842, when the Czar became more than usually menacing, and in 1864 Pius IX was equally outspoken.

“A potentate,” he said, “calling himself an Eastern Catholic, is oppressing and slaughtering his Catholic subjects who have been driven into insurrection by the harshness of his rule. On the pretext of putting down that insurrection, he is uprooting Catholicism, and deporting whole populations to the most northerly regions, where they will be deprived of all religious aid other than that which may be offered to them by adventurers belonging to other creeds. He is persecuting and massacring priests, deposing bishops, and preventing them from exercising their legitimate jurisdiction. Let no one say that in raising Our voice against this potentate of the North, we are fomenting revolution in Europe. We are well able to discriminate between revolution and right and liberty.”

Ratti reached Warsaw on the feast of Corpus Christi ; he did this deliberately, as he wished to emphasize the fact that his visit was a religious one. His journey across Poland was almost a triumphal progress, and the enthusiasm of the people came as revelation to him. Here was a people who had for more than a century been crushed under a ruthless and bitterly anti-Catholic domination, and yet they had kept their faith intact, in spite of every effort to wrest it from them. The enthusiasm and devotion of the crowds brought home to him the significance of the Papacy for the world ;

as a Catholic he had always believed in it ; but in the retired life which he had led it had never been presented to his mind in such a forcible way.

“At last,” he said to his secretary one day, “I realize the greatness of the Pope. Though I am only a poor librarian, the people kneel before me simply because the shadow of the Pope is over me.”

One is reminded of the events in Jerusalem some nineteen hundred years earlier, when a certain obstinate fisherman was busy publishing the news of an astounding event which has divided the world's history into two distinct parts. We are told that

“The multitude of men and women who believed in the Lord, was more increased : insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at the least might overshadow any of them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities.”

There was work and to spare for him to do ; at first he was Apostolic Visitor only to Poland and Lithuania, but before long his territory was increased to include all the countries that had formerly been under the Czar—Finland, Esthonia, Latvia and Soviet Russia. His main work was, however, to be in Poland.

To appreciate the importance of his position one must remember how things looked at that time. The collapse of Czarism in Russia had left a more acute state of chaos than anybody had expected, and in the middle of this chaos a new force known as Bolshevism had raised its head ; it was an oriental system that had originated in the mind of a Jew,* and it was more hard and ruthless than the French Revolution had ever been. Western Europe was in an unstable state owing to the Great War, with Germany and Austria the

*I do not say this as an insult to the great Jewish people, but I think it cannot be denied that Marx's Jewish religious background, from which he tried to escape, had a profound effect on his thought. This is dealt with in the last chapter in this book.

victims of starvation and exhaustion, as Ratti himself had noticed when passing through, and there was a considerable possibility that the iron force of Bolshevism would move farther West, for such philosophies thrive on ruin, just as vultures feed on carrion.

The territories ceded at Brest-Litovsk had thus a decisive part to play in making a barrier against the Western drive of Eastern fatalism, and the spiritual force which animated them all to a lesser or greater degree would in its turn have much to do in strengthening this barrier, for Catholicism is at the same time the religion of unity and freedom. There were signs which told of a new Lepanto not far ahead.

On the purely ecclesiastical side, things in Poland were little short of chaotic. The appointment of Bishops had always been restricted by the Czarist Government, with the result that there were twelve sees waiting to be filled. In Austrian Poland things had been oppressive on the intellectual side, and clerical studies were in urgent need of restoration; the founding of the University in Lublin was a good move forward in this direction. The Ruthenians in Eastern Poland were another complication, for though they are Catholics, they follow the Eastern rite, and they had many privileges and exemptions which had been necessary under the Russian persecution, but which would now have to be carefully inquired into. The breakdown of communications had done much to increase the general chaos.

Before the end of the summer Ratti had managed to appoint Bishops to the vacant sees, and in September he made a journey to the south. Earlier in the year he had paid a visit to the ancient pilgrimage centre of Jasna Gora, but owing to transport difficulties the vast numbers who usually visited the shrine had been unable to get there; he found only a small number of ragged pilgrims praying for peace. The journey to the south was, however, a great success; everywhere the same

crowds of enthusiastic peasants came out to meet him, carrying brightly coloured banners, and there were public banquets in his honour organized by those who were better off. Nobody could be called well off; on one occasion, owing to the usual transport troubles, his health had to be drunk in soda-water.

He did not confine himself to Catholics, but met large numbers of Jews as well; as everybody knows, the Jewish problem in Central and Eastern Europe tends to become acute, and one knows that the reactions to it are sometimes barbarous and cruel, as in Hitler's Germany; Ratti made it quite clear that any anti-Semitic outbursts would be severely condemned by the Holy See, though from what one hears of Poland during the last few years, his wishes have not been respected as they should be.

During this journey he had no difficulties over the languages; by nature a good linguist, he had been taking Polish lessons in Warsaw, and as a young priest in Milan he had learnt Hebrew from a local rabbi, so that he was able to talk freely with both races. All through his visit he was on the best of terms with the Jews, and on one occasion a chief rabbi specially asked for his prayers on behalf of himself and his people.

Another work which he had under his care was the distribution of relief. The poverty all round was terrible, and the Pope had provided him with considerable funds to distribute where they were needed. These funds had been none too easy to provide; as can be imagined, the ancient contribution known as Peter's Pence had greatly fallen off during the war, as it was impossible for the Catholics of the various countries to send it. This traditional contribution is of interest and great antiquity; in England it used to consist of an annual tax of one penny on every hearth, and Matthew Paris the chronicler mentions it being collected by Offa, King of Wessex, in the eighth century,

for the upkeep of the English school at Rome. Nowadays it is a voluntary contribution among all Catholics, and is sent to the Pope to use as he thinks right, for missions and other needy causes.

Peter's Pence might be scarce, but Pope Benedict did not wish the Poles to run short. "Spend whatever you think necessary," he said to Ratti before he left Rome, "for We are proud of Our dignity though We are poor." Most of these funds Ratti handed over for distribution to the Archbishop of Warsaw, but a certain amount he administered personally, wherever he found distress. In Warsaw it was his custom to explore the poorest parts of the city so as to see conditions for himself. His relief work was not only among Catholics; there is a true story, still told in Poland, of how he met one day an old Jewish woman crying by the side of the road. He asked her what was troubling her, and when she told him she had lost her only cow, he gave her the money to buy another, after which she went away quite happy. One wonders if the old lady can still be alive, and if she has heard what became of the amiable gentleman who bought her a cow.

In November the Germans had to evacuate Poland, and the legendary Pilsudski came back in triumph, to the dream of his life; but, unfortunately, dreams have the same relation to reality the whole world over; he had many troubles ahead. A new State of Poland was proclaimed, and he was in temporary command. Soon afterwards, the inhabitants of Posnania rebelled against their German rulers, declaring their intention to form part of Pilsudski's Poland, and early in the next year elections were held and the Constituent Assembly was set up, under the joint leadership of Paderewski and Pilsudski. A strange combination if you think of it—the rough soldier, with his visionary tendencies, who had spent his life in many strange places—Siberia, prisons, a madhouse, and the slums

of London—and one of the most famous pianists of the day, who had been taken away from his art and told he must help to rule.

Ratti spent the winter in Warsaw. Transport conditions made it impossible to do anything else, and he had plenty to do, with numberless interviews and the distribution of relief. Many of the interviews must have been irritating to a degree, but the years when he used to shield Monsignor Ceriani from visitors had made him a good listener. "They must be allowed to say whatever is on their mind," he remarked to his secretary, "no matter if we have to listen to futilities or absurdities. Visitors find it a great consolation to receive a patient hearing." Almost every day he sent reports to the Vatican, and he kept in touch all the time with the strange leaders of Poland.

An event in February 1919 was the opening of the new Polish Diet, which was preceded by the solemn singing of Mass in the Cathedral of St. John, in the presence of the Apostolic Visitor. Pilsudski and Paderevski were both present, in prominent places before the altar. The new Polish State had emphasized its religious character all along, and began its new constitution with the words, "In the name of God Almighty, we, the Polish people, in thanksgiving to Divine Providence for having freed us from the captivity of a century and a half . . ." In return the Vatican formally recognized Poland as a State *de jure*. The Government then asked that a Papal Nuncio should be appointed.

In the spring a fresh idea came into Ratti's head; had he been able to put it into effect, it is unlikely that he could ever have become Pope. Though the modern pro-Soviet enthusiasts, some of whom verge on the hysterical, have conveniently forgotten it, saner and juster men remember what was done to Christians in Russia at that time; one fears it is still being done, in spite of unconvincing assurances to the

contrary. There was a persecution, with every circumstance of fiendish cruelty ; many beautiful churches and monasteries were being destroyed, and anti-God museums were being set up, comical in their pitiful lack of humour.

Ratti's territory had been extended to cover all the lands formerly under the rule of the Czar. After giving attention to the stories that came from across the border, he decided it was his duty to visit Soviet Russia, though he knew what the end of that journey might be. He wrote to the Pope for permission, saying in the course of his letter, "I believe that to save this immense territory we need more than prayer ; we need the blood of Catholics, the blood of priests."

He had made the arrangements for his journey, and was only waiting for a Soviet visa, when a telegram arrived from Rome with totally different instructions ; he was to be appointed Papal Nuncio in Poland, and was to prepare himself for episcopal consecration. It is the custom for Nuncios to be Bishops.

He was consecrated by Archbishop Kakowski, and received the honorary title of Archbishop of Lepanto—under the special circumstances of Poland a very suitable one. He now had diplomatic status, and Pilsudski was present at his consecration, along with the diplomatic corps. Another member of the corps in Warsaw was Mr. Herbert Hoover, who was later to be President of the United States ; at that time he was directing the relief work of the American Red Cross in Poland. I have seen a photograph of Marshal Pilsudski, Monsignor Ratti, and Mr. Hoover sitting in a row while watching a military display.

The first job of the new Nuncio was to prepare a concordat between the Holy See and Poland. Mention has already been made of some of the ecclesiastical difficulties with which he had to deal ; there were

plenty more. You do not cut a kingdom into three pieces, give it to three different rulers each with a different religion, and then put it together again after a century and a quarter without producing some very odd results. Besides the complications of the Uniats, or Catholics of the Eastern rite, on the Russian side of the country, there were the problems of the Catholics who had been under the domination of Protestant Prussia ; strange vested interests and unusual arrangements had found their way in, owing to the abnormal circumstances, and these could not be recognized by the concordat.

The religious orders were another problem ; in Eastern Poland, though they had been suppressed by the Czarist Government, they had managed to preserve their existence in secret, and they now came out once more into the light of day. They had many claims to make, and just ones too, but these claims needed plenty of investigation. Dealing with corporations can be more ticklish work than dealing with individuals ; the Church owes a great debt to her religious orders, but nevertheless jealousies have occasionally been known between them ; there have been stories of differences of opinion between the Dominicans and the Jesuits. The secular clergy are sometimes a little jealous of the regulars ; on this occasion the eagerness of the regular clergy made the work of organizing the secular clergy none too easy for the Nuncio. Pious people are sometimes a little too eager, though one can thoroughly sympathize with the feelings of the regulars after their long years of eclipse.

Latvia and Lithuania had plenty of difficulties to offer, especially the latter, as Pilsudski's patriotism, always very eager, was convinced that the inhabitants of Vilna wished to be incorporated into Poland ; the latter did not, however, share his convictions, and were thus apt to be suspicious of anybody coming from Warsaw. While the Nuncio was very popular with the

Poles, they in their turn were ready enough to suspect him of favouring the Lithuanians.

Towards the end of 1919 he decided to visit Vilna personally, but this visit was promptly made more difficult by Pilsudski, always generous and impulsive, insisting that the Nuncio should travel with him in the comfort of his special train. Special train or not, the journey cannot have been comfortable; the cold was intense, with fifty degrees of frost, the engine broke down owing to the cold, and they had to wait for hours till relief reached them. As the pipes were all frozen, one can imagine what the temperature in the train must have been like. In his sermon on the journey of the Three Kings, Bishop Lancelot Andrewes used the telling phrase that it was "in the very dead of winter"; these words could also have been used to describe the journey to Vilna.

Although the scales were rather weighted against it, the visit was a success. Among other activities the Nuncio went, accompanied as usual by a surging crowd, to the shrine of Our Lady at Ostrabrama. While there he is said to have remained praying in the snow for two hours, in spite of the cold. Some of my readers will think this foolish, but the wiser among them will think otherwise. I mention this incident because it is characteristic; never spectacular, Monsignor Ratti was a man with great reserves and an unusual capacity for quiet endurance; the same qualities had shown themselves during his mountaineering expeditions. These visits to shrines seem to have made a special mark on his mind, and he remembered them later when faced with greater difficulties; they are mentioned in his first Encyclical, *Ubi Arcano Dei*, on the troubles left by the European war, issued some months after his coronation.

Latvia he visited in the following March—a warmer but trying journey as communications were almost destroyed owing to floods; armed commotion also

seemed to be brewing over frontier disputes. He had to travel by Vilna, and when he arrived there was told that the railway bridge had been washed away by the floods; the river was highly dangerous owing to blocks of ice, and that there were rumours of trains being fired on by the Lithuanians. Not very reassuring; one feels that the unfortunate Nuncio must have thought now and then of the Vatican Library, with its calm atmosphere of "a permanent international congress of learning", cheerful and companionable and above all sensible, with none of these strange quarrels over matters of minor importance.

The journey to Riga was, however, important for Rome. There had been no Bishop there for four centuries, owing to Protestant and later Orthodox domination. And now that one had at last been consecrated, the difficulties had been so acute that he had seen no alternative but to resign, and had asked the Nuncio to visit him and give advice. Ratti gave an address in the pro-Cathedral, which he delivered in Latin, but which had to be translated from the pulpit into Lettish, Polish, Lithuanian and German. This alone may give some inkling of what the complications that lay before the newly appointed Bishop were like.

The Nuncio's troubles did not end with Riga. There was also the question of Upper Silesia to be dealt with, which produced for him a charming little harvest of bickerings and jealousies. An American friend of mine who has recently gone back to his home after a long and leisured journey round Europe, said to me when he said good-bye at Waterloo that in his opinion Europeans were a "very touchy and difficult people"—one is inclined to think he is right.

In Silesia the Versailles Treaty makers with their unrivalled skill had managed to arouse fierce racial hostilities. Poor President Wilson, who knew much

about theories and nothing about Europe, and Lloyd George and Clemenceau, who knew much about Europe but cared only for themselves, bickered for some time as to whether Upper Silesia should go to Germany or Poland, while the inhabitants of the country were naturally stirred up to a state of violent excitement. Clemenceau stipulated the territory should go to Poland, and Lloyd George, in spite of his repulsive "Make Germany pay" election programme, was gracious enough to decide that this was unfair to Germany. For some reason Wilson sided with Clemenceau, though nobody has yet discovered how he squared this with his parrot-cries about self-determination. Having stirred up local passions till they were white-hot, they then decided to submit the question to a plebiscite, and in the interval the administration was carried on by an International Commission of British, French and Italian delegates.

The Vatican was implored to appoint a visitor, and Monsignor Ratti was told that he was to undertake the job. He pointed out that his position would be very difficult, as he would naturally be regarded as pro-Pole; but his protests had no effect. Subsequent events show that he was quite right, and that on this occasion the Vatican was a little unwise.

The Silesian situation was so acute that he had to start out almost as soon as he reached Warsaw, on his way back from Riga. He visited Opeeln and Breslau, and published a letter in German and Polish in which he set out the rights of the Germans and the Poles as thoroughly as was possible, and begged both sides to aim at mutual toleration—in other words, to avoid hysteria. He also gave the sensible advice that the only way to end the tension was to hold the plebiscite as soon as possible. After which he returned to his work in Warsaw, as there was nothing more to be done in Silesia.

The Nuncio's Silesian troubles were not over;

he had to pay another visit to Oppeln in June, and had the pleasant experience of being accused by each side of favouring the other. Things were made no easier for him in the following November when the Archbishop of Breslau forbade any of his clergy to take any part in political propaganda outside their parishes ; the Archbishop was a German, and although his instructions were extremely sensible, as their object was to keep the Church out of political entanglements, the Poles looked on the whole thing as an anti-Polish move, and there were many of them who imagined that the Nuncio was responsible. As a matter of fact the instructions had been issued without his knowledge, but he had to bear his full share of misrepresentation. When at last the plebiscite was held, the Germans scored 700,000 votes, and the Poles rather under 500,000 ; the towns were mainly German and the country districts Polish.

In April of that year he paid a short visit to Rome ; he found Italy in a very dejected condition, with much internal unrest, and suffering from a deep feeling of disillusionment at the way in which the Italians felt they had been swindled at Versailles. The report that he made to the Vatican was not over reassuring. In Southern Poland there was a grave risk of fighting over the question of Upper Silesia (there eventually was an insurrection that did not reach serious proportions), while in the East the Polish Army was mobilized, and might any day be at war with the Bolsheviks. An epidemic of cholera and typhus was also spreading westwards from Russia ; this danger was dealt with most efficiently by a Commission set up by the League of Nations, which organized emergency hospitals and quarantine stations, and was able to do a good deal towards isolating districts where the epidemic had broken out.

On April 25th, the trouble which he had feared began in the east. General Petlura was fighting against

the Bolsheviks for the independence of the Ukraine, and Pilsudski, who was Chief of State and Minister for War, decided to support him. When one looks back on this incident after a number of years, it is not easy to decide how far he was right or wrong ; on the whole it looks as if he was foolhardy, though it is quite possible that the Red Army would have turned their attention to Poland anyway if they had once been able to settle Petlura. Personally, I am inclined to think this is rather doubtful.

At first Pilsudski's venture seemed magnificently successful ; the Red Army retreated before him, and he was able to enter Kiev in triumph. After this he returned to Warsaw a very happy man ; a *Te Deum* was sung in the cathedral, and the bells of all the churches were rung.

All was not so well, however. There was a young general in the Red Army by name Tukhatchevsky, who at the beginning of his career had been a lieutenant in the Czar's bodyguard, and who was a more redoubtable antagonist than anyone had expected. While Pilsudski was entering Kiev, he was advancing on the north at the head of twenty-one divisions of infantry and two of cavalry, having left sufficient men in the south to receive Pilsudski, who was reinforcing that front. Tukhatchevsky continued to advance with his large army.

The population of Warsaw soon began to realize what was happening, for a stream of refugees began to arrive in the capital. The stream was slow, but it was steady. Mr. Charles Phillips, who was working for the American Red Cross, describes how he looked out of his window and saw the melancholy endless procession of "narrow, springless, high-boxed carts, built for one-man roads and forest trails", pouring into Warsaw, and bringing the unfortunate peasants who were escaping from the Red Armies. The slow stream continued, till almost a million men and women had

arrived ; they were most of them destitute, and some were typhus-stricken.

There was deep depression in Warsaw ; even Pilsudski, who had weathered so many storms, became a haggard, despondent man, who felt he had brought destruction on his people. A deputation arrived from the Allies ; Lord D'Abernon was representing England, and General Weygand France, but they could give no promise of military aid.

The advance of the Bolsheviks continued, and it looked as if Warsaw was doomed ; not only Warsaw, but Poland herself might go back once more into slavery, after her little spell of freedom. The victorious Reds had even larger ideas ; as Tukhatchevsky himself said after it was all over :

“If we had succeeded in breaking the Polish Army the tempest would not have stopped at the Polish frontier. Like a furious torrent it would have spread over the whole of Eastern Europe. The Red Army will not forget this attempt to carry the revolution outside our frontiers, to spread revolution throughout Europe.”

With Germany beaten and exhausted, the Austrian Empire dismembered and its component parts in a fairly chaotic state, and Italy divided against herself, this does not read like an empty boast.

Things could not have looked much blacker. In spite of the dread and depression in Warsaw, there were, however, determined men at the head. On the military side Pilsudski, who had faced prison, starvation, and execution for the sake of his country, was not going to give in easily, and Weygand, who was, incidentally, as devout a Catholic as Foch, was prepared to back him up to the finish. On the spiritual side, the Archbishop and the Nuncio published their intention of staying where they were ; their place was with their people, and they had no intention of giving way to panic.

On August 6th a solemn novena was started in the churches of Warsaw for the deliverance of the city. Novenas are an old Catholic custom, consisting of prayers and Masses over a period of nine days, which are offered for some particular object. You may disapprove of such practices, and you may even have a number of silly prejudices against supernatural intervention in the affairs of this world, but nevertheless, whatever you may or may not think, novenas do seem to have strange results now and then. It will be remembered that in the Gospels importunity is strongly recommended.

By the 13th hope seemed dead ; the Red troops were within twelve miles of Warsaw, and to the north and south they had advanced beyond the city. That evening most of the diplomatic corps left by special train for Posnak, the only members to remain being the American, Italian, and Danish Ministers, and the Papal Nuncio. The latter had announced that he would remain in Warsaw so long as there was a member of the Government still there, and as Pilsudski had no intention of deserting the city, this meant remaining to the end ; his decision was widely known, and it did much to give fresh courage to the beleaguered population.

On the morning of the 14th special requests were made by General Haller, who was in command of the Volunteer Defence Corps, and by General Weygand, for the Nuncio's prayers in the great crisis ; after this they waited for what seemed inevitable. The citizens had been digging hard preparing the defences, but it did not look as if these would be of much assistance. Before he became Nuncio Ratti had written to the Pope saying that he believed the blood of priests was necessary to save Russia, and he might soon be about to shed his own. We have seen in Russia, in Hungary, in Spain and Mexico, with what special cruelty the disciples of Karl Marx are in the habit of treating

priests, and one can imagine what might have been in store for Archbishop Ratti; in Russia during the revolution one Bishop had been buried alive, one mutilated, and another thrown into quicklime.

All this time the novena was going on, and there were religious processions all over the city, with thousands walking in them. For some days Pilsudski had been brooding in deep depression, blaming himself for the awful disaster; and then a sudden change came over him. His old vitality returned; he summoned his officers, and as he addressed them the mystical side of his character came once more to the fore; he reminded them of the "miracle of the Marne" and declared his belief that there was about to be a new miracle, the "miracle of the Vistula". He was convinced it was coming.

By then the Red troops were within six miles of Warsaw, and his words must have seemed to be merely the crazy optimism of a visionary who had for some days been suffering from acute strain. However, Pilsudski went out of Warsaw with his men, and attacked the Reds in the flank and in the rear; a simple strategy, and it worked. There was considerable resistance and a counter-attack, but the Poles had won the day; from then onwards the Red Army retreated, as surely as they had been advancing, and few lives were lost on either side. After this, Pilsudski sent reinforcements to the south, who drove back the Reds who had been sent there to divert his attention from the northern attack.

Trotsky, the Russian War Minister, who was always a realist, accepted the situation, especially after Budjenny's famous cavalry had to retreat before the Polish cavalry regiments, and on October 11th peace was signed between Poland and Russia. The French are apt to hold that it was General Weygand who saved Poland, but he has always held that he had nothing to do with it, and that it was the magnificent spirit of the Poles themselves which brought them victory. Behind

the fine Polish spirit there was the strong force of the novena.

It was not only Poland that was saved; as Lord d'Abernon has written :

"Had the Soviet forces overcome Polish resistance and captured Warsaw, Bolshevism would have spread through Central Europe, and might well have penetrated the whole continent. In every large city of Germany secret preparation had been made by the Communist agents—a definite programme had been prepared; leaders had been chosen; lists of victims had been drawn up; undermining intrigue would have been followed by ruthless assassination and murder."*

The Poles, as one would expect in a generous people, were fully grateful to the Nuncio for the way in which he had stood by them in their grim crisis. There had been another Battle of Lepanto, and the Archbishop of Lepanto had been one of its heroes. When Witos, the Prime Minister, announced the Polish victory to the Chamber, he gave a great tribute to his valour and friendship, and to the encouragement and example that his action had given to the people. Ten years later Cardinal Hlond, the Primate of Poland, said of Pius XI :

"No other Pope has been so close to us, no other has played so important a part in our destinies.

The day will come when historians will write many a stirring page on the work of Pius XI for the national and religious restoration of Poland."

His days in Warsaw were, however, near their end; on February 2nd, 1921, the Archbishop of Milan died, and Archbishop Ratti was appointed to succeed him. In the Consistory of June 13th he was promoted to the see and promoted Cardinal Priest of San Martino ai Monti. When the Cardinal's hat was conferred, the Pope said :

* *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World*, p. 11.

“A thousand voices rise from the ranks of those engaged in diplomatic studies to do honour to him on his elevation to the Sacred Purple. The twofold sense of the word ‘diplomatic’ finds in him a strange harmony. On the one hand the students of ‘diplomatics’ praise the former librarian of the Ambrosian Library of Milan and the Vatican Library of Rome for the enlightened zeal with which he helped them to search for, and bring to light, the treasures hidden in ancient charters and diplomas. On the other hand the masters and students of ‘diplomacy’ extol the gentle energy, the exquisite tact, and the unruffled calm of the Apostolic Nuncio in Poland, who was able to confirm and strengthen the accord between Church and State in moments of difficulty and danger.”

After the ceremony, the Pope had a conversation with the three Cardinals he had just made, and in the course of it made the significant remark, “Today we have bestowed the red ; soon they will be giving the white.”

CHAPTER V

THE PONTIFF

BEFORE starting his life at Milan, Cardinal Ratti made a month's retreat, preparing himself in prayer and silence at Monte Cassino, one of the oldest monasteries in the world, founded by St. Benedict at the beginning of the sixth century, and which at the time when the monks were the chief agents in preserving Western civilization was the metropolis of Western monasticism. On August 15th he issued his first pastoral letters, one to the clergy and one to the people of Milan. It was just a year since that day in Warsaw when it had looked as if nothing could check the Russian advance.

Some of his clergy were a little apprehensive, as there was a rumour that he intended to make their discipline rather stricter; he assured them that he intended nothing of the kind, and would demand nothing more from them than was directed by Canon Law. He also referred with affection to the many years he had spent among them at the Ambrosian Library. In the second letter he outlined no special programme, but insisted on the importance of the various classes aiming at harmony, and referred to how he himself had come from a working-class family.

He had good reason for speaking of the importance of harmony; in Milan there had been an even more acute tension than in Silesia, though in this case

its origins were not racial but social and political. During the last year life must have been almost intolerable for the ordinary peaceable citizen. While the old-fashioned Liberals were under the weather and were steadily losing control, there were on the one side the threatening forces of a violent Socialism, and on the other Mussolini and his new organization of Black-shirts, who seemed as violent as the Socialists ; they were rather an unknown quantity, and might well be worse than the ills that they proposed to cure. Nobody was sure in which direction they would be turning, and there was a good chance that they did not know themselves.

Before his official entry into Milan he paid two visits ; one was to the shrine at Lourdes, to which he led a pilgrimage of a thousand Italians ; and the other was to his home town at Desio, where there was still a number of old people who could remember him as a child. On September 8th he entered Milan in state, with all the pageantry which had gradually developed since the days of St. Ambrose, and was received with much enthusiasm. He had met the same enthusiasm wherever he went in Poland during the last two years, but as can be imagined it moved him even more when it came from his own people.

In the afternoon he spoke to a thousand poor people who were being given a feast in his honour. Part of his speech is, I think, worth quoting :

“Let nobody ever prevent your coming to me ; do not think that because you are young or poor or humble that the steps which lead to your father’s house are steep ; or no matter how high they may be, that you cannot easily climb them. If you are young, humble, poor, wounded by life or broken by its burden, then my message to you is that of the Redeemer—Come to me all ye who suffer or are heavily burdened—you have a special right to be easily and always received in your father’s house.”

His stay at Milan was to be short enough, though during those few months he was able to achieve a certain amount ; at that time disunion and political violence were the curse of Italy, and so strong were the forces of disunion that the rival movements of Catholic democracy and Catholic nationalism were also threatening to cause divisions within the Church. His efforts were therefore directed towards producing a closer union among Catholics, who ought to be relied on to keep together however silly everybody else might become, and he issued a pastoral letter to this effect, setting out the principles on which the duties of a Catholic citizen are based, which foreshadowed his later pronouncements as Pope on the subject of Catholic action.

Much of his time was spent in making himself known in the diocese ; week-days he usually gave up to the town of Milan, and Sundays he spent in touring the country districts. In this way he often spoke to as many as six audiences a day, sometimes rich and sometimes very poor.

In November he presided as Papal Legate when the new Catholic University of Milan was inaugurated ; this interested him a great deal, as he had already done much to help the foundation of the Catholic University of Warsaw. In connection with education he also made an appeal for 100,000 liras, to make provision for religious education in undenominational schools. In those days of financial depression in Italy it was a large sum to appeal for, but his appeal was generously responded to, as within a week he had received 150,000 liras.

And then, just as he was beginning to settle down to his new work, the Pope died, on January 22nd, 1922, after a short illness. When a Pope dies all the Cardinals who can reach Rome in the time are bound to assemble within nine days in order to elect his successor. Cardinal Ratti had therefore to leave for

Rome at once. When he left there was a widespread feeling in Milan that he had left the city for good, just as there had been when the future Pope Pius X set out from Venice.

In Rome he stayed at the Lombard College, where many years before he had been as a young student. When he arrived everybody noticed that there was a strange sadness hanging about him, as though there was another weight on his mind besides the grief which he would naturally feel at the death of Benedict XV, with whom he had so many personal contacts during the war years. When the time came to enter the Vatican for the conclave, the last person he spoke to was the rector of the Lombard College. "And now," he said, "we start for prison."

To elect a Pope a two-thirds majority is necessary among the Cardinals. After each scrutiny the voting-papers are burnt, and if the scrutiny has been inconclusive, damp straw is mixed with the paper, so that the people on the Piazza who are waiting for the news can see black smoke rising from the chimney. When the majority is at last sufficient, dry straw is used, and a column of white smoke can be seen. At the same time the *baldacchinos* above the stalls of all the Cardinals in the Sistine Chapel are lowered, except that belonging to the newly elected Pope.

The white smoke announcing Cardinal Ratti's election appeared at a quarter to twelve on February 6th, 1922. Fourteen scrutinies had been necessary; by the thirteenth two or three votes were necessary, and by the fourteenth the voting was almost unanimous. Half an hour later Cardinal Bisleti appeared and gave out the news. "I announce to you a great joy. We have a Pope, the most reverend and eminent Lord Cardinal Achilles Ratti, who has taken the name of Pius XI."

When he was formally asked what name he would take, Cardinal Ratti had answered:

“During the pontificate of Pius IX I was baptised into the Catholic Church, and took the first steps of my ecclesiastical career. Pius X called me to Rome. Pius is the name of peace. Since I desire to consecrate my labours to the peace of the world, that work to which my predecessor Benedict XV dedicated his life, I choose the name of Pius XI.”

He paused for a few moments, and then went on :

“I wish to add one thing. I protest before the members of the sacred College that I have at heart the preservation and defence of the rights of the Church and the prerogatives of the Holy See ; but, since I have made this clear, I desire that my first blessing shall go, as a pledge of that peace to which the whole human race aspires, not merely to Rome and Italy, but to the whole Church, to the entire world. I shall give it from the outside balcony of St. Peter’s.”

This sounds a simple enough gesture, but it meant a great deal. There was dismay on the faces of the more conservative cardinals. After the taking of Rome in 1870 Pius IX had shut himself in the Vatican, only leaving it to go into St. Peter’s, and since that day no Pope had been seen outside. The new Pope was deliberately changing the custom of half a century, and to some of the old guard this leaving of the old seclusion seemed not far off a betrayal, as if he were abandoning the cause for which his four predecessors had suffered humiliations and faced many trials. Circumstances were, however, to vindicate the new Pope, and to show that his decision was both sensible and right.

He immediately put on the white cassock, and while he was doing so the crowd in the Piazza noticed that more preparations were being made on the balcony from which the election had been announced. There was a wild outburst of enthusiasm when the Pope himself appeared in his white robes ; he let them

cheer on, and then made a sign with his hand that the time had come for silence. They understood what was going to happen, and the whole crowd, many thousands of them, knelt down. Military orders could be heard ringing out in the silence, and the Italian troops presented arms—the first time that they had offered homage to the Pope for over fifty years. The Pope intoned the blessing and made the sign of the cross above the people.

It is said that among the crowd who were tightly packed in the Piazza, there was the leader of a new political movement, one Mussolini, recognized only by a few, but turning over an idea in his mind that he meant to bring off before long. On March 23rd, 1919, fifty ex-servicemen under his leadership had formed the *fascies* of combatants, and since that day the numbers had been steadily increasing. Mussolini had started his career on the extreme left, and in his day was rather violently anti-religious. Even as late as May 1921 he made the somewhat bombastic statement :

“This Fascism is the wind of all the heresies knocking at all the closed doors. It says to the old priests, who are more or less like mutes at a funeral : ‘Fly from those storms which threaten your ruin !’ And we say to all, great men and small men of the political sphere : ‘Make way for the youth of Italy, which desires to impose its faith and its passion.’”

On this occasion, as he watched the behaviour of the crowd, he is said to have learnt something ; there are many who think they can teach Rome, but Rome ends in teaching them. His change of attitude showed itself in a speech in the Chamber, which is said to have disappointed some of his more iconoclastic and fire-eating supporters.

“I affirm here,” he said, “that the Latin and Imperial tradition of Rome is today represented by

Catholicism. If, as Mommsen said twenty-five years ago, one does not remain in Rome without acquiring a universal outlook, I think and affirm that the sole universal concept which exists today in Rome is that which radiates from the Vatican.”

CHAPTER VI

URBI ET ORBI

WHEN the Pope stepped out on to the balcony of St. Peter's, his action was symbolic in several ways, for not only did it mean a change of policy, by which I do not mean a break with the past, but rather a redirection of the papal policy, it also symbolized the advance of the Pope to meet the new forces at work in Rome, in Italy, and in the world. When the Roman Empire declined and fell, and the barbarians advanced across Europe, they met something which came out to meet them and seized them almost before they realized it had done so, and moulded them as a potter moulds the clay, again almost without their being aware that it was happening. This thing was the Res Catholica. In the first half of the twentieth century the same process is at work. But this time it is not so much new races but new ideas that are moving westwards.

It has been the lot of Pius XI to steer the Church through very difficult years, which in many ways remind one of the age when Gregory the Great was Pope. Like Gregory, he has seen the assaults on the old order, and while keeping a watchful eye on the Church at home, he has been a Pope of expansion, and has done much to encourage the spread of Catholic missions throughout the world. Let us have a look at the city and the world to which he gave his blessing.

The situation after Versailles has been well summed up by Mr. Geoffrey Gaythorne-Hardy in his admirable *Short History of International Affairs, 1920 to 1934* :

“The real difficulty arises from the fact that the territorial clauses of the Treaties are based not on considerations of strategy or revenge but on a solemn principle which endows the possessors with an increasingly incontrovertible title. Almost any proposal for revision thus assumes the appearance of an attack on the principle on which the sovereignty of a number of new States is based. It therefore fills every successor State with outraged alarm. Thus it comes about that the nations upon whose friendly co-operation the new order was based tended at once to be divided into two main groups—revisionist and anti-revisionist—ominously suggestive of the combinations which had brought the pre-war world to ruin.

“On the fringe of these groups stood Italy, an ambiguous Power whom the Peace Settlement had partly satisfied and partly disappointed, a serious threat to their ultimate equilibrium. To the east lay Bolshevik Russia, a still unsolved enigma, at best non-co-operative and credited with international aspirations which the rest of the community repudiated with horror. And to the west Great Britain, whose commercial interests called for a restoration to strength of one of the opposing forces which could not but arouse the suspicion and resentment of the other. Such was the situation which the idealism of the world and the eloquence of the American President had created, and which Mr. Wilson hoped would be ‘sustained by the organized opinion of mankind’, but for which his country promptly disclaimed all responsibility.

“The reader may possibly find a clue to the still unfinished story, if he remembers that the road along which the world was to travel was paved with the very best intentions.”

As we go along it will be helpful to keep Mr. Gaythorne-Hardy’s little picture before our minds. As

he says, the Peace Settlement had partly satisfied and partly disappointed Italy. As a matter of fact, I think the disappointment definitely outweighed the satisfaction; the incompetence of Orlando had let down the Italian cause at the Peace Conference, and she had also been shabbily treated by Clemenceau and Lloyd George, unconvincing excuses being made why the promises made to her by the Treaty of London (in itself a shady affair) and by the Pact of St. Jean de Maurienne should not be fulfilled. In the country there was widespread disillusionment, which was increased by the economic unrest and grinding poverty to be found on all sides. Feeling had also been embittered among the poor by the military tribunals which had been set up to try unfortunate men who had deserted in the retreat from Caporetto, and which with an unjustifiably vindictive spirit had sentenced numbers of them to long terms of imprisonment and even to death. There was also another subtle malady which has been described by Don Luigi Sturzo, the leader of the Partito Popolare :

“The political class which for nearly half a century (from 1876 onwards) had held the reins of power and directed public life, had never been renewed ; it had become incapable of absorbing the new currents which had been forming on the margin of political life, in the thought, aspirations, interests and general feelings of the people. Its representative men had not sufficient faith in themselves to bring about an inward travail of renewal, or to put forth the necessary strength to carry them over the crisis.”*

Don Sturzo and his Party were trying to bring new life into the Italian political world, and in November 1919 they had scored 100 seats in the new Chamber. They had a number of excellent ideas, many of them based on the social teaching of Pope Leo XIII,

* *Italy and Fascismo*, p. 61.

with its deep sympathy for the rights and needs of the working-class, but they themselves suffered a little from the malady described by their leader. They also lacked unity—in some districts being almost reactionary, in others more radical, so that they were never able to make the impression on the national life of the country that they would otherwise have done. The General Confederation of Labour were also of considerable importance; but they were too ready to play up to the extremists, even though in the trades unions their influence was on the side of moderation.

The chaos in Italy was perhaps a little less than in 1920, but things were still very bad. In 1921 there had been 1,134 strikes, 723,862 strikers, and a loss of 8,110,063 working-days. The general disintegration resulting from such a state of affairs can be imagined, and the workers were as weary of it as the employers. One thing was certain, nineteenth-century Liberalism seemed to be played out as far as Italy was concerned, and beneath the surface Marxist influences and secret societies were hard at work exploiting the legitimate grievances of the workers for their own dark purposes.

To the north of Italy, Germany was making gallant efforts to pay the indemnities and to stand once more on her feet, under the chancellorship of Dr. Wirth, who was supported by several remarkable men such as Schiedemann and Rathenau. Of the three Rathenau had the most striking personality and it was in the main his ideas that were behind Wirth's policy. This policy can be summed up under five heads:

- To regulate relations with France;
- To improve the peace terms;
- To effect a reduction of the indemnity;
- To restore Germany's moral strength;
- To exert influence on Germany's internal condition.

Wirth and Rathenau consistently followed the policy of conciliation. The latter had said: "We must discover

some means of linking up with the world again ; this wound in the body of Europe persists, and not until it is closed shall we have peace on earth again."

As we know, the Allies did not meet Germany half-way ; impossible demands continued to be made. Nobody will deny that France had suffered greatly, and had Germany won the war it is likely she would have been harshly treated by the Prussian military clique, but nevertheless her behaviour in the post-war years can only be described as a regrettable exhibition of spite and short-sightedness. Had French statesmen at that time behaved in a more Christian and less vixenish way, the atmosphere in Europe would be less volcanic today. Loucheur, the French Finance Minister, showed courage and common sense when, in a speech which was not reported in France, he pointed out that the French policy towards Germany was bound to have bad effects on French trade, and that the wisest solution was for France to accept German labour and material in rebuilding the devastated areas as part of the indemnity. Certain French tradesmen who were making a very good thing out of the areas were, however, too much for him.

Austria, thanks to Mr. Wilson's doctrines, had known starvation and misery to the full. Those who visited Vienna in 1919 described her as a dying city, though by 1922, thanks to very generous outside relief, especially from Great Britain, Switzerland and Scandinavia, and to the labours of Dr. Redlich and Monsignor Seipel, backed by the League of Nations, great progress had been achieved. Seipel was a priest who had become Chancellor of the new republic. He had formerly been a professor of moral theology, and his work for Austria was based on Leo XIII's social teaching. Besides his duties at home, he spent a long time travelling round the capitals of Europe in the search for a loan to save his country.

Hungary, though carved out of recognition, was

recovering from the bloodstained reign of Bela Kun and his Cain-like associates, which had been followed by the pillage and robbery of the Rumanians who drove him out—a pillage which the Supreme Council in Paris seem to have found beneath their notice, as they never raised a finger to check it.

Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia and Rumania were happy enough, as they had done well out of the treaties. The minorities entrusted to them were treated with considerable injustice. Blessed are the peacemakers, certainly, but the makers of peace treaties are often less blessed. The partition of Hungary was perhaps less cynical than the partition of Poland; but if it was not cynical it was a marvel of incompetence.

Russia remained a mysterious country; since the Bolshevik revolution she had not had much contact with Western Europe. It was known, however, that a more systematic attack on Christianity had begun. Things had been bad enough, and by the end of 1920 twenty-six Bishops and 6,775 priests had been put to death, very often with great cruelty, but at the time of the election of Pius XI the anti-God policy became more thorough. Hitherto the martyrs had been executed as counter-revolutionaries; from now on the avowed aim was the extermination of Christianity. On the economic side the first attempts at Communism had been a complete and tragic failure, for which the Bolsheviks were not altogether to blame; it led to famine and chaos, so that in the autumn of 1921 Lenin's new economic plan was launched. He himself was surprisingly frank about the situation:

“There is no doubt,” he said in a speech, “that we have suffered a terrible defeat on the economic front. Let us retreat and rebuild everything in a new way. . . . If we fail now—if we work badly—we shall go to the devil. They will hang the lot of us—and do splendidly. They ought to hang us if we fail to save them!”

One may dislike the man and what he stood for, but one has to admire his saturnine plain speaking.

In April 1922 a conference was held at Genoa to try and deal with the European tangle. It had three main objects : to pave the way for the general disarmament of Europe ; to settle the reparations question ; and to bring Russia back into relations with Western Europe. A proposal was put forward by Rathenau and by Chicherin, the Russian representative (there is good reason for thinking that it originated in the mind of Sir Philip Gibbs), for the reconstruction of Russia by an international syndicate. There was much to be said for it, as it would have meant a far better chance for the starving people of Russia, and an almost certain improvement of European trade, besides giving Germany the means of paying her reparations out of the proceeds of her share in the syndicate. Another result would be the demobilization of the Red Army in return for guarantees as to the Polish frontier and Polish demobilization. M. Briand had previously stated in Washington that the Red Army was the main obstacle to French disarmament, and had this plan gone through France would also have been saved the heavy expense of financing the Polish forces.

After his Polish experiences, Pius XI knew as much about the Russian question as most European statesmen, and he saw that the conference might be a good moment for obtaining anyway some improvement in the position of the Russian Christians. He had confirmed Cardinal Gasparri as Secretary of State, which had not been expected, as it was the custom for the Secretary of State to retire on the death of the Pope. This action turned out to be wise ; Gasparri had a wide diplomatic experience, and was looked upon as a rather formidable figure in the diplomatic world. During the war each belligerent country had paid him

a considerable compliment by accusing him of favouring its enemies. With Gasparri's help he had succeeded in establishing some relations with Russia. This started with an offer to pay cash for the sacred vessels of the Catholic churches in Petrograd, which had been confiscated by the Bolsheviks. No reply was given to this offer, but later they were able to start negotiations with Vorowski with a view to sending a Catholic mission to Russia for relief work in the famine-stricken areas. The agreement was signed just before the Genoa Conference, Vorowski demanding formal guarantees that the mission should have no political character, and that there should be no British, French or Serbian delegates among its members. Attempts were also made to save the Orthodox Patriarch Tikhon and fifty-three priests who were arrested at that time. Many Governments sent protests and appeals, and the Holy See was specially active. Dr. Walsh, an American Jesuit, who was the Papal Delegate in Moscow, used every influence he could enlist on their side to obtain reprieves, but he was only partially successful; a number were judicially murdered.

Just before the Conference opened at Genoa, the Pope sent an open letter to the Archbishop of the city, in which he said :

“We pray and confidently trust that the envoys of the Powers will consider the tragic situation which is afflicting all peoples, not only with a calm mind, but also with a willingness to make some sacrifices on the altar of the common good. . . . If even amid the clash of arms, according to the noble motto of the Red Cross, *inter arma caritas*, Christian charity must prevail, so much more should this be true when arms have been laid aside and peace treaties signed. All the more because international hatreds, the sad legacy of the war, work to the detriment even of the victors and prepare a future fraught with fear for all. It must never be forgotten

that the best guarantee of peace is not a forest of bayonets but mutual trust and confidence."

The first time you read through these few words they may make little effect on your mind ; you may say to yourself that they are just the usual string of platitudes which priests are always repeating. They are much more than that ; it is the warmongers who are guilty of platitudes, with their naive trust in "a forest of bayonets", and their obtuseness which fails to see that the obligation of charity applies to nations and Governments as much as to ordinary pious people. It is this obtuseness which is always getting us into a mess.

At Genoa the Conference broke down for that very reason. M. Poincaré, with his usual intransigence, had decided to wreck it, and took care that the very sensible suggestions of Chicherin and Rathenau should come to nothing ; he achieved this by ruling out the main item which they had assembled to discuss—the question of German reparations. Mr. Lloyd George made things no better by suggesting that if Russia acknowledged her war debts, Germany should agree to pay reparations to Russia for war damage and losses, this when she was crippled by the Allies' exorbitant demands. One does not know if such a suggestion was the product of thoughtlessness or cynicism, but had it been accepted by the Conference, the chances of Germany's recovery would have gone for good. The result was that Rathenau, more or less in despair, signed the Treaty of Rapallo with Russia, behind the backs of the Conference, an arrangement which was actually far more dangerous for France than the Rathenau-Chicherin plan would have been. Thanks to M. Poincaré's scepticism as to the value of Christian charity a great chance was lost for rehabilitating Germany and lifting from her that sense of grievance which may yet have terrible results. The Powers of Europe also lost their opportunity to help in the

reconstruction of Russia, and perhaps if all went well to restore liberty to her people. Instead, in 1936 and 1937 we have the grisly Moscow trials and in Germany a fanatical nationalism. As Rathenau returned to Germany he said, "Night falls over Europe."

The Pope, through his representatives, took an active interest in the Conference, and by some of his instructions rather alarmed the Russian émigrés, as well as the more conservative Catholics. They felt that their apprehensions when he stepped out on to the balcony at St. Peter's were being justified. To the Conference he sent a formal memorial, begging the delegates, whatever arrangements might be made, to demand that the Bolsheviki should grant complete liberty of conscience for everybody in Russia, the free public and private practise of religion, and the right of every religious denomination to hold property. In 1930, however, when he made a renewed protest on behalf of the persecuted Christians in Russia it contained the melancholy words :

"From the very beginning of Our Pontificate, following the example of Our Predecessor of holy memory, Benedict XV, We multiplied Our efforts to put an end to this terrible persecution and to avert the grievous evils that press upon these people. We were also at pains to ask the governments represented at the Conference of Genoa, to make, by common agreement, a declaration which might have saved Russia and all the world from many woes, demanding as a condition preliminary to any recognition of the Soviet Government, respect for conscience, freedom of worship and of church property.

"Alas, these three points, so essential above all to those ecclesiastical hierarchies unhappily separated from Catholic unity, were abandoned in favour of temporal interests, which in fact would have been better safeguarded if the different Governments had

first of all considered the rights of God, His Kingdom and His Justice.”

On the day when the memorial was presented, Monsignor Pizzardo called personally on Chicherin, to obtain the passports for the papal mission to Russia, and to plead for the protection of all religious interests in Soviet territory, whether Catholic or not. These passports were granted. Franciscans were to go to the north, in the centre there was to be a relief centre in the hands of the Jesuits, and a Dutch congregation was to work in the south. Besides Pizzardo's call on Chicherin, which caused its full share of gossip, the Pope instructed the Archbishop of Genoa to attend the banquet which took place on a battleship in the harbour, when the King entertained all the principal delegates to the Conference. On this occasion it was arranged that Chicherin should sit next to him. So far this gesture has had little effect. But one wonders what the fate of the Russian people would have been if the Genoa Conference had not failed.

CHAPTER VII

THE POPE AND FASCISM

WHEN Pius XI issued his first Encyclical, *Ubi Arcano Dei*, on the troubles left by the European war, their causes and remedies, he said in the course of it that the hope of the world lay in religious unity, and continued :

“There has been seen what may be regarded as good augury for this religious unity . . . the fact, that is, that the representatives and rulers of almost all the states of the world, as if moved by a common instinct and desire of peace, have turned to this Apostolic See either to resume old friendly relations or to inaugurate such relations of concord. . . . That being so, it is hardly necessary to say with what sorrow we see that, among such a number of nations holding friendly relations with the Apostolic See, Italy has no place.”

At the coronation ceremony it had been clear that the world was more conscious of the international importance of the Holy See ; great changes had taken place during the seven years of Benedict XV's pontificate ; England, Holland, Luxembourg and Portugal had established diplomatic representation during the war, and France and Switzerland since the armistice ; Finland, Lithuania, Esthonia and Greece were all negotiating for permanent diplomatic relations, and the new Central European States and Jugoslavia had their ministers or ambassadors ; Germany's former minister had become an ambassa-

dor, and so had the ministers of six South American republics; only two great European States remained unrepresented—Italy and Russia.

Ever since the day in 1870 when the breach had been made at the Porta Pia and Pius IX had shut himself in the Vatican, there had been strained relations between the Italian Government and the Holy See; one is apt to imagine that when Pius IX made himself a voluntary prisoner the gesture was merely a picturesque one; it may have been picturesque but it was also defiant. For 1,000 years and more the popes had ruled over the papal States, and in the nineteenth century these were wrested from the Papacy by an act of unprovoked aggression; the taking of Rome was not only a victory for the House of Savoy, it was also a victory for the materialistic Liberalism which was such a popular creed in that optimistic and naïf age. In England when we use the word Liberal we think of Mr. Gladstone, an upright and rather sanctimonious churchman; the Continental Liberal politician was apt to be something far more tiresome, and was also often connected with the Grand Orient, an institution whose activities Major Yeats-Brown has vividly described.

The relations between the Quirinal and the Vatican ebbed and flowed, sometimes a little more friendly, sometimes far less; under Pius IX they were never good, and after his death his body was publicly insulted by some ill-mannered persons. Under Leo XIII there was some improvement, though it was an uphill fight, and Pius X, who showed soon after his coronation that his aim was "less diplomacy and more religion", called forth further opposition by his stand against Liberalism and Modernism; under Benedict XV things were more friendly; the influence of the Grand Orient was markedly on the wane, and after the entry of Italy into the Great War he did much to increase the popularity of the

Papacy when he refused the offer of the Spanish Government that he should move to the Escorial. When Pius XI made his sensational gesture after his election, he clearly showed that he was prepared to make the first move in the direction of reconciliation.

We have already told of the difficult times in Italy during that year. The workers were suffering as well as the employers from the constant unrest; the grievances of the workers were genuine enough, but considerable blame attaches to the agitators, who were merely increasing the trouble for their own purposes, and doing nobody any good. In Parliament, in spite of the valiant attempts of the Partito Popolare, little was being achieved; the curse of the Italian political system was the old game of coalition-making, and when Giolitti succeeded Nitti he showed no signs of abandoning it. In August there was a general strike all over Italy; there was no valid reason for it, and everyone, rich or poor, suffered. For the ordinary citizen, whatever his political allegiance, life must have been almost intolerable, and if the secret societies had achieved their aim it might have been so completely. Parliamentary government can, as we all know, be a very good thing, but, unfortunately, in Italy it was breaking down.

In October of that year took place Mussolini's march on Rome, and on the 28th Mussolini arrived in the city, having been summoned by the King to form a Government. He had started his career as a Socialist of the more extreme kind, and had continued as one till he was expelled from the Party on November 25th, 1914, on account of his advocating Italian intervention in the war; on that occasion he had said to his antagonists:

"You are going to strike at me tonight with ostracism and banishment from the public squares and streets of Italy. Very well; I solemnly wager that I shall continue to speak, and that in a few

years the masses of Italy will follow and applaud me, when you will no longer speak nor have a following."

Two leading Socialists regretted that day; Lenin said of him: "He is a strong man who would have led our Party to victory. A great pity he is lost to us", and Trotsky was even more decisive: "You have lost your trump card," he said; "the only man who could have carried through a revolution is Mussolini."

Since the Abyssinian war it has been difficult to mention Mussolini's name in England without provoking outbursts of slightly tiresome eloquence, and the unpopularity of the Fascist régime in this country has also been increased by some regrettable behaviour at Olympia and by the Nazi atrocities in Germany. Italian Fascism has been of a very different character to its teutonic follower; it is true that at the beginning there were outbreaks of violence, for which there was little or no justification, and that a number of cruel attacks were made on perfectly peaceful members of the community; it has also relied to a regrettable extent on imprisonment and coercion; on the other hand, there has been a far smaller number of outrages than in Germany, and far fewer people have been imprisoned.

It must also be remembered that when Mussolini came to power in 1922 Italy was in a highly chaotic condition, which did not exist to anything like the same extent in the Germany that elected Hitler; there had been a certain amount of fighting between Nazis and Communists, especially in North and East Germany, which should have been more sternly repressed, but I think I am not inaccurate if I say that in many cases it was the Nazis who were the aggressors. Italian Fascism has also not been disgraced by the brutal anti-semitism which has been such a stain on the Germany of the last four years. The cult of violence came from Georges Sorel, to whose

writings the Fascist movement is greatly indebted, and as it grows older and wiser Italian Fascism seems to be increasingly aware that violence is seldom permanently effective and always hateful; at the time of the Mateotti murder Fascism reached its lowest ebb; this was a horrible deed, and it is to Mussolini's credit that his first step was to see that justice was done; the murderers were arrested, as well as those suspected of complicity, and a deputy who was compromised was expelled from the Chamber. There has been no similar episode since, nor have there been so-called "purges" such as took place in Germany on June 30th, 1934, or any events like the equally sinister Moscow trials.

In October 1922, however, the quality and strength of the movement were still doubtful, and nobody could be sure what Mussolini might be bringing to the country. It looked as if from the view point of the Church there were probably many difficulties ahead; it was known that Fascism was a system with a totalitarian conception of the State, and this must almost inevitably come into collision with the claims of the Church; it was also known that Mussolini had an anti-clerical background, and that a large number of his supporters had also been anti-clericals. A further difficulty was likely to come from the fact that the movement had been considerably influenced by the French royalist paper the *Action Française*, the tendencies of which had for years been looked on with no little suspicion at the Vatican, and of which a fuller account will be given a little further on.

There were on the other side a number of good omens. When he was Archbishop of Milan and the movement was still weak, the Pope had conducted the funeral service of some Fascists who had been the victims of a Communist outrage at a time when this meant exposing himself to the risk of a similar attack. Whatever kind of man Mussolini might turn out to be,

he was probably not lacking in gratitude. It was also well known that he had said, "I think that with the advent of Pius XI the relations between Italy and the Vatican will improve." The Fascists also knew that Cardinal Gasparri was the advocate of reconciliation between Church and State, but in this case it was doubtful how far he would approve of their Party, as he was believed to be strongly in favour of Catholic democracy and of the Partito Popolare, a Party whose point of view was in the main strongly opposed to Mussolini's.

On his side Mussolini was quick to show that he was well disposed towards the Church—anyway, so far as outward observance was concerned: the crucifix was restored to the walls of the schools, and religious instruction was given in them again, though not by priests. Religious processions were given every facility by the Government, and wherever they took place there was not the slightest disturbance. He even went a little further, and the Government was officially represented at the more important religious functions, notably at the seventh centenary celebrations for St. Francis of Assisi, while during the Holy Year in 1925 everything was done to help the religious authorities in making arrangements for the large numbers of pilgrims who visited Rome. Was Mussolini prepared to go further still?

On his side the Pope bided his time. His attitude was on the whole friendly, for he knew that though the Fascist movement had its full share of defects, it was doing great things for the country; he did not conceal his disapproval when there were outbreaks of violence, and on one occasion when an assault took place on the office of *L'Azione Cattolica* in his native region of Brianza in Lombardy, he sent a present of 500,000 lire to repair the damage. The Fascists appreciated this quiet snub, and it had its effect. He knew quite well that things were far less bright and

favourable to Christianity than Mussolini would like him to think, and that the time would almost certainly come when he would have to speak out forcibly. Another problem was that Mussolini was the avowed enemy of the Partito Popolare ; at the first assembly of the Fascists he had behaved in a foolish and bombastic way, denouncing its members as "charlatans who add the hope of heaven to their promises", and politely remarking that the Party leader, "Don Sturzo, that little long-nosed Sicilian priest of genius, might well talk of heaven, for he would achieve nothing on earth". When the Fascists came to power, they claimed that as the Pope was in sympathy with their legitimate aim of restoring order in Italy, so he must share their opposition to the Partito Popolare and its aim of catholicizing democracy ; they were quickly given to understand that they had made a mistake, and that Don Sturzo's programme was not incompatible with an ordered society.

The Roman question was not settled for six and a half years, and it was well that matters were not rushed ; each side wished to know more of the other before a definite arrangement was discussed, and it was also necessary to prepare the organizations of which they were the respective heads. For a time each side was watching the other and making friendly gestures ; the Pope saw that Mussolini was a dark horse with some very good points, and Mussolini saw that the Pope was both shrewd and determined. One day he was to experience the full force of that determination, and to find that it was even stronger than he had expected.

In his first Encyclical, the *Ubi Arcano Dei*, the Pope had said :

"It is hardly necessary to say with what sorrow We see that, among such a number of nations holding friendly relations with the Apostolic See, Italy has no place : Italy, Our beloved country, and chosen by God Himself, Who in His Providence

rules the course of all things and all times, as the place wherein to establish the seat of His Vicar on earth ; through which it came about that this dear city, once the capital of an empire large indeed but limited, became at length the capital of the whole world, the seat of a sovereignty or Divine principality which overleaps the confines of all peoples and nations, embraces all peoples and all nations. But the divine origin and nature of their sovereignty require, the inviolable right arising from the universality of the faithful of Christ spread throughout the world requires, that this sacred sovereignty shall not appear to be subject to any human power, to any law, even such law as might profess to secure the liberty of the Roman Pontiff with certain safeguards or guarantees, but must be an absolutely independent sovereignty and must manifestly appear as such."

The position is this : the Pope is the head of the greatest international body in the world, and of this he is something far more than a mere ceremonial figurehead ; his is a position of action and authority, and what he says is of decisive importance for the members of the Catholic Church, who number rather over 300,000,000, besides having considerable results among large numbers outside ; he must, therefore, as he explained in the *Ubi Arcano Dei*, be completely independent of any earthly power, and cannot be satisfied with anything less than this complete independence ; to do so would be to betray the trust committed to him.

The four popes who preceded Pius XI constantly protested against the position in which they were placed after the taking of Rome in 1870 ; we find these protests in many of their Encyclicals, and their policy of seclusion in the Vatican was part of this protest ; in no case would they do anything that might compromise this independence ; it was this necessity that

dictated their action far more than their resentment at an act of unprovoked aggression by which territories over which they had ruled for a thousand years were wrested from them, or the humiliations and difficulties which were constantly placed in their way by the anti-religious Governments which were in power. From 1871 to 1922 Italian Governments all pretended that no Roman question existed, and that the matter had been settled when the Law of Guarantees was promulgated in the year following the occupation of Rome; the Vatican had, however, remained firm and had refused to recognize it. At first sight the Law might seem to concede all that the Pope could require, but on a second reading it becomes clear that though the Pope is recognized as a sovereign, he is only a sovereign who for the time being is the guest of the Italian nation, with no territory, not even a square yard, on which to rest his sovereignty.

Most people will agree that Italy has profited by being united, even though the South suffered severely from neglect for many years, and that the position in the first half of the nineteenth century was unsatisfactory; as friendly an observer as the late Lord Halifax, whom nobody can accuse of having suffered from a prejudice against the Papacy, wrote to his mother from Rome in the eighteen-sixties, in the course of a letter full of praise for the Roman Church, "All one sees here makes one wish to see the Temporal Power done away with"; nevertheless, the fact remained that however much the popes might love Italy it was their duty to stand out for their sovereignty, though it was the freedom, not the size of their territory, which would count.

A way of solving the question similar to the one which was eventually adopted was first proposed in 1905, a year when things in Italy were looking remarkably black, by Luigi Arnaldo Vasallo; he sug-

gested that the Pope should be sovereign over much the same territory as was agreed to in 1929, with a pier on the Tiber so that he should have free access to the sea, though the latter has since become unnecessary owing to developments in wireless and aircraft.

“What injury can arise to the integrity of a nation,” he said, “from the addition of a few square metres of earth to the Vatican, when the excellent republic of San Marino enjoys the like privilege? If the great and most liberal republic of France can tolerate within its confines the Principality of Monaco for the exclusive advantage of roulette, it would be far more moral and also honourable for the Kingdom of Italy to accept a harmless service on the Tiber in compensation for the tranquillity of millions of citizens and the free expansion of the traditional patriotism of the clergy.”

Very sensibly put, but his remarks provoked a surprising outburst of hysteria from the anti-clericals of the day.

A slow preparation was necessary for the settlement of the problem. Under Mussolini's firm control peace and a certain prosperity began to return to Italy; his methods were often highly questionable, but his results on the whole were good. What the country needed was stability, and it was stability that he was providing. At the end of 1925, the Holy Year, when an unending stream of pilgrimages visited Rome, so that the Pope's day often lasted from five in the morning till past midnight, a fresh Encyclical was issued, instituting the new feast of Christ the King. Its wording was distinctly provocative in regard to the totalitarian aspects of Fascism, and caused some annoyance in Fascist circles, though it was on the whole received with a respectful common sense that contrasted favourably with the anti-clerical squealing of twenty years earlier. The Empire of Christ, the Pope declared,

“includes not only Catholic nations, not only baptized persons who, though of right belonging to the Church, have been led astray by error or have been cut off from her by schism, but also all those who are outside the Christian faith. . . . Nor is there any difference in this matter between the individual and the family or the State ; for all men, whether collectively or individually, are under the dominion of Christ. In Him is the salvation of the individual, in Him is the salvation of Society.”

This Encyclical was of importance for the whole world, but for Mussolini it had a special significance ; he knew well enough that in Pius XI he had met his match, and that it would be no use offering a compromise. In the following year the negotiations began which were to issue in the treaty of 1929. On August 5th, 1926, Signor Pacelli, the legal adviser to the Vatican, was asked to call on Professor Barone, a councillor of state.

“Before going to see Professor Barone”, Pacelli has written, “I took opportune instructions, and on August 6th we met for the first time in Barone’s house. There he told me that Mussolini desired to know on what basis it would be possible to systematize the Roman question. I replied that there were two substantial points on which it was impossible for the Holy See to give way ; one was that, through a treaty, a small pontifical state should be reconstituted under the sovereignty of the Pope, manifest and visible, which should guarantee to the Holy Father the free exercise of his spiritual power ; the other was a concordat by which it would be possible to give the value of the religious rites to matrimony under determined conditions. Barone replied that on such a basis it was possible to treat, and thereon began a series of conversations.”

The first series of conversations lasted till October 4th of that year, and on November 24th Barone and

Pacelli were able to produce the first compilation of the treaty ; this contained only sixteen articles and was later lengthened considerably ; complete secrecy was preserved, and only two copies were made ; so determined indeed were they for the matter to remain secret that the typing of the document was entrusted to Pacelli's son. In the making of the document there had been 110 meetings between Pacelli and Barone, and Pacelli was received in audience by the Pope 129 times.

After finishing the preliminary text of the treaty, they set to work on the concordat, which was completed by February 1927, but it was not submitted to the two High Parties till April ; various unofficial negotiations followed, and in November Mussolini wrote a letter to Barone in which, as head of the Italian Government, he stated that it was possible to begin official negotiations ; on November 22nd the King wrote a letter by which he delegated the head of the Government, with power of subdelegation to Barone, to proceed with official negotiations for the solution of the Roman question and to sign the texts of the treaty and concordat ; on November 25th the Pope gave a similar delegation to Monsignor Borgongini and to Pacelli.

Pacelli had his first conversation with Mussolini on January 8th, 1928 ; a sad thing had happened, as Barone had died on January 4th, just when the event for which he had worked so hard was drawing near, and Mussolini announced his intention to act personally, without appointing a substitute for Barone. There were eight conversations between them, beginning at nine in the morning and sometimes lasting till late at night ; Pacelli has written of them :

“Three experts also took part, Ministers Rocco, Comm. Consiglio, and Engineer Cozza. We reviewed with technical aid the text of the documents and their codicils. It is unnecessary to say with what

satisfaction I saw the intervention in the last stage of the negotiations of Rocco, my friend of thirty years, whom I appreciate for his great learning. Of the three texts, twenty copies were made, as they were to be the subject of study, not only on the part of the head of the Government, but also on the part of Cardinal Gasparri and the Holy Father himself, who gave much time to prayer, invoking the help of God when the moment had arrived for the conclusion of a treaty of such importance for the Holy See."

The treaty was eventually signed on February 11th, 1929, almost exactly seven years after the coronation of Pius XI; the Italian Press remained silent up to the end, but in the beginning of the year the foreign Press was full of rumours, most of them wildly inaccurate, as indeed is a large amount of the news with which the journalists feed a grateful public. On February 7th the first statement was read by Cardinal Gasparri to the diplomatic representatives to the Holy See, in which he said:

"As the result of long and laborious conferences and most careful study a treaty and a concordat corresponding to the sentiments of the Holy Father have been elaborated; a treaty which effectually secures to the Holy See that position which it has always claimed and which belongs to it of Divine right, namely, a situation which secures full liberty and real visible independence to the government of the Universal Church, and a concordat which adequately provides for the needs of the Church and religion in Italy. As we have now reached a point at which a conclusion is no longer far off, but near at hand, the Holy Father has instructed me to inform the representatives of the Powers to the Holy See so that they may inform their respective governments. His Holiness is persuaded that those governments which have desired to be represented to the

Holy Father when he was dwelling in a palace merely left to him for his use, will the more readily desire to continue this, when the Roman Pontiff shall be in possession of a small state, sovereign, free and independent."

The signature took place at midday in the Lateran palace, Cardinal Gasparri signing on behalf of the Holy See, and Mussolini on behalf of the Kingdom of Italy. Monsignor Borgongini Duca, Monsignor Pizzardo and Signor Pacelli were the witnesses for the Holy See, and Signor Rocco, Signor Grandi, and Signor Giunta the witnesses for the Kingdom of Italy.

At the time when the signature was taking place, the Pope was giving his customary address to the Lenten preachers and parish priests of Rome in the Vatican; as the clock struck twelve he suddenly changed his subject and announced what was taking place at the Lateran. Part of his speech is, I think, well worth quoting :

" . . . Difficulties and dangers must follow (in the days We are speaking of) from adding the civil administration of even a small population to the government of the universal Church. The smallness of our territory obviates dangers and inconveniences of this kind ; for the last sixty years the Vatican has in fact governed without any special complications.

"On the other hand, it will be, and already has been, said that in another direction We have asked too much, namely in the financial sphere—perhaps it would be truer to say the economic sphere, for it is not a question of great national finance, but rather of modest domestic economics. To this We say, in the first place, if it had been possible to capitalize the whole amount of which the Church in Italy was robbed, including the patrimony of St. Peter, what an enormous and crushing amount, what an overwhelming sum, it would have been ! . . . It is easy to forget that what is given to the Holy

See in reparation, cannot suffice to provide even a small part of the vast needs of the whole world which the Church embraces ; needs for ever increasing, as the missionary work of the Church develops on an enormous scale and reaches the most distant countries . . . The needs of individuals, of works of charity, of ecclesiastical institutions even the most vital, are simply lamentable. All these, We know well, appeal for help to the Holy See."

Two days later he spoke to a delegation from the University of Milan, and explained to them how the recent solution had come about ; in the course of this speech there is a very characteristic paragraph, which gives a vivid little picture of the work that had just been finished :

"We were able to revise, to reshape and, up to the limits of the possible, to rearrange and to regulate all that huge medley of laws, opposed, one and all, directly and indirectly, to the rights and prerogatives of the Church and of persons and things ecclesiastical. One had to deal with a heap of things, an agglomeration really so vast, so complicated, so difficult that it was apt to make one's head swim, and sometimes," he added with a smile, "We were tempted to think that for the solution of this question a Pope who had been an alpinist was requisite, a Pope used to facing the steepest heights ; just as at other times the need, perhaps, was for a Pope who had been a librarian, a Pope accustomed to plunge to the depths of historical and documentary research."

The treaty and concordat were undoubtedly popular in the country, and the news was received with enthusiasm ; since 1870 Italy had been governed by a number of anti-religious politicians, but the country was and is deeply Catholic at heart ; it was only the mismanagement and oppression exercised by their employers which drove large numbers of the

working-class into alliance with a type of Socialist with whose ideology they had as a matter of fact very little sympathy. In March the plebiscite was held to elect the 400 deputies for the new house, and the large majority (8,519,559 voted for, and 135,761 against) which the Government obtained showed that the population were in favour of the recent arrangement; there were just about 1,000,000 who did not vote, and one does not know which way they would have gone, but the majority would still have been large, and I think there is good reason for believing that the election did genuinely represent popular opinion.

It will be remembered that during the Great War Pope Benedict's policy was one of consistent impartiality, while at the same time he did everything in his power to help bring the conflict to an end. It will be found that the treaty reflects this policy. Article 24 is of interest, and from the point of view of the international action of the Papacy is perhaps the most important of the treaty :

“The Holy See, in relation to the Sovereignty which belongs to it also in the international sphere, declares that it remains and will remain outside all temporal competitions between the States and International Congresses held for such objects, at least unless the contending parties both appeal to its mission of peace, reserving in every case the right of making its moral and spiritual power felt. In consequence of this the *Citta del Vaticano* will always be considered in every case neutral territory and inviolable.”

This clause ensures that in the event of international disputes, its constant impartiality will ensure the Holy See being available as a Court to whom appeal can be made, a function which may be of great service at some future date. At the time of the Ethiopian war there was an outcry from several quarters in England that the Pope should intervene and “stop the war”,

though it was not specified how he was to do so, and one or two writers, who should have known better, were not above hinting that his attitude of neutrality was dictated by cowardice ; several of the Protestant papers were specially active in taking up the hue and cry, although had the Pope intervened in British relations with India or Ireland, as they demanded he should in Italy's relations with Ethiopia, one can imagine that they would have out-Gladstoned Gladstone in their condemnation of papal aggression. The matter was, as a matter of fact, perfectly simple, and the Pope stated his position quite clearly in August 1935 ; both parties had the right to appeal to him as a Court, and neither had done so. The Emperor of Abyssinia preferred Geneva to the Vatican, and with the help of one Moses Valach, alias Mr. Litvinov, a Marxian Communist, and Mr. Eden, a well-meaning but schoolboyish enthusiast, did quite nicely for himself, though not quite so nicely as the Abyssinian rases had been led to expect, for the overwhelming military help with which they had thought they would drive the Italians into the sea did not arrive.

Without going into the rights and wrongs of the Ethiopian question, it is worth remarking that in spite of our national indignation and Protestant love of preaching, later evidence seems to show that though on strictly legal grounds there was a case against Italy, on wider grounds there was much, some say more, to be said on the other side, and that the Italian case was never fully considered at Geneva. It will be remembered that at a session of the League Council Baron Aloisi, the Italian representative, held up the Italian memorandum on Ethiopia, and successfully challenged a single delegate present to prove that he had read it through carefully.* This being so,

* The Italian case is ably and concisely stated by Mr. Evelyn Waugh, who knows more about Abyssinia than most Englishmen, and has travelled extensively in the country, in *Waugh in Abyssinia*.

the Pope's behaviour at a very difficult time, when he firmly refused to commit a breach of international morality, and to behave as if the treaty was a scrap of paper, is the more to be admired.

To return to Italy in 1929. For a time things looked very hopeful, though after the signing of the treaty there was a slackening of tension which might have trouble in its train. Mussolini had seen that if he was to bring about his dream of a united Italy, he must come to terms with the Church ; he had also to learn that having come to terms with the Church he would be expected to stick to those terms.

At first it seemed as if there would be peace between the Church and the State ; Pius XI was resolute in his determination to break every bond and chain which tied the Church to a political Party, and just as he had refused to side with Fascism against the Partito Popolare, so he had been equally firm in refusing to side with any political Party against Fascism. On December 20th, 1929, there was a little event which was symbolic of peace between the two Powers ; this day was the jubilee of his priesthood, for it was exactly fifty years since he had been ordained priest in the basilica of St. John Lateran. Early in the morning a little procession of motor-cars left the Vatican, carrying the Pope and his retinue to the basilica, where he was to celebrate what is known as the golden Mass in thanksgiving for his jubilee ; he had already appeared on the balcony outside St. Peter's, as we know, but this was the first time that a Pope had gone right outside the Vatican since Pius IX had shut himself in.

And yet things were not going so well ; once the Lateran Treaty was signed, the Fascists thought that they could move ahead with the more sweeping side of their policy. In France there had been much bitter feeling owing to the Pope's condemnation of the *Action Française*, a paper which had considerable influence on Fascist thought, and of which an account

will be given in a later chapter, and since the condemnation the tendencies which had made it necessary had been at work in Italy. Pius XI had all through his pontificate encouraged the movement known as Catholic Action, and had even said of it, "Who attacks this, attacks the Pope." The movement was in no sense political, but had as its aim the consolidation of the Catholic forces in the country and the encouragement of the laity to play their full part in the life of the Church. While such a movement is not likely to come into conflict with any Government under ordinary conditions, it will be seen that it is likely to be frowned on by a Government that claims control over every aspect of the lives of its citizens. Mussolini accused the Catholic movement of political intentions—indeed, of being the Partito Popolare at work under another name; all the offices of the Catholic Action societies in Italy were raided and closed, and their papers and correspondence were confiscated. He had underrated the man with whom he had to deal.

The Pope remained calm; he denied the charge that Catholic Action had interfered in politics, and challenged the Italian Government to produce any evidence of this from the papers they had seized, to which they were unable to reply. Then he struck, with the Encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno*, in which he lashed into Mussolini with a fury worthy of a Hildebrand. The Encyclical is some forty-two pages long, but a few quotations will show clearly enough that the Fascist Government were forcefully reminded that there were bounds beyond which they would be foolish to go.

After describing what has happened, and the unpleasant way in which the Government's orders were in many cases carried out, he speaks of the "inventions, falsehoods, and real calumnies diffused by the hostile Press of the Party, which is the only Press which is free to say and to dare to say anything and is often ordered or almost ordered what it must say". After a

trenchant attack on the violence and cowardly bullying which has been such a dark stain on the Fascist movement, the Pope condemns the "ideology which clearly resolves itself into a true, a real pagan worship of the State"—the "statolatry which is no less in contrast with the natural rights of the family than it is in contradiction with the supernatural rights of the Church".

He points out that in spite of a certain amount of careful window-dressing on the part of the Fascists in regard to religious instruction in the schools, much of this has been a sham, and remarks that

"it is an unjustifiable pretension and is, indeed, irreconcilable with the name and profession of being a Catholic, to come to teach the Church and her Head what is sufficient and what must be sufficient for the education and Christian formation of souls and for promoting, especially among the young, the application of the principles of the Faith in social life. To this unjustifiable presumption is added very clear evidence of the absolute incompetence of the pretenders and their complete ignorance of the matters under discussion."

He reiterates that

"a conception of the State which makes the rising generations belong to it entirely, without any exception, from the tenderest years up to adult life, cannot be reconciled by a Catholic either with Catholic doctrine or with the natural rights of the family", and protests forcibly against the Fascist oath, "which even little boys and girls are obliged to take, that they will execute orders without discussion from an authority which, as we have seen and experienced, can give orders against all truth and justice and in disregard of the rights of the Church and its souls, which are already by their very nature sacred and inviolable".

He ends the Encyclical by pointing out that by

adopting a reasonable and peaceful attitude the Fascist Party

“would be rewarded by the sympathetic applause of the Catholics of all the world, instead of meeting, as at present, with universal blame and discontent”.

There is a story, which may or may not be true, that as this Encyclical went to press, a dry chuckle could be heard in the inner rooms of the Vatican; certainly it had the required effect, for Mussolini, whatever else he may be, is a realist, and has no silly desires to hit men bigger than himself. A compromise was reached by which complete liberty of association was restored to the Catholic Action societies, except their gymnastic clubs, while the Pope made the formal concession of decreeing that the Bishops should henceforward be the heads of Catholic Action in every diocese. At the same time he renewed his formal prohibition to all Italian clergy against taking part in political activities.

Thanks to the resolute action of Pius XI, the skies in Italy are rather clearer, though in Germany the same battle is still raging, and no man can say where it will end.

CHAPTER VIII

THE POPE AND COMMUNISM

THERE was one other State besides Italy which was not represented at the coronation of Pius XI, the great State of Soviet Russia, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. We have seen how Pius XI made a gesture of friendliness towards the Kingdom of Italy at the first possible moment, and how in the course of seven years this gesture resulted in the Treaty of the Lateran. While he entered into negotiations with the Soviet Government with a view to gaining some alleviation for the unfortunate Christians whom they were persecuting, and to helping in the work of famine relief, he had made no friendly gesture towards the Kremlin, even though hints were dropped on several occasions that the Soviet Government would gladly be represented at the Vatican. He has been described as the one statesman in the whole world who knows the world as a whole, and who therefore sees things in their right proportion and values them at their proper worth, and he knows what is the true nature of Marxian Communism. He has been unhesitating in his condemnation of this philosophy, and all through his reign has stood up to its adherents, just as he was prepared to face the Red Army when Warsaw seemed doomed to fall.

This being so it is natural that he should be accused on many sides of being a reactionary. Communism undoubtedly has a great fascination for many

people at the present, and up to a point one can sympathize with them. Christianity has been steadily pushed aside by the Governments of the world, with the result that there is much in our civilization which is base and cowardly and cruel, and a philosophy which seems to be at the same time a guide to life and a cure for the evils of our time will certainly gain many adherents among the millions whom circumstances have separated from the Catholic Church. A closer examination will show, however, that the Pope is right; Communism does not fulfil its promises, and where it is operative has indeed produced something worse than the evils which it proposed to cure. I think I am not exaggerating if I say that in Russia it has produced one of the blackest periods of reaction that the world has yet seen, with even less liberty than there was under the czars and the Pharaohs of Egypt. We have seen that the Pope has protested against the violent and totalitarian elements in Fascism; his condemnation of Communism is more severe and all-embracing.

References to Communism are to be found in various Encyclicals and public speeches, but the condemnation is most explicit in the great social Encyclical the *Quadragesimo Anno*, on Reconstructing the Social Order. This was issued on May 15th, 1931, forty years after the issue of Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, on the condition of the working-classes. This Encyclical, while it surveys our present discontents, and affirms that the Communist policy has led to even greater disaster than the un-Christian ways of modern Capitalism, is nevertheless far from being merely destructive; it points to a remedy, which will be described later, and where the principles that it lays down have been applied the result has been strikingly successful. When the *Rerum Novarum* appeared, Cardinal Manning, the radical Archbishop of Westminster, wrote in the *Dublin Review* for July 1891:

“The voice of the Good Shepherd has been heard by the flock spread throughout the world with a loving, thankful and joyous assent. It has been heard by sovereigns and statesmen, and men of every calling and of every measure of culture, with a respectful attention never before given to any political utterance. It has been heard by the millions of the world of labour, and they have recognized the accents of the Father’s love and sympathy. In truth, the Encyclical, both in matter and in manner of treatment, comes home to the intelligence and heart of this day with the simplicity of a household word. Who does not know what labour is? And who is not a sharer in its interests or sympathies or sufferings? Now, there is only one person who represents two things which men think irreconcilable—power and poverty: the Vicar of our Lord who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor—he only knows both, and can speak to both as a partner in both.

“For a century the Civil Powers in almost all the Christian world have been separating themselves from the Church, claiming and glorying in their separation. They have set up the State as a purely lay and secular society, and have thrust the Church from them. And now of a sudden they find that the millions of the world sympathize with the Church, which has compassion on the multitude rather than with the State, or the plutocracy which has weighed so heavily on them.”

These words would apply equally well to the *Quadragesimo Anno*; this Encyclical, which champions the working-man, nevertheless remains adamant in its condemnation of Communism.

The condemnation is also to be found in a number of broadcasts and public speeches, as well as in other Encyclicals. Now, why exactly has he been so downright?

The superficial answer is of course that he is on the side of Big Business, and there have been plenty of silly and unscrupulous people only too ready to suggest this. People of this type seldom take the trouble to verify their statements; if they had taken the trouble to study the *Quadragesimo Anno*, they would have found that Pius XI has been as acid about the ways of Big Business as he has about Communism, and that his remarks on the subject, though concise, show no little understanding and insight. He quickly sums up the real trouble of the present day :

“The immense number of proletarians on the one hand and the immense wealth of certain very rich people on the other, are an unanswerable argument that the earthly goods so abundantly provided in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men. . . . In our days not only is wealth concentrated, but immense power and economic domination are concentrated in the hands of the few, and those few are frequently not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds, who administer them at their good pleasure.

“This power becomes particularly irresistible when administered by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the life-blood to the economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will. . . . Some have become so hardened to the stings of conscience as to hold all means good which enable them to increase their profits. . . . The regulations legally enacted for joint-stock companies have given occasion to abominable abuses.”

These words, which dispose of the accusation that the Pope is a chaplain to the magnates, were echoed

in the House of Commons on July 15th, 1936, when Sir A. M. Samuel said :

“It is well known that there has been an abuse of public confidence in limited liability to such an extent that limited liability has become a blot on British commercial morality. Limited liability, instead of being used as a protection for honest men, has become a shield behind which rascals are able to fleece the public. An inquiry on this subject should be set on foot by the Board of Trade at once.”

There are three main reasons for which Pius XI has condemned Marxian Communism : its materialism, which has led to a cruel and determined attempt to exterminate religion ; its doctrine of the class war, which is in itself a denial of Christian charity and has led to further cruelty and injustice ; and its denial of the right of property, which, far from improving matters, produces a servile State in which a few possess even more unlimited power than that wielded by capitalists. The means of production are controlled by the officers of the State, who are the masters of all the workers ; the result is that the workers, far from being emancipated, become increasingly the slaves of the State, for their masters have a power that is impossible to resist. As Mr. Christopher Hollis has said in *Foreigners Aren't Fools*, from which I have already quoted :

“The danger of the left today is not that it is revolutionary but that its revolution is all wrong. The danger of the left is that it is so frightfully like the right. It would take every one of the diseases of modern society to aggravate them. . . . These evils, which in the old society had grown up by an accidental evolution, will be inserted in the new society by deliberate planning.”

Let us examine these three grounds for condemnation at greater length and in order. An unconvincing attempt has been made in recent years,

which has convinced large numbers of our English intelligentsia, to prove that Marxists neither believe in persecution nor practise it, while all the time the most systematic plans for destroying religion have been followed out in Russia—as systematic as any persecution under the Roman emperors, and more deadly because less obvious ; there are always a few churches still left open and a few priests still at liberty. Not only is the attack made on Christianity, but on all forms of religion. In 1923 Monsignor Budkiewicz, a Catholic priest, was shot solely on account of his faith, and at his condemnation at the end of a farcical trial, Krylenko, the prosecutor, said in the court :

“Your religion, I spit on it, as I do on all religions—on Orthodox, Jewish, Mahomedan, Lutheran and the rest. No religion has any political rights or any legal status within the territory of the republic.”

This hatred of religion is indeed to be found all through Communist literature ; Marx and Engels give no evidence of having ever investigated the rational and historical proofs of Christianity, and obediently reflected the confident and now completely exploded theories of religion put forward by the German critics of the Hegelian left. They were content, in a curiously smug way, to see and represent religion as a tool for capitalist exploitation, and gave no credit to the French Catholic reformers who for at least thirty years before the Communist manifesto was published had been attacking the *laissez-faire* economics, and they also ignored the Catholics in Germany, such as Bishop von Ketteler, who were fighting valiantly for better social conditions. Their disciples, most of whom seem to possess brains of a pathetically uncritical type, have devotedly followed their irreligious example.

There is, for instance, a book called the *ABC of Communism* originally written in Russian by

Bukharin and Preobrazhensky, translated into English by Eden and Cedar Paul, and described on the cover as "a book for all . . . a world classic". This informative little "classic" tells us that

"The Soviet power must exert the most fervent propaganda against religion. . . . All religions are one and the same poison, intoxicating and deadening the mind, the conscience ; a fight to the death must be declared against them. . . . Our task is not to reform, but to destroy all kinds of religion, all kinds of morality."

Our ancestors were content to destroy beautiful things, such as sacred images and priceless stained glass ; nowadays there is a more extreme school of thought, more ambitious than the iconoclasts, who wish to destroy the realities symbolized by the images and the glass, though if they are opposed to morality, it is strange that they should object to religion "deadening the conscience".

Lounatcharsky, when he was Commissar of Public Education in Moscow, was refreshingly plain-spoken on this question of spiritual and moral vandalism, and in many ways his repulsive bluntness is preferable to the humbug of some of his confrères.

"We hate Christianity and Christians," he said. "Even the best of them must be looked upon as our worst enemies. They preach the love of our neighbours and mercy, which is contrary to our principles. Christian love is an obstacle to the development of the revolution. Down with the love of our neighbours ; what we want is hatred. We must learn how to hate, and it is only then we shall conquer the world."

One wonders if he remembers that Our Lord Jesus Christ, after instituting the sacrifice of His love for the world, said to His Apostles, "Have confidence ; I have conquered the world."

The Soviet Press has always been ready to en-

courage the good work ; we find it announced, for instance, in an article in *Pravda* for April 8th, 1928, that

“Local authorities must, without loss of time, throw all the necessary forces on the anti-God front. They must declare anti-religious propaganda to be compulsory and that such work will be considered Party work. . . . We must declare a war to the death on all forms of religion. The fight against religion is the task of the day.”

Following on this article a constitutional amendment was made in 1929 ; by the revolutionary constitution, both religious and anti-religious propaganda were allowed, but by this amendment religious propaganda was forbidden.

Nobody can deny that the Russian Communists have practised what they preached. The first attack was made on the Orthodox Church. Now, it is certainly true that this body was far too closely allied with the Czarist bureaucracy, and that it was quite often used as an instrument of reaction ; nevertheless, its quite obvious failings can never excuse the terrible things which were done. By the end of 1920, as has been said before, six Bishops and 6,775 priests of the Russian Orthodox Church were put to death, often enough in circumstances of great cruelty, burying alive, mutilating and throwing into quicklime. These were in almost all cases accused of being counter-revolutionaries, and were usually condemned without going through the fiction of judicial proceedings. Others, perhaps less fortunate, were placed in concentration camps, of which a gruesome account is given in a book called *Red Gaols* (published by Burns Oates & Washbourne) by a lady who for several years suffered in one of them for her religious opinions. The story does not make pleasant reading.

In February 1922 the attack became more subtle. It was a time of famine, and a decree was published

that within a month all valuable objects made of gold or silver or containing precious stones were to be removed from the churches and handed over to the Government, to provide funds for relief. In spite, however, of the great need for funds to cope with the emergency, no attempts were made to sell the crown jewels, valued at a milliard of gold roubles, which the Government had in their possession, and large sums were being spent on political agitators abroad, who were to organize the unconverted countries so that they should be ready to follow the example of holy Russia ; grain was also being exported to Germany and Italy which was urgently needed for the starving peasants.

There were other reasons for making this demand to the Orthodox Church, and they had no connection with famine relief ; the Bolsheviki wished to deliver a heavy blow, for they were disappointed at the poor results of the persecution which they had been carrying through during the last few years ; not only did they wish to strike at the Orthodox Church, but they wished even more to strike at its Patriarch, who had injured their arrogance and vanity by anathematizing them and protesting against their barbarities, and who still had considerable prestige in the country. There was another and deeper reason : the Bolsheviki leaders were afraid of the opposition which was growing in the Communist Party following on the adoption of Lenin's New Economic Policy, for the thing which the Bolsheviki leaders fear above all others is lukewarmness, and it seemed likely that a vigorous drive against Christianity would do much to keep the fanaticism of their followers up to concert pitch.

The unfortunate Patriarch Tikhon was placed in a distressing position by his opponents ; he had already offered Church valuables towards the famine-relief fund, and had only drawn the line at the vessels used

in the Liturgy ; he had also explained this to his people, and had told them, as he imagined, that his offer had been accepted, so that when they heard the sacred vessels were to be taken as well, many of them feared that the Patriarch had deceived them. He made a further offer through Archbishop Nikander, asking that the sacred vessels should be spared : a little later, as we have seen, when the attack was launched on the Catholic Church, Cardinal Gasparri offered to pay cash for the sacred vessels ; to neither offer was an answer given, for both Nikander and Gasparri made the mistake of thinking that the Bolsheviks were sincerely interested in famine relief.

Soon after this the Patriarch was arrested, along with fifty-four priests of the Orthodox Church, on the charge of having "incited the masses to civil war". There was no evidence that he had incited anybody to violent or unlawful behaviour, and the only disturbance at the time was the very natural resistance given by a number of congregations when the Red officers came to take away the sacred vessels. Even though any sort of violence had been expressly discouraged by the clergy, eleven of the fifty-four priests were sentenced to death on this account. Appeals were made from Rome on behalf of the Patriarch, and it was partly due to these that his life was spared. It is a sad thing that a number of attacks have been made on Pius XI by members of the Russian Orthodox Church, both in Russia and among the émigrés, accusing him of plotting against them and of trying to win favour with the Bolshevik Government at their expense, when nothing could be more inaccurate. He has been absolutely consistent and loyal in his support of Orthodoxy against the forces of atheism.

This fresh attack on religion had widespread effects, for after the arrest of the Patriarch, the Bolsheviks were able to make a very injurious schism in the Orthodox Church ; he was kept in close confine-

ment, with very little communication with the outside world, and after a time his abdication was officially announced ; there is every reason to believe that this was obtained from him by trickery, for he was a very simple man, with neither a subtle mind nor a very strong character. A rival hierarchy was set up, consisting of men of well-known instability who were willing to be the pawns of the Government, and this was the most smashing blow that Russian Orthodoxy has received, for the "Reformed Church" was to disintegrate all that had withstood the first years of terrorism. The story is complicated and off the point here, but a detailed account is given by Captain Francis McCullagh, who was in Moscow at the time.*

Having been able to place their creatures in the heart of Orthodoxy, the Bolsheviki turned their attention to the Church of Rome ; on this subject, as on many others, they were surprisingly ignorant, and they soon found themselves baffled by the stubborn qualities of Catholicism. The relief mission which the Pope had sent under the leadership of Dr. Walsh has already been mentioned. It must always be remembered that this was a relief mission pure and simple, and that Dr. Walsh had no diplomatic status, in spite of the hints dropped by the Kremlin as to the possibility of diplomatic relations ; the Pope knew better than to compromise himself by receiving a representative from such a galère.

Comment was certainly caused by the negotiations with Chicherin in Genoa, but the aim of these was merely to obtain passports for the relief mission. A further appeal on behalf of the Patriarch Tikhon was made through Cardinal Gasparri, and a telegram was sent to Lenin ; beyond this Pius XI was not prepared to go, and in spite of the allegations made nobody has ever been able to prove that he has ever been behind

* *The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity* (John Murray, 1924).

the backs of the Orthodox ; in one of his prayers he speaks of them as divided from the Catholic Church, but nevertheless united to it *per divinum Eucharistiae sacramentum et sacrificium, quod est unitatis signum, vinculum caritatis et concordiae symbolum.*

It certainly is true that during the first few years of the new régime the Catholic Church was left more or less unmolested in Russia, and probably if anything was a little more free than under the czars ; nevertheless, during those five years the Communists failed to win over a single Catholic whether priest or layman. Captain McCullagh describes how the Catholic priests "not only remained in Moscow and Petrograd, they also remained in every other place where a Catholic church had been built." "When traversing Siberia in January 1920", he says, "I found a Catholic church functioning in every town along the Siberian railway, the priest saying Mass as calmly as if the fierce tides of revolution were not roaring and swirling around his church. In this calmness and regularity there was something exceedingly impressive. It was the calmness and regularity of a system which did not depend on the will of man. It was the calmness and regularity of the sun rising daily in the East."

The attack on the Catholic Church was launched at the beginning of 1923. In Russia it was a Church numerically weak, but to judge from the behaviour of Catholics under the Czars it was obviously stubborn, and the Communist leaders were becoming increasingly suspicious of its "calmness and regularity". There were certain obvious weaknesses in Orthodoxy once the support of the Czars was gone, but the Catholic Church depended on a different type of ruler, and one on whom the Communists could not lay hands. Though they could not lay hands on the Pope, they did their best by proxy, and a figure of Pius XI was set up in the "Park of Rest and Culture" in

Moscow, at which the people were encouraged to throw things!

The attack on Catholicism followed much the same lines as that on Orthodoxy; a demand had been made for the sacred vessels which was refused, Archbishop Cieplak saying: "Church property belongs to the Church, and I cannot surrender it without the permission of the Pope. In August 1921 I asked all Catholics to help in famine-relief work. For such work we can give even our sacred vessels, but I have no right to give them without the authorization of the Vatican." Instructions came later from the Vatican instructing him not to sign the agreement acknowledging the Bolshevik Government as the owners of Catholic Church property, but nevertheless Cardinal Gasparri, instructed by Pius XI, was perfectly prepared to be generous financially, quite apart from the relief distributed by Dr. Walsh's mission. The decree was, however, ruthlessly applied to Catholic churches all over Russia; no active resistance was offered beyond attempts to protect the Tabernacle containing the Sacred Host, and it seems that on most occasions when the spoilers arrived they found the priest and his people praying in the church, whom they expelled at the point of the bayonet. The next blow came suddenly, on March 2nd, 1923, when all the Catholic clergy in Petrograd were summoned immediately to Moscow, to appear before the supreme tribunal, where they were arrested a few days after their arrival and paraded through the streets in an open lorry.

A five days' trial took place, and it was a repulsive travesty of justice, with outbursts of atheistic and bloodthirsty frenzy on the part of Krylenko, the prosecutor—a curiously tiresome man of debased character. Besides their resistance in connection with the sacred vessels, the Archbishop and his clergy were accused of breaking the law because they had taught

the Catechism to children, to which they answered : "There are other laws, those of God and the Catholic Church, and the law to teach religion is Divine." After five days of Krylenko's ill-informed ranting, Archbishop Cieplak and Monsignor Budkiewicz were sentenced to be shot, and the rest to long terms of imprisonment, during which one of the priests lost his reason owing to the treatment he received. The Archbishop's sentence was commuted to one of imprisonment, but Monsignor Budkiewicz was martyred ; it is believed that before going to execution he was stripped of his clothes and that his last moments were made as humiliating as possible. On the night of his death Dr. Walsh was rung up on the telephone, and heard shrieks of maniacal laughter coming from the other end ; he guessed that the Monsignor had just been murdered. He had sent in a request that according to the Catholic custom he should be with him at the end, but his request was ignored.

The persecution has continued steadily, although a number of unthoughtful English people, many of them in prominent positions, affirm that in Russia there is now complete religious liberty. In December 1935 a congress was held in London of the "Friends of Soviet Russia", at which were present many of the more silly representatives of the English left, some of whom held responsible posts ; it was amusing though distressing to see how eagerly they swallowed the inaccurate information they were given. A short study of statistics will show, I think, how inaccurate this was.

Far from abating, the persecution of Christians in Russia has if anything increased, and the campaign against the Catholic Church has been particularly severe. In March 1930, Dr. Walsh, who was particularly qualified to speak, wrote :

"Fifty per cent of the Catholic clergy of Russia have disappeared since the Revolution, through

judicial murder, starvation, exile or imprisonment . . . the following priests still remain on Solovetsky Island, undergoing the agony of slow execution: Monsignor Boleslav Sloskan, Paul Chomicx, Adolph Filip, Vincent Ilgin, Joseph Juzwik, Casimir Siwicki, Miecislav Szawdinis, John Troigo, John Versocki, Bicholas Alexandrov, Potapi Emilianov, Leonid Feodorov, Caesar Feodorovitch, Victor Kriventshonk, Basil Stylo, Paul Ascheberg, Joseph Kolch and John Furch, besides many others undergoing a similar agony in Siberia, Turkestan and the Caucasus. . . . Many of these martyrs and confessors of the Faith I knew personally, and can testify that their only crime is the daily crime of Cardinal Hayes of New York City, of Bishop Manning and Rabbi Stephen Wise. They believed in God and taught His revelation and the moral law as God gave them light to see it."

Since then the enemies of Christ have not slacked off. The extermination of religion has been one of the aims of the Five-year Plan, and a resolution was signed by Stalin, Bekhterev, Jaroslavski, Cohen and Lobaevski that

"In the third year of the plan, 1934-35, atheistic cells must work with greater energy. The scope of this year is to drive out of U.S.S.R. all ministers of religion who do not agree to cease their religious work."

This resolution has been carried out to the best of their ability, with the subtle condition, however, that it is not carried out absolutely; a few churches are left, and a few priests remain more or less at liberty, so that the unobservant may gain an impression of religious toleration.

In 1934 there were some thirty priests in charge of the Catholics of Polish origin in the Ukraine, and of these there were at the beginning of 1936 only four left. There were twenty-six looking after the Catholics

of German origin in the district of Tiraspol, and in 1935 twenty-three of these were arrested. At the same time Father Hieronymus Cierpiento was arrested in Siberia, Father Sabudinski and Father Wargidze in the Caucasus, and Father Wierbicki in Tambov. Heavy sentences were inflicted, in many cases ten years at the terrible penal camp at Solovki.

Every effort has been made to hinder the work of the priests still at liberty, both Catholic and Orthodox, and the same measures have been taken against Baptist ministers, of whom there were a large number in Russia. Every priest was, for instance, by the law of April 8th, 1929, attached to one place of residence. By the same law he was authorized to celebrate regularly in several places; but what he gained on the roundabouts he lost on the swings, for owing to the law on internal passports, about which far less is said, he was unable to leave the town to which he was attached, so that many of his flock would be unable to attend Mass. A typical example of Soviet window-dressing. The president of a collective farm may not detach horses from work to take the peasants to church, and no priest may visit a house without the written permission of the head of the family. As can be imagined, fear of the omnipresent G.P.U. is likely to make many heads of families reluctant to give this written permission.

The attack on church buildings has been equally determined. In Moscow there were once over a thousand churches, Orthodox and Catholic, and there are now only thirty-five left; these are kept open with the greatest difficulty. In order to keep a church open, what is known as a church soviet must be formed; this has twenty-five members, who make themselves responsible for the church, for its furniture, and for the behaviour of the congregation; even after undertaking these responsibilities they have often been unable to save the buildings. If thieves break in—and

these may do so for anti-religious reasons—the church soviet are responsible for restoring the damage at the price assessed by the Government. They are also responsible for the taxes on the church, which are heavy, for the insurance fees, which are levied by the local authorities and are even heavier, and for further payments which may be arbitrarily demanded at any time for so-called “repairs”. It goes without saying that the members of the church soviet are marked men with the authorities.

William H. Chamberlin, the author of *Russia's Iron Age* is a competent American journalist who lived for eleven years in Russia under the Soviet régime ; he started by being enthusiastic on its behalf, but experience has changed his opinions. On the subject of the church-soviet system he says :

“In one church on the Maroseika, in Moscow, which has now been pulled down, the entire personnel of the council was arrested and sent into exile on three separate occasions. It is the generally accepted rule that only people who are not afraid to suffer for their convictions accept election into the church councils.”

Nevertheless, in spite of the constant pressure against religion in Russia, the godless Press has once or twice referred reluctantly, sometimes angrily, to the constancy of the faithful in practising their religion, and this constancy seems to have been specially striking in the Catholic German villages in the district of Odessa and Saratov. There is a full and well-documented account of the later phases of the persecution by Joseph Ledit in the *Month* for February 1936.

I think that this rather long account of the religious position in Russia is not off the point, for it shows why Pius XI has been so consistent in his warnings as to the Communist menace ; he is not gullible, and he knows well enough what the Communist Party would like to bring about all over the world. They showed their

hand in Hungary, though their reign there was fortunately short; they have shown it in Mexico, and even more brutally in Spain; one cannot be sure that the same hand will not suddenly appear at work nearer home. Apart from his many warnings, Pius XI wrote a memorable open letter to Cardinal Pompili, the vicar-general of Rome, on February 2nd, 1930.

"We are deeply moved", he said, "by the horrible and sacrilegious crimes that are repeated every day with increasing wickedness against God and against the souls of the vast population of Russia, all of whom are dear to Our heart because of the greatness of their sufferings and because so many sons and servants of this holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, devoted and generous even to heroism and martyrdom, are numbered among them.

"From the very beginning of Our Pontificate, following the example of Our Predecessor of holy memory, Benedict XV, We multiplied Our efforts to put an end to this terrible persecution and to avert the grievous evils that press upon these people. We were also at pains to ask the Governments represented at the Conference of Genoa, to make, by common agreement, a declaration which might have saved Russia and all the world from many woes, demanding as a condition preliminary to any recognition of the Soviet Government, respect for conscience, freedom of worship and of church property.

"Alas, these three points, so essential above all to those ecclesiastical hierarchies unhappily separated from Catholic unity, were abandoned in favour of temporal interests, which in fact would have been better safeguarded if the different Governments had first of all considered the rights of God, His Kingdom and His Justice. Alas, they rejected also Our intervention directed to

save from destruction and to preserve to their traditional use the sacred vessels and ikons—things which formed a treasury of piety and art, dear to the hearts of all Russians. We have, however, had the consolation of having saved from trial on a capital charge and of having otherwise aided the Patriarch Tikhon, the head of that hierarchy, unhappily severed from Catholic unity.

“Meanwhile, the generous offerings of the Catholic world saved from famine and a horrible death more than 150,000 children, who were daily fed by Our envoys, until they were forced to abandon their pious work by those who preferred to give thousands of innocent children to death rather than see them fed by Christian charity. . . . We have also given Our approval to the movement begun last November by the Institute of Oriental Studies, of holding conferences, furnished with documentary and scientific proofs, for making known to the public at large some of the sacrilegious outrages that the members of the ‘Militant No-God League’ are organizing in the vast Soviet territory, outrages going far beyond and against the text of the Revolutionary Constitution, though that was already very anti-religious. We have noted with pleasure that this example, given by Rome, was followed, a month later, by similar conferences held in London, Paris, Geneva, Prague and other cities.

“But the fresh outbreak of blasphemies and sacrileges, now officially published, demands a still more universal and solemn reparation. During the feast of last Christmas, not only were many hundreds of churches closed, numerous ikons burnt, all the workers forced to work, the children compelled to attend school, and the Sunday suppressed; but things have come to such a pass, that those employed in the workshops, both men

and women, are forced to sign a declaration of formal apostasy and hatred of God, under pain of being deprived of their tickets for food, clothing and lodging, without which every inhabitant of this unhappy country must die of hunger, distress and cold."

There are numbers of people, with whom one cannot altogether fail to sympathize, who are willing to admit that there is a religious persecution in Russia, and deplore the fact, but who would gladly see the other sides of the Communist system introduced into the West; there is so much that is abominable in the exploitation of the masses under the present form of Capitalism that one's first impulse is almost to agree. I myself have often been asked by benevolent and religiously minded people why the Pope and the Catholic Church are so deeply opposed to all the manifestations of Communism. "The Western world is in a very bad state," they say; "the two live movements in it are Communism and the Catholic Church. Why cannot the two combine? The combined forces of the two would bring salvation."

It brings up for a moment a delightful picture, for there is no doubt that in England at any rate the Communist movement has for the moment attracted some of the most eager and idealistic of the young non-Catholics—fine characters like Ralph Fox, who will be remembered with respect by those who disagreed with him most. It is also true that there are far too many Catholics who are content to go to Mass and to the sacraments, but who are not eager for social justice, and who should be put to shame by the zeal and energy of the young Communists. But still, the fact remains that Catholicism and Marxian Communism are incompatible. There is first the religious question. Many of the rank and file of the Communist movement in England are amiably dis-

posed towards religion, about which they tend to have rather hazy ideas, but, unfortunately, their leaders have other aims in view, and of this there can be no doubt. There are also the two questions of private property and class war.

Pius XI has said in the *Quadragesimo Anno* :

“Communism teaches and pursues a twofold aim : merciless class warfare and complete abolition of private ownership ; and this it does, not in secret and by hidden methods, but openly, frankly, and by every means, even the most violent. To obtain these ends, Communists shrink from nothing and fear nothing ; and when they have attained to power, it is unbelievable, indeed it seems portentous, how cruel and inhuman they show themselves to be. Evidence for this is the ghastly destruction and ruin with which they have laid waste immense tracts of Eastern Europe and Asia ; while their antagonism and open hostility to Holy Church and to God Himself are, alas, but too well known and proved by their deeds. . . . We cannot contemplate without sorrow the heedlessness of those who seem to make light of these imminent dangers, and with stolid indifference allow the propagation far and wide of those doctrines which seek by violence and bloodshed the destruction of society. Far more severely must be condemned the foolhardiness of those who neglect to remove or modify such conditions as exasperate the minds of the people, and so prepare the way for the overthrow and ruin of the social order.”

The Moscow trials have put things back a little, but outside the actual ranks of the Communist Party there are many who look towards Soviet Russia with hope and admiration at the moment ; their attitude is almost exactly the opposite of that of Pius XI in the paragraph just quoted. There are several reasons for this, and at first they seem cogent. To

begin with, any fair-minded person must agree that *laissez-faire* Capitalism has got us into a mess, and that there is much in our civilization which is unjust, inhuman and cruel, as the *Quadragesimo Anno* points out with no uncertain voice. There have also been such grim accounts of Nazi Germany during the last four years that the million and more of prisoners who are meeting with a similar fate under Stalin have been almost forgotten. Russia also gains popularity for the Communist system by being in the hands of expert window-dressers; for a comparatively small sum it is possible to spend a pleasant summer holiday touring Soviet territory under the reassuring control of well-trained and well-disciplined guides; an American Communist, Mr. Andrew Smith, was so delighted with his journey in 1929 that in 1932 he and his wife made over their life-savings to the American Communist Party and moved to Russia, as things were far from promising in the States; the account of their subsequent disillusion and disgust makes sad though interesting reading, in his book, *I Was a Soviet Worker*, recently published in England.

There are many who have come back full of enthusiasm from their summer holidays; Sir Walter Citrine, however, who is General Secretary of the Trades Union Council, happens to have a keen eye, coupled with great aptitude for statistics; *I Search for Truth in Soviet Russia*, in which he describes his summer holiday in that country, though it is necessarily a little inadequate, being the account of only a short stay, nevertheless gives much remarkable information, some of which he obtained by more or less forcing his way where he was told not to go. He came back with a shrewd suspicion that much was wrong behind the well-prepared façade, and his suspicions are confirmed by Mr. Smith's grim account, the result of personal experience, which is, as it

were, a detailed edition of the Pope's concise picture.

Another visitor to Russia last year was M. André Gide, the eminent writer; he claims to be a Marxist, but he has come back curiously disillusioned, and has expressed his opinions in his *Retour de l'U.R.S.S.* This well-balanced little account, which has apparently been as popular a subject for conversation in France as the Spanish Civil War, probes with true French acuteness to the weak points in the Communist system. There are many excellent improvements, which he praises as they deserve; he also met a number of people who were clearly fine and unselfish characters; but there is an atmosphere of repression, which must inevitably be produced by the totalitarian claims of Communism, and of this atmosphere he became increasingly conscious.

"La moindre protestation," he says, *"la moindre critique est passible des pires peines, et du reste aussitôt étouffée. Et je doute qu'en aucun autre pays aujourd'hui, fût-ce dans l'Allemagne de Hitler, l'esprit soit moins libre, plus courbé, plus craintif, plus vassalisé."*

Now, it is also interesting that towards the end of the *Quadragesimo Anno*, after laying down the principles on which the reform of the social order should be effected, and of which an account will be given later, the Pope says:

"In effecting this reform, charity 'which is the bond of perfection' must play a leading part. How completely deceived are those inconsiderate reformers who, zealous only for commutative justice, proudly disdain the help of charity. Clearly charity cannot take the place of justice unfairly withheld. But, even though a state of things be pictured in which every man receives at last all that is his due, a wide field will nevertheless remain open for charity. For justice alone, even though most faithfully observed, can remove the cause of social strife, but can never bring about a union of hearts

and minds. Yet this union, bringing men together, is the main principle of stability in all institutions, no matter how perfect they may seem, which aim at establishing social peace and providing mutual aid. In its absence, as repeated experience proves, the wisest regulations come to nothing."

This paragraph should be read through carefully more than once; there is always a danger, I think, of dismissing an affirmation of this kind as a mere pious platitude when really it contains much deep wisdom and psychological insight.

I do not know whether M. Gide has read the *Quadragesimo Anno* or not, but it is of real interest, I think, that his experience of Communism in action seems to have impressed the same truth on his mind; what he has to say bears out the Pope's statement that in the absence of the union of hearts and minds which comes from charity, "the wisest regulations come to nothing".

"Comment n'être pas choqué par le mépris, ou tout au moins l'indifférence que ceux qui sont et qui se sentent 'du bon côté' marquent à l'égard des inférieurs, des domestiques, des manœuvres, des hommes et des femmes de journée, et j'allais dire : des pauvres. Il n'y a plus de classes en U.R.S.S., c'est entendu. Mais il y a des pauvres. Il y en a trop ; beaucoup trop. J'espérais bien ne plus en voir, ou même plus exactement : c'est pour ne plus en voir que j'étais venu en U.R.S.S.

"Ajoutez que la philanthropie n'est plus de mise, ni plus la simple charité. L'Etat s'en charge. Il se charge de tout et l'on n'a plus besoin, c'est entendu, de secourir. De là certaine sécheresse dans les rapports, en dépit de toute camaraderie. Et, naturellement, il ne s'agit pas ici des rapports entre égaux ; mais, à l'égard de ces 'inférieurs' dont je parlais, la complexe de supériorité joue en plein."

Not only does M. Gide bear out what the Pope has said, but he also shows the logical results of Lounatcharsky's grim declaration, "Christian love is

an obstacle to the development of the revolution. Down with the love of our neighbours; what we want is hatred. We must learn to hate, and it is only then we shall conquer the world."

The spirit of class war is an understandable thing; there have always been a certain proportion of the human race who have been submerged and oppressed, though there was a period in Europe, during what is known as the golden period of the Middle Ages, when a genuine and not altogether unsuccessful attempt was made to establish the reign of social justice. When several nations turned away from Catholic authority in the sixteenth century, and the usurer was once more allowed to spread his serpentine coils, the throne of social justice, which had for some time been tottering, was overturned. Since that date, as the *Quadragesimo Anno* states, more and more wealth has accumulated in the hands of the few, and the tendency was increased by the Industrial Revolution, so cold and cruel, impersonal and unchristian, with its corollary of a *laissez-faire* economy.

We have advanced from the terrible pauperism of the last century, but as the Encyclical says:

"It is true that there is a formal difference between pauperism and proletarianism; nevertheless, the immense number of propertyless wage-earners on the one hand, and the superabundant riches of the fortunate few on the other, is an unanswerable argument that the earthly goods so abundantly produced in this age of industrialism are far from rightly distributed and equitably shared among the various classes of men.

"Every effort must therefore be made that at least in the future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy, and that an ample sufficiency be supplied to the working-men. . . . Thus they will not only be in a position to support life's

changing fortunes, but will also have the reassuring confidence that, when their own lives are ended, some little provision will remain for those they leave behind them.

“These ideas were not merely suggested, but stated in frank and open terms by Our Predecessor. We emphasize them with renewed insistence in this Encyclical; for unless serious attempts be made, with all energy and without delay to put them into practice, let nobody persuade himself that peace and tranquillity of human society can be effectually defended against the forces of revolution.”

Times are indeed bad enough, and they need changing, and it is the duty of every Catholic who can to place his shoulder to the wheel; it must not be forgotten, however, that reform and revolution are not the same thing, and that the latter tends to produce worse evils than it sets out to destroy, in most cases after causing an immense amount of unnecessary deaths and suffering. There are cases when according to Catholic theologians a rebellion is morally justified, the three conditions laid down restricting them to a small range; but this is different to a system which sets out deliberately to encourage class war, which it declares is not only right but inevitable. In Russia this dark doctrine has not only produced cruel and savage deeds, but after the heat of the moment was over has resulted in untold hardships and systematic starvation for many millions; we have also seen the cruelty and bloodshed which it has brought about in Spain and in Bela Kun's Hungary. Even if we were to join with the Marxists in holding the immoral doctrine that the end justifies the means, we shall not find that the results of class war have fulfilled the Utopian prophecies of Marx and his disciples. The account given of conditions in Soviet Russia by those qualified to speak is in marked contrast to the scatter-brained enthusiasm of so many English tourists. We

have already seen how the mental atmosphere affected M. André Gide; if we study its more practical side we shall find that the contrast between the dream and the reality is even more pronounced. Conditions for the workers must be bad enough, while for those who have had the misfortune to be "liquidated", they must be intolerable.

"When I first came to Moscow in 1922", says Mr. W. H. Chamberlin, "my attitude towards the Soviet régime was more than friendly; it was enthusiastic. I sometimes look back with a shade of amusement to the rhetorical articles in praise of the Bolshevik Revolution which I published in radical newspapers and magazines at that time, animated, as I can see in retrospect, by little knowledge and much faith. . . . I see no reason to doubt that the Soviet leaders and the majority of the Communist Party members believe sincerely in their cause and think they are working for the well-being of their country. . . . And yet, when one sums up all that can fairly be said about the constructive side of the Soviet régime, there remains a formidable burden of facts on the other side. . . . It is my personal belief that the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet régime which grew out of it can only be understood as an example of historical tragedy of the deepest and truest type, a tragedy of cruelty, of the crushing out of innumerable individual lives, not from sheer wanton selfishness, but from perverted, fanatical idealism—always the surest source of absolute ruthlessness. And behind the tragedy lie several conceptions which are implicit in Communist philosophy; and the longer I have seen these in practice, the more I have come to regard them as sentimental fallacies."

There is a strong likeness between the words of Mr. Chamberlin, who knows the Soviet system well,

and was an enthusiast on its behalf, and the words of Pius XI :

“To obtain these ends, Communists shrink from nothing and fear nothing ; and when they have attained to power, it is unbelievable, indeed it seems portentous, how cruel and inhuman they show themselves to be. Evidence for this is the ghastly destruction and ruin with which they have laid waste immense tracts of Eastern Europe and Asia.”

The same thought is echoed in Mr. Andrew Smith’s melancholy disillusionment after his description of a Party meeting :

“Yet here was a Communist leader cold-bloodedly defending the systematic starvation of an entire people and actually justifying the starvation of millions. And what for ? . . . And who would be left to enjoy the Socialist paradise of the future if human beings were thus left to die by the millions in the meantime ? Was it not all a tragic fable meant only to fasten the yoke of a cruel, self-seeking bureaucracy upon the Russian people ?”

The doctrine of class hatred, besides the violence and cruelty which it must bring about in the beginning, must also in the long run lead to the inhumanity and callousness towards human life and suffering of which Chamberlin and Smith give such disturbing accounts.

The third main reason for the condemnation of Marxism is its denial of the right of private ownership. At first this reason may seem inadequate. Greed of gain has caused such havoc in the world that there are many who think that the only remedy is to abolish private ownership, on much the same grounds as prohibition was considered the remedy for the evils of drink in the United States. It will be well to explain what is the Catholic teaching on

the subject. While the Church holds that the property-holder is under the most grave obligation to use his property according to the moral law, an obligation as to which Our Lord Jesus Christ gave some of His most solemn warnings, and while also the right to own is not considered as "absolute" in the individualist sense, according to which the right to property is so sacred that it overrides all other claims, even the right to life,* nevertheless Catholic theologians clearly distinguish between the *right* to something and the *use* of that something. The Catholic view is that the right to own private property, including the means of production, comes from Nature, not from the State, and that therefore it is not within the competence of the State to abolish it, though the State may define the limits which social necessity imposes on the right; it may even reserve to itself the ownership of certain kinds of property which, in private hands, would endanger the public welfare. This is expressly stated in the *Quadragesimo Anno*, and the *Osservatore Romano*, which is the newspaper of the Vatican City, in its number for November 22nd, 1934, gave as examples of this kind of property, hydro-electric power stations, public utilities, and munitions of war. Nevertheless the Pope rejects the nationalization of all the means of production as an error, as he does not admit that the general welfare demands so drastic a limitation of the right of property.

Mr. Belloc, with his usual lucidity, sums up this question of the Catholic attitude towards the right of property in his little essay on *The Church and Socialism*, which can be bought for twopence from the Catholic Truth Society. This is what he says:

"The Church maintains (I am not speaking

* For instance, during a siege, or after a shipwreck, the owner of a store of food has not the right to withhold it, and the same applies in cases where members of the community have not enough food, clothes, etc.

here of her Divine authority or of her claim to speak with the voice of Divine revelation, but only of her judgment upon the nature of men)—she maintains, I say, that human society is fulfilling the end of its being, is normal to itself, is therefore happier, when its constituent families own and privately control material things ; and she further maintains that this institution of ownership is not merely a civil accident unconnected with the destiny of the soul, nor a thing deliberately set up by man as are so many of the institutions of a state, but a prior thing, connected with the nature of man, inseparable from him, and close in touch with the sense of right and wrong. Ownership for a Catholic involves definite moral obligations, exterior to and superior to ownership, but the right of ownership remains. The owner may be a very bad man, the thing owned may be of very little use to him and of great use to another ; it still remains *his*, and the evil of depriving him of it is an evil wrought against what the Church regards as a fundamental human conception without which humanity cannot repose nor enjoy the sense of justice satisfied.”

Against this point of view Communism has set its face. Just as it has tried to destroy the worship of God, and even to eradicate Christian charity from the human heart, so it has deliberately attempted to abolish what the Church regards a fundamental human institution. According to the *Quadragesimo Anno* certain forms of property may be nationalized when this is absolutely necessary for the public good ; according to Communist teaching all property belongs of right to the State, and when private property is allowed it is only by permission of the State, which permission may be arbitrarily revoked. It is perfectly true there has been a marked return in Russia to what are known as bourgeois conditions,

but the principle remains, and it must be impossible for any property-owners under the Soviet régime to enjoy a sense of security. However much the little improvements which he has been able to bring about in the life of his family may be tolerated, and they may be tolerated for good and all, nevertheless the terrible fate of the kulaks hangs over his head, an insecurity more hateful even than what so many workers have to face under Western Capitalism.

CHAPTER IX

THE ALTERNATIVE TO COMMUNISM

UP to now we have only considered the more negative side of Pius XI's teaching in regard to the social problems of the day. We have seen that he has drawn attention to the main abuses connected with the system known as Capitalism, and that for several clearly defined reasons he is opposed to Communism, which by some is looked upon as the only feasible alternative. We have also seen that he has protested in strong terms against the totalitarian claims of Fascism; later we shall indeed find him protesting even more strongly against the more extreme totalitarianism of the Nazis. At this point, however, a reader might object that this destructive criticism is all very well, but that something more positive is needed by the world at the moment. In the strange welter and conflict of the world, with the forces of Democracy and Fascism and Communism facing each other in the open, and the veiled force of Money pulling strings behind the scenes, the one thing that sensible people look for is a sane and peaceful solution. Now, has the Pope, whose claims are more far-reaching than those of other men, any positive solution to offer?

He most certainly has. One must remember, however, that though the Pope, in composing his social Encyclicals, gives much evidence of having consulted experts and economists before he makes

a pronouncement, yet he does not claim to be an economist. His work is, as the Head of the Church and the Chief Shepherd of the faithful, to lay down the principles on which Christians must base their efforts to ameliorate the present situation, and he warns all Christians that it is the duty of every man to strive to his utmost to avert the evils which threaten human society at the present time.

I think we shall understand these principles best if we approach the matter more or less from the historical angle. The *Rerum Novarum*, which appeared at a time when the nineteenth-century belief in progress had begun to wane, and when large numbers of the working-classes were suffering terribly from the results of *laissez-faire* economics, has had a wide influence in the modern world, especially among the Catholic members of the various Labour movements. As Pius XI says at the beginning of the *Quadragesimo Anno* :

“Under the guidance and in the light of Leo’s Encyclical was thus evolved a truly Catholic social science, which continues to be fostered and enriched daily by the tireless labours of those picked men whom We have named auxiliaries of the Church. They do not allow it to remain hidden in learned obscurity, but bring it forth into the full view of public life. . . . Nor were these the only benefits which followed from the Encyclical. The doctrine of *Rerum Novarum* began little by little to penetrate among those also who, being outside Catholic unity, do not recognize the authority of the Church; and thus Catholic principles of sociology gradually became part of the intellectual heritage of the whole human race.”

Pope Leo’s teaching was on various occasions reaffirmed by Pius X and Benedict XV, but there were many all over the world who were hoping for a further exposition of his doctrines, applying them

to the altered and indeed even more pressing problems of the day.

As the pontificate of Pius XI wore on this desire increased, and it was further increased in 1929 by the results of an interesting little crisis, when the Pope's action fed the sense of expectation, and hinted that there was something on the way. There was at Lille, in the North of France, a self-made and highly successful employer in the textile industry, a man whose religion was perhaps of a doubtful quality, who started to try and dominate the industry and, by fairly peaceful methods, to bring the trades unions to an inglorious end. He managed to group round him a number of other employers, and constituted himself their leader. Most of these were good men—indeed, the majority were practising Catholics—but they were far too much inclined to treat their work-people as children, and then to be surprised that more response was not shown to their advances in return for the benefits conferred, in regard to which the workers had never been consulted. The leader of this group of employers, who had earned for himself the name of “the dictator”, made matters worse by accompanying each new act of “benevolence” with a homily on the futility of trades unions. As can be imagined, there was trouble at the works.

He was unfortunately able to buy off the Socialist leaders. The Catholic trades unions remained firm, and held out for recognition of collective agreements and the setting up of joint industrial councils. The “dictator” was clearly excessively put out, and behaved in a foolish and intransigent way, declaring that the Catholic unions were behaving as Marxists, and insisting that his associates should complain of their behaviour to the Holy See. They did so in 1924, and the Holy See replied, after due consideration, five years later.

This is perhaps the only time that the Pope has

interfered in an industrial dispute. In the *Rerum Novarum* Leo XIII had championed the right of working-men to form unions, a right which a number of nineteenth-century Liberals had opposed, and he had further laid it down that it was highly desirable that wherever possible there should be Catholic unions. The reply of Pius XI, which was addressed not to the employers but to Monsignor Liénart, the Bishop of the diocese, continued Leo XIII's championship.

The Bishop, in spite of threats, had valiantly led the clergy and the laity in their efforts to help the families who were locked out in the dispute, and the letter from Rome supported his action. It was firm, with a marked touch of humour here and there, and developed clearly the main points of Catholic doctrine concerning trades unions, employers' associations and the relations between the two. Not content with supporting the Bishop on paper, the Pope created him a Cardinal, thus showing even more definitely that the Holy See approved of his behaviour, and the Abbé Six, a man who for many years had worked patiently as a leader of working-men, and to whose teaching the workers of Lille owed much of their common sense and firm moderation, was made a canon and a prelate. The letter was of deep interest to the whole Catholic world, as—though it was only addressed to one diocese and was concerned with a local dispute—it set forth the attitude of the Holy See on a question of universal importance.

Two years later, Pius XI called the whole Catholic world to join with him in celebrating the fortieth anniversary of Pope Leo's Encyclical, and the many who had been waiting guessed that the document they had hoped for was on the way. On May 15th, 1931, the new Encyclical was given in summary to the assembled pilgrims, and a fortnight later the full text appeared. It set out in full what had already

been foreshadowed in the letter to the Bishop of Lille. Parts of it have already been quoted in regard to Communism and Big Business, but one should try and study the document as a whole.

It is divided into three chapters, the first describing the benefits which resulted from the *Rerum Novarum*, the second chapter indicating the doctrine of this Encyclical, and the third examining our present disorders, diagnosing their cause, and pointing to the true remedy. It is, however, in the second chapter that we shall find, I think, one of the best summaries of the troubles of our time, and this is followed by an exposition of what might with justice be called the backbone of the Pope's social teaching. It comes almost exactly in the middle of the letter. Though it is a little long I give it in full, as it is of genuine importance if we would understand what Pius XI has to say.

“When we speak of the reform of institutions, it is principally the State that comes to mind. Not indeed that all salvation is to be hoped for from its intervention ; but because on account of the evil of ‘individualism’, as We called it, things have come to such a pass that the highly developed social life which once flourished in a variety of associations organically linked with each other, has been damaged and all but ruined, leaving thus virtually only individuals and the State, to the no small detriment of the State itself. Social life has entirely lost its organic form ; the State, today encumbered with all the burdens once borne by those associations now destroyed, has been submerged and overwhelmed by an infinity of occupations and duties.

“It is indeed true, as history clearly proves, that owing to changed circumstances much that was formerly done by small groups can now-a-days only be done by large associations. None the less,

just as it is wrong to withdraw from the individual and commit to a group what private enterprise and industry can accomplish, so too it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order, for a larger and higher association to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower societies. This is a fundamental principle of social philosophy, unshaken and unchangeable. Of its very nature the true aim of all social activity should be to help members of the social body, but never to destroy or absorb them.

“The State therefore should leave to smaller groups the settlement of business of minor importance, which otherwise would greatly distract it; it will thus carry out with greater freedom, power and success the tasks belonging to it alone, because it alone can effectively accomplish these: directing, watching, stimulating, restraining, as circumstances suggest and necessity demands. Let those in power, therefore, be convinced that the more faithfully this principle of subsidiary function be followed, and a graded hierarchical order exist between various associations, the greater will be both social authority and social efficiency, and the happier and more prosperous the condition of the commonwealth.”

The modern world seems at first sight to be faced with two alternatives, the pair of them about as attractive as Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand we have the old *laissez-faire* policy, the basis of which system, as a recent writer on economics has said,* is starvation, with its crushing load of insecurity pressing on the workers, and its subservience to the hidden hand of Money. Napoleon once declared, “Money has no motherland; financiers are without

* R. McNair Wilson, *Monarchy and Money-Power*, p. 85. (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1933.)

patriotism and without decency: their sole object is gain." Things today are as bad if not worse. On the other hand the alternative seems to be equally uninviting. There stands the totalitarian State, grim and menacing, more humane perhaps under Fascist than under Nazi or Communist conditions, but hard and bellicose and inhuman, and producing many obstacles in the way of living the full Christian life.

It has been one of the great works of Pius XI to point out that there is no need to acquiesce in either of these two dismal alternatives; indeed it is the bounden duty of Christians not to do so. The system which he has in view is more difficult to bring about, and likely to be slower in operation, than the lightning changes which the totalitarian State can make, but the latter, as is almost always the case with short cuts, will be found to be far less durable in the long run.

He reminds us as a preliminary that though one's eyes may be raised to Heaven, it is absolutely necessary to keep one's feet on the ground, for it is with this world and with fallen human nature that we are dealing. On all sides we have advocates of various systems which they assure us will put the world right if only they are given a trial. In some cases they get their chance, and the sequel tends to be one of bitter disillusion and disappointment. Pius XI is more sceptical. He has his system, of which the main outlines are clearly worked out, but he warns us that the first change must come in man himself. St. Paul very sensibly pointed out that the desire for money is the root of all evil, and Pius XI continues his thought.

"Christianity alone", he says, "can supply an efficacious remedy for the excessive solicitude for transitory things, which is the origin of all vices. When men are fascinated by and completely absorbed in the things of this world, it alone can

draw away their attention and raise it heavenwards. And who will deny that this remedy is now urgently needed by society?"

As he says a little farther on :

"All those versed in social matters earnestly demand a rational reorganization in order to bring back economic life to sound and true order. But this order, which We Ourselves most earnestly desire and make every effort to promote, will be quite faulty and imperfect unless all man's activities harmoniously unite to imitate and, as far as is humanly possible, attain the marvellous unity of the Divine plan. . . . Nor is it to be imagined that gainful operations are thereby belittled or deemed less consonant with human dignity. On the contrary, we are taught to recognize and reverence in them the manifest will of God the Creator, Who placed man upon the earth to work it, and use it in various ways, in order to supply his needs. Those who are engaged in production are not forbidden to increase their fortunes in a lawful and just manner ; indeed it is right that he who renders service to society and enriches it should himself have his proportionate share of the increased social wealth, provided always that in seeking this he respects the laws of God and the rights of others, and uses his property in accordance with fair and right reason. If these principles be observed by all, everywhere and at all times, not merely the production and acquisition of goods, but also the use of wealth, will within a short time be brought back again to the standards of equity and just distribution."

Though there is a note of pessimism in what he says, the pessimism of Christianity, with its recognition of the fallen state of human nature, his attitude, which at the same time believes in the great possibilities of human nature, is in marked contrast to Lounatcharsky's grim insistence on the necessity for

hate. Christianity and its application can alone bring out these possibilities to the full. One aim of Christianity is always to bring about unity, and this is nowhere more necessary than in the economic world ; if this unity is to be brought about, some framework is necessary.

Now, St. Thomas Aquinas, the great philosopher of the Catholic Church, has said in regard to the State that "all must have a certain part in the government, because by this means peace is preserved among the people, and all approve of such a régime and support it." The same holds true of industrial and economic life ; the workers desire a voice in the direction of their affairs through their chosen representatives, and there is every reason why they should have it. The Pope has referred to this in the *Quadragesimo Anno* :

"We deem it advisable that the wage-contract should, when possible, be modified somewhat by a contract of partnership. . . . In this way wage-earners and other employees participate in the ownership or the management, or in some ways share in the profits."

As things are, this is a lofty aim, and there are all too few cases where it has been put into practice, but it is practicable, and where the experiment has been tried the results have been good.

The Pope has in view a definite form of organization by which such a result can be brought about in the most convenient possible way. It must not, however, be forgotten that the trades unions have done a magnificent service in improving the condition of the workers, very often in the face of bitter opposition. We have seen how the popes have consistently championed these unions and the right of the workers to belong to them ; on several occasions this championship has been in contradiction to certain economists of the Liberal school. The form of organiza-

tion which Pius XI has in view will not supersede the trades unions, which are still essential for the welfare of the workers, but should be complementary to the unions, and perhaps in most cases provide the *milieu* in which they may operate with the best advantage. The trades unions have been forced by circumstances to be mainly associations for offence and defence; the Pope has in mind associations which shall be able to work for peace and corporative reconstruction.

I hope I may be excused if I quote a rather long and none too easy passage from the *Quadragesimo Anno* on the subject, as it is, I think, important :

“The aim of social policy must therefore be the re-establishment of vocational groups. Society today still remains in a strained and therefore unstable and uncertain state, because it is founded on classes with divergent aims and hence opposed to each other, and consequently prone to enmity and strife.

“Labour, indeed, as has been well said by Our Predecessor in his Encyclical, is not a mere chattel; the human dignity of the working-man must be recognized in it, and consequently it cannot be bought and sold like any piece of merchandise. None the less, as things are now, the wage-system divides men on what is called the labour-market into two sections, resembling armies, and the disputes between these sections transform this labour-market into an arena where the two armies are engaged in fierce combat. To this grave disorder, which is leading society to ruin, a remedy must evidently be applied as speedily as possible. But there cannot be question of any perfect cure unless this opposition be done away with, and well-organized members of the social body be constituted; vocational groups namely, claiming the allegiance of men, not according to the position they occupy in the labour-market, but according

to the diverse functions which they exercise in society. For it is natural that just as those who dwell in close proximity constitute townships, so those who practise the same trade or profession, in the economic field or any other, form corporate groups. These groups, with powers of self-government, are considered by many to be, if not essential to civil society, at least natural to it."

The vocational groups which he has in mind would be to a considerable extent on the lines of the mediæval guilds which in their day did such valuable service, and the abolition of which was deeply regretted by Leo XIII in the *Rerum Novarum*. I am personally shy of using the word guild in connection with modern organizations, as it is apt to be rather misleading; so closely connected is the word with mediævalism, that people may imagine the Pope to be advocating an impracticable return to mediæval conditions, a return which would be as impossible to achieve as the visionary schemes of those theorists, now rather reduced in number, who are classed together under the name of mediævalists. There was for a time in England a movement known as Guild Socialism, which can be traced back to Ruskin, who rediscovered and praised the ancient guilds in a number of his writings; for some years it flourished, and attracted several brilliant writers, such as G. D. H. Cole, S. G. Hobson, and A. R. Orage. Their programme, which contained a curious mixture of Corporatism and Marxism, was not without its good points, but tended to be too utopian. A partial attempt was made to put it into practice in the building industry, with disappointing results.* For this reason I shall keep to the long but less easily misunderstood name, vocational groups.

The trouble today is that our social divisions

* An interesting little account of this movement is given in a pamphlet by Francis Goldwell, published by the Catholic Social Guild, Oxford.

tend to be horizontal where they should be vertical, with the unfortunate result of class warfare, and vertical where they should be horizontal, with the almost equally unfortunate result of cut-throat competition; the Pope's aim is as far as possible to alter this state of affairs, and while he does not aim at returning to mediæval conditions, he does wish to see applied to industrial life the order and unity which flourished in the best period of the Middle Ages.

It is of interest that a plan for the reorganization of Great Britain on principles remarkably similar to those laid down in the *Quadragesimo Anno* was described in *Week-End Review* (now incorporated in the *New Statesman and Nation*) in February 1931, two months before the publication of the Encyclical. It was called "the National Plan" and was very extensive, covering the political as well as the economic field; in many ways it is the one really constructive scheme that has appeared in our Press during the last few years.*

The plan proposes that all our industry and commerce should be transformed into a series of great amalgamations or federations; these will be seen to be the same as the vocational groupings advocated by Pius XI. Within each industry competition is to be eliminated or, anyway, restricted. While the ownership is to remain with private shareholders, control is to be invested in a paid council, which is to consist of representatives of the shareholders, the consumers, the management and the workers, with others who may be interested in the concern. This council must be responsible for the good government and the good behaviour of the industry; the observance of factory and safety regulations and the settlement of trade disputes would be under its control, with,

* For what follows I am specially indebted to the analysis in that excellent little book *The Future of Capitalism*, by Lewis Watt, S.J. (Catholic Social Guild, Oxford.)

however, an appeal to an Industrial Court. It is proposed that profits should be legally limited, a proposal in agreement with the Pope's demand in the *Quadragesimo Anno* that "every effort must be made that at least in future a just share only of the fruits of production be permitted to accumulate in the hands of the wealthy". The necessity of enlarging the home market is realized, and it is hoped that this would be done by providing successive increases of real wages, made possible by the increased efficiency which the plan would secure. While strikes and lock-outs would not be forbidden, there is reason to hope that their number would greatly diminish as industrial self-government extended.

Now, the ideal towards which Catholic thought tends in the reorganization of industry by voluntary effort supported *when necessary* by the State, is fulfilled in the scheme I have just described. The old guild system, which had been growing weaker and was finally destroyed by the influx of new and uncreative ideas at the Reformation, came to an end on the Continent at the end of the eighteenth century as a result of the revolutionary movement. Before very long, however, the leaders of the new Catholic Social Movement, men such as Perin, Vogelsang, von Ketteler, La Tour da Pin, Albert de Mun and Toniolo were affirming the urgent necessity for returning to something of the same kind.

The ideas of Liberalism* held full sway at the time, and in consequence the ideas of these men seemed to be only an appeal for a return to outworn conditions; nevertheless time has proved them right, and their views, besides being reaffirmed by Pope Pius XI, have exerted considerable influence over the best political thought of today. During the last few

* It is important not to confound Continental Liberalism, always so subservient to the rule of Money, with the rather less subservient English Liberal Party.

years, especially since the usurers managed to lead us to the great crash in 1931, similar schemes have been advocated by a number of thinkers on social and economic subjects; among these we find such men as the distinguished contributors to *Britain's Industrial Future**, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, who, however, leans further towards Socialism than Catholic teaching would be prepared to go, and perhaps most important of all Mr. J. M. Keynes, whose words "progress lies in the growth and recognition of semi-autonomous bodies within the State" are in complete agreement with those paragraphs which we have described as the backbone of the *Quadragesimo Anno*. The corporative idea was indeed contained in the original programme of the Guild Socialists, though it was unfortunately combined with the less satisfactory stipulation that the State should own all the means of production.

According to Pius XI, and also according to the plan outlined in the *Weekend Review*, each industry should be recognized as an economic whole, composed of the various individual concerns within it; it is advisable that this should be governed by a council, composed of (1) the representatives of the owners of the capital invested, most of whom are nowadays the shareholders; (2) the representatives of all those employed in any capacity in the industry. It would also be advisable, in most cases, that there should be a representative on behalf of the Board of Trade, as guardian of the interests of the community. Within this association employers would be perfectly free to form their own associations, and the workers to belong to trades unions; more than that, it would probably be highly desirable that they should do so.

It is, I think, certain that such a scheme when put into practice would not only go ninety per cent of the way towards ensuring industrial peace and towards

* (Ernest Benn, Ltd.)

vastly improving the conditions of the workers from every point of view ; I think that it would also have an even more far-reaching effect—in the most important direction of all.

As we have already quoted, Pius XI has pointed out that

“It is patent that in our days not wealth alone is concentrated, but immense power and despotic economic domination are concentrated in the hands of a few, who for the most part are not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds which they administer at their own good pleasure.

“This domination is most powerfully exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, also govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the life-blood to the entire economic body, and grasping in their hands, as it were, the very soul of production, so that no one can breathe against their will.

“The accumulation of power, the characteristic note of the modern economic order, is a natural result of limitless free competition, which permits the survival of those only who are strongest, and this often means those who fight most relentlessly, who pay least heed to the dictates of conscience.”

This power, against whose will “no one can breathe”, is what may be briefly called the Money Power. In the Middle Ages usury was unable on the whole to flourish ; plenty of attempts were made, but the discipline of the Church, who hates usury as one of the gravest sins, was almost always too strong for the would-be money-lenders. With the break-up of Catholic Europe that followed on the Reformation, the usurers were able to start on their philanthropic work, and during the first decade of the seventeenth century the Bank of Amsterdam started on a widespread campaign of enriching the already

wealthy and ruining the unfortunate. Not only did this campaign entangle Protestant States, but the rulers of Catholic States also found themselves caught in the coils. In England it was the Money Power which brought Charles I to the block, and what was known as Dutch Finance came over once and for all with William of Orange.

One of the conditions necessary for this destructive and parasitic system to flourish is that there should be free competition, which means in fact cut-throat competition, and which results inevitably in low wages. As Dr. McNair Wilson has said :

“A borrower and a lender become antagonists the moment the soundness of the borrower is in doubt. In the eyes of the Money Power a borrower is unsound whenever his costs (wages) begin to rise. For this reason there is a constant ebb and flow of lending.”*

The present system of cut-throat competition places the borrower at the mercy of the lender ; the corporative system as advocated by Pius XI would do an immense amount to release him from his servitude ; the rest must be done by the State, whether in the person of a monarch or some other representative. There is no doubt that the State has almost everywhere played into the hands of the money-lenders to whom it has made over what was once the king's prerogative, the right to issue money. As Pius XI says again :

“The State, which should be the supreme arbiter, ruling in kingly fashion far above all Party contention, intent only upon justice and the common good, has become instead a slave, bound over to the service of human passion and greed. As regards the relations of people among themselves, a double stream has issued forth from this one fountain-head ; on the one hand economic nationalism or

* *Monarchy or Money Power*, p. 135.

even economic imperialism; on the other a no less noxious and detestable internationalism or international imperialism in financial affairs, which holds that where a man's fortune is, there is his country."

An instance of the way in which this capitulation to the Money Power has been made by the State is what happened in England in August 1914. After the declaration of war the Bank Act was suspended and a moratorium was declared. Now, why was this? Because there was a run on the banks, who had been lending, according to their usual custom, about £9 10s. for every pound that they held. This would have been a very good moment for the King to reclaim his office of issuing money; to bring this about it would merely have been necessary to issue treasury notes for the national expenses which had to be met in pounds, shillings and pence and to open State credits with producers on agreed terms. Unfortunately, the Money Power recovered all too soon from its first panic, and was able to prevail on Parliament, by then in a state of alarm, to issue the treasury notes through the banks, and *to borrow in order to pay for the war*. As Dr. McNair Wilson says :*

"The King was prevented from exercising his office of issuing money to his people and was forced to pay the banks and their clients high rates of interest upon book entries. The King was forced, that is to say, to pledge the products and labour of his people for generations in exchange for that which belonged properly to himself and at the moment when the bankers' inability to pay in gold had just been revealed."

It is against the stranglehold of the Money Power that the true corporative State would be strong; not only would it be more just, but it would be a more solid and coherent structure than that envisaged

* Op. cit., p. 180.

by the Socialist.* It is indeed likely that a Socialist State would be only too prone to play into the money-lenders' hands; financiers tend to prefer Governments with unlimited resources behind them, as these naturally make good, safe borrowers. In Russia, for instance, practically the whole population has been enslaved in order to pay a high interest to the men who are financing the Five-year Plan.

In March 1937 Pius XI issued a fresh Encyclical, the *Divini Redemptoris*, repeating his warnings as to the imminent dangers of atheistic Communism, and urging that

“The means of saving the world today from the lamentable ruin into which amoral Liberalism has plunged us, are neither the class struggle nor terror, nor yet the autocratic use of State power, but rather the infusion of social justice and the sentiment of Christian love into the social-economic order. . . . We have indicated”, he continues, “how a sound prosperity is to be restored according to the true principles of a corporative system which respects the proper hierarchic structure of society; and how all the occupational groups should be fused into an harmonious unity, inspired by the principle of the common good. And the genuine and chief function of public and civil authority consists precisely in the efficacious furthering of this harmony and co-ordination of all social forces.”

References to the new Encyclical were made in all the newspapers; there were a number of people who were a little alarmed when they came across the word “corporative”, as it looked as if the Pope was favouring Fascism. Now, it is certainly true that the corporative idea forms part of the Fascist programme

* I use the word “Socialist” in its Continental and extreme sense. In England, the home of loose thinking, the word tends to be applied to almost anybody who believes in social reform. According to the English use of the word the Pope would be described as a Socialist |

in Italy, and of the Nazi programme in Germany; nevertheless, in neither case is the system in line with Pius XI's requirements, as Mussolini and Hitler have both gone seriously wrong in regard to the "autocratic use of the State power" to which the latest Encyclical refers. In regard to the kind of corporate organization to be found in Italy and in Germany, he has said in the *Quadragesimo Anno* :

"We feel bound to say that to Our knowledge there are some who fear that the State is substituting itself in the place of private initiative instead of limiting itself to necessary and sufficient assistance. It is feared that the new Syndical and corporative organization tends to have an excessively bureaucratic and political character and that, notwithstanding the general advantages referred to above, it ends in serving particular political aims rather than in contributing to the initiation and promotion of a better social order."

It is also highly regrettable that Hitler has waged war on the trades unions, which organizations have been so consistently championed by the Papacy.

In a book of this kind it is only possible to give a rough outline of the papal social teaching, but I do sincerely hope that anybody who has had the patience to follow me through this chapter, and who has not already made a study of the social Encyclicals, will be persuaded to do so, for he will find that they contain a solution to our present troubles which is not only Christian and suited to human nature but more practical than the doctrines of Marx, at one and the same time so materialistic, so apocalyptic, and so utopian.

CHAPTER X

THE POPE AND THE NAZIS

ON the night of March 20th, 1937, a number of men in cars, on motor-bicycles, and on ordinary bicycles were being active all over Germany. The German people have never been in the habit of going to bed early, but some of them must have wondered where these men were bound for so late. They were under way to the houses of the Catholic parish priests, who were surprised and in many cases alarmed when their bells were rung, for times were difficult and Hitler's secret police, the Gestapo, were known to arrest their victims in many cases after midnight. It was not the secret police, however, for on this occasion these were being outwitted; these messengers came from Pope Pius XI, and they brought a letter which was to be read at Mass the next morning in all Catholic churches in Germany; their plans had been well worked out, and they had succeeded in breaking through Hitler's barrage. There had been for four years a growing tension between the Vatican and the National Socialist régime; not only was the latter claiming to possess all young Germans body and soul, but since it came to power its record has been one of lies, broken promises, prevarications and hypocrisy.

Before we examine the Pope's letter we should first consider the circumstances which occasioned it. Slightly more than a third of the population of Germany is Catholic, and among them are to be found

some of the most staunch and intelligent Catholics in the world. The chief Catholic regions are in the south and west—Bavaria, Baden, the Rhineland and Westphalia; there are also many Catholics in the east round Breslau, and a good part of the population of Berlin is also Catholic; in the rest of Germany the Catholics are few in number and scattered, much as they are in many parts of England, and they are usually known as the Diaspora. Before Bismarck started on his programme of interference, the German Catholic regions had for a long period more or less enjoyed religious liberty, but under the new imperial régime a persecution of the Catholics was started, known as the *Kulturkampf*, the aim of which was to bring the Catholic Church in Germany into line with the State religion. It should be remembered that the latter had tended to abandon the position of the original reformers, and was largely influenced by the later pietists and idealists. The people rallied round their clergy, numbers of whom were arrested, and the *Kulturkampf* ended in inglorious failure.

For many years after this there was religious peace in the Reich. There was a political Party known as the Centre, which represented the Catholic interest, and which for many years was very influential, its aim being social reform on sane and democratic lines, as opposed to the more extreme and violent views of the Socialists and the reactionary policy of the right. After the revolution of 1918 there were fears that another *Kulturkampf* might be launched, this time from the left; but these fears proved unfounded, and before long, under the new system which the Weimar Constitution brought into being, the Socialist leaders of the new Germany found that the Centre Party, which represented a large proportion of the population, was an important ally. Concordats were signed for the protection of Catholic rights and liberties; these were with the various States, not with the nation as a whole,

and it is interesting that in each State they were brought about with the help of widely different allies—in Bavaria with the groups of the right, in Prussia the Social Democrats, and in the Baden the Liberals; this shows that the German Catholics were on more friendly and easy-going terms with their neighbours than at any time since the great disruption of the sixteenth century. Those were the days when Germany was making heroic efforts towards recovery, in spite of the intransigent and short-sighted policy of the Allies.

With the coming of National Socialism the atmosphere changed; like rabies, crazy ideas can be spread all too quickly. The Catholic Bishops saw the dangers, both practical and spiritual, of the new movement, and for a time the members of their flock were forbidden to join the Party. The most drastic regulations were those issued in the diocese of Mainz, where Catholics were forbidden to become registered members of the Hitler Party under pain of being refused the sacraments. The reason for this was that Article 24 of the National Socialist programme contained statements irreconcilable with the Catholic Faith. The Bavarian Bishops also warned their people in February 1931 that

“So long as, and in so far as, it proclaims cultural-political conceptions that are irreconcilable with the Catholic doctrine . . . National Socialist Christianity is not the Christianity of Christ.”

During the elections the Centre was definitely opposed to the National Socialist Party, and men such as the Bishop of Trier and the Bishop of Ermland publicly announced their support of the Centre Party on grounds of conscience, and their intention to vote for it; the latter said that

“For Catholics, when it comes to the point, there is no question of voting for any Party but the Centre . . . whose world theory is based on the supernatural, on God, so that it is free from the

clashes inseparable from the pursuit of personal gain and is independent of ephemeral values."

Personally, one might find it difficult to say anything so complimentary about any group of politicians, but nevertheless, from what one has learnt of the work of the Centre, the Bishop's praise was certainly not altogether undeserved. The attitude of the hierarchy was on the whole faithfully reflected by their flocks; I made a long journey round Germany in the summer of 1932, and can remember that when in the Catholic districts one heard Hitler and his followers spoken of with something not far off contempt, even in Munich, where at that time the now famous *Braunhaus* did not seem to cause very much more interest than Sir Oswald Mosley's headquarters do in London; as one travelled farther east, however, the change in atmosphere was marked. At every corner one seemed to see a brown shirt, there were perpetual accounts of fights between the Nazis and the Communists, and of political murders on both sides (in regard to the latter gruesome photographs were frequently exhibited), and political demonstrations took place almost every evening. In Berlin I myself met a number of young men who used to parade regularly with the Communists, but who, I should say, had scarcely read a word about Karl Marx, and only did so because they disliked the Nazis and their increasingly aggressive ways.

After Hitler had won his election, the Bishops withdrew their opposition—only, however, after he had described the Christian creeds, when speaking in the Reichstag on March 23rd, as "the most important factors in the preservation of our national welfare", and had further said that

"In the same way as we consider the forces of Christianity as indispensable to the moral renascence of the German people, we desire to develop our friendly relations with the Holy See."

Five days later the Bishops replied to his con-

ciliatory words with a joint statement, the friendly tone of which they were, however, careful to qualify with the words :

“Without withdrawing the condemnation of certain religious and moral errors against which we have been forced to take steps, the Episcopacy believes that it has reason to hope that the general prohibitions and admonitions that have been issued need no longer be considered necessary.”

A week later an even more guarded announcement was made by the Bavarian Bishops, which unfortunately was not reported in the German Press :

“There is no need to state expressly”, they declared, “that the remission made by the Bishops is in no way an exhortation to the people to join the National Socialist Party, seeing that the Bishops expressly state that the condemnation already passed on certain religious errors holds good. This is borne out by numerous announcements made by the Bishops, either separately or jointly, in which they declare their attitude towards various manifestations of the new régime. They took their stand by those who, to quote the statement made by Cardinal Bertram on October 15th, ‘In the days of Party government followed those leaders who from a sense of religious duty strove to conduct the campaign against Marxism and Bolshevism by methods appropriate to the form of government then in force.’” In other words they took their stand by the public servants who by reason of their being members of the Centre Party had been dismissed or otherwise ill-treated. Moreover, they refused to allow the work of the past to go unrecognized. ‘Far be it from us to be unjust and ungrateful to those who, putting their own interests on one side, struggled valiantly and achieved much in the troublous times that succeeded the war.’”

These two documents were followed up two

months later by a very definite pastoral letter which was issued by the Bishops assembled at Fulda, and signed by every member of the assembly ; this letter expressly warned the faithful against "an un-Christian policy of revenge", and against any unbalanced pre-occupations with the question of race and blood ; it also insisted on Catholic schools and Catholic training-schools for teachers, on the right to form Catholic associations and on the liberty of the Catholic Press ; it strongly opposed the idea of a national Church, and went on to claim for the Catholic Church a freedom "which is not to be restricted to ecclesiastical life in the narrow sense of the term".

For a time it looked as if the prospects under the new Government might be far brighter than had been expected, and arrangements were made for the signing of a concordat regulating the relations of the Vatican and the Reich ; this was completed on July 20th, Cardinal Pacelli and Vice-Chancellor von Papen being the signatories. The terms of the concordat seemed to be more favourable to the Church than those who had been watching the developments of the Nazi movement had believed possible. The nomination of Bishops was to remain entirely in the hands of the Pope ; a condition was indeed made that the name of the candidate should be submitted to the Government of the Reich to make sure that there was no objection to him on political grounds, but this condition did not apparently amount to the right of veto ; the oath taken by Bishops was to be similar to the one agreed upon in the concordats with Poland and Italy. The Holy See and the Bishops were to have complete freedom of intercourse with their people, and no hindrance was to be offered to the publication of pastoral letters. In fulfilling their spiritual duties the clergy should have the same protection as is given to State officials, and the retention and maintenance of Catholic schools was guaranteed as before. Protection

was to be given to Catholic organizations "exclusively devoted to religious, purely cultural or charitable ends and accordingly subject to ecclesiastical authority". Not only, however, was provision made for Catholic organizations of this kind but others also, serving social and professional purposes, were to be classified as State corporations; they were only to enjoy State protection when they guaranteed that their activities were unconnected with any political Party.

The Holy See agreed in return to forbid all the clergy, whether secular or regular, to become members of or actively to support a political Party, but it was definitely explained that this implied no restriction to their teaching and propagating the dogmatic and moral principles of the Church.

This all looked very well; unfortunately, to put the matter bluntly, it was "all my eye and Betty Martin". The Holy See had been too ready to believe that the Hitler Government would carry out the obligations which they had undertaken. By this time the Centre Party and the Bayrische Volkspartei, which was more or less the complementary organization in Bavaria, had been dissolved, to make way for the totalitarian State with which the Church was now face to face; before long she would have learnt the nature of the power confronting her.

The attack came soon enough, and it was subtle. The nature of the concordat made it clear that Hitler had no intention of aiming a direct blow at the Catholic Church as he did at the Jews and at the forces of the left; even in his dealings with the more easily attacked Protestant Churches his method has always been to gain his ends by introducing wolves within the fold rather than by direct coercion from outside. In dealing with the Catholic Church he knew he could not hope to introduce wolves within the fold; she is too strong and co-ordinated a body for a national ruler to be able to control her through appointing his

creatures to important ecclesiastical posts. Hitler and his colleagues know enough about Catholicism to be aware that it is no use for them to try and trifle with the Pope and the hierarchy in this way. Their methods have been, therefore, to attempt to give the impression that they are keeping to the letter of the concordat, while on the other hand they are ensuring that its provisions shall be quietly disregarded. Many Catholic clergy and laity have, for instance, been arrested and placed in concentration camps; the charge has never, however, been one of professing and teaching the Catholic religion, but usually of evading the currency regulations. Grave charges on moral grounds have also been made against the members of certain religious orders; these latter have been somewhat shrouded in mystery, but it is, I think, not without significance that when on one occasion an announcement was made by Cardinal Bertram's staff in defence of the accused, every editor who published it was immediately removed by the Government.

Two events took place soon after the signing of the concordat which showed in which direction the wind was blowing. Exactly five days afterwards the sterilization law was promulgated. The objects of this law, besides being an unjustifiable interference with the liberty of the individual, were also directly opposed to Christian moral principles, and the Pope drew special attention to this in his Christmas Address that year. The Bishops disallowed any co-operation in the actual sterilization, but it was two years before Reichminister Frick announced on behalf of the Government (this was objected to at once by the Holy See) that owing to their recognition of "universally valid principles" Catholics who opposed this law on the grounds that it was contrary to the teaching of the Church were not behaving in accordance with the terms of the concordat. That his announcement was rubbish is obvious enough.

The next event was even more significant. Von Papen had for some time been suggesting that the signing of the concordat by a representative of the Holy See implied that the latter approved of the National Socialist form of government, and of certain National Socialist doctrines and political theories. On July 26th and 27th articles were published in the *Osservatore Romano* which flatly contradicted von Papen's suggestions, and pointed out that the treaty was based on Canon Law. The result was as might be expected ; every newspaper in Germany, including the Catholic ones, was compelled to publish articles which were by way of being "based on authoritative sources" and were aimed at the *Osservatore*. The latter was more or less accurately described as the official organ of the Vatican, and these "authoritative" articles declared that Canon Law was only recognized as far as the internal affairs of the Church were concerned ; it was further explained that the Reich had not made itself subject to Canon Law "in respect of relations between the State and the Church that had not been regulated by the concordat." The *Osservatore's* statement as to the signing of the concordat being no implication that the Vatican approved of the tenets of National Socialism was also the occasion for a bitter attack.

On the other hand the Nazi leaders were careful to make one or two friendly gestures ; the Bishop of Berlin was seriously ill, and the Bishop of Osnabrück, who had temporarily taken his place, was asked by Göring to join the Privy Council, and in Baden the behaviour of the Government was so friendly that Archbishop Gröber announced, somewhat to the dismay of most Catholics :

"That it would be no betrayal of confidence to state that he gave his whole-hearted support to the Reich Government and to the new Reich, the reason being that he knew the Chancellor's aims : a

German Reich built on Christian foundations and sustained by ethical and moral strength.”

Unfortunately, His Grace must have neglected to read a sinister passage in *Mein Kampf*, that crazy and ridiculous production which is the Bible of the Nazi régime. In Part II, chapter 5, we find the following passage, dealing with the question of what is described as the National Socialist *Weltanschauung*, which indicates clearly enough the attitude of the author towards the religion of redemption :*

“A world theory is intolerant and is not content with being one party amongst other parties ; it insists on exclusive and persistent recognition of itself and on an absolutely new conception of the whole of public life in accordance with its views. Thus it cannot tolerate continuance of a force representing the former conditions. It is the same with religions. Christianity was not content with merely erecting its own altar ; it was forced to proceed to destroy the altars of the heathen. Such fanatical intolerance alone made it possible to build that adamantine creed ; it is an absolutely essential condition of its existence.

“The objection may well be made that most of these phenomena of world history are productions of a specifically Jewish mentality, but this kind of intolerance and fanaticism is the very embodiment of the Jewish character. This may well be so, and we may deeply deplore the fact and with an all too justifiable misgiving determine its appearance in the history of mankind as something that had been foreign to it hitherto—but this makes no difference to the fact that this is the condition of things today. . . . A world theory animated by devilish intolerance can be broken only by a new conception impelled by a similar spirit and fought for with

* I quote from the excellent English translation published by Hurst & Blackett in 1933.

an equally strong will, but a conception that is pure and sincere.

“The individual may realize with pain that with the appearance of Christianity there came into the much freer world of the ancients the first instance of spiritual terrorism. Only by building up on these methods can a new condition of affairs be brought about.”

We shall see that the Führer has done his best to bring this about, and since those days Archbishop Gröber has publicly announced his disillusion. In 1933, however, in spite of the thunder in the air, the concordat was ratified on September 10th. Most Catholics now consider, I think, that this was a mistake and that dust was merely being thrown in the eyes of the Church. Two Catholics with a wide knowledge of German affairs with whom I have discussed the matter have both told me that in their opinion the reports of the German Bishops to the Vatican were at first too optimistic, and that they were under-estimating the moral instability and opportunism of the Nazi authorities.

This opportunism was soon enough at work. A month after the signing of the concordat an election took place, in which the German people were allowed to vote for *one* list of candidates. The Bavarian Bishops composed an address to their people, referring to “incidents and edicts of the last months which fill us with distress and anxiety”, but the publication of this was forbidden.

Early in the new year another significant event was the appointment of Rosenberg as Hitler's plenipotentiary for *Weltanschauung*. To English ears there is something delightfully funny in the idea of anybody being appointed as a plenipotentiary for *Weltanschauung*, and there is something equally funny about the literary efforts of the same plenipotentiary. It is, however, tragic that such a man should be in a position

of power, with untold opportunities for influencing the minds of the young. I give here a surprising effusion from the *Myth of the XXth Century*, the religious and philosophical classic with which Rosenberg has gladdened the modern world. Speaking of the "German Church" which he proposes shall be established, he informs us that

"When the faithful are obviously transferring their allegiance they must be allotted the requisite buildings for public worship . . . the German Church will grant equal rights to those who have broken altogether with Church Christianity and have banded themselves into a new community. . . . The object, therefore, of founding a German National Church is not the propagation of metaphysical assertions, nor to demand universal beliefs in historical or legendary narratives, but to create a feeling of one's own high value, to segregate those who amid the multiplicity of their religious and philosophic convictions have won for themselves a deep inward confidence in their own nature, who have fought for an heroic conception of life and have been successful in their efforts. It is this spiritual conversion that seems to me to be more revolutionary than anything, for it is only this that realizes that the chief object of religious struggles hitherto—namely metaphysical, compulsory articles of faith—are inessential and that the upholding of them is the affair of the individual, not of the people. Disputes about the relative humanity and divinity of Jesus, about love and grace, about the mortality or immortality of the soul, do not come within the purview of a Germanic revival of religion; the condition of membership of the new community is the recognition of the values which have been displayed in Germanic dramatic art and the highest level in the mysticism of Master Eckhart."

Let it not be thought that Rosenberg merely

wishes to found an inoffensive and cranky sect rather on the lines of the Christian Scientists or the various theosophical bodies which have appeared during the last fifty years, and which he hopes will attract numbers of adherents by its persuasiveness and charm; he is far more determined than that. Though his views are more vague and ridiculous than anything which even the English Modern Churchman's Conference has produced, his aim is that this crazy nonsense should be made effective. On the subject of what he calls the "Totalitarian National School" he has made some remarks which may be taken as prophetic of the struggle at present taking place in the Reich.

"The struggle for the schools has probably revealed the breakdown of modern times more clearly than any other phenomenon; but at the same time it proves the just claims of the Germanic ideal, which knows of no compromise and demands supremacy for itself. Religious creeds are not ends in themselves, but fluctuating means that should be used to further the national vital feeling and peculiarly Germanic values. Their failure to fulfil this function is a symptom of the diseased condition of the people's soul.

"Hitherto these creeds have been like cast-iron moulds which their owners have tried to stamp on to living existence; that is to say, the people's. Hence the spiritual conflict that ensued, and they will never cease until the peoples disappear as conscious values and the Church denominations have won the way, or the people's existence has forced the Church to accept its laws of life. In the former case we can say good-bye to any natural form of life; in the latter case we shall see the beginning of a really honest way of thinking."

Across these clouds of hot air one can see clearly enough the direction in which he is pointing. The Vatican was fully aware of the significance of the

appointment, and sixteen days afterwards Rosenberg's *Myth* was placed on the Index. After this there was, anyway, the semblance of peace for almost two months, and then on April 1st, the next move came from the Holy See, with the Pope's fine Easter Message to German Catholic Youth. This letter contained the following passage: "We know exactly what is the situation of the young Catholics in Germany. Your associations may rest assured of this, that your cause is Our cause."

Many Catholics in Germany had been disappointed that, apart from his reference to sterilization, the Pope had declined to give a verdict on the German situation; it must, however, be remembered that it is the policy of the Papacy in general, and I think of Pius XI in particular, to pass no judgment until the facts are absolutely certain, and then to speak out in the most definite terms—a policy which in recent years has been in marked contrast to that of certain non-Catholic religious leaders who seem only too ready to give their views to the public on subjects as to which they are not well informed, and which in many cases do not concern them. In regard to Nazi Germany Pius XI has moved slowly, but he has been moving steadily in one direction.

In the earlier period he gave evidence of this when he referred to the German problem in his addresses at two canonizations, those of the great charitable organizer Cottolengo and of a German, Conrad of Parzham. At the first of these he said:

"At this very time in a country not far from this, certain people have been so unscrupulous as to say that Christianity, and especially Catholicism, has injured humanity because it had encouraged the care of children, of the poor and of the sick. We have condemned these books, and in this We have done Our duty, so that the faithful may know what is the opinion of the Vicar of Jesus Christ."

At the second canonization, his words were a little more topical ; speaking of the new Saint, he said :

“It is Divine Providence which has placed this figure in the public eye at a time which is so tragic and so historic. We do well to say tragic and historic, at a time when such great evils are threatening souls, and especially the souls of young people, at a time when a system of thought, of ideas, and of practices has been applauded, which are neither Christian nor human ; an exaltation or race which can only produce a monstrous pride, the antipodes of the Christian and even of the human spirit.”

It is worth noting that a number of the 5,000 German pilgrims who went to Rome for St. Conrad's canonization, on their return to Germany were attacked and injured by a gang of young hooligans, members of the Nazi Party.

CHAPTER XI

THE POPE AND THE NAZIS—*continued*

THE Germans have a genius for organization, which can often be carried to excess, but it is a fact that before Hitler came to power, the Catholics of Germany, especially the young, were more efficiently organized than anywhere else in the world. There was for instance the *Gesellenverein*, founded by Adolf Kolping, the priest and social worker who started life as a shoemaker. The aim of these societies was to care for young German workmen whose trade took them away from home, and to provide hostels for them where they could live in a Christian and homely atmosphere. In 1932 there were 1,770 Kolping Societies in Germany, with 93,000 active members; 280 of these had their own houses, with 17,000 beds for lodgers and travellers. There was also the *Arbeiterverein*, or Catholic Labour League, which was larger and more general in its scope than the *Gesellenverein*, and which had a special department for the young known as the *Werkjugend*; the *Jugendpflege*, an association for the care of the young, and the *Jugendbewegung*, an association for the young; also the *Wandervögel*, which had an increasing membership of young Catholic hikers and campers of all classes who took a special interest in the old German songs and dances and also in the Liturgy of the Church, and who seemed to avoid most of the pitfalls into which so many adherents of the "folky peril" in England have managed to fall. All these movements and societies, which were good

and sensible and constructive and gay, have been steadily disbanded by the Nazis, to make way for their violence, their absurd nationalism, and their irritating lack of humour. In June 1933 the Christian Trades Unions received their death sentence, and a certain Dr. Ley, the Chief of the Nazi Labour Front, declared that they were enemies of the State, and that their leaders and officials were outlawed. The latter, who had committed no crime, were dismissed and debarred from receiving other employment. After the signing of the concordat it is true that the position of the Catholic *Arbeiterverein* improved, but this improvement and so-called freedom was nominal rather than real. On the social side we shall see that every possible pressure was applied, and reference to this will be made a little later.

During the summer of 1934, life for German Catholics did, however, seem a little more hopeful, and Hitler went so far as to assure a number of Catholic Bishops that he would stop his neo-pagan propaganda. The reason for this was that the Saar plebiscite was impending, and as a large proportion of the inhabitants of that area are Catholics, it was worth the Government's while to aim at some sort of conciliation. The policy, as we know, was successful, but I am inclined to think that besides their natural patriotism, one of the influences which decided the vote of the Saar Catholics was their desire to throw in their lot with their co-religionists in the Reich. During this period, in spite of the peace on the surface, there was plenty happening underneath. Article 31 of the concordat—the one dealing with the question of Catholic Associations—was the constant bone of contention between the Church and the Nazi Government. On July 2nd an announcement was made in the German Press that

“Negotiations have taken place between the Reich Government and representatives of the N.S.D.A.P.

on the one hand, and representatives of the German episcopacy on the other, concerning the putting into effect of Article 31. . . . On the basis of the agreement that has been reached during the negotiations there is every hope of instructions being issued in the immediate future concerning the management of Associations which will bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion."

Two days before, however, Hitler and his colleagues had successfully brought off the murders of June 30th, one of the victims of which was Klausener, whose only crime was that he was the leader of Catholic Action, and had recently addressed a meeting attended by many thousands of Catholics in Berlin.* The Holy See refused to rectify the instructions, and Cardinal Schulte, the Archbishop of Cologne, publicly expressed his complete agreement with this decision.

The Nazi attack increased with a vengeance in the new year. In February pressure was applied to parents in Bavaria to send their children to non-denominational schools. To this, Cardinal Faulhaber, the Archbishop of Munich, who had already irritated the humourless vanity of the Nazis by his sermons on *Judaism, Christianity and Germany*,† responded in his best fighting style by a public protest from the pulpit in the Cathedral at Munich; there was a packed congregation to listen to the strong-faced man with bushy eyebrows as he flung down the gauntlet.

The Nazis had tried to throw dust in the eyes of the hierarchy by saying that in the non-denominational schools an hour or two would be set aside each week for religious instruction, but the Cardinal would have none of this.

* Not content with shedding innocent blood, his murderers had the inhumanity to telephone to his widow and say that he had committed suicide.

† The English translation is published by Burns Oates & Washbourne.

"But who can guarantee to us," he said, "that during the other periods some master will not teach that the Sacred Scriptures are merely a collection of Hebrew fables? Or that some other master will not draw a disfigured portrait of Our Lord for having been so mistaken as to be born and to die among the Jews?"

The Holy See was in complete agreement with Cardinal Faulhaber's gesture of defiance, and six weeks later, on March 25th, Cardinal Pacelli wrote to Schulte an open letter, in which he held up St. Ambrose, the Saint who was always so ready to stand up to the civil power, as the model for the Catholic episcopate of today.

By now the Nazis had begun to realize that the Catholic leaders in Germany were made of fighting stuff. After the political victory in the Saar, conciliation was no longer necessary, and there was no longer any reason for not showing their hand—it was a rather dirty hand. The history of the year 1935 is one of half-concealed but nevertheless relentless persecution, in most cases on trumped-up charges; nobody knows how many arrests were made. Simultaneously with the persecution there was a Press campaign to defame the Church, frequently enough in articles of surprising vulgarity. The totalitarian claims of National Socialism were also being pressed with increased vehemence. In April an edict was issued against the Christian Press by Ammann, the President of the Reich Press Court, by which the daily papers of the various Christian denominations were muzzled, and in July Göring took upon himself to issue an edict in which he inveighed with his usual flatulent pomposity against what he called "political Catholicism". This had been preceded a few days earlier by a motion of Reichminister Frick's, which advocated the "deconfessionalization of the whole of public life".

The Holy See had as yet refrained from making a definite pronouncement, but on July 26th and August 4th there were two outspoken articles in the *Osservatore Romano*; these referred specially to Frick's latest motion and its bearings on the concordat, and also dealt as it deserved with Göring's inaccurate rubbish about "political Catholicism". These articles, in accordance with instructions from the Pope himself, were read out, wherever possible, from the pulpit in Catholic churches, but otherwise the majority of the laity were unable to read them, for the German Press was forbidden to quote them.

On August 19th a letter was issued by the Bishops assembled at Fulda, once more warning the faithful about the anti-Christian aims of the Nazi policy, and also discussing the possibility of instruction by the mothers of families replacing religious instruction in the schools. An announcement was made in this letter that a memorandum had been sent to the Chancellor setting out the grievances of Catholics. The Press was forbidden to publish this announcement, and only abridged editions of it were allowed to be published in diocesan magazines. During the rest of the year the pressure continued, and at last at Christmas the denunciation from the Pope, for which so many had been waiting, was heard. Having denounced the violent persecutions and anti-Christian measures in Russia and Mexico, he turned to Germany, and said :

"We have heard other voices raised to fight Christianity in the name of Christianity, under the misleading name of Christianity. They are raised against the one form of Christianity worthy of the name—that is to say, Catholic Christianity; for only a small amount of attention and thought are necessary to see how obvious it is that true Christianity is just Catholicism; apart from the true and only Christianity which is Catholicism, how much remains of Jesus Christ Himself, of

His Divine Person, of His Doctrine? Only débris, only a counterfeit which assumes various names : positive Christianity, historic Christianity, practical Christianity, pan-Christianity ; only the husks of Christianity which, unfortunately, attempt to cover up and to disguise the persecution of the true Christianity, Catholicism."

Later on, in May 1936, at the Catholic Press Exhibition, the Pope made another public reference to the counterfeit Christianity in the name of which the National Socialist Party had been persecuting the Church ; he expressed his regret that neither Russian nor German Catholics were represented, and went on to say in regard to these two great but misgoverned countries :

"One, where a spirit full of hatred against God has destroyed and wishes to destroy everything connected with religion, and particularly the Catholic religion, everything, except the invincible fidelity to the Church, the admirable acts of heroism which every day are adding glorious chapters to the martyrology ; the other, particularly well known and dear to us, in which, against all justice and truth, they wish to bring to an end the existence of a Catholic Press, having confused in their minds the domains of religion and politics. In one and the other they do the Catholic Press the honour of fearing its power and its efficiency, and thus they give the final honour to truth by their suppression of the opposition."

Having once more set out the nature of true Christianity as opposed to sham and "positive" Christianity, the Pope issued a warning to those rulers who during the last twenty years have embarked on a policy directed against religion :

"Those [rulers] are not following a wise and intelligent policy who by placing obstacles in the way of the Church or by preventing her full and

free development, are thus refusing the precious and enduring contribution which she, and she alone, can make to public security, to true peace, to the public welfare."

Later in the year, in tragic circumstances, when he received at Castel Gandolfo a pilgrimage of Spanish refugees, he referred once more to the stupidity as well as the wickedness of this policy, by which the rulers of certain nations had deliberately tried to destroy the most stable and constructive of all forces.

Whether for a short period the Nazi authorities took his words to heart or not I do not know, but it is a fact that during the autumn of 1936 the position of Catholics in Germany seemed to improve; the attacks on the priesthood and the religious orders in the Press came to a sudden end, and after the "morality" trial of the Franciscan Brothers had ended with the infliction of a number of savage sentences, there appeared to be no further arrests. A conference of Bishops had been held at Fulda in August, after which they were able to publish a pastoral letter in which, while they complained of the difficulties which had been placed in the way of Catholic schools and associations, they nevertheless held out an olive branch to the Government. They pointed out that they were in sympathy with the stand that had been taken up against the common enemy of Bolshevism, and reminded the Führer that the only solid rampart against that enemy was true Christianity.

In holding out this olive branch the Bishops had made a mistake. The Nazi reply was merely insulting. Far from recognizing the courageous stand which had been taken by the Catholics of Spain, and the reasoned arguments against the Bolshevist danger which are to be found in the Pope's Encyclicals, they tried to make out that Catholicism was merely a

stepping-stone to Bolshevism. It is certainly true that National Socialism is theoretically opposed to Bolshevism, but it is on entirely different grounds to those of the Catholic opposition; the latter objects to the irreligion, the materialism, the cruelty and the injustice of the Bolshevik system, but these do not seem to matter very much to the Nazi mind. What matters to the Nazi is the internationalist element in the Marxian scheme, which he hates in the name of a violent nationalism largely based on bogus foundations. A typical instance of the way in which the Nazi authorities responded to the Bishops' gesture was a remark made by that pathetic figure Dr. Goebbels in a speech at Cologne, when he observed that "the Church should kneel down in thankfulness to the Nazi State for the continuance of its very existence". One can only smile when a little man of that calibre speaks of the majestic Roman Church going on its knees to a Government which, however excellent some of its reforms, has made itself a laughing-stock and even an object of contempt in the eyes of all sensible people.

In spite of the clause in the concordat guaranteeing that Bishops should have free access to their flocks, the pastoral letter just referred to was the last one which they have been able to publish. Not only are barriers placed in the way of the Bishops, but the voice of the Pope is not allowed to be heard in Germany. On Christmas Eve 1936, though he had been at the point of death and in great pain, Pius XI broadcast once more to the world and reminded his hearers that

"Among those who claim to be the defenders of order against subversive forces, of civilization against the invasion of atheistic Communism, who even claim for themselves the leadership in that campaign, We observe with sorrow a large number who, in their choice of means and even in their

discrimination of those whom they consider to be their adversaries, allow themselves to be guided and dominated by false and fatal ideas ; for whosoever attempts to extinguish in the hearts of men, and especially in the hearts of the young, faith in Christ and in Divine Revelation, whosoever dares to represent the Church of Christ, the Trustee of the Divine Promises and the teacher of the peoples in virtue of Her Divine mission, as the avowed enemy of the prosperity and progress of a nation, not only will he not be the author of a happy future for humanity and for his own country, but he also destroys the most efficacious and positive means of defence which exists against the evils which he dreads, and collaborates, though he does not realize it, with those whom he imagines himself to be fighting.”

The Pope did not refer to the National Socialist Government by name, but the whole world realized whom he had in mind. That Government itself must have had a shrewd suspicion of what was coming, for instructions were given that this broadcast was not to be transmitted in Germany, and the newspapers were forbidden to publish the passages just quoted.

Although at this time the Pope was very ill, frequently in great pain and unable to sleep, at the beginning of 1937 he had several long consultations with the three German Cardinals Bertram, Faulhaber and Schulte, and with the Bishops of Berlin and Munster. There was need, indeed, for consultation, as the policy of the Government was becoming increasingly clear.

It will be remembered that in 1935 Frick advocated the “deconfessionalization” of the whole of public life ; this aim had recently been followed out with renewed vigour. To give a couple of examples : A woman teacher was not allowed to belong at the same time to the Nazi Teachers’ Association and to the

Catholic Teachers' Society, or a labourer to the Nazi German Workers' Front and to the Catholic Workers' Society. Should they not belong to the Nazi associations, not only would they become suspicious characters, with the risk of being sent to a concentration camp, but it would also be almost impossible for them to obtain employment. The policy of the Government has been, rather than openly to break the concordat by disbanding the Catholic Associations, by coercive and underhand means to starve them out.

The same methods have been applied to the Catholic schools. Let them not be closed down, for the concordat must be respected, but there is no reason why the priests and nuns should not be dismissed, and why pressure should not be applied to parents to withdraw their children and send them to the "community schools", where instead of the Catholic Catechism they can learn the racial rubbish which has emanated from the mind of a vegetarian fanatic. In a totalitarian State such pressure can be applied all too easily, and in Munich the results were seen at the beginning of 1937. Cardinal Faulhaber with his usual courage questioned the validity of the votes when a vast majority of Catholic parents agreed to transfer their children, and he was right enough. As Mr. C. F. Melville, who in the course of the last few years has been Foreign Correspondent for English newspapers in Germany and Austria, pointed out in an article in the *Dublin Review* for April 1937 :

"The concordat expressly safeguarded in theory both the Catholic Youth Movement and the Catholic schools. The régime has definitely undermined these safeguards in practice. The methods employed have been ingenious in their simplicity. Unless boys belong to the Hitler Youth Movement they will not be able to obtain jobs. Unless their parents voted, in the recent plebiscites,

for sending their children to the Nazi schools instead of to the Confessional schools, they would be discriminated against. By means of pressure of this kind the authorities were able to obtain a 'vote' from the harassed parents which gave a false appearance of popular support to these anti-clerical moves."

Perhaps the parents in question should have been more firm, but personally I am not prepared to blame them; it was not apostasy which was demanded from them, and should this demand ever be made, German Catholics will most certainly produce a fine harvest of martyrs. Archbishop Gröber, who had first been taken in by the new Government, said about this time that he feared Germany would soon have "Mexican conditions", and his words may be prophetic. Cardinal Faulhaber had a personal interview with Hitler, from which it is reported that he came out dissatisfied and convinced that nothing would be conceded.

The Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*, to the dramatic distribution of which reference was made at the beginning of the last chapter, was issued as a protest against the gross breaches of the concordat by the Nazi Government and to encourage the faithful to stand firm. It does not mince matters. Having begun with a spirited protest in which the breakers of the concordat are compared to the "enemy" of Holy Scripture, the Pope sets out the Christian doctrine of God as against the "Germanic" notions. In regard to the latter and their propagators he has one very pleasing paragraph:

"None but superficial minds", he points out, "could stumble into concepts of a national god, or national religion, or attempt to lock within the frontiers of a single people, within the narrow limits of a single race, God, the Creator of the Universe, King and Legislator of all nations,

before whose immensity they are 'as a drop of a bucket' (Isaiah xl, 15)."

Speaking of faith in Christ, to whom the books of the Old Testament lead, "harmonizing with the slow development of revelation, the dawn of the bright day of the Redemption", he gives a most solemn warning as to the falsity of the Nazi theories :

"Should any man dare," he declares, "in sacrilegious disregard of the essential differences between God and His creature, between the God-man and the children of men, to place a mortal, were he the greatest of all times, by the side of, or over, or against Christ, he would deserve to be called a prophet of nothingness, to whom the terrifying words of Scripture would be applicable, 'He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh at them' (Psalms ii, 3)."

The primacy of the Bishop of Rome is clearly set against "the seduction of a German National Church", which the Pope declares is

"A denial of the one Church of Christ and the evident betrayal of that universal evangelical mission for which a world Church alone is qualified and competent. The life-history of other national Churches, with their paralysis, their domestication and subjection to world powers,* is sufficient evidence of the sterility to which is condemned every branch that is severed from the trunk of the living Church."

A whole series of Christian phrases are shown by the Pope to have had their meaning fantastically distorted by Nazi propaganda, the most notable of which is perhaps the word "humility", and the Encyclical, having pointed out that "human laws in flagrant contradiction with the natural law are vitiated with a taint which no force, no power can

* An interesting example of this subjection could be seen in the course of the Prayer Book controversy in 1927 and 1928.

mend", ends with an appeal to the young, the priests and religious, and to the faithful of the laity, which flings down the gauntlet and encourages them to face the troubles and struggles which are before them.

The times look black enough, but there is a strong note of optimism in the closing paragraphs.

"Like other periods of the history of the Church, the present has ushered in a new ascension of interior purification, on the sole condition that the faithful show themselves proud enough in the confession of their faith in Christ, generous enough in suffering to face the oppressors of the Church with the strength of their faith and clarity. . . . Then, we are sure, the enemies of the Church, who think that their time has come, will see that their joy was premature, and that they may close the grave they had dug. The day will come when the *Te Deum* of liberation will succeed to the premature hymns of the enemies of Christ."

In Germany the struggle is now in its most acute stage, and one does not know what the next development will be; one thing alone is certain, the Church is indestructible. Not only are there many millions of staunch Catholics in Germany, but there are also large numbers of Protestants who have remained faithful in spite of perhaps even more acute difficulties. It is an interesting portent in the present struggle that the orthodox Protestants have tended more and more to stand shoulder to shoulder with their Catholic fellow citizens, and it may be that the present persecution, which, as persecutions always do, has brought back many slack and lapse Catholics to the faith, may also end the four-hundred-year-old breach between Catholic and Protestant Christians in the Reich.

CHAPTER XII

THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF THE CHURCH

FRANCE is known as the Eldest Daughter of the Church, and she has every right to the title, for her Christianity is very ancient, and there were many martyrs among the early Christians in Gaul; unfortunately, as is often the way with eldest daughters, she has, as will be seen, a strong strain of Goneril in her composition, though this is counterbalanced by the good qualities of Cordelia, who was willing to go into voluntary exile rather than be unfaithful to her ideals. Ever since the days of the French Revolution the Church has had to face perpetual tension in France, and her position was far from being improved by the role which was forced on her on the restoration of the Bourbons, when the so-called "Defenders of the Throne and Altar" considered that the religion to which they were often at heart indifferent had no little political value. All through the nineteenth century this tension continued, with the Church, if anything, losing a little ground as each decade passed by, and gaining nothing in the way of prestige with the privileges granted to her under Napoleon III; a well-known Jesuit has said wisely of the history of the Church in France during the last century that "its religious history was as glorious as its political history was deplorable".

At the beginning of the twentieth century it looked as if the forces of irreligion were about to win, and as if the light of Christianity in France was bound

gradually to flicker out. In July 1904 diplomatic relations with the Holy See were broken off, and in July 1905 the separation was voted between Church and State, which resulted in an unjust sequestration of church property; the majority of the clergy were reduced practically to destitution, with a consequently heavy drop in the number of candidates for the priesthood, for only the most heroic would be prepared to follow a vocation which offered them a life of extreme poverty. The chief religious orders had already gone, like Cordelia, into exile, rather than truckle to the government by submitting to Waldeck-Rousseau's scheme, which would have merely made them the helpless instruments of anti-clerical politicians; in consequence there was a grave shortage of priests, and, in addition to this, the fanatical M. Combes was able to close rather more than seventy-five per cent of the schools which were under Catholic control, perhaps the heaviest blow of all.

In the history of the Church it is usually the unexpected which happens. At that moment, when things could scarcely have seemed blacker, and when to most observers it looked as if the stranglehold which the anti-clericals had managed to obtain on French Catholicism must result in its destruction, the tide began to turn. The anti-clericals by their attack had inadvertently strengthened their opponents' position. As the Vicomte d'Avenel says in his inquiry into the state of religion in France: "Rid of her shackles, free, poor and thrown upon her own resources, the Church appealed to the twentieth-century democracy with the same appeal with which she had appeared to Jerusalem on the morning of the first Pentecost, when Peter on the steps of the Temple, with no financial subsidies behind him, preached the Gospel for the first time."

How the Church in France managed to pull through during the ten years before the war will

always be little short of a marvel ; one thing is certain, she was only able to do so at the cost of heavy sacrifices both by clergy and laity. All the time, however, she was slowly gaining ground, where in the nineteenth century there had been a gradual but perceptible loss.

The Great War quite definitely acted in her favour. The clergy were called up, as were all the men of France, and they fought in the trenches as privates alongside the laity ; new contacts and friendships were established, and many an anti-clerical layman who had looked on the clergy as the black-robed enemies of liberty learnt that the Catholic priest who now wore the same uniform as himself was a genial human being with his full share of courage and humour and common sense. More than that, those members of the exiled religious orders who were young enough to do so offered their services as army chaplains, and many of them were to be found in the front line. Statistics will show that the French clergy did exceptionally well in the Great War ; it is estimated that about 32,700 ecclesiastics were mobilized for active service, and of these 4,618 were killed and 10,414 were mentioned in dispatches, while 9,378 received the *Croix de Guerre*, 1,533 *Medailles Militaires*, and 895 the Legion of Honour. Those also who had been in territory under German occupation were able to do much to rally their people for self-defence against the common enemy ; the valour of Monsignor Charost will not be forgotten in a hurry, while the Abbé Pinte at Roubaix was able for a long period to print a newspaper secretly which kept his people informed as to what was going on beyond the German trenches, and in order to obtain the necessary information he had a concealed wireless set which he was able to keep going in spite of several raids by the suspicious German authorities.

When the war was over, the clergy in the devastated areas further increased their prestige by the help

and leadership they gave in the work on reconstruction. In these areas large numbers of churches were destroyed, and when they were gone the people realized that, however slack and indifferent to religion they might have been, they had lost something which counted for much; the proof of this is to be found in the generous contributions which were given all over Northern France, frequently enough by former anti-clericals, for rebuilding the churches.

There are, indeed, parts of France, mainly certain country districts, where religious practice has, if anything, declined since the war; in these districts there is in almost every case a declining population who seem to be afflicted with a strange apathy towards life, and it is interesting that in some parts they are being replaced by an immigration of Bretons, who are a deeply religious people and have not got a falling birth-rate; it is therefore possible that these at present irreligious districts which are tending towards depopulation may be inhabited in the future by staunch Catholics who have come in from outside.

A few figures will give some idea of the religious revival which has taken place in the rest of France—in the Cathedral of Sens, for instance, which is situated in one of the regions which tend to be indifferent to religion, during the ten years 1912–1922 the number of receptions of Holy Communion rose from 35,000 to 75,000 in the year; at Auxerre the number also rose by 40,000; while in the diocese of Orleans it has risen by 55,000 since the days of Bishop Dupanloup, though the population remains much about the same. There was also a widespread realization all through the country after the war that the bitter policy of the old government towards the Church had done much to divide the country into hostile sections, with the result that when war broke out the country was disunited and insufficiently prepared.

The state of affairs in France immediately after

the war has been well described by Mr. Denis Gwynn, who worked for five years in Paris as a journalist, in *The Catholic Reaction in France* (Macmillan, 1924):

“Undoubtedly there was a strong wave of public sympathy with the clergy after the war. The *Bloc National* which swept the country at the elections of November 1919 was a union of all those parties and tendencies which pledged themselves to a programme of ‘Reconstruction and Reconciliation’ in France. And reconciliation meant primarily a truce on all questions affecting the Church. The pre-war dissensions, which had left France unprepared for war through preoccupation with internal controversies, were mainly the result of the fierce vendetta against the Church that was being pursued by the parties of the Left. And when the war ended everyone except a certain number of professional politicians hoped devoutly that the old feuds would never arise again. The heroism of the clergy was generally recognized; and most people, who felt a deep personal gratitude to the mobilized priests and to the army chaplains for the consolation they had given, in risking their lives under shell fire, to the dying and wounded during four years, were honestly ashamed, and frequently said so, of the persecution that had driven so many of the clergy into exile before the war. So the vast majority of the freshly returned deputies after the elections of 1919, among whom were nearly 250 who had never sat in Parliament before, came to the Chamber either as convinced pro-clericals or with the knowledge that their constituents were overwhelmingly in favour of reconciliation with the Church.”

In 1921, diplomatic relations with the Vatican were resumed, and it had been realized since the 1919 elections that this was bound to take place. Monsignor Ceretti, a man of wide diplomatic experience, was sent as Nuncio to Paris, and M. Jonnart, who had

originally voted for the severance of diplomatic relations in 1904, was sent to the Vatican. It is a strange coincidence that the aged persecutor of the Church, M. Combes, died on the very day when M. Jonnart left for Rome to take up his new duties.

Such, in brief, was the situation when Pius XI succeeded in 1922. Things were beginning to look well again; diplomatic relations resumed, the Church in France reviving, and, with her release from the twin enemies of State patronage and State persecution, enjoying a greater prestige than she had at any time since the collapse of the Ancien Regime; there was also a vigorous Catholic Press—a band of intelligent authors and thinkers, many of them converts to the Faith, and a Catholic Labour movement which was steadily increasing in influence. We have already referred to the latter in connection with the Catholic Trade Unions' dispute at Lille. These organizations started in the most humble way, and their founders were members of religious orders working among the poor, a certain Brother Diéron, of the Christian Brothers, beginning the work among the men with 17 young employees in 1887, and a Vincentian Sister among the women in 1902, when she was able to collect together a little group of 18 nurses, 15 girl employees, and 15 working girls. The Catholic Trade Unions have now a very large membership in France, and exercise a wide influence. As we saw in the Lille affair, they fought with more determination than the Socialist Unions, and all over France they have been more strongly opposed to modern capitalist abuses; they have also been able to put their principles into practice at Fougères, at Grenoble, and in the Dauphiné, where they have successfully established co-operative factories.

In spite of the hopeful appearance of conditions in France when Pius XI came to the throne, there was a force at work which was soon to give plenty of

trouble, and which was to have a profound effect right in the Catholic fold. Since the war it had become increasingly clear that the idols of Liberalism had in most cases feet of clay, and that parliamentary democracy, which was at one time believed to be the cure for all social evils, could only too often merely be plutocracy in disguise, holding the door open for other abuses. A Frenchman who saw this clearly was M. Charles Maurras. He was a middle-aged journalist of brilliant gifts, at his happiest in controversy, who had been brought up as a Catholic, but had lapsed into agnosticism; he had, however, retained a vivid sense of the authority and power and discipline of the Church, and of its potentiality as a force for order in the world. He was also a vehement champion of the Royalist cause, and with his merciless pen, always lucid and always direct, he was able to show up to the full the weak points in the modern democratic system. There is undoubtedly much truth in his contention that

“A State which is not based upon popular election can see without dismay the associations and organizations of its citizens rising above it in certain spheres; it has no cause to fear anyone but those who are factionists or who disturb the peace. But an elective state is absolutely dependent and is consequently afraid of everything. Any group of citizens which acquires undue influence can turn the electoral machine against it—which is, and must naturally be, the worst of all evils. . . . That is why the Royalists in France claim as their natural allies all those who are striving to bring about a restriction of the present powers of the State. For without being antagonistic to the State, the monarchy can tend, and has often tended in the past, to rid the State of everything that is not its proper concern. Whereas the Revolution, and after it the Empire, subordinated everything to the uniformity of a bureaucratic rule, the monarchy used to leave any number of private

interests free to make their own laws and regulations."

It can be imagined that with his passionate belief in authority M. Maurras won for himself plenty of support among the Catholics of France; he had also done much to ingratiate himself among them by his attacks on the enemies of the Church in the days when M. Combes and his gang thought they were able to expel Christianity from French soil; and in pre-war days the supporters of M. Maurras's movement, known by the picturesque name of *Camelots du Roi*, frequently came into collision with the police when they organized processions in honour of St. Joan of Arc.

There was indeed a good deal to be said for some of M. Maurras's political doctrines, though, as we shall see, there were others which were less satisfactory. Any attempt to make out that they were integral to Catholicism would, of course, be highly undesirable. The trouble was, however, that in his writings, and in his paper, the *Action Française*, he did not confine himself to defending the Monarchical principle, or the rights of the Church.

M. Maurras and the *Action Française* were definitely getting the best of both worlds. While attacking the enemies of the Church, and steadily increasing his influence among Catholics, he was also disseminating doctrines which were irreconcilable with Catholicism. This was already taking place in the years before the war, and in 1910, a shrewd and observant priest, the Abbé Pierre, published a book called *Avec Nietzsche à l'assaut du Christianisme* which drew attention to the dangers due to M. Maurras's influence. This book caused a considerable sensation, and during the next four years he followed it up with two others, *Les nouveaux défis de l'Action Française à la conscience chrétienne* and *Réponse à M. Maurras, ou les directions paiennes de l'Action Française*, both of which showed that under

cover of his championship of Catholicism, which he apparently only considered of value as a political instrument, M. Maurras was really on the side of irreligion and was also teaching political theories which no sincere Christian could hold. The matter was taken up by various members of the hierarchy, and in April 1913 a memorable pastoral letter was issued by the Bishop of Nice, denouncing the revival of pagan philosophy, and which, while it did not refer explicitly to the works of M. Maurras, drew attention to statements he had made, affirming that Christianity and the teachings of Christ were a cause of decadence in society.

“Were this attempt the exclusive work of our enemies,” he said, “and were it openly made, it would perhaps be less dangerous than it is. But at the time when I write these lines, it is being conducted by writers who are either blind or treacherous, who are striving to construct the whole system of society and politics on the principles of pure atheism and positivism which they scarcely even conceal; and, what is almost unimaginable, they invoke the pretence of a desire to serve the Church while they seek to discredit Jesus Christ, His moral laws, and His teaching.”

Complaints were sent to Rome, and on January 29th, 1914, a formal condemnation of the *Action Française* and of certain books by M. Maurras was put on record, with, however, a note to the effect that Pope Pius X did not consider it expedient to make it public at that time, and reserved to himself the right to decide when it would be best to do so.

The deferment in announcing this condemnation was to cause no little embarrassment to Pius XI; it was placed in the files of the Sacred Congregation of the Index, the offices of which were towards the end of the war amalgamated with those of the Holy Office. During the transfer of the files there was, it seems, some

confusion, and for several years the precious condemnation was lost! When matters became acute in 1926, M. Maurras, whom Pius X had as a matter of fact refused to receive (he is reported to have said "We will not receive that man after what he has said about Our Lord"), declared that the latter had described him as *un beau défenseur de la foi*, thus claiming that Pius XI was for personal reasons reversing the policy of his predecessor, and at the time the condemnation could nowhere be found.

During the war matters remained fairly dormant and trouble between the *Action Française* and the Church did not break out openly till August 1936, when a public letter appeared from Cardinal Andrieu, the Archbishop of Bordeaux; this letter was not altogether successful.

It came, indeed, at an opportune moment, as since the war M. Maurras's influence had undoubtedly been on the increase among the young, not only in France but even more in Belgium, from which country the first requests for some form of condemnation were sent to the Vatican. Pius XI is indeed reported to have explained in audience with Monsignor Baudrillart and Monsignor Andollent that it was the insistent demand which made him decide to act. In France the influence of the *Action Française* had been seriously disruptive, as its propaganda and activities had dangerously divided the French Catholics when there was every need for uniting them. Though after the war the prospects of the Church in France had been so bright, there nevertheless was always the danger that the old attack might be renewed; indeed, if M. Herriot had not fallen from power through his inability to save the franc from collapse, it is certain that he would have tried to disturb the peaceful atmosphere which had followed the war, and to revive the old policy of spite and stupidity.

Unfortunately, Cardinal Andrieu's letter, while

right enough on the main points, was in minor matters inaccurate, a fatal mistake when dealing with a controversialist of unusual brilliance. Among other accusations, he said that the directors of the *Action Française* "had the audacity to demand the restoration of slavery". It is true enough that the political philosophy of the paper, by which, as Cardinal Andrieu said, "humanity is divided into two classes—or, rather, two kingdoms: the illiterate man, whom the master of this school calls the degenerate imbecile, and the *élite* of educated men", might be said logically to lead to such a conclusion, but in using this phrase the Cardinal had most certainly exceeded the mark. M. Maurras reacted quickly enough by offering a reward of 100,000 francs to anybody who could find a passage in his paper which "had the audacity to demand the restoration of slavery", but was able to keep his money, and further scored by being able to show that quite a large part of the Cardinal's letter was apparently derived from a pamphlet by a Belgian lawyer, M. Passelecq, which contained in a number of places the same inaccuracies and even the same wording.

Anyway, for better for worse, the attack had been launched. Letters of protest against the Cardinal's letter were signed by the Catholic leaders of the Royalist movement, in the chief of which they declared, "we believe what the Church believes . . . and since your Eminence judges us as being so different from what we are, we hereby offer to send to him, if he desires, a formal profession of faith such as the Pope requires with our signatures attached to it". This letter was dated September 8th, and sounds edifying enough; I believe does not always mean, however, I behave.

The signatories of this letter were also reckoning without Rome, where, perhaps without their knowledge, Pius XI had been watching the developments of

the *Action Française* movement with insight and concern. To their surprise, an open letter from the Pope himself appeared, under the pontifical coat of arms, in the *Osservatore Romano*, on September 9th.

"To Our Dear Son, Paulin Pierre Andrieu, Cardinal Archbishop of Bordeaux, Pius XI Pope, Salutation and Apostolic Benediction.

"We have read with great pleasure the reply by your Eminence to the group of young Catholics who have inquired concerning the *Action Française*. We have found in it a new and high evidence of the pastoral solicitude and the eternal vigilance of your Most Reverend Eminence for the welfare of souls, and particularly of the young, who are constantly menaced in our time.

"Your Eminence points out a danger which is all the more serious in the present case because it touches more or less directly, and not always apparently, upon Catholic faith and morals. It might lead to an unconscious deviation from the true spirit of Catholicism, in the fervour and piety of the young, and both in writing and in speech might offend its delicate purity; in a word, it might diminish the perfection of Christian practice, and still more the apostolate of that true 'Catholic action' in which all the faithful, and especially the young, are called upon to give their active collaboration for the extension and the strengthening of the Kingdom of Christ, in individuals, in families and in society.

"It is therefore most appropriate that your Eminence should leave purely political questions on one side, such as for instance the question of forms of government. In that the Church leaves a just liberty to all, but it is not equally permitted, as your Eminence has well pointed out, to follow blindly the directors of the *Action Française* in matters which concern faith and morals.

“Your Eminence enumerates and condemns rightly (in publications which are not only of remote date) evidence of a new system of religion, of morals and of society; for instance, concerning the nature of God, of the Incarnation, of the Church, and in general of Catholic dogma and morality, particularly in their necessary relations to politics, which is logically subordinate to moral law. In these evidences there are substantial traces of a revival of paganism, to which naturalism is akin; which these writers have, in Our belief, unconsciously absorbed, like so many of their contemporaries, in the public teaching of those modern and laic schools that poison our young people, which they themselves often attack with so much vigour.

“In Our constant anxiety concerning the dangers which arise on all sides for Our dear young people, and above all at the appearance of these distressing tendencies, even when they should concern such a worthy object as the praiseworthy love of one’s country undoubtedly is, We rejoice that voices should have been raised, and not only in France itself, in these recent times to warn them and put them on their guard: and so We doubt not that all young people will hearken to your voice as a Bishop and Prince of the Church; in it, and with it, they will listen also to the voice of the Father of all the faithful.

“It is with that confidence We give from Our heart and to your clergy and your people the apostolic benediction.

“Given at Rome, at St. Peter’s, on the 5th September in the fifth year of Our pontificate Pius PP XI.”

This letter, coming as it did so soon after Cardinal Andrieu’s, and supporting him so strongly, made it clear enough that the Pope had been fully aware that

violent attacks but Cardinal Ceretti was represented as a dark horse in the background, furthering the sinister ends of a Berlin-controlled Vatican ; more than that, the unfortunate Cardinal, a man of blameless life, was accused of being in M. Briand's power owing to his having been arrested in Paris under circumstances of the most disreputable kind ! Not only was the rumour spread that he was too fond of the night life of the city, but it was also whispered, and loud enough for most people to hear, that M. Herriot had in his hands an entire sentimental correspondence between the Cardinal and the wife of a cartellist deputy.

Unlike the leaders of many political movements, those of the *Action Française* had a deep sense of humour, but such a gift should be controlled by charity and justice. On September 10th, the day after the appearance of the Pope's letter, the Abbé Bergey vigorously attacked this campaign of scandal in his paper the *Action Catholique*, and proved how utterly unfounded were the rumours. He remained comparatively unpunished for his boldness, unlike the Abbé Trochu, the editor of the *Ouest Éclair*, who had written against the pornographic tendencies of M. Leon Daudet ; Trochu was watched for some time by the agents of the *Action Française*, who were able to discover that he had bought up the bankrupt stock of a publisher of postcards ; it so happened that a number of these though amusing were vulgar, of the type that one usually buys when spending the day at Brighton ; when the Abbé discovered this, he ceased to sell them, and even destroyed a number, but nevertheless the *Action Française* put it about that he was making a large fortune out of the sale of indecent postcards. Funny, certainly, and indeed in the best eighteenth century tradition, but not over-scrupulous, and those who claim to be the champions of Catholicism should treat priests with respect, and be even more respectful about Papal Nuncios.

Following on the Pope's letter, each of the principal *Action Française* associations formulated addresses of submission; these were all more or less similar, and worded in the most loyal way, the chief one ending with the words:

"Most Holy Father, the Catholic students of the *Action Française* eagerly seize the opportunity which is offered to them, of expressing to Your Holiness their respect for Your person and their submission to the See of Peter, and to assure You that they would be more scrupulous than ever in avoiding all errors which are condemned by the Church and in preserving intact in their souls, and in defending outwardly, those truths of which Rome is the depository."

A reply to these was made on behalf of the Holy See by Cardinal Gasparri, which, while it said that:

"His Holiness has been particularly touched by the expressions of affection and of submission which these young men have sent to Him," nevertheless had a sting in its tail, for the Cardinal acidly pointed out that:

"To assert that one receives and accepts the teaching of the Church alone on matters of faith and morals would not seem to be consistent, nor sufficient to safeguard either one or the other, so long as one remains under leaders who by their writings have shown themselves not to be masters of Christian morality."

Circumstances were to show that the subtle-minded old Cardinal did well to be as wise as the serpent, besides being as gentle as the dove.

M. Maurras was preparing his counter-attack; in spite of propagating doctrines which nobody could call Christian, and spreading rumours about the Papal Nuncio, his method was to try and give the impression of being submissive to the Holy See and to publish any incidents which might point to his

being well looked upon by the higher ecclesiastics. There was a typical instance of this when the Jesuit Cardinal Billot, who was a very old man, and who had shown some sympathy with the movement in its earlier days, wrote a message upon the back of his visiting-card, that :

“Cardinal Billot presents to M. Leon Daudet and to other signatories of the Address to His Eminence Cardinal Andrieu, the homage of his profound respect, and at the same time his warmest congratulations on the superb reply, so dignified, so well reasoned, and so solidly supported by his courageous profession of full Catholic faith, which we hope will, with God’s help, assist the *Action Française* to come out of the present crisis more than ever esteemed by the good and feared by the wicked.”

This little message was written in the first days of the controversy ; it was not published in the *Action Française*, but it was circulated, and in November, by which time Cardinal Andrieu’s letter had become of far greater importance, it was published in the *Paysan du Sud-Ouest*, and reproduced in other newspapers. A reply to its publication appeared in the *Osservatore Romano* on December 5th, which said that :

“Certain French newspapers have published a note written on a visiting-card which was addressed by a certain eminent Cardinal to M. Daudet and other signatories of the Address to the Cardinal of Bordeaux—a visiting-card note which might be interpreted in a sense opposing the instruction recently given by the Holy See in relation to the *Action Française*. We are authorized to state :

1. That the visiting-card was not intended for publication and was published only by a culpable indiscretion.
2. That the eminent writer has been greatly

pained by the bad impression that the card may have produced, and has expressed his regret to the Holy Father, and considers that his note must be regarded as never having been written."

A year afterwards the old Cardinal resigned his rank and retired to end his days in prayer and solitude as a simple Jesuit, and in November of that year a letter appeared from the Superior General of the Jesuits repudiating the rumours that Père Billot continued to support the *Action Française*, "whose newspaper", it said, "he does not even read."

For some weeks after the appearance of the Pope's letter a duel was being fought between the *Osservatore Romano* and the *Action Française*, with both sides becoming increasingly definite in their assertions; this was brought to an end by the Pope on December 20th, in his Allocution to the Consistory of Cardinals. This speech might be said finally to clear the decks for action.

In the course of his speech he said :

"that We have accomplished an action which was very much desired, and necessary even more than opportune, in intervening with Our Authority, is shown by the gratitude of excellent laymen, of priests both of the secular and the regular clergy, by venerable Bishops and pastors of souls. . . . Those who ask of Us more clear and precise declarations should not forget that, in questions which affect life from day to day and practical conduct, it is not always possible to formulate absolute and definite rules of universal application. Moreover, in all that We have said or written up to date—words and writings which without question no Frenchman concerned in the matter any longer ignores—there will be found expressed, with a precision which is sufficient or is easy to establish, the rules and the considerations which should lead to sound conduct in the question which has been raised.

"Nevertheless We add, in case there may be any

whose spirits require further enlightenment, that in no case is it permitted to Catholics to be connected with the activities and, in any way, with the school of those who place the interests of parties above religion, and seek to make the latter subservient to the former. Nor is it permissible to expose oneself or others, and especially the young, to influences or teaching which constitute a danger to the integrity of faith and morals for the young and for their Catholic education.

“In the same category—for We wish to omit none of the questions or requests which have been sent to Us—it is not permissible for Catholics to support, or favour, or read newspapers directed by men whose writings, in departing from Our dogmas and Our moral teaching, cannot escape reprobation, and in which frequently the articles, the reports, and the advertisements, offer to their readers, especially to adolescents and to young people, many occasions of spiritual disaster. . . .

“For the rest, there is nothing to be gained by a situation in which Our most dear sons of France should remain any longer divided and in discord from one another for political reasons. Neither they nor the Church have anything to gain by it. On the contrary, they will all benefit enormously and in every way if they find themselves firmly united on the religious ground—namely, in defending the rights of the Church, Christian marriage, the family, the education of children and of the young, in short all those sacred liberties which are the foundation of States.”

This speech was published all over the world on the following day. In the *Action Française* there appeared along with it a long manifesto by the editors under the title *Non Possumus*, which complained that the paper was not being condemned for moral reasons, but only in the interests of Church politics; the tone of the article could scarcely be described as

less than one of open revolt, and it seemed clear that the condemnation which was implicit in the Pope's words would soon be made open and formal. By a remarkable coincidence the documents containing the condemnation by Pius X, for which a search had been made for some time with no success, were found on the following day.

Nine days after the appeal from which we have quoted, the formal condemnation of the *Action Française* newspaper and of a number of books by M. Maurras was published and they were placed on the Index. In spite of the discovery of the documents, the leaders continued to insist that Pius X had refused to condemn M. Maurras, and they also affirmed that Pius XI was actuated by political motives, and was influenced by intriguers who were bitterly opposed to his unassailable patriotism.

At the beginning of January 1927 a letter appeared in the French press from the Pope to Cardinal Andrieu which provides an interesting commentary and explanation concerning the decree :

"We desire to address you personally, and without the intervention of any intermediary, in order to tell you once again how much We appreciate the faithful and generous co-operation that you have rendered to Us for some months past.

"In the enclosed documents you will read in the first place a decree concerning the grave question of the *Action Française*, which will appear immediately in the *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis*, together with the acts of the last Consistory. You have a certain title to this priority, because among your venerable brethren in the French episcopate you were the first to raise the question, and the first also to bear the consequences of such a departure, always in company with Ourselves, ever since your cause became Our own, which was since the very beginning.

"As you will see, the decree has a considerable

importance, if only because it destroys with one blow the legend that has been woven, in good faith, We like to believe, around Our reverend predecessor Pius X of saintly memory. As you see, it follows from the decree not only that We and Our co-operators were not the first to occupy Ourselves with the said question, but also that We have concluded precisely where Pius X had begun.

“It is quite evident that We should have employed a different procedure, had We been aware of the documents that We now make public. But it was only on the day after the Consistory was held that We had the documents placed in Our hands. . . . It was only after repeated researches, conducted according to lines that were suggested to Us by the habits which We had formed in a life which had been spent to a great extent among books and documents, that they were eventually discovered. . . .

“. . . There has been revealed an entire absence of all just notions concerning the authority of the Pope and of the Holy See, and concerning its own competence to judge of its extent and of the matters that belong to it ; and a no less entire absence of all spirit of submission or at any rate of consideration and respect ; the pronounced attitude of opposition and of revolt ; forgetfulness, or rather, a genuine contempt towards truth, carried even to the lengths of insinuating and publishing inventions which are as calumnious as they are false and absurd ; all this has become abundantly and so clearly revealed that many good Catholics have seen and understood in what sort of men and in what sort of spirit they had trusted in all good faith. . . . They are revelations which have passed all limits, and have led Us to proscribe the *Action Française* newspaper, in the same way that past attempts proscribed the fortnightly review of the same title. In regard to the

books of M. Maurras which were proscribed by Pius X, every good Catholic must see that the proscription loses nothing of its force by reason of the fact that the author has seen fit to make his own index after the Index of Holy Church had intervened; all the more if he declares (as he has declared) that he does not thereby intend to place himself in conformity with any law. It is precisely the intervention by the Index that is disclosed by the recovery of these documents; just as they also give evidence of the consistent attitude of the Church in regard to the grave subject of the moment. . . .

“. . . But to all without exception Our paternal heart is thrown open, offering to all the most indulgent and the most tender welcome, desirous to give consolation to them all if, during a period which We hope has already passed and will never return, We have been obliged to bring sorrow to some in avoiding any failure in Our formidable responsibilities for the salvation of their souls. . . .”

Roma locuta est—causa finita est. That was the end of the matter. What were the results of the condemnation? There is no doubt that it caused at the time much dismay among a large section of Catholics, mainly laymen; nevertheless, there was a most loyal response on the part of Catholic France. Not only was a joint pastoral letter signed by 117 Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of the French hierarchy (only three members withheld their signatures, of whom one made an act of formal submission a few months later, and another was probably actuated by motives of delicacy through having been tutor to M. Maurras in his schooldays), but the visible decline of the *Action Française* movement is a proof that the Pope has been obeyed. It is probably true that immediately after the condemnation the circulation of the paper rose, as is almost always the case when a

paper is brought into the public eye, but since then there seems to be no doubt that the sales dropped very seriously. The *Ouest Éclair*, to which we have already referred, has apparently investigated this matter as far as it was able to do so; the figures at which it arrived in Brittany and Normandy and La Vendée, districts where the Royalist movement was at its strongest, are illuminating. In fourteen towns, four or five of which are important centres of population, it appears that only a thousand copies in all of the daily newspaper were being sent out for sale, and of these under 600 were usually being sold.

Political results have undoubtedly been good, for the Church has once and for all been rescued from its unhappy identification in the popular mind with the parties of the extreme Right, an identification which has undoubtedly placed obstacles in the way of the clergy when working among the poorer people.

On July 11th, 1927, a letter was addressed to the Pope by a group of parish priests in Paris, who had given up their lives to work among the poor; it was drafted by Monsignor Chaptal, the auxiliary bishop of Paris, whose life had been spent working in the slums.

“In proclaiming the teaching of the Church in regard to the doctrine of the *Action Française*” (they wrote), “Your Holiness removed a pretence which was particularly dangerous to us in our ministry among the working classes of the Faubourgs and the suburbs of Paris. We desire to express our deep gratitude. For more than fifty years the enemies of Catholicism in France have not ceased to represent the clergy as being necessary royalists, and opposed to the true interests of the people. The *Action Française* began its campaign at a time when these prejudices might have disappeared. It aggravated them by entering the Catholic organization and pretending that it was responsible for their policy

and their inspiration, by trying to give a political character which it should not have to the festival of St. Joan of Arc, and by selling its newspaper ostentatiously outside the Church doors. By these and other methods it succeeded in persuading the loyal working men and employees that the campaign conducted by the *Action Française* was a faithful and exclusive representation of the real and intimate feelings of French Catholics.

“It may be that among us certain priests have individual preferences for one form or another of political government. But we have always placed the interests of parties far below those of religion, and we were profoundly pained and distressed that we could not persuade the best of our flock among the working classes that the doctrines and the political methods of the leaders of the *Action Française* were not ours. We cannot hope that in this country of ours, where politics have created so many successive barriers between the working classes and the clergy, the bandages that have been tied round the eyes of our workers by the enemies of religion will fall completely away. But the relief which Your Holiness has brought fills us with a glad hope for the future, and gives us a new courage to fight among the vast working class population against false social doctrines and ignorance of religion.”

The last ten years have justified the optimism of these priests, for in spite of a bitter Marxist opposition, it is among the French working classes that much progress has been made. The dealings of the Church with the government have also been remarkably friendly, and there is no doubt that the outspoken attitude of Pius XI in connection with certain aspects of the Royalist movement has done much to increase the goodwill. Although there is as yet no concordat, relations are remarkably improved; as M. Francois

Charles-Roux, the French ambassador to the Vatican, publicly announced on January 1st, 1937: "Our relations with the Holy See are excellent, and are governed by a spirit of complete goodwill; the Church in France has the respect of the nation and of the public authorities."

CHAPTER XIII

ANGELI NON ANGLI

SINCE the days of Catholic Emancipation, just over a hundred years ago, there has been a marked advance in English Catholic life, with new churches, new monasteries and new schools growing up all over the place. The two most important years since the Emancipation Bill was passed were probably the year 1845, when Newman made his submission to Rome, and 1850, when the Catholic hierarchy was restored under the primacy of Cardinal Wiseman, a restoration which was necessary before a concerted advance could be made. When Wiseman was made Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and issued his famous Pastoral *From out the Flaminian Gate of Rome*, he produced a violent storm in England, which reflected little credit on the ridiculous bigots who did the storming.

“Is it then, here in Westminster,” wailed *The Times*, “among ourselves, and by the English Throne that an Italian priest is to parcel out the spiritual dominion of this country—to employ the renegades of our national Church and restore a foreign usurpation over the consciences of men and to sow divisions in our political society by an undisguised and systematic hostility to the institutions most nearly identified with our national freedom and our national faith? Such an intention must be either ludicrous or intolerable—either a delusion of some fanatical brain or treason to the constitution.”

The Protestant Bishops were even more horrified, and their remarks make comical reading today. The Bishop of Salisbury referred to the newly appointed Catholic Bishops as "foreign intruders", and held forth pompously about "foreign bondage", while the Bishop of Bangor cried out against "a foreign prince insolent in his degradation"; the Bishop of Ripon remarked complacently that "Rome clings to her abominations", and the Bishop of Carlisle denounced the claims of Rome as "profane, blasphemous and anti-Christian", and lamented the fact that England was "defiled by her pollutions". The Bishop of Oxford (Soapy Sam), whose conscience was always sensitive, but occasionally lost control of his conduct, was deeply moved at the aggression of a foreign power which he found "subtle and unclean", and the Bishop of Exeter, a crusty old High Churchman, denounced the Papal brief as a "shameless demonstration", and a "daring display of Roman ambition". On the whole the Bishop of Hereford did best of all with some good old-fashioned stuff about the "Sorcerer's cup" and "the crafts of Satan". One is a little reminded of Mrs. Varden who "was seldom very Protestant at meals, unless it happened that they were under-done, or over-done, or indeed that anything occurred to put her out of humour". On this occasion the Bishops clearly considered that things were very much over-done. It was, of course, all very silly, and was to be expected from pompous men, but for the Catholics of that day it must, to say the least of it, have been tiresome.

Seventy years later things were indeed different. Not only had the Roman influence been less polluting and blasphemous than the Protestant Bishops had expected, but an event was taking place which must have made the Cassandras of 1850 turn in their graves: three prominent members of the Church of England were at Malines having a most friendly

discussion with a Belgian Cardinal, his Vicar-General and a French Abbé, with a view to the reunion of the Catholic and Anglican churches. More than this, they had behind them the somewhat cautious good wishes of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and, for the moment, of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

These conversations, as is so often the case with important events, were the result of a chance meeting. In the year 1890 the late Lord Halifax had to visit Madeira, as one of his sons was in bad health. When he was there he happened to meet the Abbé Portal, a French Lazarist priest, who was also there for reasons of health. Lord Halifax, who was, if I may say so, one of the most magnificent figures which the Anglican Church has produced, was one of the leaders in the rapidly developing Anglo-Catholic movement, and a close friendship soon sprang up between him and the Abbé. The latter was immensely interested and indeed surprised at what Lord Halifax had to tell him about the new movement in the Anglican Church, and they both returned from Madeira determined that something must be done to bring Rome and Canterbury nearer together.

Rome can never look on Canterbury as an equal, so it was a question of Mahomet going to the mountain; the Mahomet of that day happened to be Archbishop Benson, a dignified man who always found the hare a little too swift and the hounds a little too noisy, and who was surprised and not over-pleased when the impetuous Lord Halifax descended on him, armed with the Abbé Portal, and told him of the new role he was to play.

Lord Halifax certainly had high ambitions for the Church of England, and always expected her leaders to conform to his favourite Christian types, with which, however, they were not always in sympathy. For instance, when Dr. Lang was appointed to the

See of York, Lord Halifax wrote to him : "I cannot conceive anything more splendid than that your Grace should be executed on Tower Hill. Nothing but martyrdom can save the Church of England." Dr. Lang has shown no intentions so far of complying with Lord Halifax's wishes and Archbishop Benson showed himself equally unresponsive ; he distrusted Rome, and he never knew what Cardinal Vaughan might be about ; Anglicans who enjoyed their joke might compare the Cardinal to a peacock*, but the fact remains that peacocks can peck.

Pope Leo XIII showed himself favourable to the new Romeward stirrings in England, and sent Lord Halifax a signed photograph of himself as a mark of his goodwill. Lord Halifax visited Rome where, as his biographer, Mr. J. G. Lockhart, says, "Something like a dignified tug-of-war was taking place between the two parties of English visitors," with him on one side and Cardinal Vaughan, who distrusted the new developments, on the other. Soon afterwards Pope Leo's letter *Ad Anglos* appeared ; this expressed the Pope's friendly feelings towards the English people, but was quite definitely addressed to the whole population, and not to the Church of England in particular.

Not long afterwards, in March 1896, Pope Leo appointed a commission of inquiry, to investigate into the validity of Anglican ordinations ; this commission was composed entirely of Catholics, though one or two eminent Anglican scholars were in Rome at the time and in close touch with its members. The result was unfavourable to the Anglicans, and the reasons for the condemnation of the Orders were set out by the Pope in the Bull *Apostolica Cura*. The verdict was, as can be imagined, a bitter blow to Lord Halifax and to his party, but they accepted it in a most Christian

* When the Cardinal made a sensational speech at Bristol, the learned Mr. Birkbeck wrote, "*Laudatas ostentat avis Junonia penas.*"

way. Many people have spoken of the commission's decision as if it was merely a product of prejudice and the partisan activities of Cardinal Vaughan, but the Bull has in recent years been amply vindicated in the scholarly treatises of Dr. Messenger and Monsignor Barnes. It must be remembered that though many members of the Church of England have, during the last hundred years, returned to the belief in the Catholic doctrine of the Holy Eucharist, Elizabeth's bishops believed in a very attenuated doctrine. After the foundation of the new State Church the old altars were destroyed, and the Liturgy and Ordinal were drastically altered so as to remove all trace of a sacrificing priesthood; not only that, but the saying of Mass was made a criminal offence, for which many priests were sent to a cruel and humiliating death. At the time when the *Apostolicæ Curæ* was published, it is also a fact that the majority of the Anglican Bishops were in far closer agreement with the sixteenth century reformers than with Lord Halifax and his colleagues; the measures which, with the help of the Government, were being taken against the ritualists in those years are proof of this. It should also be remembered that men as friendly to the Church of England as Baron von Hügel and the Abbé Duchesne expressed their agreement with the findings of the commission, while at the same time feeling genuine sympathy with their Anglican friends, for whom the disappointment was bound to be painful.

After the publication of the Bull it looked as if the door had been shut on the chances of a rapprochement between the Catholic Church and the Church of England, and no further advances were made from either side for a quarter of a century. In the year 1920, however, at the time when Monsignor Ratti was waiting for the Red Army in Warsaw, the most remarkable character in the Anglican hierarchy was Frank Weston, the missionary Bishop of Zanzibar;

he was a staunch Anglo-Catholic, who had not feared to denounce Dr. Hensley Henson for heresy when he was Bishop of Hereford, in terms which rather ruffled the well-bred calm of the Establishment. Dr. Bell, the biographer of Archbishop Davidson, when describing the Lambeth Conference of 1920, has written: "Most striking of all was Frank Weston, with his extraordinary mixture of generosity and menace", and there can be no doubt that he was the dominating figure in that assembly. Lambeth conferences tend to discuss everything under the sun, and in 1920 the Conference very sensibly tackled the question of Christian reunion. Bishop Weston was the chief spokesman of the committee which dealt with this, and the result of their deliberations was an "Appeal to all Christian people". The substance of this appeal was a little too vague to be satisfactory from the Catholic point of view, but its sentiments were admirable, and it showed that a new spirit was in the air; the atmosphere of Europe had changed during the preceding ten years, with the tragedy of the war and the grim two years afterwards, and there was no doubt that the old sectarian animosity was no longer fashionable. The Bishops who denounced Wiseman with such a strange lack of humour in 1850 would not have felt comfortable at the Lambeth Conference of 1920.

Lord Halifax was at that time an old man of 81, and suffering from cataract, nevertheless he was just about to start on the most important work of his life. In the following year he decided to visit the Continent, and with his usual energy, to make a tour of the battlefields with his old friend the Abbé Portal. Having arranged to do this, they decided to go even further and to visit Cardinal Mercier at Malines. "This visit to the Cardinal," said Lord Halifax, "seems to be a complete inspiration." The visit was a complete success, and both men were delighted with each other; the subject of reunion was broached once more, the

Cardinal showed himself as open-hearted as Lord Halifax, and the latter came back to England to find one or two men who could accompany him in the near future to Malines.

The first two to join him were Dr. Frere, of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, who afterwards became Bishop of Truro, and Dr. Armitage Robinson, the Dean of Wells. Dr. Frere was a learned liturgiologist who supported the Anglo-Catholic party, and Dr. Armitage Robinson was a well-known scholar who belonged to no ecclesiastical party, but was a close friend of the Benedictines of Downside, near neighbours of his at Wells. The Cardinal was supported by the Abbé Portal and by his Vicar-General, Monsignor van Roey.

Five conversations took place at Malines, following on Lord Halifax's first and unexpected visit: in December 1921, March 1923, November 1923, May 1925, and October 1926. The third and fourth conversations were very much increased in scope, as the Anglicans were joined by Bishop Gore and Dr. Kidd, the Warden of Keble, and the Catholics by Monsignor Batiffol, and Father Hippolyte Hemmer, both of whom were Church historians. The presence of Bishop Gore was important, as he was not only a prominent figure in the Church of England, but could also on no account be accused of a pro-Roman bias, having in his younger days written a violent attack on Catholicism, which he never saw fit to retract in spite of the fact that Dom John Chapman, in his far more learned reply, completely demolished Dr. Gore's argument. A melancholy cloud hung over the last conversation, as Cardinal Mercier died early in 1926, and was followed a few months later by the Abbé Portal. Monsignor van Roey succeeded Mercier as Archbishop of Malines, and presided over the final conversation. He had been present all through, and the same atmosphere of friendliness prevailed, but

there was something of sadness and finality in the proceedings, for two of the leading members were gone, and Lord Halifax knew that his own turn could not be far off.

While these conversations had no official status, they nevertheless were important, for at no time since the breach with Rome under Elizabeth had Catholics and Anglicans met under circumstances of the kind, and the representatives on both sides were men eminent in the churches to which they belonged. What part did the Pope take? At first sight his behaviour may seem to have been unnecessarily cautious and reserved, but if we examine his position we shall see that he was wise, and his wisdom has been vindicated by later events.

The attitude of the Archbishop of Canterbury was friendly all through, but he never showed himself over-forthcoming to Cardinal Mercier's advances, and caused the latter to complain of his caution. He also was wise, for he knew that not only was the difference between his own outlook and that of Lord Halifax greater than the Cardinal seemed to understand, but also that the majority of his flock were very far from sharing Lord Halifax's hopes.*

* Canon Maynard Smith in his excellent life of Bishop Weston, when writing of the Kikuyu controversy, gives an account of the attitude of the Church of England which would apply equally well in connection with the Malines conversations (*Frank, Bishop of Larzibar*, S.P.C.K. 1926. P. 156):

"About the Church of England . . . the Archbishop knew all that there is to know . . . the Church of England progresses slowly through the centuries, and gradually grows accustomed to ideas; but she will not accept them because of any man's *ipse dixit*.

"The greater number of her efficient members are people of irreproachable character and simple piety. They say their prayers, read their bibles, attend Church, and make their communions. They call themselves High, Low, or Broad according to their taste in ceremonial, but they are quite unversed in ecclesiastical questions, and have no grip upon theological principles. In quiet times they hate most of all the logical and enthusiastic members of their own party; but they are generally prepared to support them if there is a movement to persecute or any attempt at suppression. In quiet times they work very amicably with their fellow churchmen of other parties and it is only during crises, precipitated by extremists, that there is any danger of schism. These are the people who really count, but

Dr. Barnes, Dr. Inge, the Bishop of Norwich, the Editor of *The Church Times*, and even the Secretary of the *Protestant Truth Society* were also men of influence, it must be remembered, in the Church of England. The positions of the Pope and of the Archbishop of Canterbury were fundamentally different; the latter considered himself to be the head of one branch of the Catholic Church, negotiating with the representative of the head of another branch, a head to whom indeed he would be prepared to grant a primacy, but the primacy of an elder brother rather than the paternal rule which is the right of a father. The Pope viewed the relations of himself and the Archbishop in a very different light; he knew himself to be the divinely appointed head of the Catholic Church, against whose jurisdiction the so-called Church of England had rebelled three and a half centuries earlier in obedience to the commands of the secular power. Not only had they rebelled against the head whom our Lord Jesus Christ had Himself appointed, but having done so, they had made drastic changes in their doctrines and forms of worship. Reunion with Rome as seen from Lambeth would mean intercommunion, on similar lines to the arrangements now being made between the Church of England and one or two of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, with a respectful recognition of the Papal Primacy such as the Anglican Bishops now give to the See of Canterbury. Reunion with Canterbury as seen from the Vatican would mean the submission and *obedience* of the Anglican Church, and

beyond them are a vast crowd who have been baptized and confirmed and profess to belong to the Church. They require her blessing when they are married, and expect to be buried by her when they are dead. They are infrequent attendants at her services and recognize no obligation to conform to her rules. They are ready to criticize her on all occasions and delight in telling newspaper readers: 'Although I am a Churchman, I am sufficiently broadminded to see that every other religion is better than my own.' They count for nothing in the religious life of the Church, they contribute but little towards her financial support, but in newspaper offices their letters are received as voicing the lay opinion of the Church of England."

nothing less—it is, I think, better not to mince one's words, for that is how matters stand.

In order to make this clear, Cardinal Mercier issued a pastoral on "the Papacy and the Election of Pope Pius XI", which set out the Catholic doctrine of the Papacy in the most definite terms. At the Cardinal's special request Lord Halifax arranged for the translation of this Pastoral into English, though he was not without misgivings as to its probable reception, and it was published with a foreword by him, an account of his first interview with Mercier and of the first conversation. In November 1922 the Cardinal wrote to the newly elected Pope, and said in the course of his letter :

"Your Holiness will surely have noticed the publication by Lord Halifax of an English translation, done by him, of my Pastoral . . . and of a remarkable introduction in which the venerable old Anglican expresses a sincere desire for a rapprochement between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. The author recalls a private unofficial conversation which took place in December 1921, in the Archbishop's Palace at Malines, between three Anglicans and three Catholics, with the idea of dissipating as far as possible the ambiguities and suspicions which are an obstacle to union.

"I at once put the question of the Primacy and infallibility of the sovereign Pontiff. Lord Halifax's little work puts the question on the same footing.

"The Anglicans, notably the Archbishop of Canterbury, desire, we ourselves desire, the conversations to be resumed. But the Anglicans are waiting their first trusting advance towards Rome to be met by a sign of Rome's goodwill towards them. Will the Holy Father authorize me to tell them that the Holy See approves and encourages our conversations?"

Cardinal Gasparri answered on behalf of the Pope :

“Lord Halifax’s book was not sent to the Holy Father,” he said, “who does not know it and would very much like to know it. He authorizes your Eminence to tell the Anglicans that the Holy See approves and encourages your conversations, and prays with all his heart that the good God may bless them.”

Cardinal Mercier wrote to Halifax saying how delighted he was with this message from Rome, and pointed out that the use of the words “the Holy See” implied authoritative approval, though Cardinal Gasparri’s letter was not an official statement intended for publication, but a private message to Cardinal Mercier.

Between the second and third conversations a startling approach was made to the Pope from a different quarter ; it was received in silence, and indeed it demanded no answer, but it was of interest as showing that new aspirations were at work in England. In July 1923 the second Anglo-Catholic Congress was held in the Albert Hall. Large crowds attended, and it could be seen that the Anglo-Catholic party were no longer a persecuted minority, known by the slightly contemptuous name of ritualists, but were a force to be reckoned with. The Bishop of London was President, but the Bishop of Zanzibar was Chairman, and presided at all meetings except the first, when the Bishop of London gave an address. We have seen that the Bishop of Zanzibar was able to combine with true Christian humility that readiness for a fight which every Christian should possess ; he not only made a speech on the social implications of the Holy Eucharist which contains some magnificent passages in complete conformity with the teaching of the Popes, but at the end of the Congress, when messages were being sent to various personages, such as the King, the Archbishop, and Eastern Patriarchs, it suddenly occurred to him that a message should also be sent

to the Pope. Always impetuous, he had drafted it in a moment and read it out to the Assembly, who received it with enthusiastic applause :

“16,000 Anglo-Catholics, in congress assembled, offer respectful greetings to the Holy Father, humbly praying that the day of peace may quickly break.”

The arrival of this telegram at the Vatican must have been a little like the arrival of a meteorite, and it was only natural that no answer should be sent to so unexpected a message, which might indeed turn out to be a hoax. There was plenty of trouble in the newspapers in connection with the telegram, and one of Weston's staff remarked while it was going on, “They don't know the Bishop. If they did they would know that he cables to everyone. It is just his habit.”

A number of the Anglican leaders were dismayed at the Bishop's action. Dr. Frere, himself a member of the Malines group, said in the Albert Hall at the close of his paper : “Messages of this sort do more harm than good, because they are bound to be misunderstood both here and there”, though his words were received with shouts of “No !” from the audience. The Archbishop of Canterbury is reported to have been disturbed by the tone of the Congress, and to have remarked to a fellow Bishop, “I feel very Protestant today.” Poor man, one can sympathize with him.

The attitude of friendliness at the Vatican and at Lambeth continued all through the conversations, though there was a mysterious period in the middle when *The Times* correspondent in Rome claimed that Cardinal Gasparri himself had denied that the Pope had had official cognizance of the conversations. It is probable that the correspondent had not quite understood the distinction, and it is an important distinction, between cognizance and official cognizance. After the second conversation the Abbé Portal wrote to Lord

Halifax that "the Cardinal has sent a sort of resumé of our last Conference to the Pope, and he has had a reply from Cardinal Gasparri expressing approval of our attitude and of the general trend of what we said" ; while in February 1924, shortly after the third conversation, Cardinal Mercier wrote to Lord Halifax saying, "from Rome I have had an excellent private letter from Cardinal Gasparri. This letter confirms the encouragements of the first letter, but the Holy See desires for the present not to take up an official attitude." In October 1925 the Pope also sent his blessing to Lord Halifax through Cardinal Mercier.

After the last conversation the temper of the Vatican became noticeably more cautious. Now why was this ?

CHAPTER XIV

ANGELI NON ANGLI—(continued)

THE Archbishop of Canterbury was friendly and courteous all through the conversations, but nevertheless he always seemed to be a little apprehensive. After the third conversation, Cardinal Mercier said to Lord Halifax with some exasperation, "In proportion as the Sovereign Pontiff, and the Cardinal Secretary of State of the Vatican, affirm with increasing distinctness their confidence in our humble efforts, and thus indirectly disavow certain oppositions of English Roman Catholics, it would seem as if on our side the nearer hopes of reunion seemed approaching, the more sensitive the good Archbishop of Canterbury seems to grow as to his responsibilities to his own people and to desire to put off rather than to hasten the definite contact of both sides."

The Archbishop's responsibilities towards his own people were however far from being easy to discharge. Lord Halifax's aim was, with the most sincere intentions, to emphasize the points of agreement between Canterbury and Rome, while the Archbishop, who had a wider knowledge of the difficulties which existed, was equally determined that the differences should not be minimized; he was always aware of a fact which often seemed to escape Lord Halifax, that there was a wide gap between twentieth-century Englishmen and sixteenth-century formularies, and that it was the former who must be considered first. If Lord Halifax had his way, the net result might be

that a few thousand pious people and a Prayer Book would go over to Rome, leaving the rest of the Church of England where they were before, only very much more disgruntled.

After the third conversation the Archbishop composed a letter to the other Metropolitans of the Anglican Church, dealing with the various approaches towards Christian reunion which had been made, with the Nonconformists, the Scandinavian Lutherans, the Eastern Orthodox, and the Catholics. A draft of the letter was sent to Lord Halifax and he was far from being satisfied with it. He complained that one could not fail to notice the difference in tone which was to be found in the part which dealt with approaches to the various Protestant bodies, and the tone used when referring to reunion with the Holy See. Cardinal Mercier also saw a draft of the letter and was even less pleased.

“From our point of view (he wrote to the Abbé Portal), “we cannot admit that we have allowed Rome to be put on the same level as Moscow and Constantinople under the inspiration of the Lambeth Conference.”

At the Cardinal's request the letter was modified before publication, and as the Pope's message of approval of the conversations had been in the nature of an entirely private communication to Cardinal Mercier, the reference to this was omitted. All the same, when the letter was published, it was received in England on many sides with uneasiness and on others with downright animosity; it was clear that the Archbishop knew the mind of his people.

“I think you felt” (he wrote to Lord Halifax), “that I was a little exaggerating the strength of the feeling which would be aroused in England by a statement of what had been taking place. It was quite evident that I was not exaggerating, and I am certain that had I published in my letter the kind

of things which you, with your clearer vision on these whole questions, would like to say, the present storm, if it can be called so, would have been a whirlwind."

The Archbishop had been apprehensive, but the attitude of many English Catholics had been nearer one of opposition. At the beginning of the conversations Lord Halifax had a very friendly interview with Cardinal Bourne, but as the movement continued and apparently increased there was a marked change in the English Catholic attitude. It might be a very good thing that Lord Halifax and a couple of Anglican friends should pay a friendly visit to the Belgian Cardinal, but if the Malines conversations were to become a permanent institution, a very misleading impression might be given. Unfortunately, this opposition was not always shown in the most tactful or sensible way, and on one occasion a prominent English Catholic went so far that he drew on himself a sharp snub from Cardinal Mercier, but all the same, the English Catholics were on the whole quite right; like the Archbishop of Canterbury, they knew perfectly well that though theologians might see their way to interpret the Prayer Book formularies in a Catholic sense, nevertheless the vast majority of their Protestant friends and neighbours had not the faintest desire to become Catholics, with the obligations which such an act would entail, and reunion with Rome could mean nothing less than this. The majority of English Protestants would indeed be far more ready to undergo a major operation than to go to confession, a disagreeable practice which is obligatory for Catholics. They also knew that there was a movement towards Catholicism among the English people which brought in between twelve and thirteen thousand converts every year, but that the majority of these were converts from agnosticism rather than from Anglicanism; for there was another fact which Car-

dinal Mercier did not perhaps fully realize : not only were the majority of practising Anglicans Protestant at heart, in spite of the spread of the Anglo-Catholic Movement, but the Church of England was in no sense representative of the English people, of whom only between five and six per cent can be described as practising members, a proportion only slightly higher than that of the Catholics. It has been said that as soon as Cardinal Mercier was dead, Cardinal Bourne was able to gain the Pope's ear and to get his own way in regard to the conversations ; this is, I think, a definite over-statement. The fact was that they had been started as a friendly and personal rapprochement between the Cardinal and Lord Halifax, and with the Cardinal's death part of the personal element was removed, so that to continue them indefinitely would be to set up a semi-permanent institution which, if the English people were not to be misled as to the true relations of Rome and Canterbury, was exactly what ought to be avoided.

Tactful or not, a few months after the final conversation the disgruntled English Catholics were able to say "I told you so". Troubles caused by the ritualistic movement and the opposition which it aroused had for years been dividing the Church of England, and it had been decided that something must be done to try and restore order and discipline. With a view to this, a Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline was set up at the beginning of the century, with recommendations "that letters of business should be issued to the Convocations for rubrical reform and for modification in the existing law relating to the conduct of Divine Service—with a view to their enactment by Parliament". In England matters of this kind are not settled in a hurry ; a Prayer Book Revision Committee was set up, which in 1922 presented its report, and on February 7th, 1927, a draft book was presented to the Convocations

of Canterbury and York with speeches from both Archbishops. The book, when it at last arrived, was found to be a lamentable production, and many members of the Anglo-Catholic party were dismayed when they started to read it. As an Anglican wit wrote of it: "A part sentimental, and part Oriental, and part made in Germany book."*—which pleased nobody except the Bishops and the restricted circle of their immediate adherents. Its appearance caused an unexpected excitement in the country, and numbers of letters and articles appeared in the papers, many of which had clearly been written by people who had never given five minutes' thought to the problems of the Christian religion. When the storm had subsided, a definite impression was left that the most determined opposition to Catholic doctrine came, not from outside, but from within the Church of England.

The more definite Anglo-Catholics had detested the book every bit as much as the Low Church party, and they entered into an alliance with them to secure its rejection by Parliament. They were successful, but the unfortunate fact remained, obvious for all to see, that the relations of the Church of England with the State were unpleasantly like the relations between Dr. Proudie, Bishop of Barchester, and his strong-minded wife. After the first rejection, the Bishops, like Dr. Proudie, decided that the battle was too terrible to be faced and presented a somewhat Protestantized version of the book in the following year, which in its turn was ignominiously thrown out. There were some heated debates during which the No Popery drum was beaten loudly and rather discordantly. A speech was made by Sir William Joynson Hicks (later Lord Brentford), a rather narrow Low Churchman, which, however, expressed a point of view widely prevalent in England:

* The Rev. Gabriel Gillett, author of many amusing squibs.

“It may be quite true,” he said, “that the new scheme is right; it may be equally true that the doctrines of the Church of Rome are right; but it is quite clear that the doctrines of the Church of Rome, or any doctrines approximating to those of the Church of Rome are not the doctrines which were established by us at the time of the Reformation. I do not propose to say one word against the doctrines of the Church of Rome; they are not in dispute here. All I have to say is that they are not the doctrines of our Church, and that there are many things done in our Church today which, as the Royal Commission itself said, are ‘on the Rome-ward side of the dividing line’.”

There is no doubt that this speech did much to ensure the rejection of the book. The debates were an eye-opener to many continental Catholics, and they pointed with uncompromising clearness to three conclusions in regard to the Church of England. In the first place there was an alarming lack of agreement as to fundamental doctrines and practices within the innermost ranks of that body; secondly, when a new prayer book was produced with the authority of the Bishops behind it, it contained much which was not in accordance with ancient and Catholic Christianity; and thirdly, a fact which had been forgotten during the last quarter of a century, the Church of England did not possess spiritual freedom and was dependent on the secular power.

During the year 1927 it could be seen that Rome was less favourable. The work of the last conversation was to discuss the reports of the previous meetings with a view to publication. When, however, the time for publication came, both Lambeth and Rome seemed to think that this might not be advisable. Lord Halifax was asked in August by a friendly Belgian monk if he would be prepared to visit Rome and see how the land lay. With his usual gallantry,

and in spite of his great age, he set out for the Vatican in November, and was received in audience by the Pope on November 10th, having previously submitted a memorandum. He must have been a little disappointed at the result of the interview, as though Pius XI gave him his personal blessing and blessed his work, he nevertheless referred neither to the conversations nor to the memorandum. The report, along with Lord Halifax's *Notes on the Conversations at Malines*, eventually appeared in January 1928, Lord Halifax having worried the reluctant Cardinal van Roey and the equally reluctant Archbishop of Canterbury till they at last gave in and agreed to publication. It is typical of his indefatigable energy that on the way back from Rome he spent two nights in Paris, and went to Malines for the day in order to see the Cardinal—a long, tiring journey with a frontier to cross.

So far the attitude of the Pope had been a matter of rumour. Bishop Gore had visited Paris, and had found Monsignor Batiffol as doubtful as the Archbishop of Canterbury about the advisability of publishing the report, and Cardinal van Roey had sent a message to Lord Halifax, shortly before his visit to Rome, stating he was convinced that the publication could do no good, and that the situation was changed since the adoption and publication of the new Prayer Book. When Lord Halifax reached Rome, we have seen that the Pope, though courteous and kind, was determined not to be drawn out. Still, nothing definite had as yet been said. On January 6th, 1928, three weeks after the first rejection of the revised Prayer Book, there appeared the Encyclical *Mortalium Animos*, on fostering true religious unity. It was, as can be imagined, a definite pronouncement and showed that, true to tradition, the Pope neither intended to compromise nor to mince his words. To a certain extent it undoubtedly referred to the World Conference on Faith and Order, a pan-Protestant assembly which

met at Lausanne in August 1927, talked at remarkable length with the very best intentions, and achieved remarkably little. At the same time it cannot be denied that the Pope must have had Malines in his mind as well. The following paragraphs must be taken, I think, as referring to those who had advanced further towards Rome than most of the delegates at Lausanne :

“There are indeed some who recognize and affirm that Protestantism has with inconsiderate zeal rejected certain articles of faith and external ceremonies which are in fact useful and attractive, and which the Roman Church still retains. But they immediately go on to say that the Roman Church, too, has erred, and corrupted the primitive religion by adding to it and proposing for belief doctrines not only alien to the Gospel, but contrary to its spirit. Chief among these they count that of the Primacy of jurisdiction granted to Peter and to his successors in the See of Rome. There are actually some, though few, who grant to the Roman Pontiff a primacy of honour and even a certain power or jurisdiction ; this, however, they consider to arise not from the divine law, but merely from the consent of the faithful. Others, again, even go so far as to desire the Pontiff himself to preside over their mixed assemblies. For the rest, while you may hear many non-Catholics loudly preaching brotherly communion in Jesus Christ, yet not one will you find to whom it ever occurs with devout submission to obey the Vicar of Jesus Christ in his capacity of teacher or ruler. Meanwhile they assert their readiness to treat with the Church of Rome, but on equal terms, as equals with an equal. But even if they could so treat, there seems little doubt that they would do so only on condition that no pact into which they might enter should compel them to retract those opinions which still keep them outside the one fold of Christ.”

Shortly after the appearance of the Encyclical, it was officially announced in the *Osservatore Romano* that there would be no more conversations. The publication of the report raised a small storm which undoubtedly had its effect on the rejection of the Prayer Book. All that is, however, passed and done with. It is not the contents of the report which are interesting, I think, but its spirit. I do not say this sentimentally, but as a statement of fact. In so far as the papers refer to Anglican formularies, they do not matter much, for they refer to statements and to a liturgy in which only a decreasing minority are still interested. The importance of Malines is that it was a magnificent venture of faith and hope and charity, both on the side of Lord Halifax and of Cardinal Mercier, and such ventures, though they may seem to fail, always leave their mark, and it was well that as long as the conversations could do good the Pope gave his approval. As Lord Halifax's biographer has said :

"But if the conversations failed in their immediate object, they failed magnificently, and, for Halifax, heroically. His faith had been proof against every discouragement and rebuff. . . . At no time in his life did he show greater resources of courage, energy, diplomacy, pertinacity and friendship. No man could have so successfully interpreted the Cardinal and the Archbishop to each other ; more than once his efforts averted a rupture ; his correspondence and literary efforts were prodigious ; he made frequent and exhausting journeys. And he was very deaf, at times half blind, and in his ninth decade. For the few years that remained to him he believed that the conversations had done good. Reunion might be a dream, a forlorn hope, but it would come because it was God's will. After all, it would not be in his time. For him it might be :

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard ;

The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky."

Since those days much water has flowed under Lambeth Bridge, and some of it has, to speak the truth, been a little muddy. In 1930 the Lambeth Conference assembled once more, attended by Bishops of the Anglican Church from all over the British Empire, and from one or two places outside the Empire as well. A report was issued, as usual, at the end of the Conference, and its contents filled many members of the Church of England with dismay. It contained much which showed a surprising ignorance or disregard of Catholic tradition, but the most serious item was concerned with the vexed question of the use of marriage, and was in flat contradiction to the moral teaching of the Catholic Church. The resolution on this subject was worded in a silly, sentimental and ambiguous way, a method of dealing with a serious question which is also contrary to the Catholic tradition. It is true that a minority of the Bishops took exception to this regrettable statement, but the majority gave the impression of being ready to bow to an ill-informed public opinion rather than to give straightforward and outspoken guidance to their people. The general effect on the public was one of amusement rather than anything else. A slightly comical sequel was that large numbers of Anglican clergymen, many of them unmarried, were circularized by the less respectable type of chemists with catalogues of their wares, stating that these now had episcopal sanction.

Soon afterwards Pius XI spoke out on the same subject, and he spoke in a very different tone. A papal pronouncement was clearly called for at the time, as apart from the Lambeth Resolution, which was likely to have some effect on a considerable number of

people, a number of other unthoughtful publicists, many of whom were disciples of Marx, were propagating views on marriage completely opposed to that ancient and Christian tradition which for close on twenty centuries has done an incalculable amount to raise the position of women and to produce one of the most stable elements in civilization. On December 1st, 1930, the Encyclical *Casti Connubii* was issued. With boldness and unflinching argument it vindicates the Christian doctrine and the ancient fidelities,* and reminds the world that the movement known as Neo-Paganism (which has, however, none of the glamour and poetry of the ancient paganism), may prove destructive to a degree that would surprise its exponents. It would destroy if it could the traditions of Christian civilization and build up instead a new world, which might be comfortable, but which would be without colour or heroism or hope, a Brave New World such as Mr. Aldous Huxley has skilfully described.

I do not propose to speak against the motives of the Bishops at Lambeth, but it cannot be denied that to the outsider they gave the impression of yielding ground to the Neo-Pagan invader, and it is regrettable that they have since then shown signs of continuing their retreat by making public statements as to the sanctity of the marriage tie such as no Christian leader has presumed to make since the day when our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven.

From the Roman point of view there has also been

* I do not propose to defend the teaching and arguments of this highly controversial document, as it deserves a book to itself; if any reader has been disturbed or annoyed by it I would refer him, as an introduction to a difficult subject, to *Judgment on Birth Control*, by Raoul de Guchteneere (Sheed & Ward, 1931), a work by a doctor of wide experience, and to *Christian Marriage*, by G. H. Joyce, S.J. (Sheed & Ward, 1933), a learned book with, however, its full share of common sense and knowledge of the world. It is a striking fact, I think, that during the last few years a number of non-Catholic doctors, especially in the United States, have moved towards the Catholic view.

fresh trouble over the Abyssinian question; the Emperor apparently had a genius for manipulating the League; Mr. Litvinov had his own axe to grind; and Mr. Eden possessed those romantic and gullible qualities which have made the average Englishman such a strange mixture of stupidity and common sense, of good nature and hypocrisy. In consequence, the case against Mussolini was made as black as could be, and the man in the street grew quite pompous with anger as he read his daily paper. The man in the Protestant pulpit was also in the habit of reading his paper. Now, ever since England broke away from Catholicism in the sixteenth century and started to evolve a religion "in a style entirely her own", the English have had a passion for preaching—like the Pharisee in the parable, they are "not as other men", and consequently have a perfect right to do so. As can be imagined, at the time of the Abyssinian War the pulpits in the Protestant churches trembled with the righteous anger of the preachers, and the Protestant Press trembled in unison. The many uncomfortable events which have occurred in the history of the British Empire were conveniently forgotten while the Italians were arraigned before the British public as the enemies of civilization. It is of interest that very little notice has been given to the fighting which has been taking place since then on the North-West frontier of India, and it is well-known that the English are too humane to kill any black men.

No words were too bad for Mussolini. There was, however, another figure who was to blame, though it was not clear whether he was egging the Duce on or merely a tool in his hands; whichever line he was taking there was no doubt that the Pope of Rome was very much in the wrong. In the summer of 1935 the Pope had quietly and lucidly explained his position, and most sensible people on the Continent had apparently understood; the matter has already been

referred to in a previous chapter. He had signed the Lateran Treaty four years earlier, and by this was in a magnificent position for peace-making in International disputes, should an appeal be made to him, as his Court would necessarily be immune from the purely political considerations and the influence of vested interests that could never be kept out of the Court at Geneva. He had, however, agreed not to interfere unless an appeal was made to him by both parties in a dispute, an agreement which would greatly strengthen his position as an arbiter on the day when an appeal should be made. On this occasion the Emperor of Abyssinia had decided to appeal to Geneva and not to the Vatican, and international morality therefore demanded that the Sovereign Pontiff should remain aloof.

A logical argument does not appeal to the English Protestant, and the Lateran Treaty, being a mere agreement among Dagoes, could not be worth studying. In consequence, only a small number of English non-Catholics have understood the position of Pius XI. Nevertheless, opinion among the sensible has slowly begun to change. Though it cannot be said that Mussolini had all the right on his side, it has been seen more and more how difficult was the position of the Italians in Eritrea, with a barbarous and uncontrolled neighbour just across the frontier whose behaviour was in many ways similar to that of the tribes to the North-West of India, and there has been a realization that the bearded and romantic Haile Selassie was perhaps not altogether the enlightened and humane and popular ruler that so many English papers and parsons made out; there has even been a suspicion that the League was a little hysterical and unjust, while Pius XI was calm and wise. The League lost Haile Selassie his throne, and very nearly started a European conflagration; Pius XI remained faithful to the Treaty he had signed, and thus did not damage

his position as a potential peacemaker. Europe may yet have reason to be grateful to him. The Abyssinian escapade was followed by the Spanish war, which will be dealt with in the next chapter. Once more the Protestant English started to preach, and as they preached showed that they had not begun to understand the situation; the Pharisee was too busy with his many good works to have time for studying the motives of a bloodthirsty publican like General Franco. On the whole, the clergy of the Church of England had not thought much about the Catholics of Spain since the day when George Borrow went on his travels; in the summer of 1936 the news came through that the Spanish Army had rebelled against the Government; in several towns their rebellion had not been successful, and where they had failed it was rumoured that their officers had been butchered, large numbers of churches and convents had been burnt, priests and nuns had been killed, and there were dark rumours of savage cruelty. The Protestant clergy and numbers of their laity began to remember about Spain, and seemed to have heard that the Church there was hopelessly corrupt; they had no first-hand knowledge as few of them had visited the country or could speak the language, but they could remember hearing something of the kind; it was, of course, a pity that works of art should be destroyed, but these ecclesiastics were merely getting their deserts. Even the Anglo-Catholics joined in the hue and cry, and their most influential paper was hot on the scent; a few eminent Anglo-Catholics wrote expressing their sincere regret at this campaign of abuse and injustice, but the editor of the paper in question replied in a way that to the casual reader seemed a little impertinent, and described them as obscurantists in religion and politics.

On the whole, English public opinion was against Franco as it had been against Mussolini; the Anglican

hierarchy reflected this public opinion and made a number of remarks which they presumably hoped the English public would appreciate; the Archbishop of Canterbury has indeed preserved a dignified silence, but several other Anglican bishops and even a misguided Metropolitan have betrayed an attitude towards the persecuted Catholics in Spain which is as striking for its folly as for its lack of Christian charity. More than that, three Anglican deans have chosen to visit Spain, along with a number of Nonconformists; they only chose to visit the Government side, although the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar, whose permission they should have asked for, announced that had they done so he would have insisted on their visiting both sides; their reports showed that they had obediently swallowed everything which they were told, that they had not had the time to make independent investigations, and that they were merely being used by the politicians who had invited them. One of the Nonconformists in the party has published articles in the English Press, both before and after the journey, and these are surprising examples of ignorance and bad taste, with no trace of first-hand knowledge; an Anglican Bishop wrote to the paper to express his approval of one of the articles, and the Deans who accompanied the writer and signed the report with him must be considered as committed to a certain extent to the lamentable views which he expresses. Since the publication of the report it has been announced that the Prime Minister will shortly be raising one of these Deans to the Anglican Episcopate.

Pius XI has been freely blamed over Spain as he was over the Abyssinian War; one Protestant paper which should know better has described him as "the helpless ally of Fascism", and has contrasted what it considers to be the autocratic temper of Rome with the love of liberty for which Canterbury stands. This occurred in the course of a paragraph on the

Spanish War and it did not state precisely whether the liberty for which Canterbury stands is of the kind which is to be found in Red Spain. Another Dean, whose stall is in one of our most ancient and historic cathedrals, wrote a ridiculous and abusive letter to the papers on the subject of the Catholic Church in which he announced that the leopard does not change its spots, and although there has been a gallant and splendid minority in the Church of England who have stood out against the unjust accusations which are being made against their fellow Christians, there is no doubt that since the year 1935 a sour-faced and Protestant spirit has been troubling the Anglican communion. It is disappointing and a sad falling off from the noble and Irenic ideas for which Lord Halifax stood ; had he been alive now one cannot help thinking that he would have been greatly saddened.

There also seems to have been a growing split in the Anglo-Catholic party since the days of Bishop Weston and the first Anglo-Catholic Congresses ; one is inclined to think that in those years the Anglo-Catholic movement reached its zenith, as the split is so definite that it is doubtful whether the two wings can ever co-operate in the future. On the right is the Papalist wing, who believe in the Catholic doctrine of the Papacy, but who most illogically refuse to make the act of obedience which the Pope demands, and prefer instead to build a castle in the air of a Papalized Church of England ; there is no doubt that their influence and numbers are spreading among the clergy, but on the whole they are suspected by the laity, who prefer a straightforward Roman Catholicism. To the left is the so-called Liberal wing, who give the impression of being increasingly anti-Papal, and indeed more inclined to agree with the Anglican Bishops than with the Pope in the matter of Christian marriage ; this wing may not unfairly be said to believe in Catholic ritual, but to be doubtful about the Catholic

faith. In both wings there appears to be a risk of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel, of concentrating on matters of small importance such as ceremonial while ignoring or even being unorthodox in essentials. The words which Newman wrote to Henry Wilberforce in 1849 would apply even more aptly to the Anglo-Catholic movement of today :

“While you stick to the old Church of England ways you are respectable. When you propose to *return* to lost Church of England ways you are rational. But when you invent a new ceremonial which never was, when you copy the Roman or other foreign rituals, you are neither respectable or rational.”

In social work the Anglo-Catholics have done great things, but in doctrine they have lost their way.

It looks, then, as if in spite of the gallant though misplaced efforts of the Papalist party in the Church of England, there is likely to be an increasing gulf between that body and the Pope ; in 1928 Pius XI stated the Catholic position with no uncertain voice in the *Mortalium Animos* and it is the same position in the twentieth century as it was in the first ; since 1928 it seems, however, as if the Anglican position had changed and as if Anglicanism was returning towards the anti-Catholic polemics of 1850 ; Mrs. Varden has taken down the Protestant Manual from the shelf once more, and is reading it over with her shrewish companion, Miss Miggs.

On the other hand, it looks as if there is to be a new rapprochement between the Vatican and the British Government. Monsignor Pizzardo, Archbishop of Nicea, who has been entrusted with much diplomatic work by Pius XI, and who, it will be remembered, played an important part at the Genoa Conference, was sent as Papal Envoy to the Coronation of King George VI. During his visit to London he had a long interview with Mr. Eden, who has surely learnt

much wisdom since 1935, and it is reported that both sides were supremely satisfied. There are only two other institutions which can vie in international scope with the Catholic Church and the British Empire, and they are both of them sinister forces, International Finance and the Third International; a friendly co-operation between the Vatican and the British Foreign Office may well prove to be a decisive force for peace in the difficult years which lie before us; spiritual work always has good effects, but often enough in an unexpected direction, and it may be that Lord Halifax's noble efforts will produce in the future something quite different from anything he or Cardinal Mercier ever foresaw at Malines.

CHAPTER XV

THE MYTH OF RED SPAIN

(*The Years Before*)

A HUNDRED years ago a picturesque but slightly eccentric Englishman was wandering about Spain, which at the time was troubled by civil war, distributing copies of the Bible, a book which he mistakenly believed was forbidden to Catholics. On his return to England George Borrow published the account of his adventures and gave to the world one of the most engaging travel books which have ever been written. He was a man of strong likes and dislikes, and the man whom he disliked above all others was the Pope of Rome; he knew very little about him, but nevertheless no words were too abusive for the Sovereign Pontiff. In the preface to his book he chose to address the Pope of the day with some rather astonishing rhetoric, and for some reason best known to himself to call him by a Russian name. "Undeceive yourself, *Batuschka*!" thundered the representative of the Bible Society. "Undeceive yourself! Spain was ready to fight for you so long as she could increase her own glory by doing so; but she took no pleasure in losing battle after battle on your account."

And yet, a hundred years after these prophecies, there are many Spaniards at war, and while there are naturally many other issues at stake, it is a fact that many of them believe themselves to be fighting for the

Catholic religion, and for its earthly head, the Pope. On September 14th, 1936, Pius XI received in audience at Castel Gandolfo a number of refugees from Spain. In the course of a speech of some length, he explained his attitude to the terrible struggle which had begun. A number of attempts have been made to try and persuade the newspaper-fed public that the war in Spain is one between Fascism and Democracy, and that there has been no persecution of Christian people; many priests and nuns may have fared badly, but according to a section of the Press it is only because they allowed themselves to become Fascist agents. As I hope to establish, this is an absolutely inaccurate account of the situation, and at the beginning of his speech the Pope was careful to show how fully he realized what was the true issue. He knew that the men and women whom he was addressing were exiles for religious as well as for political reasons, and that a religious persecution had broken out in Spain on the lines followed in Russia and Mexico.

“How timely,” he said, “how providential and how pleasing to God is your reparation of fealty, of reverence and of praise, in these our days in which it has been given to hear the new and horrifying cries of ‘No God!’ and ‘Against God!’ But all this brightness and refulgence of heroism and glory which you, beloved sons, present and recall to Us, makes Us see with compelling clarity, as in a great Apocalyptic vision, the wreck and ruin, the profanation and havoc of which you have been not merely the witnesses but the victims.”

These well-rounded periods may seem a little strange to anyone unused to the style of papal pronouncements, just as the great Church of the Jesuits in Rome must surprise any visitor who is accustomed to the more austere style of the North, but there can be no doubt as to what the Pope had in

mind: he did not believe himself to be addressing a number of Fascist refugees who had just failed to bring off a *coup d'état*.

Nevertheless, the Pope was not going to allow himself to be embroiled as a political partisan. Attempts were made during the Great War to give the impression that the Holy See was favouring one side more than the other, and these attempts had to be steadfastly resisted; the same policy has been followed in regard to the war in Spain. Though it has been increasingly obvious that one side in Spain stands for the defence of religion, while the other, however much it may protest and look pious, behaves as if it intends to exterminate it, nevertheless, it is not so clear as to leave no shadow of doubt, and the Holy See, in order to preserve its position intact as an international mediator, will not take sides. At the beginning of the conflict the *Osservatore Romano* announced that the Holy See was neutral, and while Mussolini and Hitler have recognized Franco's Government, the Pope has been careful to do nothing which might give the impression that he had done so. This action or, rather more, this avoidance of action, is not due to any love of sitting on the fence, but is due to the far greater responsibility which he holds and to the necessity for his always remaining impartial if he can possibly do so, in order that he may do nothing likely to injure his potentialities as a peacemaker. At the close of his speech the Pope gave a blessing, and it was carefully worded. While there was nothing ambiguous in what he said, nevertheless, there could be no doubt that his intention was to steer clear of all political entanglements.

"To all this good and faithful people," he said, "to all this dear and noble Spain which has suffered so much, We direct Our Benediction, and We desire that it may reach them; and to them, no less, Our daily prayer goes out and will continue to go

out until the happiness of peace fully and finally returns.

“Our Benediction, above any mere political or mundane consideration, goes out, in a special manner, to all those who have assumed the difficult and dangerous task of defending and restoring the rights and honour of God and of Religion, which is to say the rights and dignity of conscience, the prime condition and the most solid basis for all human and civil welfare.”

There have been plenty of perhaps not very thoughtful people who have seized on his words, and have announced that the Pope has “blessed the rebellion”—a statement about as fair as those which silly and unscrupulous people made about him at the time of the Abyssinian War. On September 29th, 1936, a letter appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* which caused a certain amount of discussion, from Don Enrique Moreño, a Spanish Catholic resident in England; he is a supporter of the so-called Government which has, for reasons of safety, moved from Madrid to Valencia (in spite of Señor Caballero’s empty heroics), and he wrote to “express the painful impression produced on many Spanish Catholics by the words with which the Pope has recently blessed the Rebels”.

But if the “Government” side, which Don Enrique Moreño considers it his duty to support, “have assumed the difficult and dangerous task of defending the rights and honour of God and of Religion”—a claim which a number of Protestant dignitaries have apparently made for them, and which one presumes Don Enrique Moreño would also make—it would appear that they are included in the Pope’s blessing, for it is noticeable all through the speech that no reference is made definitely to either side by name, and the Pope expressed his sorrow that civil war had broken out. Can it be that

there is reason to believe that the Spanish "Government" is not over favourably disposed towards God or religion? I wonder. It is also the case that a section of the Basques have, in the hopes of gaining autonomy, thrown in their lot with Madrid; as far as one can make out there is religious liberty in their territory, and the Pope has never said a word against this deeply Catholic people who have sided against General Franco.

After giving his blessing to the defenders of the Faith the Pope went on to say that their task is

"... Both difficult and dangerous, because the labour and difficulty of defence too easily make it go beyond bounds and not fully justifiable, and, further, intentions less pure, selfish interest and mere Party feeling may just as easily enter in to cloud and change the morality of and responsibility for what is being done."

A shrewd warning, and necessary, for it cannot be denied that for Catholics the present situation is no easy one; to many it has seemed as if a rebellion of reaction in Spain had broken out against a Liberal and progressive Government, in order to defend privilege and vested interests, and backed up by a rich and corrupt Church, which saw itself faced with loss of position and revenue. A large section of the Press has supported this view, the falsity of which has, however, been shown up week after week in the brilliant and far-seeing articles of Mr. J. L. Garvin in the *Observer*, one of the few English journalists who understand foreign affairs, and whose virile prose, always rather reminiscent of Edmund Burke, is in marked contrast to the hysterical and misleading squeals of the English left. Now, what really happened in Spain, and how much is the Church to blame? It will be simplest to tackle the ecclesiastical side first.

The Catholic Church is an institution almost 2,000 years old, with roots that stretch back to the

days before history began, and it has been an integral part of Spanish life for many centuries. Now, it is a fact that ancient institutions tend to become conservative, for they possess the wisdom of the ages, and are aware that to scrap the things which to the hot-head and the hustler appear merely to be encumbrances is often to inflict serious loss on the community. There is always a danger, however, that this conservatism will become a little exaggerated, and in certain respects it is likely that this happened in Spain; to be conservative is not, however, to be corrupt, and only the most bigoted partisan will contest this statement.

It is true that a large proportion of the Spanish people are illiterate, but to blame the Church for this would, I think, be unjust, for it has on the whole tried to the best of its ability to grapple with a difficult problem. Professor Allison Peers, the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, which is probably the best-informed and most fair-minded book on the causes of the civil war, holds the Chair of Spanish in Liverpool University, and knows more about the inner life of Spain than almost any other Englishman; four articles by him appeared in the *Tablet*—on May 22nd and 29th, and June 4th and 11th, 1937, describing the educational work done by the religious Orders in Spain, especially by the Salesians among the lower classes. There is no space here to quote from them at length, but they deserve careful study by anybody who really wishes for a fair view of the Spanish educational problem. Professor Peers explains that his aim is

“ . . . To demonstrate how much all classes and types of Spaniard owe to the religious Orders, and how much, therefore, Spain itself would lose by the victory in the civil war of any party or groups of parties which would curtail or suppress their activities.”

How wide-spread these activities were is indicated

by the fact that the Jesuits, in the days before they were expelled by Señor Azaña's Government, maintained in connection with the Church of the Sacred Heart in Barcelona five working-men's clubs, and educated over 1,200 children, while in Badajos they had a working-men's club with 1,500 members, in connection with which there were also housing and pension schemes, a sick-benefit club, a savings bank, and day- and night-classes. It is estimated that on the morning in 1932 when the Jesuits left Spain, some 20,000 people were present at Mass at Loyola, the hamlet where St. Ignatius was born.

The agricultural problem in Spain has been even more acute, and it cannot be denied that there were many landlords who cared much for their rents but hardly at all for their unfortunate tenants and employees. Since the outbreak of the war letters and articles have appeared in the Press denouncing the rapacity and land-grabbing qualities of the Catholic Church, and several Protestant clergymen have been particularly active in this direction, though their self-righteous letters have been supported by no verifiable facts. Now, is this the case? Professor Salvador de Madariaga is no friend to the clergy, if one may judge from his chapter on clericalism, and information from such a source is therefore of special interest. Writing in 1930 of attempts to deal with the agrarian question, he says that

“The only agency which can rival the State in this field is the Church. Early in the century some enlightened members of the clergy realized the social and political possibilities of this field. [Is the Professor a little ungenerous?] A campaign of propaganda fostered by Bishops and priests led to the creation of not a few rural associations termed ‘syndicates’, having for their main object the organization of rural credit. This was achieved by means of banks based on joint and unlimited

liability, a system which in the small social area of a village seems to work satisfactorily. The movement met with considerable success, and the sketch of a federation was first attempted in 1912, when the federation of the old Castile and Leon syndicates came into being. Others followed, until the whole country was covered by the Confederacion Nacional Catolico-Agraria.

"This organization has ambitious aims, and, what is more, it attains them. It arranges for the collective purchase of fertilizers and machinery; it organizes collective sales of the produce, as well as the collective working of not a few industrial-agricultural operations such as wine, flour and oil production, the organization of slaughter-houses and electric plants, etc. The value of its buildings was estimated in 1926 at about twenty million pesetas, while the deposits and loans of its credit banks were calculated respectively at two hundred and fifty millions and two hundred million pesetas. Extensive operations of internal colonization have been carried out under the auspices of this organization, and valuable work has also been done in irrigation."

In his chapter on clericalism, Professor de Madariaga makes what is more or less an attack on the Catholic Church in Spain as it has been during the last 200 years, and yet, at the end of it all, one remains a little puzzled. He apparently believes the Church to be a retarding influence on the national life, without specifying clearly enough the direction in which he wishes it to progress, but all the time the impression is left on one's mind that his accusations are vague. The Catholic Church in Spain, apart from its supernatural functions, is a society composed almost entirely of Spaniards, and its defects would seem to have been precisely those which one associates with the Spanish temperament—a tendency to pride and intolerance, and at times, while keeping a firm hold

of the spiritual, nevertheless to neglect ethical considerations, though one is inclined to think that this latter tendency has often been exaggerated by prejudiced writers; it is true, however, that the inhabitant of northern Europe more usually places ethics before religion, while the man of the South is apt to go too far in the opposite direction. All through the nineteenth century, and at the beginning of the twentieth, it may be true to say that the Church in Spain has been too much inclined to distrust freedom of thought. If this is the case it is a pity, but it has probably been caused by the realization, produced by centuries of experience, that the Spaniard when uncontrolled by authority has a dangerous bias towards mental and moral anarchy.

Another trouble is that the Church has been in Spain for many centuries, and the result of being accustomed to something is the same all over the world—men grow slack and begin to take things for granted. Up to the fall of the monarchy the appointment of Bishops was in the hands of the Crown, and in consequence there undoubtedly was a certain amount of place-hunting which was bound to have its effect on the general health of the body. In spite of much malicious abuse and ignorant chatter, nobody has been able to prove that the Spanish Bishops were not good and devout men, but nevertheless they probably were often rather out of touch with the masses and with popular movements. Social questions were too often neglected, the Church was insufficiently organized for social action, and all over Spain it is probably not unfair to say that there were too many Catholics who were content with a religion that stopped at the church door. Provided the priest performed his duties satisfactorily inside the building, all was well, and thus apostolic work would at times be a little half-hearted. In the lower ranks of the clergy there was widespread and acute poverty; there

was a bad system by which they were paid inadequate salaries by the State which were scarcely enough to keep body and soul together, but which nevertheless gave the laity the impression that they had no need to contribute towards the support of their parish priests; in consequence they often had to try and earn a little more by taking on secular jobs as well, and the result of this was inevitably a loss of prestige.

We have already seen that the method of appointing Bishops was unsatisfactory; an even more serious drawback was that the better-paid posts, such as canonries in cathedrals, were the reward of brains rather than of good work. Appointments to these were made as the result of public disputations, the successful speaker winning the prize. The clever young man from the seminary would thus secure a comfortable and well-endowed stall, and would be tempted to spend the rest of his life after the fashion of the Fellow of an Oxford College in the eighteenth century, quietly learned and attending the Divine Office regularly, but oblivious of the masses outside, while the parish priest of peasant stock who had led a life of privation for many years was passed over.*

Such, I believe, was the state of the Church in Spain; it had its defects, and it had its virtues, but I see no reason for denying that the latter easily won the day. It needed some opposition to stir it to more active life. Ganivet suggested in 1896 that it would be a good thing if a few Freethinkers and Protestants could be hired to live in Spain with this object in view; one is inclined to think that he was right, and had his sensible though comical scheme been put into operation all kinds of interesting results might have been achieved! As it was, when a serious opposition

* For this information I am indebted to Dr. Bernard Grimley, the Editor of the *Catholic Times*, who has lived for several years in Spain. His little pamphlet *The Spanish Crisis* gives much interesting information.

of Freethinkers did come, it proved as constructive as a flock of locusts.

It will be most convenient to study the political history of the last fifteen years in chronological order. General Primo de Rivera brought off his *coup d'état* on September 13th, 1923—about a year and a half after the coronation of Pius XI. On the whole the majority of the Spanish people were behind him during the early years of the dictatorship; they were sick to death of the perpetual disturbances and swings of the pendulum which were the result of trying to combine the Spanish temperament with something on the lines of a parliamentary system, and it cannot be denied that during the early years of his rule Spain knew greater peace and prosperity than she had known at any time since the birth of Spanish Liberalism. The war in Morocco, which had been a sort of running sore in the body of the Spanish people, was brought to an end, and under his firm control trade flourished. The railways, the telephone service, and the hotels were improved, and irrigation schemes were set in motion. It is a sad fact, however, that a successful dictator must either be a man of genius or a man of iron, and Primo de Rivera was neither; he was an impulsive, garrulous, benevolent Andalusian, with the Spanish distrust of freedom of thought and speech. His rule was never harsh, as has been that of other dictators, but his policy was inconsistent and his methods increasingly incompetent. In many cases wages were shockingly low for working-people, with consequent discontent, and among the upper classes the intellectuals were becoming increasingly disgruntled at his repressive methods. At last the discontent overflowed, not only bearing a worn-out and well-meaning dictator across the Pyrenees, but not long afterwards the King of Spain as well.

Under the dictatorship the relations of the Vatican and the Spanish Government were friendly and

uneventful. The early decades of the nineteenth century had been a period of violent upheaval in Spain, and the Church had suffered much at the hands of the Liberals, many of whom were merely adventurers at heart. In 1851 a concordat was signed between the Vatican and the Spanish Government, the terms of which were undoubtedly favourable to the Church, and its provisos held good up to the fall of the monarchy.

King Alfonso left Spain with quiet dignity, and the rights and wrongs of his behaviour are now beside the point ; one feels, all the same, that had his rule been wiser and more constructive, and had he made better use of his opportunities, the storm need never have broken, or anyway, if it did break, would have caused far less havoc. The new republic came in with enthusiasm and high-sounding promises ; it has gone out with tears and blood.

CHAPTER XVI

THE MYTH OF RED SPAIN

(*The Facts*)

SEÑOR AZAÑA, when he took over the office of Prime Minister under the new republic, made a grandiloquent speech in which he said : "Never, gentlemen, while in my hands, shall authority be weakened ! Never, while in my hands, shall the Government be the object of contempt, scorn and ridicule ! Never in this Ministry shall there be hesitancy in the service of the Commonwealth ! The republic belongs to us all. Woe to the man who desires to lift his hand against us !"

Golden eloquence indeed, but the last promise was the only one which has been fulfilled ; it was indeed more than fulfilled, for not only was it a case of woe to those who should lift their hands against Señor Azaña, but also of woe to all those unfortunates who should be even suspected of wishing to do so. During the two years' rule of the left which followed the fall of the monarchy, there was a constant campaign of repression, so much so that *The Times*, which has been consistently favourable to the republic, contained an article on May 16th, 1931, which said :

"Considerations of legality have been abandoned, the Opposition Press has been silenced by confiscation, or merely by order, the High Court of Justice has been abolished, martial law has been proclaimed, and legislation by edict is being hastily promulgated

in a fierce endeavour to consolidate the republic by any and every means."

This policy of repression was intensified after the passing of the "Law for the Defence of the Republic", which held sway for twenty-one months; it was in direct contradiction to the spirit of the new constitution, and became in Señor Azaña's hands an instrument of tyranny. His term of office was stained by the tragedy of Casas Viejas, the deportation of a number of Communist rebels *without trial* to Spanish Guinea, the suspension of most of the Opposition papers, again in defiance of the constitution, and the deportation of a large number of members of the aristocracy and adherents of the right, also *without trial*, to Villa Cisneros, a desert and very unhealthy place on the West Coast of Africa, where they had to endure every sort of hardship, including a grave shortage of water. A good beginning for a Liberal régime. There are those in England who have expressed their admiration for Señor Azaña's methods of government, but one feels that they must either have unusual ideas of right and wrong or else have been too idle to study the facts.

The Church did not fare well when Señor Azaña was in power, and it was partly due to his ecclesiastical policy that there was such a marked swing to the right in 1933. The sympathies of the humbler parish priest would naturally be with the poor, who, it is only too true, had not had a fair deal under the old régime, and it is probable that about eighty per cent of the lesser clergy voted for the republic which gave such fine promises. They were aware that the ecclesiastical machine was rather run down and needed rejuvenation, and that the fall of the monarchy would almost certainly bring to an end the State interference with the appointments in the Church which, as we have seen, had bad results. The new Government showed no gratitude for their support.

Trouble had started when Cardinal Segura, the Archbishop of Toledo, issued a pastoral which was undoubtedly provocative. The Cardinal was a shrewd man, still under fifty, who was not only a scholar but a keen social reformer as well, and who had distinguished himself by his humanitarian work in poverty-stricken districts: He saw clearly enough the direction in which events were moving, and boldly warned his flock that much courage and fidelity would be required from them.

"In these moments of terrible uncertainty," he wrote, "every Catholic must measure the magnitude of his responsibility and valiantly perform his duties. If we all keep our eyes fixed on higher interests, and sacrifice what is secondary to what is important, if we unite our forces and prepare to fight with perfect cohesion and discipline, without vain parade, but with faith in our ideals, with abnegation and the spirit of sacrifice, we shall be able to look at the future with tranquillity, confident of victory.

"If we remain quiet and idle, if we allow ourselves to give way to apathy and timidity, if we leave the road open to those who are attempting to destroy religion or expect the benevolence of our enemies to secure the triumph of our ideals, we shall have no right to lament when bitter necessity shows us that we had victory in our hands yet knew not how to fight like intrepid warriors prepared to succumb gloriously."

The gauntlet had been thrown down, and the Government replied by requesting the Holy See to remove the Cardinal from his office. The Holy See did not comply with their request, but the Cardinal, probably under pressure from the secular authorities, left for Rome. There had been a fierce outbreak of church-burning conducted by gangs of hooligans and fanatics, which the Government had made only

the most ineffectual efforts to control, and he may have thought that his absence for a time would bring peace. He returned incognito soon afterwards, entering Spain through the Pyrenees by one of the more remote passes, but was detected, and escorted over the frontier the next day. After this incident the Holy See complied with the request of the Government, the See of Toledo was declared vacant, and the Cardinal was replaced by Monsignor Goma, a well-known theologian.

Cardinal Segura had not been merely captious, for he saw well enough the aims which the Government had in view. When the constitution was drawn up, it contained several clauses which could only be interpreted in an anti-Catholic sense. The first one dealing with the Church, by which the payment of the clergy by the State was to cease after two years, was more likely to have some good results, but there were others which declared that the Jesuit order in Spain was to be dissolved and its property nationalized and used for "charitable and educational purposes",* and other Orders were to come under the scope of a special law, and to be dissolved if they should "constitute a peril to the State". It was not specified by what standards their dangerous possibilities were to be judged, and a final threat was held out that "it shall be permissible for the property of the religious Orders to be nationalized". Such a threat, it must be remembered, can be a regular sword of Damocles for an Order which has embarked on a scheme of widespread charitable or educational work.† The clause dealing with marriage, by which any union may be dissolved "as a result of mutual disagreement or on

* The Jesuits were not mentioned by name, but the reference to the Order which takes a fourth vow made it obvious who was meant.

† In the course of the debate Señor Azafia made the astounding statement, which he was naturally unable to support, that "In the sphere of the political and moral sciences, the Catholic religious Orders are compelled by virtue of their dogma to teach everything that is contrary to the principles which are the foundation of the modern State."

the petition of either party, just cause being shown", was also bound to be highly distasteful to Catholics.

Relations between the Spanish Government and the Vatican were by now strained just beyond breaking-point. The Holy See had refused a *placet* to the newly appointed Ambassador to the Vatican, and made a condition of his being accepted that the lives and safety and property of the faithful should be guaranteed by the Government. To this very moderate request the Government made no reply, and it must be said that no guarantee from them would have been worth much ; at that time nobody's life or property appeared to be safe in Spain, and the Government gave no satisfactory evidence of desiring to improve the situation, while their threats to the religious Orders showed that they had ceased to believe in justice. When the new President of the republic, Señor Alcalá Zamora, held his first reception, the Papal Nuncio delivered the formal address of congratulation as Deputy Doyen of the diplomatic corps, but one cannot imagine that he felt that the new republic or its President had behind them many achievements of which they might be proud.

The expulsion of the Jesuits followed soon enough, and their property was confiscated. They had done magnificent work in Spain and this move was only popular among the more narrow-minded and uncontrolled and anti-clericals. Professor de Madariaga, an anti-clerical of the more balanced type, has written of Señor Azaña's folly and spite in scathing terms :

"The second republic has ruined a magnificent opportunity of directing the problem of secondary education towards a satisfactory solution. Obsessed by its anti-clericalism, it has light-heartedly closed down the only type of school that, for all its imperfections, bore some slight resemblance to a secondary school—the Jesuit College. And having

done this it has created more and more . . . spiritless caricatures of universities. . . . In matters of secondary education the republic has failed dismally.”*

Mention has already been made of the social work done by the Society of Jesus in Spain. Professor Allison Peers’ comment on the intellectual loss suffered by the country as a result of the expulsion is illuminating :

“The excellence of Jesuit education is proverbial the whole world over, and in a country like Spain, where for centuries education has been neglected, it has been a godsend. At the time of its dissolution, the Society had some seventy residences and thirty colleges in Spain. Of the best known of the colleges, that of Sarria, near Barcelona, had a school of Ecclesiastical Studies, an institute of Chemistry, and laboratories for Biology and Experimental Psychology. The theological studies of the College at Comillas and the astronomical studies of those at Granada were equally noteworthy. The poorest classes were poorer for the loss of the Jesuits.”†

The expulsion of the Jesuits was only the thin end of the wedge, and in October 1932 a “Law of Confessions and Congregations” was drafted, which fulfilled the threats against the religious Orders contained in the constitution. Besides a number of clauses which gave the State unnecessary powers to meddle in the inner life of the Orders, it was also laid down that no Order might engage in commerce, industry, or in agricultural labour apart from what is necessary for its own subsistence ; no Order might engage in teaching apart from the instruction of its own members ; State inspectors were to make investigations so as to ensure that the Orders had no private schools of their own and did not teach in

* *Anarquía o Jerarquía*, p. 248.

† *The Spanish Tragedy*, p. 94.

schools under lay control. The result of this drastic decree would be that the State would have to provide schools for some 600,000 children at least—a heavy requirement with which Señor Azaña's Government could not possibly deal; luckily, they went out of office before the measure came into effect.

This law passed the Cortes on May 17th, 1933, by a majority of 278 votes to 50; the Metropolitan Bishops at once replied with a joint letter in which they condemned the law and other anti-clerical measures of the Government; on June 2nd their action was endorsed by the Pope, who issued an Encyclical denouncing the law with well-merited acerbity. He had already drawn attention to the bad results of secularizing education in the Encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri* (December 31st, 1929), in which occurs the highly controversial but nevertheless accurate passage:

“Let it be borne in mind that this institution (the school) owes its existence to the initiative of the family and of the Church, long before it was undertaken by the State. Hence, considered in its historical origin, the school is by its very nature an institution subsidiary and complementary to the family and to the Church. It follows logically and necessarily that it must not be in opposition to, but in positive accord with, the other two elements, and form with them a perfect moral union, constituting one sanctuary of education, as it were, with the family and the Church. Otherwise it is doomed to fail of its purpose and to become an agent of destruction. . . . From this it follows that the so-called ‘neutral’ or ‘lay’ school, from which religion is excluded, is contrary to the fundamental principles of education. Such a school, moreover, cannot exist in practice; it is bound to become irreligious.”

Señor Zamora must have known that the

Encyclical condemning the law was on the way, but though he claimed to be a champion of the Catholic cause, he agreed to give his signature to the law; it has been said that he was right in doing so, as to have refused would have placed him in an unconstitutional position. On the other side it can be urged with greater force that the finest men, such as Saint Thomas More, have always placed Christianity before constitutional behaviour, and that later events have always proved them right. Anyway, on this occasion, the fall of the left-wing Government made the measure of no effect.

The two years of the centre-right which followed were better for the Church, but little enough can be said of the achievements of the Government. While the first two years of the republic were occupied with feverish and highly unintelligent activity, the next two years were mainly noticeable for an uninspiring inertia. Negotiations were opened with the Vatican, and the Foreign Minister, while retaining his portfolio, went to the Vatican as "Ambassador Extraordinary". The Law of Congregations remained on the Statute Book, though in practice it was allowed to lapse.

During these years there was one sign of activity: it became evident that the Catholics of Spain had taken Cardinal Segura's advice to heart and had begun to organize themselves under the political leadership of Señor Gil Robles. The Catholic Party, known as the CEDA, had rapidly increased in membership. In April 1934 Robles addressed 50,000 young men at El Escorial, and his words have since then come partly true, but in a strange and terrible way:

"We will come into office soon, for the political Parties are crumbling . . . the moment will arrive when not only the right groups, but the great neutral masses all over Spain, will turn to us as their only hope for the future."*

* *Sol*, April 24th, 1934.

The CEDA has been described by its enemies as both Monarchist and Fascist ; as a matter of fact it was neither, and was the only Party whose policy could with justice be called both constructive and consistent ; it would be more accurate to compare it with the Centre Party in Germany, or the Popular Party in Italy, both of which have, as we know, been persecuted by the Nazi and Fascist movements. In October 1934 there were 114 CEDA deputies in the Cortes, out of a total of 306, of which 207 were of the centre and the right ; they were easily the largest of the Parties represented, the next—the Radicals—having only 72 deputies ; it was therefore only fair that they should be adequately represented in the Government, and indeed it would have been suitable, owing to their predominance, that Robles should be Prime Minister. He was, however, passed over in favour of Alejandro Lerroux, though he was given a portfolio along with two other members of the CEDA. Though this was only just, the extremists of the left were so incensed that they engineered a revolt in the Asturias. It is indeed significant that the very people who have condemned General Franco for his revolt against anarchy and chaos were the very ones who supported and encouraged the rebels at Oviedo who rose against constitutionalism.

After the failure of the revolt, the CEDA grew even more in numbers ; its policy was an excellent example of Catholic action such as has always been encouraged by Pius XI, but it had to contend with the most unscrupulous misrepresentation and constant opposition. In spite of the increasing size of his following Gil Robles was not called to form a ministry, and in consequence his programme, one of the only bright spots of those dark years, and which might have meant the bloodless salvation of Spain, remained untried.

What happened ? With the CEDA condemned to impotence, the rule of the centre-right continued to

be ineffectual and lethargic ; in February 1936 there was a swing to the left at the elections, though this was considerably less than one would have gathered from the reports in most of the papers ; the Popular Front, as it was now called, did as a matter of fact poll 500,000 votes less than its opponents, but by electoral manipulation it was able to secure 39 more deputies ; having thus achieved a majority it was able to manipulate yet further and to unseat various deputies of the right, resulting eventually in a majority of 128 ! Following on this somewhat surprising election, the history of Spain in 1936 was one of increasing chaos,* culminating in the murder of Calvo Sotelo. He was a brilliant young deputy of the right, who if he had lived might have become a Spanish Salazar. His death was prophesied openly in the Cortes by one of his opponents, and he was taken from his house soon afterwards by 15 police, in car No. 17 of the Republican Police Force ; he was never seen alive again. A few days later the military revolt broke out.

The military rose only just in time ; there is conclusive evidence that where they were successful they forestalled a Communist plot. The evidence for this, for which there is no space here, is given in detail by Douglas Jerrold in the *Nineteenth Century* for April 1937, and in even greater detail in the *Dublin Review* for January 1937.† Wherever the military rising was

* In June 1936 Gil Robles read an impressive series of statistics in the Cortes telling of the unrest which had prevailed since the elections of February 16th. His list recorded 269 dead, 1,287 injured, 160 churches completely destroyed, 251 churches damaged, 69 political club houses wrecked, 312 club houses damaged, 113 general strikes, 288 partial strikes, 10 newspaper-offices totally destroyed, 33 newspaper-offices damaged, 138 armed robberies.

† These articles are now published in pamphlet form : *Communist Operations in Spain*, by G. M. Godden. (Burns Oates & Washbourne.)

Spain : Impressions and Reflections, by Douglas Jerrold. (Constable.)

Chaos in Spain, by Jaques Bardoux (Burns Oates & Washbourne), gives important documentary evidence, and shows that if the military in Spain had not forestalled the plot it is almost certain that France would have shared the same fate.

unsuccessful the revolution broke out, though owing to the urgency of the moment it was not so systematic and obedient to the carefully laid down plans that it would have been had Franco not struck. The history of those months in territory under "Government" control was one long record of cruelty and blasphemy to which one can only apply the word satanic; numbers of innocent people and defenceless women were tortured to death in the most revolting way, and all over the place churches were destroyed and defiled. There can be no doubt of this, and it is idle to dismiss the reports which have come through as old wives' tales; they are too well attested by numbers of sane and intelligent men who have visited Spain, and a terrible and well-documented account of them is given in the two volumes dealing with the atrocities published by Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode, as well as Mr. Arnold Lunn's *The Unpopular Front* (Longmans) and the anonymous *Red Terror in Madrid* (Longmans).

Attempts have been made to prove similar atrocities on the side of the Nationalists. War is always a terrible thing and can produce unexpected streaks of brutality in the best people, and it would also be idle to try and make out that Nationalist behaviour has always been perfect. Nevertheless it is, I think, true to say that the behaviour of the Nationalist troops has been of as high a standard as that to be found among any troops who have ever taken part in a war. Various concrete accusations have been made and they have broken down all along the line. The most notable stories which were put forward were of the massacres which were said to have taken place after the falls of Badajos and Malaga. There was the story, even more convincing, of the ruthless destruction of Guernica. There was also a harrowing account, sponsored by a well-known Dean of the Church of England, stating that a persecution of the Protestants had taken place in Nationalist territory. The war has

been waged on the Government's side by propaganda rather than by fighting, in the hopes that they will enlist the sympathies of powerful and gullible countries. It is, however, not possible to carry on a campaign of lies indefinitely, as there are usually a number of inquisitive and kindly disposed people who take a pleasure in investigating the statements which have been made.

The story of the massacre at Badajos has been disproved by Major Geoffrey Moss in his very interesting book *The Epic of the Alcazar*; Major Moss has visited Spain and his evidence is conclusive. There was also a very interesting letter on the subject of Malaga in the *Spectator* for June 4th, 1937, from Mr. Algernon Jameson. Mr. Jameson has visited Malaga, and far from a cruel massacre having taken place at the hands of the Nationalists, the boot is on the other leg, as the taking of Malaga saved the majority of the inhabitants from a Red reign of terror. In regard to Guernica there was a full article in the *Tablet* on June 4th, 1937, by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, who has been in Spain for some time during the Civil War. He shows conclusively that the greater part of the damage at Guernica* was done by the retreating Reds, presumably again for propaganda purposes, in the hopes of winning outside sympathy. His evidence is particularly strong, as the holes, which were in many cases very large, could only have been made

* It was reported from the Vatican City that after the Guernica affair certain well-known non-Italian theologians had taken a hostile view towards Franco; this view was supposed to have been intensified by the propaganda of a certain Canon who claimed to be a Basque priest. It has since, however, been reported that this Canon has been disowned by the Chapter whom he claims to represent, and there has been another small incident which is worth mentioning. A Basque lay-brother in Rome received a letter from his sister, a Basque working-woman, living in Ermua, a small town occupied by the Nationalists a few days before Guernica. After describing the indignities suffered by her family during the Red occupation she told how Ermua was being prepared by the Reds for mining when a Nationalist bombardment cut off the electricity supply. "Otherwise", she wrote, "the Reds would have blown it all to pieces like they did to Eibar and Guernica."

by mines, and not by bombs from the air. As regards the persecution of Protestants, the story was quickly contradicted in the Press by Englishmen living near by. The correspondence appeared in the *Spectator* in November 1936.

There has been a Red attack on Spain and the Pope has shown that he is fully aware of this; in his Encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, on Atheistic Communism, issued on March 19th, 1937, he said in regard to the sufferings of Spain:

“Even where the scourge of Communism has not yet had time to exercise to the full its logical effect, as witness Our beloved Spain, it has, alas, found compensation in the fiercer violence of its attack. Not only this or that church or isolated monastery was sacked, but as far as possible every church and every monastery was destroyed. Every vestige of the Christian religion was eradicated, even though intimately linked with the rarest monuments of art and science! The fury of Communism has not confined itself to the indiscriminate slaughter of Bishops, of thousands of priests and religious of both sexes; it searches out, above all, those who have been devoting their lives to the working-classes and the poor. But the majority of its victims have been laymen of all conditions and classes. Even up to the present moment, masses of them are slain almost daily for no other offence than the fact that they are good Christians or at least opposed to atheistic Communism. And this fearful destruction has been carried out with a hatred and a savage barbarity one would not have believed possible in our age. No man of good sense, nor any statesman conscious of his responsibility, can fail to shudder at the thought that what is happening today in Spain may perhaps be repeated tomorrow in other civilized countries.”

At the same time, to talk of a Red Spain is to be

inaccurate; the increasing success of Franco's cause bears witness to the enthusiasm and virility which has once more been kindled in the Spanish people. When one speaks of a measly child one speaks of a temporary condition, and one believes that the *vis mediatrix naturae* will win through and conquer the disease. The same seems to be happening in Spain, and in spite of the suffering and the horror the country is gradually returning to full health, to a health indeed such as it has not known for two centuries or more. This fact is amply attested by the Englishmen and women—and there are all too few of them—who have taken the trouble to visit Nationalist Spain. As Mr. Jerrold has said in his article in the *Nineteenth Century*:

"I do not mean that there has been no hard fighting—still less that there are no convinced Communists. Almost every village in Spain bears witness to the malign sincerity of their convictions. As to fighting, there was hand-to-hand fighting for a short time at Talavera, and for many days at Toledo. There was a stubborn resistance at Madrid, and the battles on the Jarama and on the road to Guadalajara have been bitter and costly. But these battles have been purely defensive—a touch of bloody reality interjected into a long war of propaganda. Oviedo alone is different. There is the only Red Spain; the mining population there have nothing in common with the Basques except courage. They are, however, badly led and are fighting a lone and hopeless battle."

When Mr. Jerrold wrote this there had been much less fighting in the Basque country, and it is in this country that there is perhaps the saddest tragedy of the war, for the section of the Basques who have been beguiled to side with Madrid by promises of autonomy should by rights have been on Franco's side.

What of the future? The policy of the Pope has been to remind Catholics that their duty is to defend religion and civilization, but he has refrained from stating which side he considers to be the one that Catholics are bound to support; it is true, indeed, that the reference to Spain in the Encyclical *Divini Redemptoris* is rather more definite than his remarks made to the refugees at Castel Gandolfo last September, but at the same time he has not withdrawn his recognition of the Valencia Government. It is said that when the representatives of General Franco succeeded the representatives of the Government in the Embassy to the Vatican and replaced their flag by General Franco's flag, he requested them to take it down.*

The right to rebel is a question which has been treated by moral theologians; the general principles have been laid down, but the business of applying them to a particular situation can only be done after much research and complete knowledge of the facts. In view of the menace of a Communist revolution, and the way in which the Communists have since shown their hand, it is almost certain that the majority of theologians would decide in favour of General Franco, though there are some, such as Don Luigi Sturzo, the ex-leader of the Popular Party in Italy, to whom we have referred before, who is of the opinion that the facts did not warrant an action which was more than likely to plunge the country into civil war. The certainty of civil war was not complete, as there is no doubt that Franco and his colleagues hoped that they would be able to achieve a more or less bloodless *coup d'état* such as has so often taken place in Spain, though on this occasion there was less

* The Marquess de Majaz has been acting as Franco's unofficial representative at the Vatican, but there is no Papal Nuncio in Spain. Cardinal Goma, the Archbishop of Toledo, acts on behalf of the Vatican, but not officially.

chance of bloodshed being avoided owing to the violence and ferocity of the Reds, both Communist and Anarchist.

The Catholics of Spain have been divided in their political allegiance, but there can be no doubt that the vast majority of them hope that Franco will win. There must be many unfortunate and silent people in Madrid, Valencia and Barcelona who are patiently hoping for the day when the relieving armies will arrive, and it is noticeable, and has been remarked by all visitors to Nationalist territory, that everywhere Franco's régime is popular, democratic in the best sense, and that it has evoked genuine enthusiasm. It is probable that he would have a much better Press in England if his staff had been a little more tactful and helpful when dealing with foreign journalists. Another fact to which visitors to Nationalist Spain bear witness is the great revival of religion which has taken place; not only are the churches crowded, and where no churches are available crowded Masses are being celebrated in the open air, but numbers of men who were content to go to Mass but not to the Sacraments, as was so often the case in Spain, now go regularly.

In General Franco's broadcasts there have been one or two notes which make one, as an outsider, a little apprehensive. It is true enough that in the present state of Spain only a very strong Government can have any chance of success, and there is something in the Spanish temperament which responds readily to a stronger exercise of authority than most Englishmen would welcome, but still one is inclined to fear that Franco's new Spain may lean a little too much towards the totalitarian State. One hopes that when peace is restored he may rest content with the Christian corporative State on the lines laid down in the *Quadragesimo Anno*. He has, however, said much which promises well for the future, and from what one hears

from those who have visited Nationalist Spain* there is no reason to accuse him of insincerity.

"The Spain we want to bury," Franco said in his broadcast at the beginning of the year 1937, "is the Spain that was a stepmother instead of a mother to many of her sons. How could they love her, how could they understand her, if some individuals in high positions used their positions to discredit her, to deepen her faults and kill her good instincts? . . . We do not want only to end the sufferings of the working-classes and abolish for ever the poverty—the traditional poverty—of our middle classes. We want to banish, and we shall banish, the injustices and sufferings of many who have a right to live and be happy.

"Spain is sufficiently large and rich to afford a happy life for every one of its inhabitants, provided that there exists an administration sufficiently just and honest to see that each individual gets his share of the goods of the mother country. Collaboration of all classes towards the one end in view is the sure remedy of all evils.

"Those who, like me, have had the great pleasure and honour of living in contact with the working-classes for years . . . can feel and understand them much better than those who, under the pretext of wishing to help them, deceive and exploit them for their personal gain.

"As regards religion, opposing the systematic and brutal persecution of the Marxist of anything that is spiritual in any shape or form, we shall have

* If I may quote Mr. Jerrold again: "I asked a Phalangist friend what his Party were doing in the way of political action. 'We are feeding the children of the poor in our big cities,' was the answer. Such is the spirit of the new Spain of which the Generalissimo is the servant as well as the master. I saw these children's restaurants—two rooms to each, with fifty tables each seating four infants, and each table with a toy on it. Elephants seemed the most popular. There were four of these restaurants in Salamanca—each gave 800 meals a day. There were as many, or more, in Seville. They are being started in Malaga. 'Are you going on with them afterwards?' I asked. 'Till we have made them unnecessary,' my friend answered."

a Catholic Spain, with its saints and martyrs, with its institutions, Christian charity and that proverbial tolerance which made it possible for Spain to become the greatest Catholic country while synagogues and mosques existed in it unmolested. . . . Those who either by conviction or through being deceived by others are fighting against us have my word of honour that nothing will happen to them if they surrender to our troops. It will be the work of the courts of justice to punish only those who have committed crimes or acts punishable under ordinary law.

“We offer to all Spaniards bread and justice, and the sooner they call on us for it the sooner the bloodshed will be at an end and the country will take its normal course again.”

There is no doubt that much was wrong with the old Spain—poverty and apathy, a rich class who were content to live on the Riviera without troubling to know where their wealth came from, and a working-class exploited and underpaid, and which was sometimes neglected by the representatives of Christ. One can only hope that this is passing.

It has been said that Franco and his colleagues have been busy studying the *Quadragesimo Anno*, and one hopes that its principles will really be put into practice, as foreshadowed in his broadcast and in the reports brought by friendly visitors to the Spain he now controls. As Pius XI lay in great pain during the winter of 1936 to 1937, he said that he offered his sufferings for the Church in Spain, in Russia, in Germany, and Mexico. In Spain it looks as if during his pontificate the phoenix has once more risen from the ashes.

CHAPTER XVII

THE AMERICAS

THOUGH the end of this book is now within sight, we have hardly moved outside Europe. This may seem strange when it is remembered that the Catholic Church is far from being a merely European institution, and that the Pope claims the whole world for his province. The reason for this is, however, that Europe is at the moment a disturbed and feverish continent, still suffering from the maladies which four years of carnage have left in their train, while in the Western Hemisphere, with one terrible exception, the life of the Church during the Pontificate of Pius XI has on the whole been peaceful and progressive. There are those who despair of Europe and believe that our present troubles are not the birth-pangs of a new and better age, but the death-throes of a civilization that has grown decayed and effete. The Pope is less of a defeatist, but it will be seen, from what has gone before, that he is apprehensive as to the future of the little continent which is really only a peninsular to the north-west of Asia, but which in its day has held such a dominating position in the world.

It is well known that since Soviet Russia was admitted to the League of Nations the Pope's regard for the League has decreased to a marked extent. The idea of the League was strongly encouraged by Pope Benedict XV in his last Encyclical, the *Pacem Dei Munus Pulcherrimum*, on the re-establishment of Christian peace, but since then the League has undoubtedly

fallen short of its first high promise. Not only has it all along been too closely bound up with the provisions of the misbegotten Treaty of Versailles, but since the admission of Soviet Russia with no satisfactory guarantees as to the cessation of religious persecution, there has been a deep feeling at the Vatican that it may merely become the instrument of immoral and opportunist Powers. It may, indeed, incorporate much of the teaching of Catholic theologians on international relations, but at the same time it has tended to play increasingly into the hands of those who make no pretence of being guided by other than utilitarian considerations and who in some cases are professedly anti-Christian.*

The concern of the Pope must not only be for the Church of today; he must have his eyes fixed even more steadily on the Church of tomorrow, and there is no doubt that the hopes of Pius XI are centred in the Church outside Europe, in the Americas, and in the mission-field, rather than in the Old World, which may have had its day. An important Encyclical which has been rather neglected by Catholics is the *Rerum Ecclesiae*, on the Propagation of the Faith, published in February 1926. In this document the principle of self-government in the Church in distant lands is described and encouraged. Not only is the formation of a native clergy to be vigorously sponsored in all countries where there is the least chance of its achievement, but also, while there is of course no question of independence from Rome, nevertheless there is a distinct break from the old tradition that the Catholic Church throughout the world should be as like as possible in details of action and culture to the Church of Rome. An instance of this greater breadth of vision is the permission recently given to Catholics in the

* There was an excellent article on this subject called "The Policy of Pius XI" by Count Michael de la Bedoyère in the *Fortnightly Review* for August 1936.

Far East to take part in certain Confucian ceremonies, on the grounds that these have a social and ethical but not a religious significance.

The Faith in the Americas has been planted for some time, and the work of the Church there is now one of consolidation and conservation ; only here and there it is one of missionary expansion. If we take a survey of the two great continents, moving from north to south, we shall, however, find a strange variety in the status and prosperity of the Church. In the north, in Canada, there has been little enough in the way of friction, one of the greatest problems having been to provide for Catholic emigrants from Eastern Europe who belong to the Eastern rite ; in the west of Canada, in Quebec, a large proportion of the inhabitants are of French descent, and the Church in consequence is strong ; Liberalism has been fighting a losing battle, the reverses of which have been intensified by the slumps and troubles of the last few years ; an attempt is now being made to put into practice the principles of the *Quadragesimo Anno*, and there seems to be good reason for hoping that the effort will be successful, though it is still too early to prophesy.

As we move farther south we shall find that there is more to observe. It should not be forgotten that the proportion of Catholics in the United States is rather more than one in five ; this proportion is likely to increase, owing to the fact that birth control is being widely practised among non-Catholics, and also to there being more conversions to Catholicism every year than to any other faith. The United States is not represented at the Vatican, but relations are friendly, and at Washington there is an Apostolic delegate ; there was a representative at the Vatican during the years 1848 to 1867, and indeed there were ten different ambassadors during that time ; in 1867 diplomatic relations were temporarily broken off owing to an

insignificant dispute, and have not been resumed. About the year 1934 there were rumours that an ambassador would once more be sent, but there was widespread opposition to the scheme, and the plan was eventually turned down on the grounds that there was not enough business to be transacted to warrant the expense.

It is of interest that the first glimmerings of a solution of the Roman question should have appeared in a conversation between an American bishop and Signor Orlando, who was Prime Minister of Italy. In 1919 Monsignor Kelley of Oklahoma was in Paris attending the Peace Conference in the interest of the Mexican Catholics who were suffering as a result of the Carranza revolution, and a meeting was arranged by Signor Brambilla, of the Italian Delegation, between him and Signor Orlando. Monsignor Kelley wrote in his diary that he placed the following points before Signor Orlando :

“(1) That there was a certain amount of dislike amongst Catholics in America for Italians because of the feeling that Italy had behaved badly towards the Holy See. A settlement of the question would thus make things easier for Italians in America.

“(2) The situation touched Italian-Americans both politically and financially.

“(3) The stability and future prosperity of Italy required settlement of the Roman question as soon as possible.

“(4) The presence of the Holy See in Italy was a great asset, commercially, to the country—an asset which, if possessed by any commercially minded people like the Americans, would be valued and guarded.

“(5) It was his belief that, because of the war, secret lodges were beginning to lose their influence with European Governments.

“(6) He believed that the Holy See would soon

consider it wise to increase its world missionary activities, and that it appeared logical to him that the centre for distribution of the financial resources for them would be changed from Paris and Lyons to Rome. An unsettled Roman question might be an obstacle.

“(7) The elimination of Austria as a Great Power left her place among the Catholic Powers vacant, and he suggested that its place might naturally be occupied by Italy.”

As regards the territorial question, Monsignor Kelley has written :

“I reminded Signor Orlando that we were merely two gentlemen discussing an interesting question together, and that nothing I would say had any more authority behind it than the simple opinion of an American Catholic. He agreed, and said that he was interested in what American Catholics thought about the matter. I then said that I thought the question of the liberty of the Holy See was of much more importance than the question of territory ; but that real liberty could not be had without some territory. I said I could not see what possible difficulty would arise to Italy if the Holy See had territory beginning at the Bridge of the Angels, including the Castle, with a boundary along the Tiber running far enough back so as to include space sufficient for legations.”

Monsignor Kelley subsequently visited the Vatican, where it is reported that his account of the conversation was most favourably received.

We thus see how an active American Bishop was able to play an important part in European affairs. One can only think that a closer connection between the United States and the Vatican would be to the advantage of both parties, and that the States in their decision to send no ambassador have made a mistake. In view of the large proportion of Catholics in the

States, there would almost certainly be plenty of business which could be profitably transacted, and we shall see, when we examine conditions in Mexico, that there are ways in which he might be of the greatest use to other inhabitants of the American continent, for he would hear a point of view which he is not likely to hear so clearly expressed anywhere else, and which voices a wider scope of opinion than anything to be heard at Geneva. Had there been an ambassador at the Vatican there is just the chance that the behaviour of the States in regard to Mexico would have been a less regrettable exhibition of short-sightedness and hypocrisy.

President Wilson was a man of the best intentions, but he suffered from having a narrow and doctrinaire mind. By his predominance at Versailles he managed to bring about a state of chaos in Europe from the results of which we are still suffering, and though his intentions in regard to Mexico were no doubt equally high-minded, their effect has been even more disastrous.

Up to the most recent years the strongest influence on American policy has come from Protestants, and often enough from Protestants of a rather bigoted and unthoughtful type ; in consequence the United States has always backed up anti-clericals and revolutionaries in the New World, just as Mr. Gladstone gave his sanctimonious support to Garibaldi and Mazzini. President Wilson was not a religious bigot ; his trouble was rather more a tendency towards empty but high-sounding phrases when he should have been trying to think along practical lines. At the time of the struggle between Carranza and Huerta, he allowed Carranza, the miserable Kerensky of Mexico, to import all the arms he wanted, while he forbade their supply to Huerta. Carranza won, but before long he was murdered by the envoys of his successor, General Obregon, who was a most bitter enemy to Christianity.

On the subject of President Wilson's interference

in Mexico, no less a person than Mr. Theodore Roosevelt wrote to the *New York Times* on December 6th, 1914:

“The act of permitting the passage of arms across the frontier on the part of Wilson, meant that he had not only actively helped the insurrection, but without any doubt provided the means of achieving success, in so far as he actually prevented Huerta from organizing an effective resistance. . . . The United States would not have had the least responsibility for what was done to the Church if the action which committed these outrages had not been enabled to triumph by the United States. But since the United States took part in a civil war in Mexico in the manner in which Wilson and Bryan obliged our Government to take part, this country, through this act alone, is responsible for the horrible injustices, the terrible outrages, committed by the revolutionaries against hundreds of believers of both sexes.

“Not long ago, President Wilson, in a speech delivered at Strathmore, Penn., declared that ‘in no part of this continent can any Government survive that is stained with blood’, and in Mobile he said: ‘We shall never forgive iniquity solely because it may be more convenient for us to do so.’

“At the very moment he was pronouncing these high-sounding phrases, the leaders of the faction which he actively aided were shooting down hundreds in cold blood; they were torturing men supposed to be wealthy; they were casting forth from their homes hundreds of peaceful families; they were sacking the churches and maltreating priests and religious in the most infamous manner, from assassination to mutilation and outrage.

“In other words, at the very time the President assured us ‘that in no part of this hemisphere can any Government endure if it be stained with blood’,

he was helping to put in power a Government that was not only stained with blood but was stained with stains worse than those of blood. At the very time that he announced that 'he would not continue relations with iniquity even if it were more convenient to do so', he not only consorted with iniquity but openly supported it and put in power men whose actions were those of ferocious barbarians."

It was thus a happy heritage in Mexico to which Pius XI succeeded in 1922. Although the vast majority of the population were devoutly Catholic, the Government, which ruled by force and not by popular consent, was bitterly and savagely anti-Christian. In 1924 Plutarco Elias Calles succeeded Obregon as President. He was a man of strangely mixed blood, his father, a mysterious man of whom nothing is known, having been described as a Syrian and his mother having been a Yaqui Indian. The Yaqui Indians are a savage and warlike people who live in the north-west of Mexico. It appears that Calles was not brought up as a Christian, though it is not known whether his father was a Mahommedan, a Jew, or an atheist, and he had a varied career, with many incidents that would not bear too close investigation; he started life as a schoolteacher, but was dismissed, and soon started on the more lucrative profession of bar-tender. He must have been successful at this, as he soon became owner of the Hotel Mexico in Guaymas, a none too reputable establishment which was burnt down. The insurance company refused to pay up and made one or two very uncomfortable suggestions, though I believe that in the end some sort of compromise was achieved.

After the revolution in 1910 Calles became a police inspector on the frontier; he also became a colonel in the Army, but when captured by rebels is said to have fallen on his knees and to have begged for his life in the most heartrending manner. A Spanish

doctor called Huerta pleaded for the pitiful coward, and his life was spared; but he was not altogether grateful, as soon afterwards he managed to have Huerta kidnapped and hanged; he is said to have risen at five in the morning in order to gloat over the poor man's body as it swung to and fro. It was at this time that he began his close friendship with General Obregon, which meant that by easy stages this blood-stained and cowardly frontier official was able to move on to the Mexican Presidency.

For some reason he had a deep hatred of Christianity; it may have been due to some age-old legacy from his "Syrian" father, or it may be because in the grand old days at the Hotel Mexico the local priest objected, with some forcibleness, to the disturbances which took place in that establishment. Other motives were undoubtedly the greed of plunder, and there has always been a strong suspicion that he was using his persecution of the Church as a smoke-screen for his attack on American property rights. Monsignor Kelley, of Oklahoma, who has already been mentioned, declared this openly in a public speech. There is an uneducated section of American Protestants always ready to applaud an attack on Catholicism, and it is probable that Calles thought that business men of this type would be so pleased at what he was doing for the Church that they would not realize at first what was happening to themselves. The expropriations of the American property-holders in Mexico which eventually took place proved Monsignor Kelley right.

Since the days when Wilson brought Carranza to power life had been bad enough for the Catholics in Mexico, but in 1926 a more serious persecution was launched by the mongrel President. During the months of February and March Catholic schools, chapels, hospitals and orphanages were closed all over the place; no provision was made for the humane work to be carried on, in one case a home for old men

being closed down and no shelter provided for the inmates, while at Colima an orphanage was seized by Government officials and the little children were turned into the streets. Later in the year the Sisters of Charity were driven out of the civil hospital in Durango; nobody was sent to take their place, and the patients were left to their fate. When some kind people heard what had happened and managed to make their way into the hospital, they found the patients without food and one of them dead.

In June 1926 a number of regulations were presented to Congress for immediate ratification. It is significant that one-third of these regulations related to the punishment of public officials who should fail to enforce the laws of persecution. The aim of these regulations was to cripple the work of the Church of Mexico, and to submit to them would mean the absolute domination of the Church by the State.

The Church replied, and its reply was virile. At the beginning of the persecution the Catholics in Mexico had declared a period of three days of "mourning for the death of liberty in Mexico". The response to this was widespread, and the indignation shown by all classes of the population surprised the President. Not only were most houses and offices draped in black, but in the windows of houses and shops all over the country cards were displayed which called for the amendment of the anti-religious clauses in the constitution. After the passing of Calles's regulation, an economic boycott was instituted by the Catholics. The Bishops had instructed their people to refrain from acts of violence, and this measure of passive resistance corresponded in many ways to some of the methods employed in India. The success of the boycott was greater than had been expected, and though messages as to its failure were constantly being sent by the Government, the whole economic system of the country was seriously affected.

An even more serious measure followed. The episcopate decreed that all church services must cease while the anti-religious laws were in force. This has been described as the imposition of an Interdict, similar to the Interdict imposed on England during the reign of King John, but as a matter of fact this is an exaggeration. By the regulation which was signed by Calles on June 14th, 1936, it was decreed that persons in charge of churches were to notify the authorities. It was also laid down that "the religious institutions known as Churches, whatever their creed, shall not have, in any case, capacity for acquiring, possessing, or administering their estate or real-estate securities. Those who actually do have such real estate shall turn it over to the Government of the nation, the right being granted to anyone to denounce the property that may be found in such a case." An even more significant statement was that "the churches destined for public worship are the property of the nation, represented by the Federal Government, which shall determine those churches which shall continue destined for the purpose of worship". It will be seen that these clauses bear a sinister resemblance to the measures employed against Christianity in Russia which landed the unfortunate Patriarch Tikhon in such difficulties.

After the episcopal decree in Mexico what happened was that the priests did not notify the authorities of the churches in their charge, and the committees of ten citizens who were to be responsible for each church were not forthcoming. It will be remembered that in Russia the Government had managed to make the recognition of their authority by the formation of committees of laymen responsible for the churches, a stepping-stone to the closing and destruction of large numbers of them, and that they also had been able to employ this recognition as a means of confusing the faithful of the Orthodox Church. It was for denying the authority of Caesar over God that Monsignor

Budciewicz was condemned to death. In the same way, in Mexico, the priests and laity refused to acquiesce in State supervision of such a type.

The Secretary of the Interior responded by sealing up the churches; the clergy left their homes and were supported by the faithful. Mass was said in secret. But there were many raids, as in the old penal days in England, and numbers of clergy and laity were thrown into jail. Not only were large numbers imprisoned, often enough under cruel conditions, as in the terrible penal settlement of the Islas Marias, but there were many noble chapters added to the Martyrology. Captain Francis McCullagh, who was in Mexico at the time, having perhaps found Soviet Russia a little too tranquil, reckons that the death-roll of Catholics who suffered for their faith was in four figures each year, and that in most cases the executions were not preceded by a trial, though this was in absolute defiance of the constitution.*

The following account, which is vouched for by the N.C.W.C. News Service of Washington, D.C., as being "from a source reliable beyond all question", will give some idea of the martyrdoms which the people of Mexico have had to face:

"Recently in the City of Leon, State of Guanajuato, among many Catholics shot there were several young men of the A.C.J.M. (Catholic Association of Young Mexicans), among them Salvador Vargas, Nicholas Navarro, Ezequiel Gomez, Jose Rios and Jose Valencia Gallardo; this last with extreme cruelty, because he called on the others to cry out 'Long Live Christ the King', as they all did.

* Cf. *Red Mexico*, by Francis McCullagh. (Brentano 1928.) This is a most interesting though gruesome book; the author has first-hand knowledge, and his documentation is careful and accurate. His vivid account takes one back to the days of the catacombs.

For a more concise and tabulated account of the persecution, *The Mexican Reformation*, by George Barnard (Sheed & Ward 1930), should be consulted. This book is also very well documented. It is clearly written and contains much valuable information.

“For this they broke his teeth and tore out his tongue. Notice of this appeared in the papers in spite of the strict censorship, as you may see by the enclosed clipping from *Excelsior*. The bodies were exposed in the public square of the city to terrorize the Catholics and to agonize the parents of the victims.

“Through private information we know that in the neighbouring city of San Angel other young men of the A.C.J.M. were tortured before being shot ; the skin was pulled off the head and from the fingers, but they did not cease to call on the Holy Name of Christ the King.”

The Bishops tried to end the struggle by offering terms on which they would be prepared to call off the boycott. These were that the anti-religious laws should be allowed to fall into abeyance for twelve months, that a plebiscite should be taken in twelve months' time to determine whether the people favoured the anti-religious articles of the constitution which were being enforced, and that the people should be allowed to vote without Government interference or intimidation. It was clear that the Bishops believed in democracy, and also knew that the people would support their cause.

On November 18th, 1926, Pius XI stepped in with his Encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque*. Matters were not minced, and he showed that he knew what was the true state of affairs.

“The civil authorities of Mexico,” he declared, “abusing both their power and the really remarkable patience of the people, are now in a position to menace the clergy and the Mexican people with even more severe punishments than those already inflicted. But how are we to overcome and conquer men of this type who are committed to the use of every type of infamy, unless we are willing, as they insist, to conclude an agreement with them which

cannot but injure the sacred cause of the liberty of the Church?"

There has been a mysterious silence in connection with the dark deeds that have been committed against the people of Mexico, and though it is natural that so distant a country should be considered to have little news value by European papers, it is strange that the American Press should have been so resolute in their determination to avoid the subject. It is of interest that this silence of the Press brought Pius XI and Mr. Bernard Shaw into alliance. In the summer of 1927, Mr. Michael Williams, the editor of the *Commonweal*, an influential American Catholic paper, obtained from the Pope a detailed statement on the Mexican situation. He took this back to America with him, but it was arbitrarily refused by all the great American secular papers on the grounds that it was "Catholic propaganda". Mr. Williams wrote to his friend Mr. Bernard Shaw, asking if he would send him a letter on the subject which would force the editors to publish the Pope's statement, and Mr. Bernard Shaw promptly replied, saying :

"I cannot imagine what the American Press is thinking of in refusing to publish what is practically an interview with the Pope. It is news, and official news, from a person of overwhelming importance. The mere fact that the Pope has at last consented to avail himself of the Press instead of the pulpit as his instrument of publicity would be sensational news even if the message were nothing but a remark on the prospects of the harvest. . . . I have never been able to understand why the subject of the pitched battle between Church and State in Mexico was dropped so suddenly by the British Press after it had figured with the prominence its importance deserved for several days."

Nevertheless, one only of the great American papers published an account of the interview and of

Mr. Shaw's letter. This is curious, as he is not a writer who is usually boycotted by the Press.

The persecution has dragged on, with its grim crop of imprisonments and martyrdoms, and men like Father Pro Juarez, his brother Humberto, Luis Segura Vilchis, Juan Tirado Arias and Joaquin Silva are now held in honour throughout the Catholic world, just as their persecutors are objects of pity and disgust. In the third decade of the twentieth century the Catholics of Mexico have behaved with magnificent courage, patience and fidelity. On September 29th, 1932, Pius XI spoke once again, in the Encyclical *Acerba Animi*. After telling of the persecution, of the expulsion of the Bishops, and of the limiting of priests to such an extent that only a small minority of the faithful could possibly attend Mass or receive the sacraments,* he went on to explain the policy of the Church, since the terms offered by the Bishops had been refused by Calles. His aim was to show that while the Church, Bishops, priests and laity must constantly protest against the State arrogating to itself an authority to which it had no just claim, as had been done in 1926 :

“For even if these protests have no effect on those who govern the country, they will be effective in persuading the faithful, especially the uneducated, that by such action the State attacks the liberty of the Church, which liberty the Church can never

* In *Red Mexico* Captain McCullagh gives a most interesting account of the Masses said in the hours before dawn for fear of raids, and of the devices resorted to for distributing Holy Communion. He described how Father Pro Juarez “organized his work and arranged secret meeting-places where confessions were heard. He also established ‘eucharistic stations’—houses in which Holy Communion would be distributed on certain days. But owing to the pertinacity of the secret police, of whom there are 10,000 in Mexico City alone, and who are actuated mostly by desire for money, he had to change these places frequently. He gave Holy Communion to about 300 persons daily, and on the first Friday of three months the numbers ran successively to 900, 1,300, and 1,500. In addition to this, he went round every morning on his brother's bicycle distributing Holy Communion to many people in their own houses. And despite the vigilance of the secret police, he was able to perform all his priestly functions.”

This man, who was innocent of all political activity, was executed without trial ; it is reckoned that 20,000 Mexican Catholics attended his funeral.

renounce, no matter what may be the violence of the persecutors. . . . Nevertheless, it would be a vain and unfounded fear to think that one is co-operating with these iniquitous legislative ordinances which oppress him, were he to ask the Government which imposes these things for permission to carry out public worship, and hence to hold that it is one's duty to refrain absolutely from making such a request. Such an erroneous opinion and conduct might lead to a total suspension of public worship, and would, without doubt, inflict grievous harm on the entire flock of the faithful." He points out that the priest is in the position of "one who having been robbed of his belongings is obliged to ask his unjust depouiler for at least the use of them".

Such instructions were urgently needed at the time. As the Pope said, "in the face of the firm and generous resistance of the oppressed", the Government had shown signs that "it would not be adverse to coming to an agreement, if only to put an end to a condition of affairs which it could not turn to its own advantage". In consequence, in 1929, when the Supreme Magistrate of Mexico had publicly declared that he had no intention of destroying the "identity of the Church", the Pope had thought it best to try and profit by the occasion. He had ordered that the suspension of public worship should be revoked, without withdrawing his protests against the regulations. The result had been disappointing, for the persecution had in no sense abated, and the Press campaign in Mexico against the Church had increased in violence.

The Encyclical closed with a further reassurance that

"The danger of formal co-operation, or of any approval whatever of the present law, is removed as far as is necessary by the protests energetically expressed by the Apostolic See and by the whole Episcopate and people of Mexico. . . . In much the

same manner the faithful and the sacred ministers of the early Church, as history relates, sought permission, by means of gifts even, to visit and comfort the martyrs detained in prison and to administer sacraments to them. Yet surely no one could have thought they in some way approved or justified the conduct of the persecutors.”

Calles was never tired of claiming that he was the champion of the poor and of the working-classes, and it is a great pity that various branches of the Labour movement allowed themselves to be taken in by his fictitious claims. Far from being the friend of the masses, under his rule many thousand peasants were pouring over the frontier into the States every year, because life for them in Mexico was intolerable, and because they deeply resented being cut off from the religion in which they believed. Calles has now gone, and while the economic government of Mexico may now be less insane, the position of Christianity is still critical enough. On the surface things have improved, but this is largely window-dressing, as in Soviet Russia. The schismatic Church set up by Calles has failed dismally, and it is true that in many parts of Mexico public worship has been resumed by Catholics. Indeed, a tourist visiting Mexico City, when he saw the devout crowds at Mass, would imagine that all was well, and it is the desire of the Government that he should think so. What has happened is that the Government was shrewd enough to see that their policy of brutality and bloodshed was a failure. For, as has been found all through history, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. The new attack—and there is a new attack—is directed particularly at the children, and the schools are kept in a strong grasp. No Catholic schools are allowed, and religion may be taught in churches only, not even in the home. In the more remote parts of Mexico, where tourists do not go, things are much as they were in 1926. In the majority of places Mass is

not allowed to be said, and there have been a number of cases where, while public worship had been resumed, nevertheless unjustified attacks were made by Government employees on the priest and congregation, often resulting in death and injury.

With the rest of Latin America the relations of Pius XI have on the whole been calm and serene. The troubles of Mexico were indeed reflected in a modified way in Guatemala, though things are now somewhat improved. The most important event of the Pontificate in South America has perhaps been the Eucharistic Congress held at Buenos Ayres in 1934, which made a deep impression on the country. In the war in the Gran Chaco between Bolivia and Paraguay, Pius XI exerted his influence through his Nuncios in order to try and bring about peace. No appeal was made to him as arbitrator, and therefore, as in the case of the Abyssinian War, he made no judgment on the rights and wrongs of the case, though he was able to persuade both sides to make a twenty-four hour truce and to refrain from hostilities on Christmas Day. One is probably not being over optimistic if one says that the Catholic religion has increased in strength in South America during the last fifteen years, though it is probably true to say that this progress is far more noticeable in Brazil, in the Argentine and Chile, than in the States of the centre and the north-west, where the local branch of the Church is sometimes more picturesque than thoroughly satisfactory.

Thus, if one looks up and down the two great continents of the West, one sees that the history of the Church there during the Pontificate of Pius XI, with the exception of the Mexican persecution, has been in marked contrast to the contest with crazy ideologies which he has had to wage in Europe, though it is not safe to say whether this atmosphere of calm and common sense will endure. For the Catholic, the United States remains of great interest. The old

America of the Protestant ascendancy seems to be dying, and it looks as if there is a new America on the way in which Catholicism will have to play an increasingly influential part. It is not so long since Catholicism in the States was looked upon as merely the religion of the "poor immigrant" from Ireland and Italy. Large numbers of these immigrants have now done well, and are important men in the country, and a fine proportion of them have remained true to their traditional faith. The signing of the Lateran Treaty has also brought to an end an unfortunate little division among American Catholics, as Monsignor Kelley foresaw. There was a time when politicians like the late Mark Hanna tried to stop anti-Catholicism by reminding the rich that the priest might prove useful as a kind of extra policeman for keeping the poor in order. An appeal of this kind could only do harm to religion, and it is now out of date.

The case of Father Coughlin is an isolated incident, but it shows the way in which the wind is blowing. He was reprimanded from Rome for using disrespectful language towards the President, and at once submitted and returned to the role of a parish priest in a suburb of Detroit. It was time for him to retire, but he had done an important work. He had contradicted the Mark Hanna point of view, which was far too widespread in the States, and had shown that the Church is not a timid defender of things as they are. He had also compelled the American public to notice the papal Encyclicals, and they had realized that it was the principles of the Catholic Church which compelled him to fight for the poor and to demand the rebuilding of society.

Society in America is now being rebuilt, and there is much in Mr. Roosevelt's policy which is in accord with the social teaching of Pius XI. He has himself described the *Quadragesimo Anno* as "one of the most important documents of our time", and it may be by

means of the Encyclicals that the ancient faith will spread in the New World. The Vatican has its eyes on America, and Cardinal Pacelli, the Secretary of State, has made a tour of the country. As the years go by it is to be hoped that the link between the newest country and the most ancient throne will grow steadily closer. The link has certainly been strengthened during the Pontificate of Pius XI.

CHAPTER XVIII

PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

A FRIEND, with whom I was discussing the question of biography writing, and whose fate it has been to write a number of such books, said to me the other day that his difficulty has always been the question of knowing where to end, however easy it has been to begin. Most biographers, before they begin to write, compose a synopsis, but when the end of this has been reached they are far from being satisfied, and are painfully aware that much important matter has been slurred over or even omitted. It must however be so, for the public will no longer tolerate the heavy volumes which our forefathers liked to hold in their gouty hands ; it is also a fact that, apart from one or two American novelists, few modern authors have the energy to write them.

The Pontificate and public life of Pope Pius XI would provide material for several fat volumes, and one wishes, not that he had had a Boswell, for his solitary life would never have satisfied that sharp-eared listener, but that Samuel Johnson had lived in our time, and had written the *Lives of the Popes* as well as the *Lives of the Poets*. One can imagine the delighted fury with which the great cham of literature would have smashed the idols of the day. Pius XI visited and worked in Poland when the condition of Eastern Europe could scarcely have been less critical, and it has been his work to steer the Catholic Church through the years which have been made bitter by

post-war disillusionment, a disillusionment which had fed in parasitical fashion on the dregs of nineteenth-century materialism.

The dregs are now devoured, and the *naïf* hopes of the nineteenth-century progressives are at an end; they are retreating from Moscow amid cold and famine, as Napoleon did in 1812, and no Tchaikowsky has yet arisen to set the drama to music. Today the Catholic Church must face new problems, which are no longer caused by the old supercilious neglect of spiritual values, but by the reaction to this, for the dialectical materialism of Marx has developed, as it was bound to do, into a spurious mysticism,* and the somewhat bourgeois speculations of the German philosophers have suddenly flared up into an illogical and humourless racial fanaticism. In Mexico there has merely been a lurid reflection of all that is evil and unhealthy in the other hemisphere. In Italy it looks as if Mussolini had at one moment thought of reverting to the old gods of Rome, and as if history had repeated itself, and Christ has once more proved himself the stronger.

The aim of this book has been to try and show how Pius XI has faced these problems; he has done his best to face them in accordance with the teachings of a young Jewish carpenter who was crucified almost two thousand years ago, and who is believed by many millions of His followers to have been both God and

* Although Marx had cut himself off from the Synagogue, he was never able to cut himself off mentally and emotionally from his Jewish background; the apocalyptic note which is to be found in most of the books of the Bible is to be found all through his work. As Nicholas Berdyaev, the distinguished Russian philosopher, has said:

"Socialism has arisen from Jewish soil. It is the ancient form of Hebrew millenarianism, of the hope of Israel in a miraculous earthly kingdom, in an earthly felicity. It was not mere chance that made Karl Marx a Jew. He believed that a Messiah would come, but one who would be the reverse of Jesus, whom the Hebrew people had rejected. For him the Elect of God, the messianic people, was the proletariat." (*L'Esprit de Dostoïevski*, Editions Saint Michel, Paris.)

This thesis is lucidly worked out, and in considerable detail by Christopher Dawson in *Religion and the Modern State* (Sheed & Ward).

man ; Pius XI has striven for the peace of the world, and in doing so he has had to remember that principles must come before expediency. To say so sounds priggish, but it is the case. We see the same policy showing itself all through his Pontificate, starting with the Genoa Conference, showing itself again in his condemnation of the *Action Française*, and even more definitely in his Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge* against Hitler's government. He was loyal to the principle during the troubled times when Mussolini declared war on Abyssinia, for while he was at perfect liberty to condemn unjust aggression in the abstract, he could not apply his condemnation to the particular event, without a judicial investigation, which owing to the fact that neither side had appealed to him he was unable to institute.

This book has been frankly partisan almost all through ; there have been foolish Popes and there have even been some very wicked Popes, but it is the belief of the present writer that the last five Popes, the three determined Piuses, Leo XIII with his shrewd versatility, and the astute Benedict XV have been men in the best Petrine tradition. It is not altogether untrue to say that a new age began with the accession of Pius XI, for it was not till 1922 that the storm caused by the Great War had subsided ; another age had begun with Pius IX, who brought on himself the scorn of the self-satisfied liberal world of his day by pointing out the direction in which Western civilization was moving ; Pius XI, has lived to see that his predecessor was right, and by combating the more fanatical heresies of his day has encountered even fiercer opposition. The hopeful element in the modern situation is that almost everybody is aware of the sword which hangs above our heads, and that more and more men are coming to see that a solution must be found if we are not to perish miserably ; unfortunately, the speculations of many are

wild and unsound, for hot-headedness, not complacency, is the fault of the post-war world.

Pius XI has offered the solution to the world; where men have approached his pronouncements with unprejudiced and thoughtful minds, they have seen that he is wise, and that the See of Peter still has something to tell the world, just as Peter the fisherman proclaimed the news on the day of Pentecost. It must however be remembered that the work of the first Peter was to steer his ship. His successor must perform the same office, but the ship is now much larger; it is reckoned that the number of Catholics has more than doubled in the last hundred years. Now, the welfare of a ship ultimately depends on the captain, and for that reason he must be a man apart, with his eye on everything, but with most matters delegated to subordinates. A good captain is to be found on the bridge or in his cabin, available when needed and responsible for what takes place, but not rushing about and giving advice in all directions. He will do well not to model himself on the great Lord Palmerston, who not only infuriated Queen Victoria but also managed to make himself a little ridiculous by giving unsought-for and sometimes unsound advice all over the Continent.

For several hundred years it has been the tradition at the Vatican to define general principles, but only in extreme cases, when an attack is made on the life and liberty of the Church, to intervene in particular matters, and this tradition has been continued in the Pontificate of Pius XI. As regards general principles, his great contribution to civilization has undoubtedly been the *Quadragesimo Anno*; this document is still very young, but its influence has already spread widely, and it is not improbable that the social struggles of the future will be more and more between the social principles of the Vatican and those of this world, whether they take the form of Marxist inter-

nationalism, or the frenzied racialism of the Nazis. The cauldron has already boiled over in Spain, while in Germany it simmers ominously. By this I naturally do not mean that Pius wishes to see his principles applied by force; there are few things he desires to see less. It is a fact however that his principles are so different from the ideologies, as they are called, which have captured the minds of many today, that in some cases clashes are unavoidable. He has been accused of being a Fascist, but this accusation is unjust, and he has explained quite definitely where he believes certain elements in the Fascist and Nazi programmes to be irreconcilable with true Christianity.

The most hopeful examples of Catholic social practice have been in the smaller countries, in Portugal, in Austria, and in some of the Swiss Catholic cantons; the latter experiment is indeed practical and economic, and not political. The achievements in Portugal and Austria have been rather neglected and indeed misrepresented in England, though at the Requiem Mass for Dollfuss, after his murder by the Nazis, Westminster Cathedral was packed to the doors. Dollfuss was bitterly criticized by certain sections of the English press for the events of February 1934, and the story was tragic enough, but those who went rather more deeply into what actually happened, realized that he had nipped in the bud a civil war which might have led to a general conflagration; a civil war in Central Europe could not fail to lead to far more serious consequences than in Spain, which is cut off by the high wall of the Pyrenees.

As it was, the casualties in all amounted to 314 killed and 805 wounded, more or less equally divided between both sides; not only were the peasantry loyal to the government, but in Vienna only five out of the twenty-one districts showed any sympathy with the *Schutzbund* (armed socialists), and of those only one could possibly be described as wholehearted. The

post, telegraph and telephone services, those employed by the gas and water-supply companies, the railwaymen and the printers all remained at work, and the bulk of the working-class population held aloof from the socialist revolt; a hero of the crisis was an engine-driver, who remained at his post though mortally wounded by the rebels, and of the sixteen men of the *Heimwehr* (armed volunteers who joined together in opposition to the *Schutzbund*, and for the defence of traditional Austria), who were killed, thirteen belonged to the industrial working class.

Salazar's government is also rather disapproved of in England, owing to its attitude in regard to the Spanish war; the Englishmen who persist in regarding Caballero, Prieto and their gang as benevolent Gladstonian liberals, seem incapable of realizing what an avalanche is likely to break over Portugal if Franco's resistance should fail. I must apologize for a tendency to preach, when I have laughed at the English people for falling into the same silly habit, but it seems to be more and more the case in this country that most people fail to see that the English Labour party, with its constitutionalism and moderation,* is totally different, both in aim and sentiment, from the sinister forces which are at work on the Continent, and which while claiming the English Labour movement as their ally, are out to destroy those things which the Englishman values best. If only those who sympathize with the working-man, and wish to see something constructive done, could be brought to study what the Popes and Catholic Christianity have to say in regard to our present discontents, I believe that a bloodless revolution would be brought about which would brighten the whole face of the land, for it is in the realism of Christianity, and not in the apocalyptic

* I refer to the majority of those who "vote Labour" and to the men they return to Parliament, not to those excitable and tiresome people who are usually known as the "Bloomsbury intelligentsia", but who like to refer to themselves grandiloquently as "the Left".

dreams of Marx that the true solution is to be found.

There is a strange likeness between the careers of Dollfuss and Salazar, and they may both be described as typical of twentieth-century Catholicism; attempts have already been made to assassinate Salazar, and one wonders whether he will also meet a death not untouched by martyrdom. When the Nazis murdered Dollfuss, G. K. Chesterton wrote to *The Times* that "this little man happened to be fighting to keep one little corner of Germany still a part of Christendom"; changing the word "Germany" to "the Iberian Peninsula", the same words would hold true of Salazar. Both men came of peasant stock and of poor families, and they both thought at one time of entering the priesthood, but decided they had no vocation; Dollfuss died as a devout Catholic, and Salazar is still living as one. In the composition of each there is far more of the don than of the demagogue, though in temperament Salazar, whose habits are almost monastic, has more in common with Dollfuss's great predecessor, Dr. Seipel, for Dollfuss was a genial, humorous man, fond of his joke and fond of his wine. Religion has however played a profound part in the lives of all three and it is told that Dollfuss prayed much before he decided to accept the Chancellorship.*

Both men have suffered from the usual accusation of being Fascists, which has indeed become a sort of parrot-cry among certain types,† while they have

* *Dollfuss and his Times*, by J. D. Gregory, p. 152 :

"Dollfuss thereupon did a characteristic thing. He asked for time to reflect, and said that he would give his answer on the following morning. At nightfall he was seen to wander off by himself, and it was supposed that he had gone to consult various political personages. As a matter of fact he made his way, as he thought and hoped unobserved, into one of the poorest quarters of Vienna, entered a modest church and there spent the night in prayer, asking for guidance as to whether or not he should accept the Chancellorship."

† I have personally heard the Archbishop of Canterbury accused of Fascism for advocating a return to religion, and I have heard Charles I and Oliver Cromwell both described as forerunners of the movement !

been strongly opposed, like Pius XI, to certain Fascist views ; the words used by Gil Robles, another Catholic politician who has also been accused of Fascism, could have been used with equal sincerity by Dollfuss or Salazar :

“In spite of all the respect which I feel for your (Fascist) ideal and for those who follow it, I am obliged in duty to affirm that I cannot go with you because, so far as I am concerned, a regime based on the pantheistic conception of a deified state and the suppression of individual personality is diametrically opposed to the religious principles on which my policy is founded.”*

It certainly was the unpleasant duty of each to have to bring in a more authoritarian form of government, after parliamentary methods had broken down in their respective countries. In Dollfuss's case the breakdown was due to the intransigence of the Nazis and the Socialists, who hated each other, but were nevertheless unwilling to co-operate with anybody else, a condition which had been going steadily from bad to worse ever since Dr. Seipel, whose health was shattered when a young Socialist fanatic tried to murder him, had been forced to retire from public life. Salazar was faced with the havoc caused by years of misgovernment ; he was summoned from Coimbra, where he was a professor, but returned almost immediately to his university when he found that he was not to be given a free hand. This move was successful, for he was recalled to Lisbon and given the freedom which he demanded. He has had many difficulties, for Portugal is by nature a poor country, but he has succeeded in balancing the budget, a difficult feat in these days, and the bulk of the population are contented and happy under his rule. The government in Portugal is strong, but life is free.

Both Austria and Portugal have many dangers

* Speech in the Cortes, December 19th, 1932.

ahead of them, but the new corporative states which they have produced are worthy of the most serious study; neither government aims at a totalitarian régime, but at the ordered liberty of the Encyclicals; if the régime seems unduly authoritarian to English eyes, it must be remembered that in England the red menace is still negligible on the whole, while there is no Nazi menace in the country at all. There is indeed a Fascist movement, but it is not widespread, and there is no reason to fear that Mr. Chamberlain will soon be murdered by enthusiastic members of the B.U.F.! A close examination of Austrian and Portuguese conditions will show that the principles of Pius XI* have worked, while, if one may judge from W. H. Chamberlin, Andrew Smith, and André Gide, the Marxist experiment in Russia has proved a bitter disappointment. Concordats have been signed with both countries; in each case the Catholic religion had been rather too closely identified with the ruling classes, and while the peasantry remained loyal, it fell on rather bad days in the large towns during the first few years after the collapse of the throne. In Portugal especially there was much ground to recover, and it will be remembered how so stern a moralist as the great Lord Byron was shocked at the state of affairs which he found there a hundred years ago; it is however from Portugal that the most striking reports of religious revival have been brought. In Austria Cardinal Innitzer has been a great leader, and popular with the Socialists as well as with the *Heimwehr* and the Christian Socials, but it is said in Vienna that while the Church has regained much of the ground which was lost during the bad years, nevertheless progress has been a bit disappointing, the obstacle being the apathy which the years of constant

* Dollfuss surprised the rather secularist assembly at Geneva by explaining that the new Austrian State would be "guided by the principles laid down by Pius XI for solving the social problems of the day".

stress and privation have produced. It is also a great pity that the Austrian Protestants have allowed themselves to be used by the Nazis, instead of fighting alongside the Catholic Church, like their gallant co-religionists across the border.

In December 1933 a statement was published by the Austrian Bishops, which may be described as the forerunner of the Pope's Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*; it was in the form of four propositions:

"(1) Mankind is a homogeneous family founded on justice and charity. We therefore condemn the National Socialist racist illusion, which is bound to lead to racial hatred and conflict between the nations.

"(2) True Christian Nationalism is willed by God and approved by the Church, since love for one's people and devotion to one's country are rooted in man's nature. We therefore preach the virtue of Christian patriotism.

"(3) Nation and State are not the same thing, and the State is above the Nation. We therefore condemn the extreme principle of nationality, defend the historic rights of our country and welcome the furtherance of the Austrian idea.

"(4) Above all nationalism stands religion, which is not national but super-national. It is the business of religion to ennoble every nation. It is the source and main-spring of true culture. But it is not confined to particular nations. Rather is its mission to preach salvation to all peoples and at the same time to conduce to their earthly warfare. We therefore condemn all doctrines and tendencies that must inevitably lead to a breach with the Catholic Church."

Three and a half years later Pius XI has had to denounce the errors of aggressive nationalism with greater force, and it may be that there are martyrdoms ahead for those who remain true to what he has laid down. Whatever happens he has fought for the cause

of peace, and the missionary organizations which he has sent out all over the non-Christian world are labouring for the same cause. In his first Encyclical he spoke of peace, and the three condemnations which he has had to utter, of the errors of the *Action Française*, of Communism, and of National Socialism have been issued, among other reasons, because such movements must in the end lead to war, in two cases the wars of race, in the other the yet more brutal war of class.

The great pilgrimages of ex-servicemen, which have been a special feature of the Pontificate, have been in the cause of peace, and in 1935, at Lourdes, took place the greatest gathering which that strange town has seen, when men and women assembled from all over the world, to pray for peace; not to make empty demonstrations, but to offer their wills to God. For three whole days the space before the Grotto was packed with suppliants of all races, white, yellow and black, and on the afternoon of the last day the voice of Pius XI was heard over the wireless blessing the great crowd.

I have tried to deal faithfully with the one occasion when he was accused of failing the cause of peace, and I do most honestly believe that an unprejudiced study of the matter will show that far from failing the cause, his reticence may have saved his peace-making potentialities for future years. The more enthusiastic pacifists narrowly missed landing Europe in war during that critical time, and the years to come may show how, by his impartiality, he preserved for the Pontifex Maximus the power to preserve the Pax Romana. Let it never be forgotten that while he deliberately refused to judge in a particular matter, as no direct appeal had been made to him by those concerned, nevertheless he has constantly reminded the world that those who indulge in unprovoked aggression will endanger their souls.

The future is still dark, and it has never been very bright since history began, "but I know," as G. K. Chesterton said, "that he who is called Pontifex, the Builder of the Bridge, is called also Claviger, the Bearer of the Key ; and that such keys were given to him to bind and loose when he was a poor fisher in a far province, beside a small and almost secret sea."

THE END

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