

THE CHURCH AND THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD.

Modern Intellectualism and the Catholic Church. Dublin Review,
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The Light of the Holy Spirit in the World. Five Lectures, by Rev.
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IT was stated in a previous paper on the "Actual Situation of the Church" that she has lost a considerable portion of her former control over the intellectual part of mankind. To this most remarkable feature of her present position it is our ungrateful task to devote a few pages. In doing so we may have to unravel the intricacies of a dark plot, as daring as was the one by which she was deprived of her temporal power; a plot at this moment most manifest in many deplorable state measures which become every day more widespread, and would surely prove fatal to her existence if her intellect were not truly "the light of the Holy Spirit in the world," as it is eloquently portrayed in the "Lectures" of Rev. Canon, now Bishop, Hedley.

But to understand more thoroughly the *animus* of Modern Intellectualism—as it has been called appropriately by a contributor to the *Dublin Review*—to judge accurately of its fell purpose and of the success it has so far met with, to revive our hopes at the same time by the sight of the sure remedy always ready at hand when the evil is worse, it is proper first to examine the Church as being essentially an intellectual body, as in fact the most powerful one that has ever appeared on earth. And this may in the end convince the reader that since she cannot change in whatever is to her essential, since the living spring of reason and of faith deposited in her bosom for satiating the thirst of humanity can never dry up, all the attempts of the "men of intellect" of our time, although they seem so firmly banded together against her, must ultimately fail. Can they ever quench the mental light which shines so bright, lit up from heaven, in the souls of thousands of men ardent in their belief, devoted to the Church, and able to hold a pen in their hand, or to speak from the rostrum and the pulpit? If in the previous century these were fewer in number owing to many mournful causes, see how they swarm in our age, and how they are at once able and bold! Man cannot be robbed of his intellect as of his land. After you have taken from the priest all he possessed there is yet a fire burning in his soul, and he still has a tongue as well as you. But of this anon.

The ardent promoters of "Modern Intellectualism" may very

well, therefore, be deceived in their calculations. At this moment, however, they are fully convinced of their power; and their power is certainly as great as was that of "darkness" at the time of our Saviour's passion. They would like evidently to secure themselves in their high situation, and being of a liberal turn of mind they would like, instead of engaging in a perpetual war, to come to a peaceful settlement between themselves and the Church. They have consequently propositions, conditions, terms of agreement to offer, with a view to determining in peace the great question who shall have the intellectual guidance of mankind? For this is the solemn problem now agitated all around us. It has been so to a certain extent in all ages; it is so most pre-eminently at the present moment.

These are the clear terms and conditions of the men of intellect: "Let the priest confine himself to his church, and there explain the dogmas of his catechism and the morality of his gospel. To us belong whatever remains, namely, the forum, the senate chamber, the social atmosphere, and the school." They insist that to secure the tranquillity of the world this division of labor is necessary. When it is well understood and accepted on both sides mankind will progress with rapidity in its career of civilization and refinement. The "men of intellect" will be, of course, as it is meet, the chief factors in the mighty problem. And the Church will not be deprived altogether of usefulness, at least with respect to women and children, who form always a numerous class of society. But with this the great object always now kept in view, peace, will be surely obtained, and the millennium so long promised to mankind will finally commence.

Were the Church reduced to accept those terms—she is not quite yet—she might say: "Peace is the result of the perfection of order which I alone can bring; and it will certainly come when I am left perfectly free. War, I see, must continue on earth a little longer. But with what you have the kindness to leave me, gentlemen, I can beat you. The share you pompously assign to me was the only thing I had at first, and with it alone I once conquered your ancestors. Are you so dull of intellect, with all the means you possess of cultivating it, not to perceive that, with the dogmas of the catechism and the morality of the gospel, I am far more able to guide the world than you? What you call the catechism, Proudhon, an intellectualist certainly like you, called *theology*; and he said in substance that 'no social, political, and moral question could be fairly discussed, and ultimately resolved, without the aid of *theology*.' Consequently since you discard from your armory the weapon called catechism, you are perfectly incompetent to discuss, much more to solve, whatever questions belong to the 'social,

political, and moral order.' Proudhon may have advanced and written in his life many paradoxical and false propositions. But this one is among the most profoundly true that a man could utter. Since, therefore, you leave the catechism to me, I have enough to beat you in all that belongs to those great subjects. Sooner or later the world will have to come to me—owing to the fatal blunderings of you, gentlemen, its self-appointed leaders—or else the world must perish."

These few words, which we make bold enough to place on the lips of the Church, portray vividly the positions of the two contending armies in the field of intellect. The first, all of this earth, has contemptuously rejected all that is in the least supernatural, or even spiritual, and pretends to govern the world—a pure machine—by cranks, levers, or weights and wheels. In that system man is an animal, life a span of a few years, the whole of creation *une mécanique céleste*, as it was ingeniously called by Laplace. Very different is the other system, which starts from the principle that there is a supreme intellectual effusion which is "the light of the Holy Spirit," by which the world must be controlled and directed, because man is akin to God by his origin, and destined ultimately to return to God as his last end. This is merely the text of the catechism; but it is also a sublime theology. The war, therefore, must be perpetual between the two systems until the weaker one, which is certainly the first, shall be totally and finally conquered.

But this is only light skirmishing. We must throw ourselves at once *in medias res*.

Is it true that the Church, as has been said, has always been and is still the most intellectual body that has ever existed on earth? Can this be proved historically? We think it can; and, in undertaking it, no restriction whatever is placed on the meaning of the word *intellect*. This may surprise some persons who think seriously that science has been at last *secularized*, and cannot any more belong to the province of *clericalism*. A very strange notion, to say the least, which cannot endure the least discussion, since intellect belongs to mind, and mind is the same for *clericals* as well as for *seculars*; only, the first apply their minds more to the high questions of the spiritual world than to the details of nomenclature in natural history, for instance; for which, however, they are fully competent, if they choose to lower their circle of study. In the historical discussion on which we enter we give therefore to the word *intellect* the most comprehensive meaning it can receive. It is true that, when our Lord sent His Apostles to teach mankind, He invested them chiefly with the great function of directing intellect infallibly in the path of truth and virtue, and did not require they should be *littérateurs* and *savans*. Yet it is historically remarka-

ble that this last lower privilege has always seemed to follow naturally the first and higher one. Let us enter into some details and ponder over them.

Generally the real intellectual power of the Church, in the sense indicated, is supposed to have begun when the barbarians, having destroyed the Roman empire, threw themselves in all their fierce nakedness into the midst of corrupt populations, and began to destroy whatever existed before, riveting their rough feudalism as a yoke of iron over the neck of prostrate Europe. The Christian Church, say unanimously both friends and foes, rendered then an inappreciable service to mankind by taking the first elements of culture to those savage children of the northern forests and moors. She presented herself to them with the Gospel in her hand; she became the instructress of rude tribes, who first were struck with awe at her sight, and soon became convinced that her doctrine was heavenly. She thus began to tame them, to subdue their ferocious natures, and to pave the way for a more tranquil state of society.

Many modern "men of intellect" add, with a half-sneer, "A theocratic and autocratic Church was after all the proper truchman to speak in a rough tongue to rough peoples." If these are not exactly their expressions, it is at least their meaning. We shall, before long, give a very different interpretation of the intellectual work of the Church at that time. It will not be difficult to prove that she did a great deal more; that she completely educated, in fact, the northern barbarians, and raised them to that supreme elevation by which Europe has been able ever since to rule the world, and to obtain the hegemony of all the nations of the globe, which she still possesses. But this was not the first time that the Church gave full proof of her intellectual ability. Long before this, when society was most refined, and had reached the highest point of material as well as artistic and literary eminence, the Church had shown the power of her mind in a way which men seem to have forgotten, since they never speak of it. This was the sudden burst of sublime eloquence, literary perfection, and most polished culture, which gave to the fourth and fifth centuries the well-known name of "Age of Doctors." Still, this glorious designation does not give a sufficient idea of this remarkable intellectual phenomenon, which was the most surprising that ever happened on earth, since it was in fact the almost sudden substitution of a complete, new, and altogether unexpected literature, in lieu of the most brilliant one which had shed such an immortal lustre over Greece and Rome, and which, wonderful to relate, was at the time positively expiring. This deserves some special attention.

The ancient literature of Greece and Rome has certainly been

the most influential that has ever existed on earth. The Sanscrit alone, in old times, might have some claim to a particular consideration; but, although it seems that there are compositions in that language which may be said to surpass in freshness and depth any of the Greek or Latin works we possess, they are so peculiarly Oriental that the more sedate habits of the ruling race on earth, that is, the European, cannot be so powerfully impressed and moulded by them as it has always been by the productions of Hellenic or Roman genius. In these classics, as we call them, besides the mythological element, contemptible for us, yet which may become a promoter of moral corruption for some unformed minds, there is often a depth of wisdom, a clear view of human nature, an appreciation of the beautiful, a precision of thought, and perfection of style, which has secured their immortality, and induced the mediæval monks to spend long hours, days, and years of their lives in transcribing them and handing them over to us. There is no need of expatiating on the subject, and any amount of opposition will not now cause them to disappear.

It just happened that the most brilliant period of the Latin literature was the age of Augustus; the very time when our Divine Saviour was born in Judea. The acme of Greek genius was reached a few centuries earlier, at the time of Pericles; but the decline from that period had scarcely been sensible, except in the perfection of style; and Rome herself, so rich in her own language under the first of her emperors, bowed to Hellenic art, tongue, and wisdom, and invariably imparted to her wealthy classes an artistic, literary, and philosophical education, under *Greek* masters. This was the case when Peter reached Rome, and the religious society which was to be forever glorious under the name of the Roman Church, commenced directly to use both languages, but chiefly the *Greek*. Those of us who have read with delight the productions of the first children of Peter, namely, of Clement of Rome, of Ignatius of Antioch, and of Hermas, the letters of the Church of Smyrna on the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, and of the Church of Vienna and Lyons on that of St. Pothinas, and finally, the few fragments which remain of various authors of the first or second centuries, can never forget the strange but entrancing perfume which exhales here and there from new Greek words and phrases—first lisping sounds of a superhuman language—of a truly heavenly character, never met with in the old Pagan authors.

Soon a new literature begins to appear under the pens of Irenæus, and Justin, and Athenagoras, and Theophilus of Antioch. At the same time the solemn Latin tones of Cyprian and Tertullian are heard. How different from the profane authors of the same age! It is indeed the birth of a new intellectual age. The sensuous

character of the old literary masters has altogether disappeared, and *mind* alone stalks forth rich in fresh heavenly gifts.

But at the same moment a most unaccountable phenomenon is rapidly developed, which must attract our attention. It is the swift disappearance, without any visible cause, of that brilliant literature of Greece and Rome, to make room for the fresh intellectual wonder which is going to replace it. What majesty of expression could picture to the life this grand scene which took place in the comparatively short time comprised between the Antonines and Theodosius? Pity that there is no better means of placing this before the reader than cold statistical tables.

The idea had presented itself to our mind to go through the various histories of literature of that epoch, and note on paper the descending and ascending scales of the old classics on one side, and of the new Fathers on the other, comparing, if possible, at the same time, the literary value of each. It is not a pleasant task, owing to its aridity; and we were greatly gratified to find that it had been splendidly done, in this very country, at least for the Greek branch of the subject. The tables can be seen and duly appreciated in the introduction to the *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* by Professor E. A. Sophocles, of Harvard University. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1870.) This most erudite Greek gentleman prefaces those of his lists dating from the birth of Christ—the previous ones have no interest for us in the present question—by the following remarkable words: “From the first century of the Christian era downwards, the writers are divided into *secular* and *ecclesiastical*. The former are the legitimate successors of those preceding this century; the latter may be regarded as intruders or disturbing forces.” This is, indeed, most pointed, and it will be very curious, by and by, to give a few moments’ attention to the comparative value of the legitimate successors of the old classics, on one side, and to the *intruders* or *disturbing forces*, which means here the new Christian writers or Fathers, on the other. Since these long lists cannot be given entire in these pages, we have only to count the number of authors on each side. For the *first century*—many simple inscriptions or short fragments are included in the classical list as distinct authors—we have thirty-four legitimate successors of the old classics; and already fifteen *intruders*, among whom are the four Evangelists and four writers of Apostolic Epistles.

The *second century* gives forty-eight names, including inscriptions, in the first list, and thirty-three in the second, in which, it is true, several Gnostic writers are enumerated. The *third century* has eighteen names only in the first list, and the same number in the second. But from the fourth age down, see how the tables are

suddenly reversed: *Fourth century*, thirty-one legitimate successors of the Classics, including, however, ten problematical names accompanied with the sign of doubt (?), and forty-seven authentic names on the second list. The *fifth century* enumerates only nineteen authors on the first side—several of them doubtful—and on the other, forty-nine. Finally, in the *sixth century*, against fourteen names on the first list, we have thirty-eight on the second. It is useless to add that from the seventh century down, the first list disappears entirely.

To compare the value of the writers on both sides would require a much longer space than is at our disposal. Suffice it to say that the whole array of the Greek Fathers, whose names will forever be glorious, is placed in juxtaposition with names perfectly unknown, or those of mere sophists and grammarians. Something, however, will presently be said on this subject. A like result would be reached by an inquiry into the secular and ecclesiastical literature of Rome in the same period. We would find, as stated previously, a complete substitution of the second for the first. But, as it is a question here of intellectual merit, as the object is to show how the intellect of the Church at once took possession of the mind of Greece and Rome, it is proper, for a just appreciation of the subject, to weigh, mark down, and estimate as well as can be done in a most condensed form, the new element that then took possession of mankind.

Order in writing being an essential condition of clearness, we will speak of the intellectual hold the Church assumed, first, in the Grecian, and, secondly, in the Roman, world; in the third place, of the same phenomenon outside of the strict limits of the great European empire. A word only on each is allowed us, whilst a large volume would be scarcely sufficient.

It is in Alexandria that the first of these wonders happened. That great city was then the brain of the whole world. At the moment of its near disappearance, of which a word was just said, the old Hellenic literature had concentrated all its brilliancy at the mouth of the Nile. No need of describing its schools, its libraries, its immense collections of scientific objects, and the crowds of its learned professors and world-renowned philosophers. Eclecticism and Neo-Platonism were professedly the concentration of the whole ancient intellectual universe into a gigantic focus. History, philosophy, theurgy, the scientific archæology of the old polytheism, natural sciences, too, in their largest acceptation as understood at the time, were the subjects of most intense interest taught and studied in its halls. And the ultimate object of all these was to prop the intellectual basis of the ancient world, including its idolatry, which awakening reason threatened to batter down.

But, unfortunately for these mighty hopes, Mark, the disciple of Peter, had, a few years after the ascension of our Lord, rambled, unaccountably in appearance, all the way from Rome, through Cyrenaica, first, to learn Greek, probably, then down into Central Egypt, through Thebais, where he remained twelve years, to learn, no doubt, the Egyptian tongue; and finally he dropped down some fine day in Alexandria, where he took his quarters, we are sure, in the Jewish part of the town, as he was himself a Jew. The city was then divided equally between the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Jews, and thus Mark was prepared to face the three sections at once. He began directly to teach *catechism*, an occupation mean enough in the opinion of the Intellectualists of our age. Yet he made converts, and he soon opened a church, a very insignificant proceeding, certainly, in the estimation of these same gentlemen. His successors after him followed in the same track, until under one of them, by name Alexander, we think, Pantæus was placed at the head of the Alexandrian catechists, what we would call the Sunday-school teachers of that Church. And, strange to say, a turn was given by Pantæus to the institution, which could not but seem a desperate project without any hope of success. This turn consisted in posting notices through the city, or something of the kind, by which the Greek pupils of the Musæum, that is of the great public schools mentioned above, were invited to come and listen to the catechetical instructions given by Pantæus and his assistants.

What seems incredible, and yet is a positive fact, the students who were every day listening to the learned lectures of the Eclectic and Neo-Platonist philosophers, and of the greatest scientists of the time, who had yet, no doubt, in their immense collections of natural objects some of the specimens sent formerly by Alexander to his teacher Aristotle, entered the modest rooms where the new catechism was taught; and in course of time many of them declared themselves Christians.

Thus the school was not a failure. There were other teachers after Pantæus, even when the persecutions against the new religion were most fierce. It is precisely during that fearful epoch that the great figure of Origen finally looms up. In him we see the champion destined to replace the old literature by the new. What could not be said, if time allowed it, of that gigantic enterprise by which Paganism was to be conquered with all the untold beauties of its poetry, its art, its science, everything which belongs to a really intellectual race of people? For, mark it well, it was merely a contest of mind with mind—of the mind of the old Pagan world at the time of its greatest culture, in the city endowed with its highest power, with the mind of the new spiritual society—the Church—just gathering its strength by a sublime effort, and wrestling, with

no other weapon than that of the intellect. And in this mighty struggle the Church conquered! Alexandria was a Christian city when the Moslem arrived later on. Other champions had followed Origen, the chief one being Clement, the learned author of the *Stromata*, the *Protrepticon*, and the *Pedagogue*. Those immortal works immediately attracted the attention of all; and by placing face to face, as they all do, the new religion and the old, intellectual Pagans were convinced, gave up the old literature and embraced the new.

The contest, meanwhile, had extended all over the Hellenic world. How could we possibly condense in a few paragraphs the recital of that war of giants? The names alone of those who fought for the Church, or rather for mankind, would fill pages, if a word were added to each, to depict briefly his peculiar character. Cyril, of Jerusalem, would appear with the simplicity of his style and the lucidity of his doctrine; Gregory of Neo Cæsarea, might be called the first who carried Christian eloquence to the height of sublimity in his "*Discourse on Thanksgiving to Origen*." Basil, of Cappadocia, could take his rank among the best Greek writers of antiquity; Gregory, of Nazianzum, his bosom friend, not only might deserve a high position among the best orators of any age and country, but his chief attribute in our eyes would be that of poetry; since he was the first to weave the golden and silken threads of Grecian rhythm around the noble dogmas of the religion of Christ. To him must be assigned the honor of having, in more than one hundred and fifty-eight poems, set in motion the sweet waves of harmony on which the Hellenic world was henceforth to disport itself, and express its enthusiasm and love for the Supreme God, the Eternal Word, the Holy Spirit, and a host of saints, instead of Jove and the other deities and heroes of heathen mythology.

What could not be said of Gregory of Nyssa, the brother of Basil, his equal almost in elevation of thought, purity of style, and strength of reasoning faculties? Of Athanasius, and of Cyril of Alexandria, it might be safely advanced that the Greek mind never went farther in sublimity and depth for the explanation of the mysteries of religion, than in the works of those two great men, in spite of the calumnies that some Protestant and many infidel writers have circulated against the second. With respect to their literary merit, if Cyril does not reach the perfection of many other Fathers, owing probably to his long sojourn among the austere monks of Nitria, the sublime things which he discusses with grandeur and clearness are sufficient to make of him a great writer; and Athanasius is in every respect a master of language, except perhaps in some minor tracts which he wrote in his flight through the wilderness of Upper Egypt.

Finally, for necessity compels us to omit many names of importance, the greatest of them all in point of eloquence, John of Antioch, called Chrysostom, can receive nothing more than a mere general mention. But all thoroughly educated men must have, at least, read some of his immortal productions, since the man cannot be said to be acquainted with Greek literature who does not know, at least, his *Homilies* to the people of Antioch.

These are a few of those intellectual giants who accomplished this mighty literary revolution, the actual object of our inquiries. A word, however, cannot possibly be omitted on the general character of their mind with regard to its expression in the language they used, and to the whole intellectual substratum of their works, taken mainly from the Bible. Their mind had for its organ of expression only the Attic idiom; and the great subject of its splendid development was the text of Holy Scripture. Nothing could give us a higher idea than these two points, of the really intellectual work which the Church thus accomplished in the fourth and fifth centuries.

It is known that just previous to the first spread of Christianity all the old dialects of Greece had disappeared, and were merged everywhere in the universal Attic idiom. Professor Sophocles, in the *Lexicon* previously quoted, gives curious details on the subject. In our opinion it was a part of a great, providential design, on which it is impossible at this moment to enlarge. All the Greek fathers wrote in that limpid, harmonious, rich, and elaborate idiom, the very one best adapted to the expression of the highest, holiest, and sweetest operations of the mind. If such were the noble organ they used, the main substance of all they said was of a still higher character, as it was all derived from the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Fathers began to spread this heavenly doctrine of Scripture before the world from the very beginning. But it was chiefly after Origen had critically given a safe edition of Holy Writ in his *Hexapla*, and Jerome had published his *Vulgate*, that the Christian writers expatiated at length on so mighty a theme. It is difficult to find even a few Fathers who have not given a literal explanation of the entire Bible, and impossible to meet a single one who has not, at least, done the same for a part of it. It was the first time that humanity heard the real Word of God explained in masterly style by the most intelligent instructors. When this is well considered, is it surprising that the former intellectual food of mankind was despised and finally set aside for a heavenly aliment, alone able to satisfy the cravings of the mind as well as the aspirations of the heart?

But we must hasten on. Nothing has yet been said of the ignominious death of the old Latin literature, and of the sublime effu-

sions of the Christian Latin intellectual life that replaced it. As soon as Cyprian, Tertullian, and, a little while after, Lactantius were heard, there were no more any successors to the brilliant writers of the Augustan age. Had we time to do for Rome what has been done so briefly for Greece, the epithet, *ignominious*, which we just gave to the sudden demise of Roman art, would be thought scarcely strong enough. Tacitus, Juvenal, and Pliny, are the only men of note directly after Nero, and they appear floating alone in a sea of deplorable scribblers, who are the six or eight *worthies*—writers on Latin literature differ as to the number—who employed their rare talent on what is called *Historia Augusta*, and who are more or less known under the name of *Scriptores Augustorum*? Except a few facts which would be altogether ignored had they not taken the trouble of using a pen, they might as well have never existed, so far as the intellectual good of mankind is concerned. They lived from Hadrian to Diocletian. This astonishing collapse of so great and powerful a thing, as was the poetry of Virgil and Horace, the historical ability of Livy and Tacitus, the forensic eloquence of Hortensius and Cicero, is a stupendous fact, which has not yet been explained, and probably cannot be.

But see the array of great writers who, after the Church had fed them with her milk, step at once on the stage of the world, and give to Latin literature a new lease of existence for several centuries! To the names of Cyprian and Tertullian, already mentioned, we have to add Arnobius, Minutius Felix, in early times; a little later, Lactantius, Hilary of Poitiers, Vincentius of Lerins, Maximus of Turin, Claudianus Mamertus, Paulus Orosius, and Salvianus of Marseilles, a simple priest, author of numerous works, two of which only we possess: *Adversus Avaritiam* and *De Gubernatione Dei*. With what vigor he speaks of the abuses already creeping into the Church in his time! With what gloomy colors he pictures the devastation of the empire by the barbarians, foretelling clearly, however, its salvation through the Church, and like a prophet predicting that the world would not perish, but would be recalled to life and renewed by the very scourge. These few names of Christian authors would suffice to show the intellectual wealth of the Church in that degenerate age. Yet nothing has been said of the greatest men then living, who, by themselves, would give lustre to a literature in any age, at least when power of mind alone is considered. These were Ambrose, Augustine, and Jerome. How many geniuses has the world ever produced on a par with Augustine? Perhaps two or three. But how few in our days can even understand and fathom his deep philosophy, his incomparable knowledge of the human heart, his sublime conception of the dogmas of religion, and, what seems however much easier, his melting tenderness for every kind

of misfortune. As to Jerome, he can be better understood by the men of our age; for he joins to an immense erudition, a prodigious activity of mind, a wonderful power of influencing all classes of men; the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the austere anchorite and the soft and tender virgin or matron; all of them great qualities which chiefly attract the attention in this age, and seem to be highly appreciated by all in this century of steam-power, of active and quick life, of free expansion, and social mixing up of all shades of humanity.

But unable, through want of space, to develop the proofs of the intellectual superiority of the Church over the Greek and Roman world in the fourth and fifth centuries, we must be satisfied here with quoting a few words of Cesare Cantù on the same subject: "One is struck when comparing the strong life, the perfect accord, the harmonious motion then visible in religious society, whilst in the civil world everything was inert, and ran rapidly toward decomposition. We see among the Pagan men of letters, only cold grammarians, loquacious rhetoricians, meagre chroniclers, sickly poets singing nuptial verses or shepherd's idyls; things which can all coexist with servitude and moral depression. Among Christians, on the other hand, there were philosophers, statesmen, orators, agitating the highest questions; and most of those who wrote, were likewise actively engaged in public life; they were bishops, thinkers, men engaged in the politics of those days, devoted at the same time to meditation and action, intent on convincing men and governing them. On this account their writings sometimes show a kind of haste, are composed for the actual circumstances of the day, and solve questions just coming for the first time before the public. Still they are aglow with a freedom and ease perfectly unknown to the Pagan literature of the epoch." We have translated freely, but we think accurately, this remarkable passage of Cantù (*Hist. Univ. Sept. Ep.*, ch. xxi.), which certainly settles the question.

Before concluding this subject a promise must be redeemed, to which a few sentences only can be devoted. The Church, it was said, then showed her intellect not only in the superiority she so soon acquired in the field of Greek and Latin literature; but the same fact strikes us also in cultivated countries outside of the strict limits of the Roman empire. Eastern Syria and Armenia were included in our meaning when the promise was made.

Of the first, whose central seat of culture was Edessa, a single paragraph must contain what could bear a long development. It is all comprehended in this simple but pithy remark: Syriac literature must have existed before Christianity was first planted at Edessa. There was certainly something of the kind in that country, even from the time of the old Assyrian empire. A part of the library

of those kings, it is known, was transported in our days from the ruins of Nineveh to London and Paris. Still more must this have been the case immediately previous to the Christian era. Every parcel of it, however, has perished; but Christian oratory, poetry, history, in the great Aramæan idiom called Syriac, has left some traces of the perfection which it at once attained, as soon as the Abgar dynasty embraced the Christian religion. This very probably took place directly after the death of Christ, and in Apostolic times. We have yet, at least, the text of the Old and New Testaments in excellent Syriac, published in the East as early at least as Origen gave forth his *Hexapla*, and long before Jerome handed over to the West his precious *Vulgate*. The *Peshito*, as it is called, of the Old and New Testaments, that is the Syriac text of the same, excites at this moment the wonder of learned men, who can scarcely understand this strange phenomenon.

The world has lost the works of Bardesanes, a writer of the second century, which would increase this wonder, had we any considerable portion of them. But the productions of the great Ephrem are yet in existence, some of them at least; and they suffice to give to modern readers some idea of the literary eminence the Church immediately acquired wherever she was solidly established. This much only can be said here.

For Armenia the result is nearly as striking as for Eastern Syria. To be convinced of it the reader has only to consult the first column of the article on "Armenian Literature," contained in Appleton's *American Cyclopaedia* (first edition). The writer of it certainly is well acquainted with his subject, and he says with justice, that "the literature of Armenia, until the introduction of Christianity, is contained in a few songs or ballads, which have been collected by Moses of Chorene. . . . The new faith of the Armenians operated favorably and powerfully on their literature," etc. He might have expressed his idea more clearly and forcibly, had he said that the new faith of the Armenians created for them in full vigor what scarcely existed before, a copious, rich, and immortal literary life, copied from the Greeks at first, but soon putting on the Armenian garb after Mesrole had invented the alphabet of thirty-eight letters, which has been the national one ever since. We regret we can say no more on the subject, but it would be only a repetition of the paragraph on Edessa.

This short sketch of the primitive intellectual superiority of the Church would authorize the assertion that, had it not been for the invasion of the barbarians in the West, and of the Saracens in the East, the mental activity of the Christian Church would have immediately given rise in the world to the richest artistic and literary development that has ever since taken place—a development per-

haps superior to what the modern nations have produced in Italy, Spain, France, England, and Germany, during the three or four last centuries. But it would be of little profit to expatiate on the subject; as it is, at best, a well-founded conjecture only, and because the barbarians really destroyed at first everything in the West. Our next step, therefore, must be to consider how the Church repaired the evil, and showed her great mind still more powerfully than on the first occasion. This promise has been made; it must be redeemed. Unfortunately, condensation necessitates the lopping off of the legitimate developments which such a mighty subject seems to require.

Many "modern men of intellect"—this was said previously—have thought they rendered a full acknowledgment to the Church for her services to society during the German invasions, from the fifth to the tenth centuries, by admitting, "with a half sneer," that it was the proper thing at the time for Christianity to "speak in a rough tongue to rough peoples;" and this is all she did, as they aver. Have they really studied at all that long process of education which all the nations of Europe had to undergo, in order to reach that summit of high intellect, perfect culture, and encyclopedic knowledge, by which they are now able to rule the world? Or do they imagine that the Church, after having hurriedly baptized them, left them to their own guidance? Guizot has said, we think, that "in France the bishops made the nation." This is an idea as true as grand, but it is not comprehensive enough; for France is not Europe, and the bishops are not the whole Church, although they form, when they have the Pope at their head, the chief and only ruling part of it.

Any one who reads with care a few of the excellent books of history which have been recently written on the origin, first ebullitions of temper, gradual cooling down, settling at last in comparative repose and dignity, of the various European peoples, cannot contemplate without wonder the entrancing spectacle offered to his view and meditation. What prolonged efforts to break and shake off the heavy yoke of feudalism! What energy in spreading more and more the reign of right over that of might! What ardor in bringing out from the former barbarous codes the eternal axioms of law and justice contained in them, no doubt, but buried under the thick envelop of old Pagan cruelty! It took centuries to go through these various steps. But who was all the time guiding the various states of Europe in this painful but glorious career of improvement and well-being?—The Popes, the bishops, and the priests. Take any nation you choose—France, Spain, England, Germany, or Italy—Italy chiefly, which was the first to emerge fully from barbarism, only because she was nearer to the centre of intel-

lectual life. It was so for all of those nations. Thus we enlarge the ideas of Guizot, and we better express the truth. It is strange that all those modern writers who speak of mediæval times, attribute to the Church whatever was dark in them, whilst she was really, all along, diffusing light and doing away with what was barbarous. This truth is coming out now more prominently from all recent researches, and we intend to din it into the ears of unwilling listeners until they finally bow their heads to the great fact.

It is proper on this subject to consider a few of the most important lines of action followed by the Church for educating fully the Western races of the Old World. In some places, as in France, and perhaps England, it was chiefly the work of the bishops; in some others, as in Italy, and possibly in Spain, it was principally that of the Popes and the monks; in other countries, as in Germany and the North, it was the combined action of the three, without scarcely the pre-eminence of any single class of them. Everywhere, in fact, Popes, bishops, monks, and priests, were busy in the great operation which was to issue in the raising of all those races to the pinnacle of culture and a display of wholesome energy.

Let us see, *firstly*, what amount of influence the Popes and bishops had in shaping the elaborate forms of government which their long-prolonged action educed from the primitive rough feudalism. The Popes as the great moral arbitrators and rulers, the bishops in all European countries as the leaders of the nobility, either in the limitation of the royal power, or in parliamentary discussions, or often in the administration of public affairs as ministers of state, took certainly the lead everywhere. In mediæval history they appear always prominently in the various capacities just enumerated. In a previous article a short allusion was made to the noble part the bishops and monks took in bringing forth into existence the Third Estate, and in raising the peasantry out of serfdom. A reference to it is required, but a very brief one must be sufficient. Nothing was then said of the great influence they had in the abolition of slavery; and this simple reminding word about it must suffice here, since, after the demonstration of the fact by so many eminent writers, no one would now dare to express even a doubt on the subject.

And be it remembered that, in speaking of the shape churchmen gave to the various European governments, we do not intend to allude to those political institutions within the last two or three hundred years. It is well known that, with the rising of Protestantism, absolute rule was gradually substituted in all European states, instead of the really free constitutions which the action of the Church had previously established everywhere. The fact is now too well proved to be even a subject of discussion. From the tenth century down to the sixteenth, Europe, with her parliamen-

tary debates, her Third Estate rising constantly in consideration, the municipal and altogether self-conducted administration of her cities, her trade-guilds and corporations, was far more free than she has ever been since, even including the present time. If the hateful relics of former feudalism gave rise occasionally to arbitrary power and many abuses, these would have gradually disappeared and become extinct with the total disappearance of the barbarous institution. But it is certain that the free governments alluded to were the work of the Church; feudalism was not. This must suffice on this first point.

The *second bearing* of the Church's action over mediæval Europe regards the manners of the people, who from Burgundian savages, Vandal robbers, Gothic brutes, etc., etc., were to be shaped into the comparatively refined entity known under the name of the Christian people—*populus Christianus*. Take an Italian burgher of the fourteenth century; the most humble subject of Louis IX. in the thirteenth; a Castilian of the lower class, or better still a Navarrese peasant at the foot of the Pyrenees, in the fifteenth; finally, choose well—for the good there was not so promiscuous as in the countries just enumerated—choose well the numerous specimens you can find among the British boors or the German roughs of any of the centuries mentioned a moment ago, and say what amount of care, what unremitting attention, what loving zeal, had been required to produce the change. But in truth, and without the least exaggeration, this care, attention, and zeal had been bestowed by the Church *alone* for the good of the people. To the Church alone, we repeat again, was due the remarkable alteration noticeable in Europe in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

She had used for producing that transformation all the means her heavenly ingenuity could suggest: the beauties of her liturgy, the grandeur of her rites, the sweetness of her songs, the vastness of her holy edifices, the innumerable institutions erected for the alleviation of all possible human miseries. She had done more: she had spoken to the heart of those forlorn beings, and deserved to be called by them their mother, the Holy Church! She had instructed their children; opened schools for them—we do not speak yet of her high institutions of learning;—she had formed their minds, and developed their emotional faculties; and under her tuition all knew, at least, that they had been created to the image of God, and were destined to be happy with him forever in heaven. Those Europeans of our days are most ungrateful who revile the Church after all she has done for their ancestors. Let them remember, even for one single moment, what would have become of them had she been, what they odiously attribute to her, a proud, cunning, calculating, insidious foe of the human race.

Let them reflect also a little on the kind of language they would now speak had not the Church polished their utterance, and given them the flowing tongues they use. This single item is not without its importance, and alone it would deserve the gratitude of mankind. In the *third place*, the formation of all the rich, melodious, highly philosophical, and sweetly persuasive idioms of modern Europe is certainly owing to the Church's action. This may not, at first sight, appear so certain as what was just shown to have taken place in the formation of the European governments, and in the shaping of the manners of the people. Yet it is certainly true, and the reader will soon be convinced of it. A great fact, much to the honor of the Church in another line, seems to militate against this actual assertion. Was she not mainly instrumental, they say, in spreading everywhere her Latin, and thus opposing the energy of those young races in forming each its own idiom? We answer *yes* to the first part of the proposition, but decidedly *no* to the second.

Christendom was to be a true commonwealth; a universal language was therefore necessary for its unity, and the Latin was the best for such a purpose. And in this the intellectual function of the Church in the forming of Europe—to show which is all along the object of these pages—could not find a better means for the diffusion of knowledge through her universities than the old language of Rome. This will be more clearly seen by and by. But that this militated in the least against the birth of new idioms adapted to the idiosyncrasy of each people is most untrue, as a few words only may show.

How could those new idioms be formed but from some former ones? Men had not yet imagined that languages, constitutions, religions, etc., could be built and fashioned philosophically, as that ridiculous Abbé Sièyes thought he had logically elaborated his own constitution for France, which the first consul, Napoleon, dispatched so handsomely in a few words. New languages are formed gradually from old ones; and unless the young European races preferred to continue to use the barbarous idioms they had brought from the North, it was necessary they should follow the natural process. Just opportunely for this mighty operation the Latin tongue was at hand, out of which every beginner in philology knows that all modern European languages were mainly derived. The best, most appropriate, most noble, and energetic expressions used originally in the German, Scandinavian, or Celtic dialects were carefully preserved, and interwoven with a superabundance of Latin terms to add majesty to the whole. These last generally form the bulk of modern languages, whilst the strong, lucid words of the dialects, just referred to, have also been retained.

These few words exhibit, we think, satisfactorily the genesis of all our idioms; but it took many centuries to elaborate, complete, and perfect them. Who were the men that did it? They must have been masters of Latin, since this language formed so large an element in the result. They must have been used to write, to compose, to speak, for which objects alone a refined language is required. They must have attached a great importance to whatever bore a literary character. They could, therefore, have been no others than churchmen, because churchmen alone then knew Latin; they alone gave their time to writing, composing, and speaking; they finally were the only persons who attached any importance whatever to literary effort. None of these assertions need proof; and therefore the action of the Church in the formation of modern languages may be looked upon as solidly established.

But there are men who do not easily give way to what is so clear and convincing. They will tell you: "Did not Dante and Petrarca, two laymen, form the Italian language? Did not the writers of the *chansons degeste* form that of France? Did not the *cancioneros* give birth to that of Spain? Did not the early chroniclers do the same for the English?" We might answer that these various men or bodies of men had all been made and instructed and fostered by the Church, to which the honor of the result at last is due. Many of the writers of the *chansons degeste* in France, of the *cancioneros* in Spain, of the early chroniclers in England, must have been churchmen or monks. But we prefer to say succinctly, for there is no room for discussing the question at length, that without the previous slow, persistent, nay, secular action of the Church on society, Dante would not have written his great poem, nor Petrarca his often insipid *rime*. Thus also the epic poets of France, the writers of the romances in Spain, and of the chronicles in England, were merely the natural offspring of the protracted action of the Church. They thus prove precisely our thesis, since they are the special developments of a universal cause at the time, which was nothing else than the laborious and constant efforts of the Christian Church prolonged with diligence during so many centuries. We never intended to say that laymen did not join in the cause. On the contrary, as they also partook of the benefit which was intended for all, it was proper they should show that they had profited by it. What good would the Church have done in laboring so assiduously to form the tongue of Europeans, if Europeans had not finally spoken the tongue which was made for them?

Enough of this. We come finally to the grandest feature of the intellectual action of the Church on mediæval Europe, that is her universities; for no one can deny that the universities were hers, were the work of the Christian Church. They were first planned,

devised afterwards in all their details, carried out elaborately in all their scientific parts, and fostered forever after by Popes, bishops, and monks. Pity that we have not the space to describe them as they loomed up when they came to be in full operation. All the universities now in existence cannot give the least idea of them. Oxford in England, Tübingen, Halle, etc., in Germany, have been emasculated by Protestantism. For nearly a hundred years they have disappeared entirely from the soil of France; Spain possesses only a shadow of them under her actual bastard institutions; Victor Emmanuel is just now engaged in the very praiseworthy business of destroying them in Italy. A long description would be required to bring them forth to life again on the paper on which we write, with their staffs of professors by hundreds; with their armies of students by twenty or thirty thousands; with their learned discussions of the most important social, moral, and religious questions that can engage the attention of mankind; with their grand days of debate under the direction and in the presence of men who had often published stupendous works which printing has not yet entirely reproduced.

Those were the days when mind ruled, and they have been called Dark Ages! In our time it is really a superhuman work to establish one of those universities. The Church, left to-day somewhat more free than yesterday, is now trying to restore them to life in France, in Belgium, in England, in Ireland. She will succeed, if left perfectly free; but she alone can do it; and modern *Intellectualism* must necessarily fail, because its very principles deny *intellect*, and reduce everything to *matter*. Read from a recent cyclopedia the pithy statistics of Catholic universities before the year of grace 1500. "Before the year 1500 there were in Europe 64 universities, viz., 15 in France, of which after that of Paris, those of Montpellier, Toulouse, and Orleans were the most celebrated . . .; 19 in Italy, one of them, at Salerno, was probably the earliest in Europe, dating from the tenth century . . .; 15 in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, including those of Vienna, Prague, Heidelberg, Cologne, Erfurt, Leipsic, Louvain, Basil, Ingolstadt, and Tübingen; 9 in Spain and Portugal, including Salamanca, Coimbra, Valladolid, Saragossa, and Alcalà; 2 in England, Oxford and Cambridge; 1 in Poland, at Cracow; 1 in Hungary, at Buda; 1 in Denmark, at Copenhagen, and 1 in Sweden, at Upsal."

By this simple list, it is seen at a glance how completely the Church had taken intellectually possession of Europe. In those eloquent figures we read the fruitful source of the modern power Europe enjoys over the whole world. For in those sixty-four centres of thought there were constantly at work two mighty principles, by which the world must necessarily be governed, namely, Faith and

Reason. Both must be conjoined together; to separate them is fatal to either; and by the very constitution of those universities, Faith and Reason were more solemnly consecrated as the intellectual queens of the universe.

It is a pity that we can say so little upon so vast a theme. Yet enough after all will be said, if we merely point our finger at the splendid results, in Europe itself, of the fruitful scheme. See at a glance those refined nations that, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, just after the invention of printing, and the discovery of India and America, were starting on a career of universal dominion, which might have been such a blessing, had it been confined to the spread of religion and of virtue. Look at Italy, then so brilliant with her innumerable works of art, her magnificent temples, her literature already so rich and noble. Look at Spain, so young and fresh after her struggle of seven hundred years with the Moors, ready to circumnavigate the globe, and plant her flag on all continents and the largest lands. Look at France, recovering from the struggle required to expel the English from her soil, fixing her longing eyes on Italy and Spain, bent only on rivalling them in art, poetry, and enterprise, before Huguenotism came to bring on civil strife. Look on Germany, with the secular prestige of the empire, and proud at the thought that three of her sons had invented a new art for spreading thought. Look on England, finally, still free, before the Tudors had completed their plans for enslaving her, full of energy certainly, even after her sons had been compelled to leave their possessions on the continent and return to their native island home. Look wherever you choose, you find genius, activity, freshness, an overflowing life. And the greatest causes of it all were those centres of intellect, that is, of Faith and Reason, which have been called the Universities; all of them the offspring of the Church, and nourished not only with her milk, but with her highest wisdom which is, in substance, "the light of the Holy Spirit in the world."

But a contradicting voice is heard, and its utterances are plain enough: "This may have been so in the past; at present it is so no longer. Intellectualism is ahead of Theology. The Church has lost most of her control over the men of mind, who spurn her thunders and walk steadily to the spiritual conquest of the world."

It would be strange, indeed, if, after having shown such a complete mastery of mind during so many ages, the Church had really reached the period of dotage, and was obliged to resign the rule of mankind into the hands of her enemies. There has been, it is true, a grand conspiracy against her intellectual power; and at this moment the plot is scarcely kept secret. Everybody knows it by this time; and the day has come to speak plainly on the subject. After we are done, the reader may say, whether the Church is really

doting in a second childhood, whether the light of the Holy Spirit has departed from her, and left her in darkness; and whether she must give up in despair the hope of defeating the plans of her enemies.

Those plans were at first of the most patent and glaring character. Wherever Protestantism was firmly established, existence itself was denied the Church; much more was all intellectual life refused her with the means of reviving it and keeping it up. This branch of our subject need not detain us long, as the most minute details of the open persecution are known to all. In England and Ireland, in all the Scandinavian States, in a great part of Germany, all the Catholic schools were closed; no Catholic voice could be heard any more in any university; the poorest schoolmaster was not allowed to teach the first elements of knowledge even to children; no book could be written and published by a Catholic on any subject connected in any way with religion; the penal laws by which no Catholic could leave England or Ireland to be educated in any school on the continent are well known. There is no doubt that the Church in those countries lost almost totally her intellectual character. If Intellectualists find in this a fit subject for deriding the Church, they are welcome to it, and we shall not envy the feeling by which they are animated.

But those times are gone, thank God, and another system, worse, perhaps, was set on foot, which must now receive our attention. To give, however, a right understanding of it, a brief sketch of the various downward steps from the birth of the Reformation to our days, is absolutely required; it shall be short, and every word of it can be made good by volumes of documents.

Luther had opened the floodgates of unbelief, which he tried vainly to keep closed, except for the insipid waters of his heresy. Before he died he saw innumerable sects tearing Germany to atoms, and all and each of the former dogmas of Christians attacked. The Germany of our days is the result of it; and a single fact must suffice: in a population of five hundred thousand souls Berlin sees only thirty thousand people going to church on Sundays, and the great majority of these are Catholics, or women.

In England the result was almost the same, but much more gradual. Owing to the coercion which the government employed to keep the Anglican Church alive by parliamentary decrees—owing likewise to the fanaticism of the Puritans, who had a code of belief, to be sure—it was only towards the end of the seventeenth century that open infidelity stalked abroad. But it did so mightily in the works of Bolingbroke, Tyndal, Collins, etc. It was much later on that Wesley stopped up the current of the stream for a time.

Voltaire went to London to receive the doctrine at the beginning

of the eighteenth century, and returning to France published his *Lettres sur les Angloise*, the first of his openly anti-religious pamphlets. Then he began to surround himself with disciples, and the sect of philosophers, so well known in our days, began its career of religious devastation. As Catholicism, however, was yet strong in France, hypocrisy was required, and thus the mighty effort *to spread light* became a *dark plot*. The patriarch of the sect being a literary man, devoted to the beauties of the classics, being surrounded moreover by refined classicists, all his policy consisted in making the Church appear vulgar, ridiculous, and *infamous*. *Ecrasez l'infâme* became his war cry. To think that twelve fishermen of Galilee, with their absurd successors, had led the world intellectually during so many ages, made his blood absolutely curdle in his veins. He wanted to show that he and his band of philosophers had more intellect than the Church ever had. That project of his is well known. It was the first time that a word was uttered, outside of the sloughs of Protestantism, against the brilliancy of mind that had always glowed in the Church; and this word was uttered just the day after the burial of Bossuet and Fénelon in France, and when the rather too refined Massillon was yet alive.

The reader knows what floods of obloquy, falsehood, outrageous calumny, began to be poured out, under the name of wit, all over France and Europe. This was the first war of modern Intellectualism against Christianity. The name of Europe has just been added to that of France. Why so? Because it unfortunately happened that the French language was then understood and even spoken all over Europe; in Russia, where it was the only polished tongue; in Germany, where Frederic II. surrounded himself with all the stray French philosophers he could catch—not even spurning the low materialist, Le Mettrie, who died *gloriously* of an indigestion, after having eaten at supper an entire *pâté de faisan aux truffles*; in Italy, where the French language has always been universally known; in Spain, and all the Spanish-American States, where it began then to furnish the fashionable reading-matter for the higher class of society. In nearly all those countries it began to be taken for granted that the Old and New Testaments were absurd tales; the rule of the Church at all times a degrading despotism; Christian literature a low and grovelling attempt at prose and verse; Christian art even not worthy to be looked at in comparison with the beauties of Boucher, the lewd painter, and David, the Pagan artist. In criticism, history, archæology, the philosophers were *grand*. When they spoke on these subjects in their *Encyclopédie* of more than one hundred large quarto volumes, they showed how everything was false in Scripture—Tom Paine has told us something of it—ridiculous in the chronicles of the mediæval monks, and fabulous in the old

traditions, which they asserted modern archæology had demonstrated to be false. This was the first sublime explosion of the glorious Intellectualism arrayed against the heaven-directed mind of the Church.

Unfortunately for the philosophical system, recent researches are proving every day more and more clearly that Scripture is true in all its details; that the annals chronicled by the mediæval monks are much more safe to follow than the romances of the historians of the eighteenth century; and the most critical archæology of our days revindicates all the ancient traditions of mankind.

As this was beginning to appear, the modern intellectualists changed their tactics. They suddenly discarded philological criticism, the noble recitals of ancient history, and the hoary ruins studied by archæologists, and they turned all their attention to natural science—geology, zoology, embryology, hybridism, etc., etc.—in fact all the great physical branches of knowledge studied in the light of evolutionism; and they boldly declared that these sciences alone could form the real appanage of the human intellect and rule the world. At the same time they proclaimed the most radical antagonism between their high intellectualism and the common-rate mind of the Christian Church. This antiquated, discrowned queen must clearly abdicate her former proud position, and leave her throne to her yet prouder enemy. At the same moment the beautiful conditions for peace, mentioned at the beginning of this paper, are presented to her with solemnity: "Let the Christian priest teach his catechism in his church, and leave the rest, chiefly the schools, to me!"

Our promised sketch is nearly done. But, unaccountably, one of the most important features of it was left out, which must still be briefly portrayed. It happened that, just when Voltaire brought over from England his philosophy, Lord Derwentwater and Ramsay fetched also from the same country the first system of Freemasons' lodges, invented originally in the interest of Jacobitism. The new philosophers saw directly the immense advantages they would derive from such a machinery as this. France was soon covered with associations of this kind, and, although laws were enacted by the State against them, they continued to flourish with the connivance of the magistrates, who soon began to be, in great number, both philosophers and Freemasons. This is well ascertained in our day.

We would not attempt to write a history of this dark conspiracy against religion and the state, which culminated in the first French Revolution, nor give the positive programme of its aspirations. Many things, no doubt, have been ascribed to it which may have been the aim of individual Freemasons, not of the whole sect. But

one thing is certain, namely, that it would require an overdose of simplicity to refuse to believe that a powerful party was organized more than a hundred years ago, one of whose chief objects was directed against the power of the Church in the intellectual as well as in the social and political line. The intention of the conspirators was certainly to substitute their own powerful organization as a guide of society to that of the Church. They wanted absolutely to be the head, the mind, the directing agent of the intellectual world; so that the new being which they wished to bring forth would henceforth be created after their own image, certainly not after that of God. The man would surely be a simpleton who would deny that most of the results achieved so far against the Church as the ruler of mankind, were due to that party, and that at this moment it is more powerful than ever.

This being well understood, it is proper to dismiss from our view all its other past and recent achievements, and concentrate our attention on the actual phase of modern intellectualism as one of its pet measures and chief concerns. The party having undoubtedly immense ramifications in all modern governments, finds docile under its hand the machinery of law-making, as well as that of the execution of the laws. To this must be added the control of the press, which, in many countries, is almost altogether under the control of Freemasonry. Outside of the government circle there is in our days the great scientific circle, which, as stated above, has replaced the philosophical sectarian system of the last century in point of intellectualism. It is not our intention to do Freemasonry the honor of ascribing to it any of the modern discoveries due to the scientists of our time. But as, unfortunately, there cannot be any doubt that many of these learned men have openly declared themselves against Revelation, and pronounced for a complete antagonism between their doctrines and those of the Church, Freemasons are not slow in making the best of it for their own party, and in clamoring aloud for science against religion.

Look, therefore, calmly at the position of the Church, alone and almost defenceless, with such odds as these against her. Often the ordinary newspapers announce to us that in this country or in that the legislature is elaborating such and such laws directed against "clericalism." This is now the word. Another telegram acquaints us with the fact that the cabinet of ministers in such and such countries is busy taking measures against "Vaticanism"—another word of the same import. We learn, without any surprise, that here or there bishops are imprisoned, or exiled from their sees; or, oftener yet, some quiet house of Brothers, or of nuns, is closed and the inmates sent adrift. All this is evidently done with the intention of spreading light and circumscribing the kingdom of darkness. In

a very different, but as brilliant a sphere, the same daily news report at full length the Belfast addresses, or scientific congress debates; or, better still, pungent lectures on astronomy, besides new books on the great *Doctrine of the Descent of Man*, etc., etc. (see *London Tablet*, April 8th and 15th, 1876). Indeed, we are swimming in the full tide of Intellectualism!

To render the aspect of things more interesting still, see the mighty means of diffusion, rapid communication, and universal sway, possessed by this new god of the modern world. Count, if you can, the daily papers, the weekly and monthly magazines, the quarterly reviews, the pictorial folios, and the innumerable volumes that issue from the press in every country under the sun, so that you could scarcely read every week the catalogue merely of them all. After having tried such a calculation, enumerate on your fingers the means of enlightenment of the same kind which the Church enjoys, and tremble for the dread result! See, moreover, that if a brave word is uttered for her, if a speech comes out from the mouth of some of her eloquent children, if a book breathing the spirit of faith, and able to convince some vacillating soul, is finally published after a world of difficulties, see, we repeat, what reception this brave word, this eloquent speech, this sprightly book, receives in the *world of letters*, as they used formerly to call it. Who can even know that such word, speech, or book, has received the gift of existence? What publisher will consent to give the book a place on his catalogue? Unless you go yourself to post the notice of it down along the curbstones of the streets and avenues of cities, who will ever become acquainted with such a paltry fact?

But these are merely straws which show how the wind blows. It is time to come to a design more striking yet, and give to the great policy of the age a tittle, at least, of the development it deserves. The plot, of which a word only has been said, concentrates all its strength on *one* measure, which at this moment all the governments of the world, and the great scientific and teaching bodies existing in all nations, try to carry out, fully this time and radically, so as to have finally done with it. It is the wresting from the grasp of the Church the power, and even the possibility, of teaching men, and transferring it in its entirety to the State alone and forever. They want to kill outright the last spark of intellect in the great organization which has in truth created the European mind. Will they ever succeed? Certainly not, as it will soon be easy to show; but it is time to unveil the conspiracy in all its nakedness, that all Catholics, at least, knowing it, may conceive for it the contempt it deserves.

In Catholic countries—the Protestant States are for the moment

out of the question—the Church enjoyed her inherent right of teaching until the last century. It may be said that one hundred years ago all the schools were directed by her, as she had established them all. But Gallicanism in France, Jansenism in Italy, where it was openly favored by all the secular princes, which never took place in France; above all, Febronianism in Germany, adopted openly by Austria; by giving to civil governments in church affairs an undue preponderance, began to transfer to statesmen a part at least of the influence enjoyed exclusively by the Church in teaching. But the origin of the radical state control which is now aimed at in all countries, dates from the dark days of the Convention in France, which prepared the absolute state monopoly introduced without any opposition by Napoleon I. This requires some details, which cannot but throw a flood of light on what is now called the School question.

The astonishing result of the expansion of light brought out by the French philosophers, when their intellectual efforts culminated in the Revolution, was the sudden and total abolition of all the establishments of education in France. Wonderful indeed! But it is a fact which cannot be gainsaid. From the French Academy, from all the great academies of sciences, of inscriptions, and belles-lettres, etc.; from the fifteen universities then in full sway over the whole extent of the country; from the numerous colleges open to all—for they were all free of expense—in the chief cities of the kingdom, down to the innumerable schools supported by municipal corporations, and village or township committees; all went down at a crash. There remained only a few sickly private pay-schools, whose *instituteurs* had to live, and could not find any other means of support. This was the great final result of what was called previously the first war of modern Intellectualism against the supreme mind of the Church; the pure and simple extinction of all light.

The Convention promised, of course, to replace education on a much nobler and more rational basis than formerly; but during all its terrible reign of three years nothing was done except the spasmodic effort of hearing a few reports on the subject by such men as the Abbé Grégoire, calling himself Bishop of Loir-et-cher. The Pentarchy, called the *Directoire*, attempted to do something in that line. We will not take the trouble of going through its scheme, which deserved nothing but contempt. It is certain that if Napoleon had not stepped on the great stage of France, education in that country would have been a nonentity, and the people would have speedily returned to barbarism. But, after ten long years of total darkness succeeding to the bright realm of light, whose rule the Church had established and fostered for so many centuries, the

First Consul, as he was then called, saw the necessity of *borrowing* something of the former splendor, that France might not remain in the frightful obscurity of a "Dark Age" indeed. Napoleon, therefore, re-established the former great *académies*, mostly under different names—the whole system was called *l'Institut de France*. He created the great Polytechnic school, due entirely to his particular views. It may be said that in doing this he gave birth to *scientism*. (They say "scientists," why not "scientism?") From that great central establishment in Paris radiated certainly the cultivation of sciences, as they are called, all over the world. Instead of the fifteen former universities created by the Church, the new ruler of France launched into existence a huge body called *l'Université de France*, composed of two vast establishments for higher instruction in Paris, and of all the colleges which he opened, or which were to be afterwards opened all over the country. The schools of law and medicine formed a distinct branch, which in course of time became inadequate to the needs of the country.

But all these creations, or *restaurations* under a new name, were altogether creatures of the state, and no individual could open a college, no corporation could set on foot any academic institution of whatsoever character, because the government monopolized in reality all the branches of education, except the primary schools, which Napoleon had not time to bring under the full control of the state. He was so jealous of this state teaching, that, having restored religion, and being obliged consequently to allow the bishops to have theological seminaries of their own, he did not let them have in their establishments teachers of classics, belles-lettres, and rhetoric; but all the pupils of the ecclesiastical seminaries who pursued these preparatory studies, had to go twice a day to the *Lycée* of the place, there to receive from state teachers lessons in Latin, Greek, and oratory. No one dared to utter a word against such a monstrous organization of the most complete intellectual despotism, because he was the master, and every one else had to submit. He had, moreover, rendered such a service by restoring order and bringing back to life the education of youth, completely dead before, that any one raising his voice against his plans would have been thought to be an enemy of France.

But, unfortunately, the system appeared too favorable to government in general to be abandoned by those who succeeded Napoleon after his downfall. The Bourbons kept jealously the same plan, with some very slight modifications; and, when the revolution of 1830 took place, the government of Louis Philippe was very careful to preserve in all its prerogatives the precious body called *l'Université de France*. It is known that, the new charter of rights having promised freedom of education, as soon as Montalembert,

Lacordaire, Gerbet, and their friends, clubbed together to open, as a test in Paris, a small primary school, the new Chamber of Peers, sitting as a court, because Montalembert belonged to that body, closed the school, and fined the teachers.

This long digression was necessary, because the same system which has begun to break down in France spreads now all over Europe. In the new empire of Germany it exists in all its rigidity; in Austria the case is not very different; in Italy the government of Victor Emanuel is gradually introducing it; Spain, of course, could not fail to follow so many bright examples; and the States of South and Central America, not excluding the delightful republic of Hayti, are the most ardent in the race towards this brilliant goal of enlightenment and culture. In England, where there is yet a vigorous and sturdy feeling of the former liberty, it cannot be denied that lately national schools, and queen's colleges, and many new schemes of the kind, smell strongly of the modern universal plot. In this country alone—God be blessed for it—superior education at least has not been touched by the State, and the former freedom can yet be enjoyed in full. The reader knows that the same cannot be said altogether of the common education of the people in what is called public schools; to which, however, the objection against the modern European system does not apply, as no one is deprived of the faculty of opening rival establishments of any kind. The only question that has ever been raised regards purely and simply their support, which we are not called upon to treat of in these pages.

We can, therefore, openly proclaim that these United States have not joined in the universal conspiracy which it is our purpose to unveil and discuss. Individuals certainly have embraced the cause of *secularism*, as it is called; but not the State thus far. God be praised for it; and with joy we absolve this country of participating in the guilt.

But see "modern intellectualism" everywhere else triumphant; and consider for a moment what the conspirators aim at doing, but how in fact they are limited in their power. A consoling word must follow on the probability of the final success of the Church in grasping again the intellectual reins of the world, to guide it, as formerly, in the road of true progress and culture.

Suppose that education, instruction, culture, enlightenment—whatever name you choose to give to the development of mind in the world—has been entirely secularized. That is, suppose that the State alone, and the scientists as the instruments of the State, monopolize entirely the right of forming the mind of mankind. The clericals, that is, the Church, is entirely in the background. She yet can teach the catechism, but only in her churches, not in a

school; she can in fact have no schools. The system is generalized which was attempted once in the west of France, to the writer's personal knowledge—and the thing is too good not to say at least a word on it. A law had just been passed forbidding any one not authorized by the State giving any instruction whatever, excepting only, as to religion, clergymen in their churches. A poor peasant woman in Brittany, either not hearing of the law or not caring for it, continued to do what she was doing before, namely, teaching in her peasant's hut a few children to learn their prayers, something of their catechism, and perhaps their a, b, c. A schoolmaster of the neighborhood, a great intellectualist, an ardent supporter of the laws of the State, actually denounced her, had her fined, and the door of her cottage closed against the coming of the children!

Suppose, we say, this beautiful system to be legalized and enforced in the whole Christian world. It is certainly towards the realization of such a plan as this that the whole bent of legislation is tending everywhere, under the inspiration, no doubt, of Freemasons' lodges. Let the question be fairly put: What kind of people will you have in three or four centuries hence? We reply without hesitation: either idiotic herds, or frightful hordes of savages. Yes, we dare maintain that the portion of the people born with a mild or phlegmatic temper will be reduced to idiocy; and those naturally of a fiery and passionate disposition will become ferocious beasts. It is not difficult to prove it. By a settled purpose, well understood by all, and not denied by the designers of the project, religion is to be excluded from having any control over mankind. If religion preserved any of her former control the plan would completely fail; no one, consequently, can be surprised at the pertinacity with which the priest is to be locked up in his church with the insignificant flock foolish enough to go to him. How many will consent to belong to that despised category of men anathematized by science, and cut off from the great Church of the intellect? The greatest part of mankind, therefore, will not care for religion, and will be publicly encouraged to despise it. What kind of people can you have in such a godless society, not in two centuries hence, as we said a moment ago, but in fifty years from this time?

There are, thank God, for the peace of mankind, a great number of people born under a happy star, whose nervous system is very inactive, their muscular structure flaccid or stunted, their imagination torpid, their temperament, in fine, more or less lymphatic. When built up by religion, which develops, they say, the emotional faculties—we are bound to use the language of the Intellectualists, which is not here absolutely absurd—there arises in them gradually a curious activity, giving them, in fact, nerve and life, under the

influence of the sense of *duty*, a strange word, to which they then pay a great deal of attention. Their muscular structure from flaccid becomes gently rounded and pleasant to be looked at by good people; for religion secures fast their chastity, which is always the mother, not of beauty alone, but chiefly of strength. So, likewise, their imagination, step by step, rises towards heaven, because religion *foolishly* teaches them to believe in angels and saints, chiefly in a bright Being transcending all terrestrial and celestial beauties, except God. So, finally, their temper, from lymphatic, which it was, warms up, and is enriched by the blending of all amiable qualities. In a Christian commonwealth, the great number of nuns in convents, of good mothers of families surrounded habitually by many cheerful children, the great mass, even of those of the sterner sex who are numbered among useful citizens, is certainly composed of this first class of mankind. But our actual purpose is not to see in detail what religion does for them; it is rather to examine what would be the effect of the contrary system upon them. Is it an exaggeration to say that idiocy would be their lot?

If you suppose religion absent from the education of such people, what must be the natural, inevitable result? *First*, morality is nonsense for them, or at least is very loose, and without fixed principles; the sense of *duty* remains undeveloped, since its necessary sanction—the judgment of God—is removed out of sight. *Duty* is an empty word, which they invariably suppose to be synonymous with *task*. It is very wrong to confound the two. They think of duty, consequently, as little as they can, and thus their whole moral soul remains inactive. It is very unwise to think that the education of the common school and the ubiquitous daily journal can supply the place of the ten commandments. These may create an interest of unwholesome curiosity or appetite, not foster, in the least, moral feelings. *Secondly*, their muscles being fed only by bread and beef, and not receiving any shape from the soul itself, which must be, however, the *forma corporis*, remain gross, flaccid, as previously stated, bloated, if not stunted; and, since chastity is out of the question in the present case, how could there be beauty and strength? You will have there a mass of matter perfectly fit to lodge the soul of an idiot; especially since, in the *third* place, imagination must necessarily remain uncreated or unborn in such a being. There may be in those forlorn animals a kind of *imagining*, like that of a dog when he sees a bone; but you will never see on their faces the upward look towards heaven which is natural to the Christian, even of the lowest class; you will never see their eyes bathed with tears, when looking toward the west at sunset, or toward the morning star before sunrise. How could you, since for them there is no heaven, with its angels, and saints, and glorious Queen?

Still, not a word has been said of the unspeakable degradation which is too often the lot of that miserable class. Read something at least of what has been said in many books, of the wretched condition of Pagan savages. Are they not idiots, when not ferocious beasts? And it is precisely by the exclusion of the true religious and moral element that the "uncivilized races," as they are called, have been reduced to that unfortunate state. If you think that in a nation comprising a notable number of refined individuals, such a condition of humanity cannot exist, go to London, go to Berlin, go even to Paris with its *communards*, and tell me the result of your observation!

But we must hasten on, and turn to the *second* class, of which not a word has yet been said. It was stated, that in refusing to religion the guidance of mankind, in sending her ignominiously to the background and placing the reins of the world in the hands of modern Intellectualism, that portion of the population which is naturally of a fiery and ungovernable temper would be turned into a troop of wild beasts. There is no need of a long demonstration to make this evident. Every sane man admits that religion alone can tame such animals; and that if her holy rule is totally discarded, society must return to the state of that *refined* Paganism when Aristotle declared that slavery was absolutely necessary. And, mind you, the slavery he spoke of was that of the greatest part of the white race prostrate at the feet of the few. The reason the mighty philosopher could give was convincing: the majority of mankind left to itself cannot be governed except in the most strict servitude. There is no space to say more; yet the field, which must be left here unexplored, is immense.

But how can the modern Intellectualists boast of their ability to rule mankind intellectually? Do they imagine that they can form a new and happy society by the means at their command? What are those means? "Instruction," they say, "spread by the thousand channels which science and art now supply." We understand. They will multiply indefinitely their colleges, great and small, all under the rule of the State, and teaching merely *scientism*, that is, physics and sociology. They will print by the million their "Popular Science Monthlies," their "Atlantic Magazines," their "Westminster Reviews," etc. Let it be well understood: it is a question of giving a new shape to mankind by such means as these. But they can thus at best reach only the lettered class. Without inquiring what sort of "lettered class" they can form, we merely say that this is not mankind. Have they ever reflected on the task they undertake? They must evidently be told what they must undertake and accomplish, if they wish to be successful. They must establish everywhere normal-apostolic-seminaries of Intellectualism. All

the members of those establishments, without any interest of their own, but only for the common good, must devote themselves to a life of hardship, followed often by an ignominious death. The messengers of the new Gospel must then place themselves individually in contact with every possible class of humanity, chiefly with the lowest and most forlorn, which is always the most numerous. They must win the hearts of all by the purest charity, and cover the world with establishments of every kind, in which speculation will never enter, but which will be entirely devoted to the universal good. They must form, consequently, armies of monks and nuns of "Intellectualism." This is the only means of embracing mankind in its entirety. This is what the Catholic Church has always done, and is now doing. They know it well, but they CANNOT do it, because they have NOT the required disinterestedness. None can have it but those who have drunk of it from the side of Christ on the cross. The idea could be developed indefinitely. The reader must take upon himself the task of going through this work in his thoughts. But the result of it all is that the success of the new way of guiding mankind will be a total failure, and as the Catholic Church is the only body that has always known the secret of it, and submitted cheerfully to all the most painful conditions of it, her success at this moment is as certain as the fact that the sun will rise to-morrow.

See, if you please, on which side are true intellectual ventures and intellectual profits, to use a phrase well known to merchants. The ventures of the Church are not assorted cargoes of silks, teas, or dry goods; they are not rural villages built in lovely spots for the benefit of the humble classes, but also for that of the contriver; they are not "Northern Pacific Railroads" whose profits *must be* commensurate with their length. They are far more precious than all the costly machinery by which are set on foot the gigantic enterprises which in our days astonish the world, and are expected to enrich it with an untold wealth.

The ventures of the Church are merely composed of the souls of numerous devoted servants, but not to be despised in the "intellectual line." Here are some of them:

1st. A hierarchy of noble men, having no other object in view but "the Church"—that is, regenerated mankind; anointed by God Himself to rule spiritually and govern the world; each of them having a portion of the globe as his special department, and deputed in the place of Christ to see that every individual of it, even the most degraded and despised, is truly *redeemed* and prepared for heaven. When one of these noble men dies, another is found to replace him, so that the number is always full; it increases even as the waste places previously left fallow are cultivated and

made capable of bearing fruit. This is the first venture of the Church, for it is a real *venture*—that is, an expense of intellectual capital, which must be profitable or not, according as it is well or badly managed. In the hands of the Church it is always immensely profitable, because always well managed, being directed by the Spirit of God.

2d. Under the hierarchy you have a large army of powerful workmen, who are at this moment more active than ever. These are the men who know how to speak or write so as to attract the attention of mankind, and in the end win their cause. Some of them belong to the hierarchy, some to the priesthood, some, and occasionally the best, are simple laymen; but all have received a gift far superior to that of mere science of the physical order chiefly, since that gift has always been the very one which the world itself praises and admires above all others. St. Paul had it eminently. An infinite number of men in the Church have attracted by it the plaudits even of the world. Does any one imagine that we are deprived of it in this age? Then he does not know what is going on all around him in the whole universe. Let him listen to the voices coming from France, from Germany, from Spain, from Italy, even now from England, Ireland, and this country. They cannot be named individually in these pages; the list would be too long. But they are well known, because they are public men indeed. They may be incarcerated or exiled in Germany and Switzerland; fined for their boldness in Italy, according to law; misrepresented and ridiculed in other countries by scribblers of the opposite camp; they continue unflinchingly their noble work, and show much more real intellect than all modern Intellectualism can boast of. Do you think, for instance, that Count de Mun, in France, will sit down and keep his peace if his case, pending now in *committee*, is decided against him, as it is very likely it will be? He will find many other rostrums to speak from besides that of the republican assembly in Versailles. Do you suppose that, because Mallinkrodt, in Germany, is dead, nobody will succeed to his place and his *rôle* in the Berlin Reichsrath? Gentlemen of the intellectual order, be persuaded at last that the Catholics of this age have a tongue like you, lungs as powerful as yours, more mind perhaps, and certainly more belief in heaven, which last thing must necessarily win the day.

But there is a third venture of the Church, not so indispensable perhaps as the first two are, but extremely powerful in its way, and to which the world must bend, and in fact does bend the knee. It is that immense army of virgins which have always formed the most precious crown of the Church, and which at this moment is more numerous certainly, and whose blossoms exhale a sweeter perfume

perhaps than they ever did. Did the Intellectualists ever reflect on the strange fact, that, in this very year of our Lord 1876, the number of Nuns and Sisters of all Orders in France alone is more than double what it was when the convents were closed in 1790? What hope can the "men of intellect" entertain of seeing that innumerable covey of multi-colored birds disappear from our fields and our sky, when they at this moment swarm in France at such rate, so soon after having been all caught in the legislative net of 1790 and throttled? And yet, unless the Intellectualists destroy the brood—as they call it—they cannot expect to rule mankind, which will always prefer "the gentle rule of the Sisters" to theirs. Did not Thaddeus Stevens, a hoary sinner and a most influential leader of the Republican party in the United States, ask and receive on his death-bed, from a simple-minded Sister of Charity, the words of faith and the waters of Baptism? Did not Sister Rosalie, in Paris, dispose as she wished of the whole cabinet of ministers, including that of the police, and this under the reign of Louis Philippe, in France? Who could refuse to bow to that holy influence when such miracles of grace as these are performed in this cold age? Yes, our power to rule will always be greater than that of science, because it reaches the heart, which science cannot do.

We could go on indefinitely on the subject, but we must refrain. After having seen, however, a few of the *ventures* of the Church, a word must be said of her *profits*, that unreflecting people may not imagine that all these are for her on the wrong side of the *ledger*. The profits in a clever and attentive merchant's books are either certain and well defined in the balance-sheet, or, when the commercial operations are not yet completed, they are regarded only as probable.

Let us look at both as they stand on the Church's books. Those that are certain and well defined are succinctly and clearly in black and white: 1st. A constant increase of the children of the Church going on uninterruptedly, so that even her adversaries are obliged to confess that she has lost nothing, or rather that she has gained in numbers, in spite of their plots, attacks, and blows. How much higher we stand than two hundred millions, no one can say. 2d. A very sensible addition, in our age, of men of real intellect to her ranks in all countries; in England certainly, in France to a very remarkable extent, in Germany wonderfully, in Italy and Spain undoubtedly, in this country and the rest of the world increasing by slow, it is true, yet gradual steps. In fact, the point mainly insisted upon in these pages, namely, the diminution of her control over men of intellect, referred mostly to the former time of her universal sway as described in a previous article. But to-day we have certainly gained over yesterday; and the progression seems to be steady.

3d. The hierarchy of the Church, enumerated among the *ventures*, can be classed likewise among the *profits* by the important change which has certainly happened in this age. Look at its actual unity under the Supreme Pastor; consider its efficiency, tenacity, and oneness of purpose. The long history of the Church has never before witnessed anything of the kind. See what the Church was, in that regard, at the time of Arianism, in the feudal ages, even under the late monarchies of Europe one and two hundred years ago; and compare with it her present state. With this alone, adding a numerous and devoted clergy working under their rulers, you have an imperishable Church independently of any other cause. What a gain and profit over former times! 4th, and last. The ground is clear, a most important circumstance, and a great source of advantage for the Church. The side-issues are dead; the questions are well defined: God, or no God; soul in man, or mere matter, Christianity, or Nihilism, etc. The State, it is true, is breaking loose from the Church, but the Church is at least very near being free from any entanglements with the State. It is an immense loss to the State, but a much less one for the Church. She can say openly: "I do not put my trust in princes;" and by this time she knows that they are not trustworthy; an immense profit in our opinion.

After speaking of the certain gains, the enumeration of the probable ones, which are not yet clearly defined because the transactions are not yet ended, would carry us too far just now. The reader may count them on his ten fingers, and examine them well in his mind. Meanwhile, although the prospect is really not so dark as it appeared at first, none of us ought to fall into apathy, thinking that the sky is becoming clearer of its own accord, and will go on becoming brighter and brighter without any exertion of ours. What good there is, is the result of immense, of gigantic efforts; and without the continuance of the same under the grace of God, the guidance of the world might fall into the hands of those who are now so eager to grasp it. Woe to the world if this should ever happen! But we Christians cannot fear it; we can rely entirely on the promises which the God-man made to His Church: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against her."
