

been inwardly docile to either priesthood or tradition. In all his reflections upon philosophic and scientific themes he is, in the scientific sense, materialistic—that is, inductive, studious of experiment, insistent upon tangible data.¹ “Wisdom is daughter of experience”;² “truth is the daughter of time”;³ “there is no effect in Nature without a reason”;⁴ “all our knowledge originates in sensations”⁵—such are the dicta he accumulates in an age of superstition heightened by the mutability of life, of ecclesiastical tyranny tempered only by indifferentism, of faith in astrology and amulets, of benumbing tradition in science and philosophy. On the problem of the phenomena of fossil shells he pronounces with a searching sagacity of inference⁶ that seems to reveal at once the extent to which the advance of science has been blocked by pious obscurantism.⁷ In all directions we see the great artist, a century before Bacon, anticipating Bacon’s protests and questionings, and this with no such primary bias to religion as Bacon had acquired at his mother’s knee. When he turns to the problems of body and spirit he is as dispassionate, as keenly speculative, as over those of external nature.⁸ Of magic he is entirely contemptuous, not in the least on religious grounds, though he glances at these, but simply for the folly of it.⁹ All that tells of religious feeling in him is summed up in a few utterances expressive of a vague theism;¹⁰ while he has straight thrusts at religious fraud and absurdity.¹¹ It is indeed improbable that a mind so necessitated to discourse of its thought, however gifted for prudent silence, can have subsisted without private sympathy from kindred souls. Skepticism was admittedly abundant; and Leonardo of all men can least have failed to reckon with its motives.

Perhaps the most fashionable form of quasi-freethinking in the Italy of the fifteenth century was that which prevailed in the Platonic Academy of Florence in the period, though the chief founder of the Academy, Marsilio Ficino, wrote a defence of Christianity, and his most famous adherent, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, planned another. Renaissance Platonism began with the Greek Georgios Gemistos, surnamed Plethon because of his devotion to Plato, which was such as to scandalize common Christians and exasperate Aristotelians. The former had the real

¹ *Ib.* 44, 46, 47, 48, 58, 60, 63, etc.

² *Ib.* 45.

³ *Ib.* 30.

⁴ *Ib.* 57.

⁵ *Ib.* 66. Cp. 67-69.

⁶ *Id.* *Pensieri sulla natura*, 80-86.

⁷ Shortly after Leonardo we find Girolamo Fracastorio (1483-1553) developing the criticism further, and in particular disposing of the futile formula, resorted to by the scientific apriorists of the time, that the “plastic force of nature” created fossils like other things.

⁸ *Id.* *Pensieri sulla morale*, *passim*.

⁹ *Ib.* 7.

¹⁰ *Ib.* 44, 45.

¹¹ *Ib.* 46, 47.

grievance that his system ostensibly embodied polytheism and logically involved pantheism;¹ and one of his antagonists, Gennadios Georgios Scolarios, who became patriarch of Constantinople, caused his book *On Laws* to be burned;² but the allegation of his Aristotelian enemy and countryman, Georgios Trapezuntios, that he prayed to the sun as creator of the world,³ is only one of the polemical amenities of the period. Ostensibly he was a believing Christian, stretching Christian love to accommodate the beliefs of Plato; but it was not zeal for orthodoxy that moved Cosimo dei Medici, at Florence, to embrace the new Platonism, and train up Marsilio Ficino to be its prophet. The *furor allegoricus* which inspired the whole school⁴ was much more akin to ancient Gnosticism than to orthodox Christianity, and constantly points to pantheism⁵ as the one philosophic solution of its ostensible polytheism. When, too, Ficino undertakes to vindicate Christianity against the unbelievers in his *Della Religione Cristiana*, "the most solid arguments that he can find in its favour are the answers of the Sibyls, and the prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ to be found in Virgil, Plato, Plotinus, and Porphyry."⁶

How far such a spirit of expatiation and speculation, however visionary and confused, tended to foster heresy is seen in the brief career of the once famous young Pico della Mirandola, Ficino's wealthy pupil. Parading a portentous knowledge of tongues⁷ and topics at the age of twenty-four, he undertook (1486) to maintain a list of nine hundred *Conclusiones* or propositions at Rome against all comers, and to pay their expenses. Though he had obtained the permission of the Pope, Innocent VIII, the challenge speedily elicited angry charges of heresy against certain of the theses, and the Pope had to stop the proceedings and issue an ecclesiastical commission of inquiry. Some of the propositions were certainly ill adjusted to Catholic ideas, in particular the sayings that "neither the cross of Christ nor any image is to be adored *adoratione latriæ*"—with worship; that no one believes what he believes merely because he wishes to; and that Jesus did not physically descend into hell.⁸

¹ Cp. Burckhardt, pp. 524, 541, notes; Villari, *Life of Machiavelli*, i, 124. "It was easy to see by his words that he hoped for the restoration of the pagan religion" (*Id. Life of Savonarola*, Eng. tr. p. 51).

² Only a few fragments of it survive. Villari, *Life of Savonarola*, p. 51.

³ Carriere, *Philos. Weltanschauung der Reformationszeit*, 1847, p. 13.

⁴ Cp. Villari, *Life of Machiavelli*, i, 128-34.

⁵ Cp. Perrens, *Hist. de Florence (1434-1531)*, i, 258.

⁶ *Id.* p. 257. Cp. Villari, *Machiavelli*, i, 132; *Savonarola*, p. 60.

⁷ "Of the majority of the twenty-two languages he was supposed to have studied, he knew little more than the alphabet and the elements of grammar" (Villari, *Machiavelli*, i, 135). As to Pico's character, which was not saintly, see Perrens, *Histoire* as cited, i, 561-62.

⁸ Cp. Greswell, *Memoirs of Politianus, Picus, etc.* 2nd ed. 1805, 235; McCrie, *The Reformation in Italy*, ed. 1856, p. 33, note.

Pico, retiring to Florence, defended himself in an *Apologia*, which provoked fresh outcry; whereupon he was summoned to proceed to Rome; and though the powerful friendship of Lorenzo dei Medici procured a countermand of the order, it was not till 1496 that he received, from Alexander VI, a full papal remission.

Among the unachieved projects of his later life, which ended at the age of thirty-one, was that of a treatise *Adversus Hostes Ecclesiæ*, to be divided into seven sections, the first dealing with "The avowed and open enemies of Christianity," and the second with "Atheists and those who reject every religious system upon their own reasoning"; and the others with Jews, Moslems, idolaters, heretics, and unrighteous believers.¹ The vogue of unbelief thus signified was probably increased by the whole speculative habit of Pico's own school,² which tended only less than Averroism to a pantheism subversive of the Christian creed. It is noteworthy that, while Ficino believed devoutly in astrology,³ Pico rejected it, and left among his confused papers a treatise against it which his nephew contrived to transcribe and publish;⁴ but it does not appear that this served either the cause of religion or that of science. The educated Italian world, while political independence lasted, remained in various degrees freethinking, pantheistic, and given to astrology, no school or teacher combining rationalism in philosophy with sound scientific methods.

One of the great literary figures of the later Renaissance, NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI (1469-1527), is the standing proof of the divorce of the higher intelligence of Italy from the faith as well as the cause of the Church before the Reformation. With this divorce he expressly charges the Church itself, giving as the first proof of its malfeasance that the peoples nearest Rome were the least religious.⁵ To him the Church was the supreme evil in Italian politics,⁶ the "stone in the wound." In a famous passage he gives his opinion that "our religion, having shown us the truth and the true way, makes us esteem less political honour (*l'onore del mondo*)"; and that whereas the pagan religion canonized only men crowned with public honour, as generals and statesmen, "our religion has glorified rather the humble and contemplative men than the active," placing the highest good in humility and abjection, teaching rather to suffer than to do, and so making the world debile and ready to be a prey

¹ Greswell, pp. 330-31.

² Cp. K. M. Sauer, *Gesch. der italien. Litteratur*, 1883, p. 109; Villari, *Machiavelli*, i, 138.

³ Villari, *Machiavelli*, i, 133.

⁴ Greswell, pp. 331-32.

⁵ *Discorsi sopra Tito Livio*, i, 12.

⁶ *Istorie fiorentine*, liv. i; *Discorsi*, i, 12.

to scoundrels.¹ The passage which follows, putting the blame on men for thus misreading their religion, is a fair sample of the grave mockery with which the men of that age veiled their unfaith.² Machiavelli was reputed in his own world an atheist;³ and he certainly was no religionist. He indeed never avows atheism, but neither did any other writer of the epoch;⁴ and the whole tenour of his writings is that of a man who had at least put aside the belief in a prayer-answering deity;⁵ though, with the intellectual arbitrariness which still affected all the thought of his age, he avows a belief that all great political changes are heralded by prodigies, celestial signs, prophecies, or revelations⁶—here conforming to the ordinary superstition of his troublous time.

It belongs, further, to the manifold self-contradiction of the Renaissance that, holding none of the orthodox religious beliefs, he argues insistently and at length for the value and importance of religion, however untrue, as a means to political strength. Through five successive chapters of his *Discourses on Livy* he presses and illustrates his thesis, praising Numa as a sagacious framer of useful fictions, and as setting up new and false beliefs which made for the unification and control of the Roman people. The argument evolved with such strange candour is, of course, of the nature of so much Renaissance science, an *à priori* error: there was no lack of religious faith and fear in primitive Rome before the age of Numa; and the legend concerning him is a product of the very primordial mythopoesis which Machiavelli supposes him to have set on foot. It is in the spirit of that fallacious theory of a special superinduced religiosity in Romans⁷ that the great Florentine proceeds to charge the Church with having made the Italians religionless and vicious (*senza religione e cattivi*). Had he lived a century or two later he might have seen in the case of zealously believing Spain a completer political and social prostration than had fallen in his day on Italy,

¹ *Discorsi*, ii, 2.

² For another point of view see Owen, as cited, p. 167.

³ In the Italian translation of Bacon's essays, made for Bacon in 1618 by an English hand, Machiavelli is branded in one passage as an *impio*, and in another his name is dropped. See Routledge ed. of Bacon's *Works*, pp. 749, 751. The admiring Paolo Giovio called him *irrisor et atheos*; and Cardinal Pole said the *Prince* was so full of every kind of irreligion that it might have been written by the hand of Satan (Nourrisson, *Machiavel*, 1875, p. 4).

⁴ Burckhardt, pp. 499-500. Cp. Owen, pp. 165-68. It is thus impossible to be sure of the truth of the statement of Gregorovius (*Lucrezia Borgia*, Eng. tr. 1904, p. 25) that "There were no women skeptics or freethinkers; they would have been impossible in the society of that day." Where dissimulation of unbelief was necessarily habitual, there may have been some women unbelievers as well as many men.

⁵ Owen's characterization of Machiavelli's *Asino d'oro* as a "satire on the freethought of his age" (p. 177) will not stand investigation. See his own note, p. 178.

⁶ *Discorsi*, i, 56.

⁷ As we saw, Polybius in his day took a similar view, coming as he did from Greece, where military failure had followed on a certain growth of unbelief. Machiavelli was much influenced by Polybius. Villari, ii, 9.

and this alongside of regeneration in an unbelieving France. But indeed it was the bitterness of spirit of a suffering patriot looking back yearningly to an idealized Rome, rather than the insight of the author of *The Prince*,¹ that inspired his reasoning on the political uses of religion; for at the height of his exposition he notes, with his keen eye for fact, how the most strenuous use of religious motive had failed to support the Samnites against the cool courage of Romans led by a rationalizing general;² and he notes, too, with a sardonic touch of hopefulness, how Savonarola had contrived to persuade the people of contemporary Florence that he had intercourse with deity.³ Italy then had faith enough and to spare.

Such argument, in any case, even if untouched by the irony which tinges Machiavelli's, could never avail to restore faith; men cannot become believers on the motive of mere belief in the value of belief; and the total effect of Machiavelli's manifold reasoning on human affairs, with its startling lucidity, its constant insistence on causation, its tacit negation of every notion of Providence, must have been, in Italy as elsewhere, rather to prepare the way for inductive science than to rehabilitate supernaturalism, even among those who assented to his theory of Roman development. In his hands the method of science begins to emerge, turned to the most difficult of its tasks, before Copernicus had applied it to the simpler problem of the motion of the solar system. After centuries in which the name of Aristotle had been constantly invoked to small scientific purpose, this man of the world, who knew little or nothing of Aristotle's *Politics*,⁴ exhibits the spirit of the true Aristotle for the first time in the history of Christendom; and it is in his land after two centuries of his influence that modern sociology begins its next great stride in the work of Vico.

He is to be understood, of course, as the product of the moral and intellectual experience of the Renaissance, which prepared his audience for him. Guicciardini, his contemporary, who in comparison was unblamed for irreligion, though an even warmer hater of the papacy, has left in writing the most explicit avowals of incredulity as to the current conceptions of the supernatural, and declares concerning miracles that as they occur in every religion they prove none.⁵ At the same time he professes firm faith in Christianity;⁶ and others who would not have joined him there were often as inconsistent in the ready belief they gave to magic

¹ Cp. Tullo Massarani, *Studi di letteratura e d'arte*, 1899, p. 96.

² *Discorsi*, i, 15.

³ *Id.* i, 11, *end.*

⁴ Villari, ii, 93-94.

⁵ Burckhardt, p. 464; Owen, p. 180, and refs.

⁶ Owen, p. 181. See the whole account of Guicciardini's rather confused opinions.

and astrology. The time was, after all, one of artistic splendour and scientific and critical ignorance;¹ and its freethought had the inevitable defects that ignorance entails. Thus the belief in the reality of witchcraft, sometimes discarded by churchmen,² is sometimes maintained by heretics. Rejected by John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, and by the freethinking Pietro of Abano in 1303, it was affirmed and established by Thomas Aquinas, asserted by Gregory IX, and made a motive for uncounted slaughters by the Inquisition. In 1460 a theologian had been forced to retract, and still punished, for expressing doubt on the subject; and in 1471 Pope Sixtus VI reserved to the papacy the privilege of making and selling the waxen models of limbs used as preservatives against enchantments. In the sixteenth century a whole series of books directed against the belief were put on the Index, and a Jesuit handbook codified the creed. Yet a Minorite friar, Alfonso Spina, pronounced it a heretical delusion, and taught that those burned suffered not for witchcraft but for heresy,³ and on the other hand some men of a freethinking turn held it. Thus the progress of rational thought was utterly precarious.

Of the literary freethinking of the later Renaissance the most famous representative is POMPONAZZI, or Pomponatius (1462–1525), for whom it has been claimed that he “really initiated the philosophy of the Italian Renaissance.”⁴ The Italian Renaissance, however, was in reality near its turning-point when Pomponazzi’s treatise on the Immortality of the Soul appeared (1516); and that topic was the commonest in the schools and controversies of that day.⁵ He has been at times spoken of as an Averroïst, on the ground that he denied immortality; but he did so in reality as a disciple of Alexander of Aphrodisias, a rival commentator to Averroës. What is remarkable in his case is not the denial of immortality, which we have seen to be frequent in Dante’s time, and more or less implicit in Averroïsm, but his contention that ethics could do very well without the belief⁶—a thing that it still took some courage to affirm, though the spectacle of the life of the faithful might have been supposed sufficient to win it a ready hearing. Presumably his rationalism, which made him challenge

¹ Though Italy had most of what scientific knowledge existed. Burckhardt, p. 292.

² “A man might at the same time be condemned as a heretic in Spain for affirming, and in Italy for denying, the reality of the witches’ nightly rides” (*The Pope and the Council*, p. 258).

³ *The Pope and the Council*, pp. 249–61. It was another Spina who wrote on the other side.

⁴ F. Fiorentino, *Pietro Pomponazzi*, 1868, p. 30.

⁵ Owen, pp. 197–98; Renan, *Averroës*, pp. 353–62; Christie, as cited, p. 133.

⁶ Cp. Owen, pp. 201, 218; Lange, i, 183–87 (tr. i, 220–25). He, however, granted that the mass of mankind, “brutish and materialized,” needed the belief in heaven and hell to moralize them (Christie, pp. 140–41).

the then canonical authority of the scholasticized Aristotle, went further than his avowed doubts as to a future state; since his profession of obedience to the Church's teaching, and his reiteration of the old academic doctrine of two-fold truth—one truth for science and philosophy, and another for theology¹—are as dubious as any in philosophic history.² Of him, or of Lorenzo Valla, more justly than of Petrarch, might it be said that he is the father of modern criticism, since Valla sets on foot at once historical and textual analysis, while Pomponazzi anticipates the treatment given to Biblical miracles by the rationalizing German theologians of the end of the eighteenth century.³ He too was a fixed enemy of the clergy; and it was not for lack of will that they failed to destroy him. He happened to be a personal favourite of Leo X, who saw to it that the storm of opposition to Pomponazzi—a storm as much of anger on behalf of Aristotle, who had been shown by him to doubt the immortality of the soul, as on behalf of Christianity—should end in an official farce of reconciliation.⁴ He was however not free to publish his treatises, *De Incantationibus* and *De Fato, Libero Arbitrio, et Prædestinatione*. These, completed in 1520, were not printed till after his death, in 1556 and 1557;⁵ and by reason of their greater simplicity, as well as of their less dangerous form of heresy, were much more widely read than the earlier treatise, thus contributing much to the spread of sane thought on the subjects of witchcraft, miracles, and special providences.

Whether his metaphysic on the subject of the immortality of the soul had much effect on popular thought may be doubted. What the Renaissance most needed in both its philosophic and its practical thought was a scientific foundation; and science, from first to last, was more hindered than helped by the environment. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, charges of necromancy against physicians and experimenters were frequently joined with imputations of heresy, and on such charges not a few were burned.⁶ The economic conditions too were all unfavourable to solid research.

When Galileo in 1589 was made Professor of Mathematics at Pisa, his salary was only 60 scudi (= dollars), while the

¹ This principle, though deriving from Averroïsm, and condemned, as we have seen, by Pope John XXI, had been affirmed by so high an orthodox authority as Albertus Magnus. Cp. Owen, pp. 211-12, *note*. While thus officially recognized, it was of course denounced by the devout when they saw how it availed to save heretics from harm. Mr. Owen has well pointed out (p. 238) the inconsistency of the believers who maintain that faith is independent of reason, and yet denounce as blasphemous the profession to believe by faith what is not intelligible by philosophy.

² Owen, p. 209, *note*. "Son école est une école de laïques, de médecins, d'esprits forts, de libres penseurs" (Bouillier, *Hist. de la philos. cartésienne*, 1854, i, 3).

³ Owen, p. 210; Christie, p. 151.

⁴ Christie, pp. 141-47.

⁵ *Id.* p. 149.

⁶ Burckhardt, p. 291.

Professor of Medicine got 2,000. (Karl von Gebler, *Galileo Galilei*, Eng tr. 1879, p. 9.) At Padua, later, Galileo had 520 florins, with a prospect of rising to as many scudi. (Letter given in *The Private Life of Galileo*, Boston, 1870, p. 61.) The Grand Duke finally gave him a pension of 1,000 scudi at Florence. (*Id.* p. 64.) This squares with Bacon's complaint (*Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii; *De Augmentis*, bk. ii, ch. i—*Works*, Routledge ed. pp. 76, 422-23) that, especially in England, the salaries of lecturers in arts and professions were injuriously small, and that, further, "among so many noble foundations of colleges in Europe.....they are all dedicated to professions, and none left free to the study of arts and sciences at large." In Italy, however, philosophy was fairly well endowed. Pomponazzi received a salary of 900 Bolognese lire when he obtained the chair of Philosophy at Bologna in 1509. (Christie, essay cited, p. 138.)

Medicine was nearly as dogmatic as theology. Even philosophy was in large part shouldered aside by the financial motives which led men to study law in preference;¹ and when the revival of ancient literature gained ground it absorbed energy to the detriment of scientific study,² the wealthy amateurs being ready to pay high prices for manuscripts of classics, and for classical teaching; but not for patient investigation of natural fact. The humanists, so-called, were often forces of enlightenment and reform; witness such a type as the high-minded POMPONIO LETO (Pomponius Laetus), pupil and successor of Lorenzo Valla, and one of the many "pagan" scholars of the later Renaissance;³ but the discipline of mere classical culture was insufficient to make them, as a body, qualified leaders either of thought or action,⁴ in such a society as that of decaying Italy. Only after the fall of Italian liberties, the decay of the Church's wealth and power, the loss of commerce, and the consequent decline of the arts, did men turn to truly scientific pursuits. From Italy, indeed, long after the Reformation, came a new stimulus to freethought which affected all the higher civilization of northern Europe. But the failure to solve the political problem, a failure which led to the Spanish tyranny, meant the establishment of bad conditions for the intellectual as for the social life; and an arrest of freethought in Italy was a necessary accompaniment of the arrest of the higher literature. What remained was the afterglow of a great and energetic period rather than a spirit of inquiry; and we find the

¹ Gebhart, pp. 59-63; Burckhardt, p. 211.

² Cp. Burckhardt, p. 291.

³ Burckhardt, pp. 279-80; Villari, *Life of Machiavelli*, pp. 106-107.

⁴ Burckhardt, pt. iii, ch. xi.

old Averroïst scholasticism, in its most pedantic form, lasting at the university of Padua till far into the seventeenth century. "A philosophy," remarks in this connection an esteemed historian, "a mode of thought, a habit of mind, may live on in the lecture-rooms of Professors for a century after it has been abandoned by the thinkers, the men of letters, and the men of the world."¹ The avowal has its bearings nearer home than Padua.

While it lasted, the light of Italy had shone upon all the thought of Europe. Not only the other nations but the scholars of the Jewish race reflected it; for to the first half of the sixteenth century belongs the Jew Menahem Asariah de Rossi, whose work, *Meor Enayim*, "Light of the Eyes," is "the first attempt by a Jew to submit the statements of the Talmud to a critical examination, and to question the value of tradition in its historical records." And he did not stand alone among the Jews of Italy; for, while Elijah Delmedigo, at the end of the fifteenth century, was in a didactic Maimonist fashion doubtful of literary tradition, his grandson, Joseph Solomon Delmedigo, flourishing early in the seventeenth century, "wrote various pamphlets of a deeply skeptical character."² That this movement of Jewish rationalism should be mainly limited to the south was inevitable, since there only were Jewish scholars in an intellectual environment. There could be no better testimony to the higher influence of the Italian Renaissance.

§ 2. *The French Evolution*

In the other countries influenced by Italian culture in the sixteenth century the rationalist spirit had various fortune. France, as we saw, had substantially retrograded at the time of the Italian new-birth, her revived militarism no less than her depression by the English conquests having deeply impaired her intellectual life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Thus the true renascence of letters in France began late, and went on during the Reformation period; and all along it showed a tincture of freethought. From the midst of the group who laid the foundations of French Protestantism by translations of the Bible there comes forth the most articulate freethinker of that age, BONAVENTURE DESPÉRIERS, author of the *Cymbalum Mundi* (1537). Early associated with Calvin and Olivetan in revising the translation of the Bible by

¹ Dr. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, 1895, i, 265. Cp. Renan, *Averroès, Avert.*

² Schechter, *Studies in Judaism*, pp. 213, 420-21.

Lefèvre d'Étaples (rev. 1535), Desperiers turned away from the Protestant movement, as did Rabelais and Étienne Dolet, caring as little for the new presbyter as for the old priest; and all three were duly accused by the Protestants of atheism and *libertinage*.¹ In the same year Desperiers aided Dolet, scholar and printer, to produce his much-praised *Commentarii linguæ latinæ*; and within two years he had printed his own satire, *Cymbalum Mundi*,² wherein, by way of pagan dialogues, are allegorically ridiculed the Christian scheme, its miracles, Bible contradictions, and the spirit of persecution, then in full fire in France against the Protestants. In the first dialogue Mercury is sent to Athens by Zeus the Father to have the "Book of the Destinies" rebound—an adaptation of an ancient sarcasm against the Christians by Celsus.³ He, robbing others, is robbed of the book, and another (=the New Testament) is put in its place. In the second dialogue figure Rhetulus (=Lutherus) and Cubercus (=Bucerus?), who suppose they have found the main pieces of the philosopher's stone, which Mercury had broken and scattered in the sand of the theatre arena. Protestants and Catholics are thus alike ridiculed. The allegory is not always clear to modern eyes; but there was no question then about its general bearing; and Desperiers, though groom of the chamber (after Clement Marot) to Marguerite of France (later of Navarre), had to fly for his life, as Marot did before him. The first edition of his book, secretly printed at Paris, was seized and destroyed; and the second (1538), printed for him at Lyons, whither he had taken his flight, seems to have had a similar fate. From that time he disappears, probably dying, whether or not by suicide is doubtful,⁴ before 1544, when his miscellaneous works were published. They include his *Œuvres Diverses*—many of them graceful poems addressed to his royal mistress, Marguerite—which, with his verse translation of the *Andria* of Terence and his *Discours non plus Melancoliques que Divers*, make up his small body of work. In the *Discours* may be seen applied to matters of history and scholarship the same critical spirit that utters itself in the *Cymbalum*, and the same literary gift; but for orthodoxy his

¹ Notice of Bonaventure Desperiers, by Bibliophile Jacob [*i.e.* Lacroix], in 1841 ed. of *Cymbalum Mundi*, etc.

² For a solution of the enigma of the title see the *Clef* of Eloi Johanneau in ed. cited, p. 83. *Cymbalum mundi* was a nickname given in antiquity to (among others) an Alexandrian grammarian called Didymus—the name of doubting Thomas in the gospel. The book is dedicated by *Thomas Du Clevier à son ami Pierre Tyrocan*, which is found to be, with one letter altered (perhaps by a printer's error), an anagram for *Thomas Incrédule à son ami Pierre Croyant*, "Unbelieving Thomas to his friend Believing Peter." *Clef* cited, pp. 80-85.

³ Origen, *Against Celsus*, vi, 78.

⁴ The readiness of piety in all ages to invent frightful deaths for unbelievers must be remembered in connection with this and other records. Cp. *Notice* cited, p. xx, and *note*. The authority for this is Henri Estienne, *Apologie pour Herodote*, liv. i, chs. 18, end, and 26.

name became a hissing and a byword, and it is only in modern times that French scholarship has recognized in Desperiers the true literary comrade and potential equal of Rabelais and Marot.¹ The age of Francis was too inclement for such literature as his *Cymbalum*; and it was much that it spared Gringoire (d. 1544), who, without touching doctrine, satirized in his verse both priests and Protestants.

It is something of a marvel, further, that it spared RABELAIS (? 1493-1553), whose enormous raillery so nearly fills up the literary vista of the age for modern retrospect. It has been said by a careful student that "the free and universal inquiry, the philosophic doubt, which were later to work the glory of Descartes, proceed from Rabelais";² and it is indeed an impression of boundless intellectual curiosity and wholly unfettered thinking that is set up by his entire career. Sent first to the convent school of La Baumette, near Angers, he had there as a schoolfellow Geoffroy d'Estissac, afterwards his patron as Bishop of Maillezais. Sent later to the convent school of Fontenay-le-Comte, he had the luck to have for schoolfellows there the four famous brothers Du Bellay, so well able to protect him in later life; and, forced to spend fifteen years of his young life (1509-24) at Fontenay as a Franciscan monk, he turned the time to account by acquiring an immense erudition, including a knowledge of Greek, then rare.³ Naturally the book-lover was not popular among his fellow-monks; and his Greek books were actually confiscated by the chapter, who found in his cell certain writings of Erasmus,⁴ to whom as a scholar he afterwards expressed the deepest intellectual obligations. Thereafter, by the help of his friend d'Estissac, now bishop of the diocese, Rabelais received papal permission to join the order of the Benedictines and to enter the Abbey of Maillezais as a canon regular (1524); but soon after, though he was thus a fully-ordained priest, we find him broken loose, and living for some six years a life of wandering freedom as a secular priest, sometimes with his friend the bishop, winning friends in high places by his learning and his gaiety, everywhere studying and observing. At the bishop's priory of Ligugé he seems to have studied hard and widely. In 1530 he is found at Montpellier, extending his studies in medicine, in which he speedily won distinc-

¹ So Charles Nodier, cited in the *Notice* by Bibliophile Jacob, pp. xxiii-xxiv. The English translator of 1723 professed to see no unbelief in the book.

² Perrens, *Les Libertins en France au XVIIe siècle*, 1896, p. 41.

³ *Notice historique* in Bibliophile Jacob's ed. of Rabelais, 1841; Stapfer, *Rabelais*, pp. 6, 10; W. F. Smitk, biog. not. to his trans. of Rabelais, 1893, i, p. xxii.

⁴ Rathery, *notice biog.* to ed. of Burgaud des Marets, i, 12. Jacob's account of his relations with his friends Budé and Amy at this stage is erroneous. See Rathery, p. 14.

tion, becoming B.M. on December 1, and a lecturer in the following year. He was later esteemed one of the chief anatomists of his day, being one of the first to dissect the human body and to insist on the need of such training for physicians;¹ and in 1532² we find him characterized as the "true great universal spirit of this time."³ In the same year he published at Lyons, where he was appointed physician to the chief hospital, an edition of the Latin letters of the Ferrarese physician Manardi; and his own commentaries on Galen and Hippocrates, which had a very poor sale.⁴ At Lyons he made the acquaintance of Dolet, Marot, and Desperiers; and his letter (of the same year) to Erasmus (printed as addressed to Bernard de Salignac⁵) showed afresh how his intellectual sympathies went.

About 1532 he produced his *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*, the first two books of his great humoristic romance; and in 1533 began his series of almanacks, continued till 1550, presumably as printer's hack-work. From the fragments which have been preserved, they appear to have been entirely serious in tone, one containing a grave theistic protest against all astrological prediction. Along with the almanack of 1533, however, he produced a *Pantagruelian Prognostication*; and this, which alone has been preserved entire,⁶ passes hardly ridicule on astrology,⁷ one of the most popular superstitions of the day, among high and low alike. Almost immediately the Sorbonne was on his track, condemning his *Pantagruel* in 1533.⁸ A journey soon afterwards to Rome, in the company of his friend Bishop Jean du Bellay, the French ambassador, may have saved him some personal experience of persecution. Two years later, when the Bishop went to Rome to be made cardinal, Rabelais again accompanied him; and he appears to have been a favourite alike with Pope Clement VII and Paul III. At the end of 1535 we find him, in a letter to his patron, the bishop of Maillezais, scoffing at the astrological leanings of the new Pope, Paul III.⁹ Nonetheless, upon a formal *Supplicatio pro apostasia*, he obtained from the Pope in 1536 an absolution for his breach of his monastic vows, with permission to practise medicine in a Benedictine monastery. Shortly before, his little son Théodule had died;¹⁰ and it may have been grief that inspired such a desire: in any case, the papal

¹ Le Double, *Rabelais anatomiste et physiologiste*, 1889, pp. 12, 425; and pref. by Professor Duval, p. xiii; Stapfer, p. 42; A. Tilley, *François Rabelais*, 1907, pp. 74-76.

² In the same year he was induced to publish what turned out to be two spurious documents purporting to be ancient Roman remains. See Heulhard, *Rabelais légiste*, and Jacob, *Notice*, p. xviii.

³ Rathery, p. 23.

⁴ Jacob, p. xix.

⁵ As to this see Tilley, p. 53.

⁶ See it at the end of the ed. of Bibliophile Jacob.

⁷ Cp. Stapfer, pp. 24-25; Rathery, p. 26.

⁸ Rathery, p. 30.

⁹ Cp. Jacob, *Notice*, p. xxxviii; Smith, ii, 524.

¹⁰ Rathery, p. 71; Stapfer, pp. 42-43.

permission to turn monk again was never used,¹ though the pardon was doubtless serviceable. Taking his degree as doctor at Montpellier in May, 1537, he there lectured for about a year on anatomy; and in the middle of 1538 he recommenced a wandering life,² practising in turn at Narbonne, Castres, and Lyons. Then, after becoming a Benedictine canon of St. Maur in 1540, we find him in Piedmont from 1540 to 1543, under the protection of the viceroy, Guillaume de Bellay.³

During this period the frequent reprints of the first two books of his main work, though never bearing his name, brought upon him the denunciations alike of priests and Protestants. Ramus, perhaps in revenge for being caricatured as Raminagrobis, pronounced him an atheist.⁴ Calvin, who had once been his friend, had in his book *De Scandalis* angrily accused him of *libertinage*, profanity, and atheism; and henceforth, like Desperiers, he was about as little in sympathy with Protestantism as with the zealots of Rome.

Thus assailed, Rabelais had seen cause, in an edition of 1542, to modify a number of the hardier utterances in the original issues of the first two books of his *Pantagruel*, notably his many epithets aimed at the Sorbonne.⁵ In the reprints there are substituted for Biblical names some drawn from heathen mythology; expressions too strongly savouring of Calvinism are withdrawn; and disrespectful allusions to the kings of France are elided. In his concern to keep himself safe with the Sorbonne he even made a rather unworthy attack⁶ (1542) on his former friend Étienne Dolet for the mere oversight of reprinting one of his books without deleting passages which Rabelais had expunged;⁷ but no expurgation could make his *évangile*, as he called it,⁸ a Christian treatise, or keep for him an orthodox reputation; and it was with much elation that he obtained in 1545 from King Francis—whose private reader was his friend Duchâtel, Bishop of Tulle—a privilege to print the third book

¹ Stapfer, p. 53.

² Jacob, p. xxxix.

³ Rathery, pp. 44-49. The notion of Lacroix, that Rabelais visited England, has no evidence to support it. Cp. Rathery, p. 49, and Smith, p. xxiii.

⁴ Cp. Jacob, p. lx. Ramus himself, for his attacks on the authority of Aristotle, was called an atheist. Cp. Waddington, *Ramus, sa vie*, etc., 1855, p. 126.

⁵ See the list in the avertissement of M. Burgaud des Marets to éd. Firmin Didot. Cp. Stapfer, pp. 63, 64. For example, the "theologian" who makes the ludicrous speech in Liv. i, ch. xix, becomes (chs. 18 and 20) a "sophist"; and the *sorbonistes*, *sorbonicoles*, and *sorbonagres* of chs. 20 and 21 become mere *maistres*, *magistres*, and *sophistes* likewise.

⁶ It is doubtful whether Rabelais wrote the whole of the notice prefixed to the next edition, in which this attack was made; but it seems clear that he "had a hand in it" (Tilley, *François Rabelais*, p. 87).

⁷ R. Christie, *Étienne Dolet*, pp. 369-72. Christie, in his vacillating way, severely blames Dolet, and then admits that the book may have been printed while Dolet was in prison, and that in any case there was no malice in the matter. This point, and the persistent Catholic calumnies against Dolet, are examined by the author in art. "The Truth about Etienne Dolet," in *National Reformer*, June 2 and 9, 1889.

⁸ *Epistre*, pref. to Liv. iv. Ed. Jacob, p. 318.

of *Pantagruel*, which he issued in 1546, signed for the first time with his name, and prefaced by a cry of jovial defiance to the "petticoated devils" of the Sorbonne. They at once sought to convict him of fresh blasphemies; but even the thrice-repeated substitution of an *n* for an *m* in *âme*, making "ass" out of "soul," was carried off, by help of Bishop Duchâtel, as a printer's error; and the king, having laughed like other readers, maintained the imprimatur. But although it gave Rabelais formal leave to reprint the first and second books, he was careful for the time not to do so, leaving the increasing risk to be run by whoso would.

It was on the death of Francis in 1547 that Rabelais ran his greatest danger, having to fly to Metz, where for a time he acted as salaried physician of the city. About this time he seems to have written the fourth and fifth books of *Pantagruel*; and to the treatment he had suffered at Catholic hands has been ascribed the reversion to Calvinistic ideas noted in the fifth book.¹ In 1549, however, on the birth of a son to Henri II, his friend Cardinal Bellay returned to power, and Rabelais to court favour with him. The derider of astrology did not scruple to cast a prosperous horoscope for the infant prince—justifying by strictly false predictions his own estimate of the art, since the child died in the cradle. There was now effected the dramatic scandal of the appointment of Rabelais in 1550 to two parish cures, one of which, Meudon, has given him his most familiar *sobriquet*. He seems to have left both to be served by vicars;² but the wrath of the Church was so great that early in 1552 he resigned them;³ proceeding immediately afterwards to publish the fourth book of *Pantagruel*, for which he had duly obtained official privilege. As usual, the Sorbonne rushed to the pursuit; and the Parlement of Paris forbade the sale of the book despite the royal permission. That permission, however, was reaffirmed; and this, the most audacious of all the writings of Rabelais, went forth freely throughout France, carrying the war into the enemies' camp, and assailing alike Protestants and churchmen. In the following year, his work done, he died.

It is difficult to estimate the intellectual effect of his performance, which was probably much greater at the end of the century than during his life. Patericke, the English translator

¹ Cp. W. F. Smith's trans. of Rabelais, 1893, ii, p. x. In this book, however, other hands have certainly been at work. Rabelais left it unfinished.

² Jacob, *Notice*, p. lxiii; Stapfer, p. 76.

³ So Rathery, p. 60; and Stapfer, p. 78. Jacob, p. lxii, says he resigned only one. Rathery makes the point clear by giving a copy of the act of resignation as to Meudon.

of Gentillet's famous *Discours* against Machiavelli (1576), points to Rabelais among the French and Agrippa (an odd parallel) among the Germans as the standard-bearers of the whole train of atheists and scoffers. "Little by little, that which was taken in the beginning for jests turned to earnest, and words into deeds."¹ Rabelais's vast innuendoes by way of jests about the people of *Ruach* (the Spirit) who lived solely on wind;² his quips about the "reverend fathers in devil," of the "diabological faculty";³ his narratives about the *Papefigues* and *Papimanes*;⁴ and his gibes at the Decretals,⁵ were doubtless enjoyed by many good Catholics otherwise placated by his attacks on the "demoniacal Calvins, impostors of Geneva";⁶ and so careful was he on matters of dogma that it remains impossible to say with confidence whether or not he finally believed in a future state.⁷ That he was a deist or Unitarian seems the reasonable inference as to his general creed;⁸ but there also he throws out no negations—even indicates a genial contempt for the *philosophe ephectique et pyrrhonien*⁹ who opposes a halting doubt to two contrary doctrines. In any case, he was anathema to the heresy-hunters of the Sorbonne, and only powerful protection could have saved him.

Dolet (1508–1546) was certainly much less of an unbeliever¹⁰ than Rabelais;¹¹ but where Rabelais could with ultimate impunity ridicule the whole machinery of the Church,¹² Dolet, after several iniquitous prosecutions, in which his jealous rivals in the printing business took part, was finally done to death in priestly revenge¹³ for his youthful attack on the religion of inquisitorial Toulouse, where gross pagan superstition and gross orthodoxy went hand in hand.¹⁴ He certainly "lived a life of sturt and strife." Born at Orléans, he studied in his boyhood at Paris; later at Padua, under Simon Villanovanus, whom he heard converse with Sir Thomas More; then, at 21, for a year at Venice, where he was secretary to Langeac, the French Bishop of Limoges. It was at Toulouse,

¹ *A Discourse.....against Nicholas Machiavel*, Eng. tr. (1577), ed. 1608, Epist. ded. p. 2.

² Liv. iv, ch. xliii.

³ Liv. iii, ch. xxiii.

⁴ Liv. iv, ch. xlv-xlviii.

⁵ Liv. iv, ch. xlix sq.

⁶ Liv. iv, ch. xxxii.

⁷ Prof. Stapfer, *Rabelais, sa personne, son génie, son œuvre*, 1889, pp. 365–68. Cp. the *Notice of Bibliophile Jacob*, ed. 1841 of Rabelais, pp. lvii–lviii; and Perrens, *Les Libertins*, p. 39. In his youth he affirmed the doctrine. Stapfer, p. 23.

⁸ Cp. René Millet, *Rabelais*, 1892, pp. 172–80.

⁹ Liv. iii, ch. xxxvi.

¹⁰ The description of him by one French biographer, M. Boulmier (*Estienne Dolet*, 1857), as "le Christ de la pensée libre" is a gross extravagance. Dolet was substantially orthodox, and even anti-Protestant, though he denounced the cruel usage of Protestants.

¹¹ Wallace (*Antitrinitarian Biography*, 1850, ii, 2) asserts that Dolet "not only became a convert to the opinions of Servetus, but a zealous propagator of them." For this there is not a shadow of evidence.

¹² Cp. Voltaire, *Lettres sur Rabelais*, etc. i.

¹³ Cp. author's art. above cited; R. C. Christie, *Étienne Dolet*, 2nd ed. 1899, p. 100

Octave Galtier, *Étienne Dolet* (N.D.), pp. 66, 94, etc.

¹⁴ Christie, as cited, pp. 50–58, 105–106; Galtier, p. 26 sq.

where he went in 1532 to study law, that he began his quarrels and his troubles. In that year, and in that town, the young Jean de Caturce, a lecturer in the school of law, was burned alive on a trivial charge of heresy; and Dolet witnessed the tragedy.¹ Previously there had been a wholesale arrest of suspected Lutherans—"advocates, procureurs, ecclesiastics of all sorts, monks, friars, and curés."² Thirty-two saved themselves by flight; but among those arrested was Jean de Boysonne, the most learned and the ablest professor in the university, much admired by Rabelais,³ and afterwards the most intimate friend of Dolet. It was his sheer love of letters that brought upon him the charge of heresy;⁴ but he was forced publicly to abjure ten Lutheran heresies charged upon him. The students of the time were divided in the old fashion into "nations," and formed societies as such; and Dolet, chosen in 1534 as "orator" of the "French" group, as distinct from the Gascons and the Tolosans, in the course of a quarrel of the societies delivered two Latin orations, in one of which he vilipended alike the cruelty and the superstitions of Toulouse. A number of the leading bigots of the place were attacked; and Dolet was after an interval of some months thrown into prison, charged with exciting a riot and with contempt of the Parlement of Toulouse. His incarceration did not last long; but never thereafter was he safe; and in the remaining thirteen years of his life he was five more times in prison, for nearly five years in all.⁵

After he had settled at Lyons, and produced his *Commentaries*, he had the bad fortune to kill an enemy who drew sword upon him; and the pardon he obtained from the king through the influence of Marguerite of Navarre remained technically unratified for six years, during which time he was only provisionally at liberty, being actually in prison for a short time in 1537. Apart from this episode he showed himself both quarrelsome and vainglorious, alienating friends who had done much for him; but his enemies were worse spirits than he. The power of the man drove him to perpetual production no less than to strife; and his mere activity as a printer went far to destroy him.

"No calling was more hateful to the friends of bigotry and superstition than that of a printer" (Christie, as cited, p. 387). Nearly all the leading printers of France and Germany were either avowedly in sympathy with Protestant heresy or sus-

¹ It is to this that Rabelais alludes (ii, 5) when he tells how at Toulouse they "stuck not to burn their regents alive like red herrings."

² Christie, p. 80.

³ Liv. iii, ch. xxix.

⁴ Christie, p. 86.

⁵ One of his enemies wrote of him that prison was his country—*patria Doleti*.

pected of being so (*id.* p. 388); and the issue of an edict by King Francis in 1535 for the suppression of printing was at the instance of the Sorbonne. We shall see that in Germany the support of the printers, and their hostility to the priests and monks, contributed greatly to the success of Lutheranism.

In 1542 he was indicted as a heretic, but really for publishing Protestant books of devotion and French translations of the Bible. Among the formal offences charged were: (1) his having in his *Cato Christianus* cited as the second commandment the condemnation of all images; (2) his use of the term "fate" in the sense of predestination; (3) his substitution of *habeo fidem* for *credo*; (4) the eating of flesh in Lent; and (5) the act of taking a walk during the performance of mass.¹ On this indictment the two inquisitors Orry and Faye delivered him over to the secular arm for execution. Again he secured the King's pardon (1543), through the mediation of Pierre Duchâtel, the good Bishop of Tulle; but the ecclesiastical resistance was such that, despite Dolet's formal recantation, it required a more plenary pardon, the express orders of the King, and three official letters to secure his release after a year's detention.²

That was, however, swiftly followed by a final and successful prosecution. By a base device two parcels were made of prohibited books printed by Dolet and of Protestant books issued at Geneva; and these, bearing his name in large, were forwarded to Paris. The parcels were seized, and he was again arrested, early in January, 1544. He contrived to escape to Piedmont; but, returning secretly after six months to print documents of defence, he was discovered and sent to prison in Paris. The last pardon having covered all previous writings, the prosecutors sought in his translation of the pseudo-Platonic dialogues *Axiochus* and *Hipparchus*, printed with his last vindication; and, finding a slight over-emphasis of Sokrates's phrase describing the death of the body ("thou shalt no longer be," rendered by "thou shalt no longer be anything at all"), pronounced this a wilful propounding of a heresy, though in fact there had been no denial of the doctrine of immortality.³ This time the prey was held. After Dolet had been in prison for twenty months the Parliament of Paris ratified the sentence of death; and he was burned alive on August 3, 1546. The utter wickedness of the whole process⁴ at least serves to relieve by neighbourhood the darkness of the stains cast on Protestantism by the crimes of Calvin.

¹ *Procès d'Estienne Dolet*, Paris, 1836, p. 11; Galtier, pp. 65-70; Christie, pp. 389-90.

² *Procès*, p. viii.; Galtier, p. 78.

³ Galtier, p. 101 sq.; Christie, p. 461.

⁴ A modern French judge, the President Baudrier, was found to affirm that the laws, though "unduly severe," were "neither unduly nor unfairly pressed" against Dolet! Christie, p. 471.

The whole of the clerical opposition to the new learning at this period is not unjustly to be characterized as a malignant cabal of ignorance against knowledge. In Germany as in France real learning was substantially on the side of the persecuted writers. When, in March of 1537, Dolet was entertained at a banquet to celebrate the pardon granted to him by the king for his homicide at Lyons on the last day of the previous year, there came to it, by Dolet's own account, the chief lights of learning in France—Budé, the chief Greek scholar of his time; Berauld, his nearest compeer; Danès and Toussain, both pupils of Budé and the first royal professors of Greek at Paris; Marot, "the French Maro"; Rabelais, then regarded as a great new light in medicine; Voulté,¹ and others. The men of enlightenment at first instinctively drew together, recognizing that on all hands they were surrounded by rabid enemies, who were the enemies of knowledge. But soon the stresses of the time drove them asunder. Voulté, who in this year was praising Rabelais in Latin epigrams, was attacking him in the next as an impious disciple of Lucian;² and, after having warmly befriended Dolet, was impeaching him, not without cause, as an ingrate. It was an age of passion and violence; and Voulté was himself assassinated in 1542 "by a man who had been unsuccessful in a law-suit against him."³

Infamous as was the cruelty with which Dolet was persecuted to the death, his execution was but a drop in the sea of blood then being shed in France by the Church. The king, sinking under his maladies, had become the creature of the priests, who in defiance of the Chancellor obtained his signature (1545) to a decree for a renewed persecution of the heretics of the Vaudois; and an army, followed by a Catholic mob and accompanied by the papal vice-legiate of Avignon, burst upon the doomed territory and commenced to burn and slay. Women captured were violated and then thrown over precipices; and twice over, when a multitude of fugitives in a fortified place surrendered on the assurance that their lives and property would be spared, the commander ordered that all should be put to death. When old soldiers refused to enact such an infamy, others joyfully obeyed, the mob aiding; and among the women were committed, as usual, "all the crimes of which hell could dream." Three towns were destroyed, 3,000 persons massacred, 256 executed, six or seven hundred more sent to the galleys,

¹ Concerning whom see Christie, as cited, pp. 29 01.

² Tilley, as last cited, p. 69.

³ Christie, p. 317.

and many children sold as slaves.¹ Thus was the faith vindicated and safeguarded.

Of the freethought of such an age there could be no adequate record. Its tempestuous energy, however, implies not a little of private unbelief; and at a time when in England, two generations behind France in point of literary evolution, there was, as we shall see, a measure of rationalism among religionists, there must have been at least as much in the land of Rabelais and Desperiers. The work of Guillaume Postell, *De causis seu principiis et originibus Naturæ contra Atheos*, published in 1552, testifies to kinds of unbelief that outwent the doubt of Rabelais; though Postell's general extravagance discounts all of his utterances. It is said of Guillaume Pellicier (1527-1568), Bishop of Montpellier, who first turned Protestant and afterwards, according to Gui Patin, atheist, that he would have been burned but for the fact of his consecration.² And the English chroniclers preserve a scandal concerning an anonymous atheist, worded as follows: "1539. This yeare, in October, died in the Universitie of Parris, in France, a great doctor, which said their was no God, and had bene of that opinion synce he was twentie yeares old, and was above fouerscore yeares olde when he died. And all that tyme had kept his error secrett, and was esteamed for one of the greatest clarkes in all the Universitie of Parris, and his sentence was taken and holden among the said studentes as firme as scripture, which shewed, when he was asked why he had not shewed his opinion till his death, he answered that for feare of death he durst not, but when he knew that he should die he said their was no lief to come after this lief, and so died miserably to his great damnation."³

Among the eminent ones then surmised to lean somewhat to unbelief was the sister of King Francis, Marguerite of Navarre, whom we have noted as a protectress of the pantheistic *Libertini*, denounced by Calvin. She is held to have been substantially skeptical until her forty-fifth year;⁴ though her final religiousness seems also beyond doubt.⁵ In her youth she bravely protected the Protestants from the first persecution of 1523 onwards; and the strongly Protestant drift of her *Miroir de l'âme pécheresse* exasperated the Catholic theologians; but after the Protestant violences of 1546 she seems to have sided with her brother against the

¹ Christie, as cited, pp. 465-67; Lutteroth, *La Réformation en France pendant sa première période*, 1859, pp. 39-40; Prof. H. M. Baird, *Rise of the Huguenots*, 1880, i, 240 sq.

² Perrens, *Les Libertins*, p. 43; Patin, *Lettres*, ed. Reveillé-Parise, 1846, i, 210.

³ Wriothesley's Chronicle (Camden Society, 1875), pp. 107-108.

⁴ Nodier, quoted by Bibliophile Jacob in ed. of *Cymbalum Mundi*, as cited, p. xviii.

⁵ Cp. Brantome, *Des dames illustres*. Œuvres, ed. 1838, ii, 186.

Reform.¹ The strange taste of the *Heptaméron*, of which again her part-authorship seems certain,² constitutes a moral paradox not to be solved save by recognizing in her a woman of genius, whose alternate mysticism and bohemianism expressed a very ancient duality in human nature.

A similar mixture will explain the intellectual life of the poet Ronsard. A persecutor of the Huguenots,³ he was denounced as an atheist by two of their ministers;⁴ and the pagan fashion in which he handled Christian things scandalized his own side, albeit he was hostile to Rabelais. But though the spirit of the French Renaissance, so eagerly expressed in the *Défense et Illustration de la langue françoise* of Joachim du Bellay (1549), is at its outset as emancipated as that of the Italian, we find Ronsard in his latter years edifying the pious.⁵ Any ripe and consistent rationalism, indeed, was then impossible. One of the most powerful minds of the age was BODIN (1530–1596), whose *République* is one of the most scientific treatises on government between Aristotle and our own age, and whose *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*⁶ is no less original an outline of a naturalist⁷ philosophy. It consists of six dialogues, in which seven men take part, setting forth the different religious standpoints of Jew, Christian, pagan, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Catholic, the whole leading up to a doctrine of tolerance and universalism. Bodin was repeatedly and emphatically accused of unbelief by friends and foes;⁸ and his rationalism on some heads is beyond doubt; yet he not only held by the belief in witchcraft, but wrote a furious treatise in support of it;⁹ and he dismissed the system of Copernicus as too absurd for discussion.¹⁰ He also formally vetoes all discussion on faith, declaring it to be dangerous to religion;¹¹ and by these conformities he probably saved himself from eccle-

¹ Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, art. MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE (the First), notes F and G.

² Bayle, note N. Cp. Nodier, as cited, p. xix, as to the collaboration of Desperiers and others.

³ Bayle, art. RONSARD, note D.

⁴ Garasse, *La Doctrine Curieuse des Beaux Esprits de ce Temps*, 1623, pp. 126–27. Ronsard replied to the charge in his poem, *Des misères du temps*.

⁵ Bayle, art. RONSARD, note O. Cp. Perrens, *Les Libertins*, p. 43.

⁶ MS. 1588. First printed in 1841 by Guhrauer, again in 1857 by L. Noack.

⁷ As before noted, he was one of the first to use the word. Cp. Lechler, *Geschichte des englischen Deismus*, pp. 31, 455, notes.

⁸ Bayle, art. BODIN, note O. Cp. Renan, *Averroès*, 3e édit. p. 424; and the *Lettres de Gui Patin*, iii, 679 (letter of 27 juillet, 1668), cited by Perrens, *Les Libertins*, p. 43. Leibnitz, in an early letter to Jac. Thomasius, speaks of the MS. of the *Colloquium*, then in circulation, as proving its writer to be "the professed enemy of the Christian religion," adding: "Vanini's dialogues are a trifle in comparison." (*Philosophische Schriften*, ed. Gerhardt, i, 26; Martineau, *Study of Spinoza*, p. 77.) Carriere, however, notes (*Weltanschauung*, p. 317) that in later years Leibnitz learned to prize Bodin's treatise highly.

⁹ Cp. Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, i, 66, 87–91. In the *République* too he has a chapter on astrology, to which he leans somewhat.

¹⁰ *République*, Liv. iv, ch. ii.

¹¹ *Id.* Liv. iv, ch. vii. "Bodin in this sophistry was undoubtedly insincere" (Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, ii, 159).

siastical attack.¹ Nonetheless, he essentially stood for religious toleration: the new principle that was to change the face of intellectual life. A few liberal Catholics shared it with him to some extent² long before St. Bartholomew's Day; eminent among them being L'Hopital,³ whose humanity, tolerance, and concern for practical morality and the reform of the Church brought upon him the charge of atheism. He was, however, a believing Catholic.⁴ Deprived of power, his edict of tolerance repealed, he saw the long and ferocious struggle of Catholics and Huguenots renewed, and crowned by the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day (1572). Broken-hearted, and haunted by that monstrous memory, he died within six months.

Two years later there was put to death at Paris, by hanging and burning, on the charge of atheism, Geoffroi Vallée, a man of good family in Orléans. Long before, at the age of sixteen, he had written a freethinking treatise entitled *La Béatitude des Chrétiens, ou le fléau de la foy*—a discussion between a Huguenot, a Catholic, a *libertin*, an Anabaptist and an atheist. He had been the associate of Ronsard, who renounced him, and helped, it is said, to bring him to execution.⁵ It is not unlikely that a similar fate would have overtaken the famous Protestant scholar and lexicographer, Henri Estienne (1532–1598), had he not died unexpectedly. His false repute of being “the prince of atheists”⁶ and the “Pantagrue of Geneva” was probably due in large part to his sufficiently audacious *Apologie pour Herodote*⁷ (1566) and to his having translated into Latin (1562) the *Hypotyposes* of Sextus Empiricus, a work which must have made for freethinking. But he was rather a Protestant than a rationalist. In the former book he had spoken, either sincerely or ironically, of the “detestable book” of Bonaventure Desperiers, calling him a mocker of God; and impeached Rabelais as a modern Lucian, believing neither in God nor immortality;⁸ yet his own performance was fully as well fitted as theirs to cause

¹ Cp. Perrens, *Les Libertins*, p. 43.

² Cp. Villemain, *Vie de L'Hopital*, in *Études de l'hist. moderne*, 1846, pp. 363–68, 428.

³ Buckle (3-vol. ed. ii, 10; 1-vol. ed. p. 291) errs in representing L'Hopital as the only statesman of the time who dreamt of toleration. It is to be noted, on the other hand, that the Huguenots themselves protested against any toleration of atheists or Anabaptists; and even the reputed freethinker Gabriel Naudé, writing his *Science des Princes, ou Considérations politiques sur les Coups d'état*, in 1639, defended the massacre on political grounds (Owen, *Skeptics of the French Renaissance*, p. 470, note). Bodin implicitly execrated it. Cp. Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, ii, 162.

⁴ Villemain, p. 429.

⁵ Garasse, *Doctrine Curieuse*, pp. 125–26; *Mémoires de Garasse*, ed. Ch. Nisard, 1860, pp. 77–78; Perrens, p. 43.

⁶ Bibliophile Jacob, *Introd. to Beroalde de Verville*.

⁷ Estienne's full title is: *L'Introduction au traité de la conformité des merveilles, anciennes avec les modernes: ou, Traité préparatif à l'Apologie pour Herodote*.

⁸ *Apologie pour Herodote*, ed. 1607, pp. 97, 249 (liv. i, chs. xiv, xviii. *Cymbalum Mundi*, ed. Bibliophile Jacob, pp. xx, 13.

scandal. It is in fact one of the richest repertoires ever formed of scandalous stories against priests, monks, nuns, and popes.¹

One literary movement towards better things had begun before the crowning infamy of the Massacre appalled men into questioning the creed of intolerance. Castalio, whom we shall see driven from Geneva by Calvin in 1544 for repugning to the doctrine of predestination, published pseudonymously, in 1554, in reply to Calvin's vindication of the slaying of Servetus, a tract, *De Haereticis quomodo cum iis agendum sit variorum Sententiæ*, in which he contrived to collect some passage from the Fathers and from modern writers in favour of toleration. To these he prefaced, by way of a letter to the Duke of Wirtemberg, an argument of his own, the starting-point of much subsequent propaganda.² Aconzio, another Italian, followed in his steps; and later came Mino Celso of Siena, with his "long and elaborate argument against persecution," *De Haereticis capitali supplicio non afficiendis* (1584).³ Withal, Castalio died in beggary, ostracized alike by Protestants and Catholics, and befriended only by the Sozzini, whose sect was the first to earn collectively the praise of condemning persecution.⁴ But in the next generation there came to reinforce the cause of humanity a more puissant pen than any of these; while at the same time the recoil from religious cruelty was setting many men secretly at utter variance with faith.

In France in particular a generation of insane civil war for religion's sake must have gone far to build up unbelief. Even among many who did not renounce the faith, there went on an open evolution of stoicism, generated through resort to the teaching of Epictetus. The atrocities of Christian civil war and Christian savagery were such that Christian faith could give small sustenance to the more thoughtful and sensitive men who had to face them and carry on the tasks of public life the while. The needed strength was given by the masculine discipline which pagan thought had provided for an age of oppression and decadence, and which had carried so much of healing even for the Christians who saw decadence carried yet further, that in the fifth century the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus had been turned by St. Nilus into a

¹ The index was specially framed to call attention to these items. The entry, "Fables des dieux des payens cousines germaines des legendes des saints," is typical.

² Bayle, *Dictionnaire*, art. CASTALION; Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, ii, 81; Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, ii, 46-49. Hallam finds Castalio's letter to the Duke of Wirtemberg "cautious"; but Lecky quotes some strong expressions from what he describes as the preface of Martin Bellius (Castalio's pseudonym) to Cluten's *De Haereticis persequendis*, ed. 1610. Castalio died in 1563. As to his translations from the Bible, see Bayle's note.

³ Hallam, ii, 83; McCrie, *Reformation in Italy*, ed. 1856, p. 231.

⁴ Even Stäbelin (*Johannes Calvin*, ii, 303) condemns Calvin's action and tone towards Castalio, though he makes the significant remark that the latter "treated the Bible pretty much as any other book."

monastic manual, even as Ambrose manipulated the borrowed Stoicism of Cicero.¹ With its devout theism, the book had appealed to those northern scholars who had mastered Greek in the early years of the sixteenth century, when the refugees of Constantinople had set up Platonic studies in Italy. After 1520, Italian Hellenism rapidly decayed;² but in the north it never passed away; and from the stronger men of the new learning in Germany the taste for Epictetus passed into France. In 1558 the semi-Protestant legist Coras—later slain in the massacre of St. Bartholomew—published at Toulouse a translation of the apocryphal dialogue of Epictetus and Hadrian; in 1566 the Protestant poet Rivaudeau translated the *Enchiridion*, which thenceforth became a culture force in France.³

The influence appears in Montaigne, in whose essays it is pervasive; but more directly and formally in the book of Justus Lipsius, *De Constantia* (1584), and the same scholar's posthumous dialogues entitled *Manducatio ad philosophiam stoicam* and *Physiologia stoicorum* (1604), which influenced all scholarly Europe. Thus far the Stoic ethic had been handled with Christian bias and application; and Guillaume Du Vair, who embodied it in his work *La Sainte Philosophie* (1588), was not known as a heretic; but in his hands it receives no Christian colouring, and might pass for the work of a deist.⁴ And its popularity is to be inferred from his further production of a fresh translation of the *Enchiridion* and a *Traité de la philosophie morale des stoïques*. Under Henri IV he rose to high power; and his public credit recommended his doctrine.

Such were the more visible fruits of the late spread of the Renaissance ferment in France while, torn by the frantic passions of her pious Catholics, she passed from the plane of the Renaissance to that of the new Europe, in which the intellectual centre of gravity was to be shifted from the south to the north, albeit Italy was still to lead the way, in Galileo, for the science of the modern world.

§ 3. *The English Evolution*

In England as in France the intellectual life undergoes visible retrogression in the fifteenth century, while in Italy, with the

¹ Hatch, Hibbert Lectures, p. 169.

² Burckhardt, p. 195.

³ Prof. Fortunat Strowski, *Histoire du sentiment religieux en France au 17e siècle*, Ptie i, *De Montaigne à Pascal*, 1907, pp. 19-23.

⁴ "Du Vair ne songe pas au Médiateur; s'il y a dans son traité des allusions à Notre Seigneur, le nom de Jésus-Christ ne s'y trouve, je crois bien, pas une fois. Il songe encore moins aux pieux adjuvants qui excitent l'imagination; pas un mot de l'invocation des saints, pas un mot des sacrements" (Strowski, as cited, p. 78).

political problem rapidly developing towards catastrophe, it flourished almost riotously. From the age of Chaucer, considered on its intellectual side and as represented mainly by him, there is a steep fall to almost the time of Sir Thomas More, around whom we see as it were the sudden inrush of the Renaissance upon England. The conquest of France by Henry V and the Wars of the Roses, between them, brought England to the nadir of mental and moral life. But in the long and ruinous storm the Middle Ages, of which Wiclif is the last powerful representative, were left behind, and a new age begins to be prepared.

Of a very different type from Wiclif is the remarkable personality of the Welshman REGINALD (or REYNOLD) PECOCK (1395?–1460?), who seems divided from Wiclif by a whole era of intellectual development, though born within about ten years of his death. It is a singular fact that one of the most rationalistic minds among the serious writers of the fifteenth century should be an English bishop,¹ and an Ultramontane at that. Pecoek was an opponent at once of popular Bibliolatry and of priestly persecution, declaring that "the clergy would be condemned at the last day if they did not draw men into consent to the true faith otherwise than by fire and sword and hanging."² It was as the rational and temperate defender of the Church against the attacks of the Lollards in general that he formulated the principle of natural reason as against scripturalism. This attitude it is that makes his treatise, the *Repressor of Overmuch Blaming of the Clergy*, the most modern of theoretic books before More and Hooker and Bacon. That he was led to this measure of rationalism rather by the exigencies of his papalism than by a spontaneous skepticism is suggested by the fact that he stands for the acceptance of miraculous images, shrines, and relics, when the Lollards are attacking them.³ On the other hand, it is hard to be certain that his belief in the shrines was genuine, so ill does it consist with his attitude to Bibliolatry. In a series of serenely argued points he urges his thesis that the Bible is not the basis of the moral law, but merely an illustration thereof, and that the natural reason is obviously presupposed in the bulk of its teaching. He starts from the formulas of Thomas Aquinas, but reaches a higher ground. It is the position of Hooker, anticipated by a hundred years; and this in an age of such intellectual backwardness and

¹ Cp. Prof. Thorold Rogers, *Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 83.

² In 1387 the Lollards were denounced under that name by the Bishop of Worcester as "eternally damned sons of Antichrist."

³ See the *Repressor*, Babington's ed. in the Rolls Series, 1860, Part ii.

literary decadence that the earlier man must be pronounced by far the more remarkable figure. In such a case the full influence of the Renaissance seems to be at work; though in the obscurity of the records we can do no more than conjecture that the new contacts with French culture between the invasion of France by Henry V in 1415 and the expulsion of the English in 1451 may have introduced forces of thought unknown or little known before. If indeed there were English opponents of scripture in Wiclif's day, the idea must have ripened somewhat in Pecock's. Whether, however, the victories of Jeanne D'Arc made some unbelievers as well as many dastards among the English is a problem that does not seem to have been investigated.

Pecock's reply to the Lollards creates the curious situation of a churchman rebutting heretics by being more profoundly heretical than they. In his system, the Scriptures "reveal" only supernatural truths not otherwise attainable, a way of safeguarding dogma not likely to reassure believers. There is reason, indeed, to suspect that Pecock held no dogma with much zeal; and when in his well-named treatise (now lost), *The Provoker*, he denied the authenticity of the Apostles' Creed, "he alienated every section of theological opinion in England."

See Miss A. M. Cooke's art. REGINALD PECOCK in *Dict. of Nat. Biog.* This valuable notice is the best short account of Pecock; though the nature of his case is most fully made out by Hook, as cited below. It is characteristic of the restricted fashion in which history is still treated that neither in the *Student's History* of Professor Gardiner nor in the *Short History* of Green is Pecock mentioned. Earlier ideas concerning him were far astray. The notion of Foxe, the martyrologist, that Pecock was an early Protestant, is a gross error. He held not a single Protestant tenet, being a rationalizing papist. A German ecclesiastical historian of the eighteenth century (Werner, *Kirchengeschichte des 18ten Jahrhunderts*, 1756, cited by Lechler) calls Pecock the first English deist. See a general view of his opinions in Lewis's *Life of Dr. Reynold Pecock* (rep. 1820), ch. v. The heresies charged on him are given on p. 160; also in the *R. T. S. Writings and Examinations*, 1831, pp. 200-201. While rejecting Bibliolatry, he yet argued that Popes and Councils could make no change in the current creed; and he thus offended the High Churchmen. Cp. Massingberd, *The English Reformation*, 4th ed. pp. 206-209.

The main causes of the hostility he met from the English hierarchy and Government appear to have been, on the one hand,

his change of political party, which put him in opposition to Archbishop Bourchier, and on the other his zealous championship of the authority of the papacy as against that of the Councils of the Church. It was expressly on the score of his denunciation of the Councils that he was tried and condemned.¹ Thus the reward of his effort to reason down the menacing Lollards and rebut Wiclif² was his formal disgrace and virtual imprisonment. Had he not recanted, he would have been burned: as it was, his books were; and it is on record that they consisted of eleven quartos and three folios of manuscript. Either because of his papalism or as a result of official intrigue, Church and lords and commons were of one mind against him; and the mob would fain have burned him with his books.³ In that age of brutal strife, when "neither the Church nor the opponents of the Church had any longer a sway over men's hearts,"⁴ he figures beside the mindless prelates and their lay peers somewhat as does More later beside Henry VIII, as Reason *versus* the Beast; and it was illustrative of his entire lack of fanaticism that he made the demanded retractations—avowing his sin in "trusting to natural reason" rather than to Scripture and the authority of the Church—and went his way in silence to solitude and death. The ruling powers disposed of Lollardism in their own way; and in the Wars of the Roses every species of heretical thought seems to disappear. The bribe held out to the nation by the invasion of France had been fatally effectual to corrupt the spirit of moral criticism which inspired the Lollard movement at its best; and the subsequent period of rapine and strife reduced thought and culture to the levels of the Middle Ages.

A hint of what was possible in the direction of freethought in the England of Henry V and Henry VI emerges in some of the records concerning Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, the youngest son of Henry IV. Gifted but ill-balanced, Humphrey was the chief patron of learning in England in his day; and he drank deeply of the spirit of Renaissance scholarship.⁵ Sir Thomas More preserves the story—reproduced also in the old play, *The First Part of the Contention of the two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster*—of how he exposed the fraud of a begging impostor who pretended to have recovered his sight through the virtue of a saint's relics; and

¹ Hook, *Lives of the Archbishops* (Life of Bourchier), 1867, v, 294-306.

² He repels, e.g., Wiclif's argument that a priest's misconduct sufficed to destroy his right to his endowments. *Repressor*, Babington's ed. as cited, ii, 413.

³ Hook, as cited, v, 309.

⁴ Gardiner, *Student's History*, p. 330. Cp. Green, ch. vi, § i, 2, pp. 267, 275; Stubbs *Const. Hist.* iii, 631-33.

⁵ Cp. Pauli, *Pictures of Old England*, Eng. tr. Routledge's rep. pp. 332-36.

a modern pietistic historian decides that the Duke "had long ceased to believe in miracles and relics."¹ But if this be true, it is the whole truth as to Humphrey's freethinking. It was the highest flight of rationalism permissible in his day and sphere.

On the view that Humphrey was a freethinker, the pious Pauli, who says (as cited, p. 337) of the Renaissance of letters, "The weak and evil side of this revived form of literature is that its disciples should have elevated the morality, or rather the immorality, of classical antiquity above Christian discipline and virtue," sees fit further to pronounce that the bad account of Gloucester's condition of body drawn up eleven years before his death by the physician Kymer is a proof of the "wild unbridled passions by which the duke was swayed," and throws a lurid light upon "the tendencies and disposition of his mind." Humphrey lived till 55, and died suddenly, under circumstances highly suggestive of poisoning by his enemies. His brothers Henry and John died much younger than he; but in their case the religious historian sees no ground for imputation. But the historian's inference is overstrained. In reality Humphrey never indicated any lack of theological faith. The poet Lydgate, no unbeliever, described him as "Chose of God to be his owne knyghte," and so rigorous "that heretike dar not comen in his sihte" (verses transcribed in Furnivall's *Early English Meals and Manners*, 1868, pp. lxxxv-vi).

His most comprehensive biographer decides that he was "essentially orthodox," despite his uncanonical marriage with his second wife and his general reputation for sexual laxity. "He was punctilious in the performance of his religious duties" and "a stern opponent of the Lollards"; he "countenanced the extinction of heresy by being present at the burning at Smithfield of an old priest who denied the validity of the sacraments of the Church"; and an Archbishop of Milan pronounced him to be "known everywhere as the chiefest friend and preserver of Holy Church" (K. H. Vickers, *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester: A Biography*, 1907, pp. 223, 321-23). Of such a personage no exegesis can make a rationalist.

Of other traces of critical thinking in England in that age there is little to be said, so little literature is there to convey them. But there are signs of the influence of the "pagan" thought of the Renaissance in religious books. The old *Revelation of the Monk of Evesham*, ostensibly dating from 1196, was first printed about 1482,² with a "prologe" explaining that it "was not shewed to hym only for hym butte also for the confort and profetyng of all cristyn

¹ Pauli, p. 332.

² See Arber's reprint.

pepulle that none man shuld dowte or mystruste of anothis life and world"; "and as for the trowthe of this reuelacyon no man nother woman ought to dowte in any wise," seeing it is thus miraculously provided that "alle resons and mocyons of infydelite the which risith often tymes of man's sensualite shall utwardly be excluded and quenched." Evidently the old problem of immortality had been agitated.

§ 4. *The Remaining European Countries*

Not till late in the fifteenth century is the intellectual side of the Renaissance influence to be seen bearing fruit in Germany, of which the turbulent and semi-barbaric life in the medieval period was little favourable to mental progress. Of political hostility to the Church there was indeed an abundance, long before Luther;¹ but amid the many traces of "irreligion" there is practically none of rational freethinking. What reasoned thought there was, as we have seen, turned to Christian mysticism of a pantheistic cast, as in the teaching of Tauler and Eckhart.²

Another and a deeper current of thought is seen in the remarkable philosophic work of Bishop Nicolaus of Kues or Cusa (1401-1464), who, professedly by an independent movement of reflection, but really as a result of study of Greek philosophy, reached a larger pantheism than had been formulated by any Churchman since the time of John the Scot.³ There is little or no trace, however, of any influence attained by his teaching, which indeed could appeal only to a very few minds of that day. Less remarkable than the metaphysic of Nicolaus, though also noteworthy in its way, is his *Dialogue* "On Peace, or Concordance of Faith," in which, somewhat in the spirit of Boccaccio's tale of the Three Rings, he aims at a reconciliation of all religions, albeit by way of proving the Christian creed to be the true one.

In the Netherlands and other parts of western Europe the popular anti-ecclesiastical heresy of the thirteenth century spread in various degrees; but there is only exceptional trace of literate or properly rationalistic freethinking. Among the most notable developments was the movement in Holland early in the fourteenth century, which compares closely with that of the higher Paulicians and mystics of the two previous centuries, its chief traits being

¹ Cp. Souchay, *Gesch. des deutschen Monarchie*, 1861-62, iii, 230-31.

² On this cp. Souchay, pp. 234-39.

³ See a good synopsis in Pünjer's *History of the Christian Philosophy of Religion*, Eng. tr. pp. 68-89; and another in Moritz Carriere's *Die philosophische Weltanschauung der Reformationszeit*, 1847, pp. 16-25, which, however, is open to Pünjer's criticism that it is coloured by modern Hegelianism.

a general pantheism, a denial of the efficacy of the sacrament of the altar, an insistence that all men are sons of God, and a general declaration for "natural light."¹ But this did not progressively develop. Lack of leisured culture in the Low Countries, and the terrorism of the Inquisition, would sufficiently account for the absence of avowed unbelief, though everywhere, probably, some was set up by the contact of travellers with the culture of Italy. It is fairly to be inferred that in a number of cases the murderous crusade against witchcraft which was carried on in the fifteenth century served as a means of suppressing heresy, rationalistic or other. At Arras, for instance, in 1460, the execution of a number of leading citizens on a charge of sorcery seems to have been a blow at free discussion in the "chambers of rhetoric."² And that rationalism, despite such frightful catastrophes, obscurely persisted, is to be gathered from the long vogue of the work of the Spanish physician Raymund of Sebonde,³ who, having taught philosophy at Toulouse, undertook (about 1435) to establish Christianity on a rational foundation⁴ in his *Theologia Naturalis*, made famous later by Montaigne.

To what length the suppressed rationalism of the age could on occasion go is dramatically revealed in the case of HERMANN VAN RYSWYCK, a Dutch priest, burned for heresy at the Hague in 1512. He was not only a priest in holy orders, but one of the order of Inquisitors; and he put forth the most impassioned denial and defiance of the Christian creed of which there is any record down to modern times. Tried before the inquisitors in 1502, he declared "with his own mouth and with sane mind" that the world is eternal, and was not created as was alleged by "the fool Moses" that there is no hell, and no future life; that Christ, whose whole career was flatly contrary to human welfare and reason, was not the son of Omnipotent God, but a fool, a dreamer, and a seducer of ignorant men, of whom untold numbers had been slain on account of him and his absurd evangel; that Moses had not physically received the law from God; and that "our" faith was shown to be fabulous by its fatuous Scripture, fictitious Bible, and crazy Gospel. And to this exasperated testimony he added: "I was born a Christian, but am no longer one: they are the chief fools." Sentenced in

¹ Dr. Paul Frédéricq, *Geschiedenis der Inquisitie in de Nederlanden, 1025-1520*, Gent, 1892-1897, ii, 4-9.

² Michelet, *Hist. de France*, vii—éd. 1857, pp. 125, 172.

³ This name has many forms; and it is contended that Sabieude is the correct one. See Owen, *Evenings with the Sceptics*, 1881, ii, 423.

⁴ Cp. Hallam, *Introd. to Lit. of Europe*, ed. 1872, i, 142-44, and the analysis in Prof. Dowden's *Montaigne*, 1905, p. 127 sq.

1502 to perpetual imprisonment, he was again brought forward ten years later, and, being found unbroken by that long duration, was as an unrepentant heretic sentenced to be burned on December 14, 1512, the doom being carried out on the same day. The source of his conviction can be gathered from his declaration that "the most learned Aristotle and his commentator Averroës were nearest the truth"; but his wild sincerity and unyielding courage were all his own. "Nimis infelix quidam" is the estimate of an inquisitor of that day.¹ Not so, unless they are most unhappy who die in battle, fighting for the truth they prize. But it has always been the Christian way to condemn all save Christian martyrs.

There is a tolerably full account of Ryswyck's case in a nearly contemporary document, which evidently copies the official record. Ryswyck is described as "sacrē theologiē professorem ordinis predicatorum et inquisitorum"; and his declaration runs: "Quod mundum fuit ab eterna et non incipit per creationem fabricatum a stulto Mose, ut dicit Biblia indistincta.....Nec est infernus, ut nostri estimant. Item post hanc vitam nulla erit vita particularis.....Item doctissimus Aristoteles et ejus commentator Auerrois fuerunt veritati propinquissimi. Item Christum fuit stultus et simplex fantasticus et seductor simplicium hominum.....Quot enim homines interfecti sunt propter ipsum et suum Euangelium fatuum! Item quod omnia que Christus gessit, humano generi et rationi recte sunt contraria. Item Christum filium Dei omnipotentem aperte nego. Et Mosen legem a Deo visibiliter et facialiter suscepisse recuso. Item fides nostra fabulosa est, ut probat nostra fatua Scriptura et ficta Biblia et Euangelium delirum.....Omnes istos articulos et consimilos confessus est proprio ore et sana mente coram inquisitore et notario et testibus, addens: Ego Christianus natus, sed iam non sum Christianus, quoniam illi stultissimi sunt." Paul Frédéricq, *Corpus documentorum Inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis Neerlandicae*, Gent, 1889, i, 494, 501-502.

Thus the Renaissance passed on to the age of the Reformation the seeds of a rationalism which struck far deeper than the doctrine of Luther, but at the same time left a social soil in which such seeds could ill grow. Its own defeat, social and intellectual, may be best realized in terms of its failure to reach either political or physical science. Lack of the former meant political retrogression and bondage; and lack of the latter a renewed dominion of superstition and Bibliolatry—two sets of conditions of which each facilitated the other.

¹ Van Hoogstraten, in Frédéricq, as cited below.

Nothing is more significant of the intellectual climate of the Renaissance than the persistence at all its stages of the belief in astrology, of which we find some dregs even in Bacon. That pseudo-science indeed stands, after all, for the spirit of science, and is not to be diagnosed as mere superstition; being really an *à priori* fallacy fallen into in the deliberate search for some principle of coördination in human affairs. Though adhered to by many prominent Catholics, including Charles V, and by many Protestants, including Melanchthon, it is logically anti-Christian, inasmuch as it presupposes in the moral world a reign of natural law, independent of the will or caprice of any personal power. Herein it differs deeply from magic;¹ though in the Renaissance the return to the lore of antiquity often involved an indiscriminate acceptance and blending of both sorts of occult pagan lore.² Magic subordinates Nature to Will: astrology, as apart from angelology, subordinates Will to Cosmic Law. For many perplexed and thoughtful men, accordingly, it was a substitute, more or less satisfying, for the theory, grown to them untenable, of a moral government of the universe. It was in fact a primary form of sociology proper, as it had been the primary form of astronomy; to which latter science, even in the Renaissance, it was still for many the introduction.

It flourished, above all things, on the insecurity inseparable from the turbulent Italian life of the Renaissance, even as it had flourished on the appalling vicissitude of the drama of imperial Rome; and it is conceivable that the inclination to true science which is seen in such men as Galileo, after the period of Italian independence, was nourished by the greater stability attained for a time under absolutist rule. And though Protestantism, on the other hand, adhered in the main unreasoningly to the theory of a moral control, that dogma at least served to countervail the dominion of astrology, which was only a dogmatism with a difference, and as such inevitably hindered true science.³ On the whole, Protestantism tended to make more effectual that veto on pagan occultism which had been ineffectually passed from time to time by the Catholic Church; albeit the motive was stress of Christian superstition, and the veto was aimed almost as readily at

¹ Dr. Frazer's assumption (*Golden Bough*, 3rd ed. pt. i, i, 224) that magic assumes an invariable order of nature, is unsubstantiated even by his vast anthropological erudition. Magic varies arbitrarily, and the idea of a fixed "order" does not belong to the magician's plane of thought.

² Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, 4e éd. pp. 214-16.

³ "Judicial astrology.....which supplanted and degraded the art of medicine" (Prof. Clifford Allbutt, *Harveian Oration on Science and Medieval Thought*, 1901, App. p. 113). There is a startling survival of it in the physiology of Harvey. *Id.* p. 45.

inductive and true science as at the deductive and false. We shall find the craze of witchcraft, in turn, dominating Protestant countries at a time when freethinkers and liberal Catholics elsewhere were setting it at naught.

There can be little doubt that, broadly speaking, the new interest in Scripture study and ecclesiastical history told against the free play of thought on scientific and scholarly problems; we shall find Bacon realizing the fact a hundred years after Luther's start; and the influence has operated down to our own day. In this resistance Catholics played their part. The famous Cornelius Agrippa¹ (1486-1535) never ceased to profess himself a Catholic, and had small sympathy with the Reformers, though always at odds with the monks; and his long popular treatise *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium, atque excellentia verbi Dei declamatio* (1531) is a mere polemic for scripturalism against alike false science and true, monkish superstition and reason. Vilified as a magician by the monks, and as an atheist and a scoffer by angry humanists,² he did but set error against error, being himself a believer in witchcraft, a hater of anatomy, and as confident in his contempt of astronomy as of astrology. And his was a common frame of mind for centuries.

Still, the new order contained certain elements of help for a new life, as against its own inclement principles of authority and dogma; and the political heterogeneity of Europe, seconded by economic pressures and by new geographic discovery, sufficed further to prevent any far-reaching organization of tyranny. Under these conditions, new knowledge could incubate new criticism. But it would be an error-breeding oversight to forget that in the many-coloured world before the Reformation there was not only a certain artistic and imaginative sunlight which the Reformation long darkened, but even, athwart the mortal rigours of papal rule, a certain fitful play of intellectual insight to which the peoples of the Reformation became for a time estranged.

¹ Heinrich Cornelius Agrippa von Nettesheim.

² Above, p. 385.

CHAPTER XI

THE REFORMATION, POLITICALLY CONSIDERED

§ 1. *The German Conditions*

IN a vague and general sense the ecclesiastical revolution known as the Reformation was a phenomenon of freethought. To be so understood, indeed, it must be regarded in contrast to the dominion of the Catholic Church, not to the movement which we call the Renaissance. That movement it was that made the Reformation possible; and if we have regard to the reign of Bibliolatry which Protestantism set up, we seem to be contemplating rather a superimposing of Semitic darkness upon Hellenic light than an intellectual emancipation. Emancipation of another kind the Reformation doubtless brought about. In particular it involved, to an extent not generally realized, a secularization of life, through the sheer curtailment, in most Protestant countries, of the personnel and apparatus of clericalism, and the new disrepute into which, for a time, these fell. Alike in Germany and in England there was a breaking-up of habits of reverence and of self-prostration before creed and dogma and ritual. But this liberation was rather social than intellectual, and the product was rather licence and irreverence than ordered freethought. On the other hand, when the first unsettlement was over, the new growth of Bibliolatry tended rather to deepen the religious way of feeling and make more definite the religious attitude. Tolerance did not emerge until after a whole era of embittered strife. The Reformation, in fact, was much more akin to a revolt against a hereditary king than to the process of self-examination and logical scrutiny by which men pass from belief to disbelief in a theory of things, a dogma, or a document.

The beginning of such a process had indeed taken place in Germany before Luther, insofar as the New Learning represented by such humanists as Erasmus, such scholars as Reuchlin,¹ and such satirists as Ulrich von Hutten, set up a current of educated hostility to the ignorance and the grosser superstitions of the

¹ Who, however, was no rationalist, but an orientalizing mystic. Cp. Carriere, *Die philos. Weltanschauung der Reformationszeit*, 1846, pp. 36-38.

churchmen. For Germany, as for England, this movement was a contagion from the new scholarship and Platonism of Italy;¹ and the better minds in the four universities founded in the pre-Lutheran generation (Tübingen, 1477; Mayence, 1482; Frankfort-on-the-Oder, 1506; Wittenberg, 1502) necessarily owed much to Italian impulses, which they carried on, though the universities as a whole were bitterly hostile to the new learning.² The Dutch freethinker Ryswyck, as we saw, was fundamentally an Averroïst; and Italy was the stronghold of Averroïsm, of which the monistic bias probably fostered the Unitarianism of the sixteenth century. But it was not this literary and scholarly movement that effected the Reformation so-called, which was rather an economic and political than a mental revolution.

The persistence of Protestant writers in discussing the early history of the Reformation without a glance at the economic causation is one of the great hindrances to historic science. From such popular works as those of D'Aubigné and Häusser it is practically impossible to learn what socially took place in Germany; and the general Protestant reader can learn it only—and imperfectly—from the works on the Catholic side, as Audin's *Histoire de la vie de Luther* (Eng. tr. 1853) and Döllinger's *Die Reformation*, and the more scientific Protestant studies, such as those of Ranke and Bezold (even there not at any great length), to neither of which classes of history will he resort. In England the facts are partially realized, in the light of an ecclesiastical predilection, through High Church histories such as that of Blunt, which proceed upon a Catholic leaning. Cobbett's intemperate exposure of the economic causation has found an audience chiefly among Catholics.

Bezold admits that "with perfect justice have recent historians commented on the former underrating of an economic force which certainly played its part in the spread and establishment of the Reformation" (*Gesch. der deutschen Reformation*, 1890, p. 563). The broad fact is that in not a single country could the Reformation have been accomplished without enlisting the powerful classes or corporations, or alternatively the *de facto* governments, by proffering the plunder of the Church. Only in a few Swiss cantons, and in Holland, does the confiscation seem to have been made to the common good (cp. the present writer's *Evolution of States*, pp. 311, 343).

¹ Cp. Ranke, *Hist. of the Ref. in Germany*, bk. ii, ch. i (Eng. tr. Routledge's 1-vol. ed. 1905, p. 129). The point is fairly put by Audin in the introduction to his *Histoire de Luther*. Compare Green: "The awakening of a rational Christianity, whether in England or in the Teutonic world at large, begins with the Florentine studies of Sir John Colet" (*Short Hist.* ch. vi, § iv). Colet, however, was strictly orthodox. Ulrich von Hutten spent five of the formative years of his life in Italy.

² Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature*, 1852, p. 205.

But even in Holland needy nobles had finally turned Protestant in the hope of getting Church lands. (See Motley, *Rise of the Dutch Republic*, ed. 1863, p. 131.) Elsewhere appropriation of Church lands by princes and nobles was the general rule.

Even as to Germany, it is impossible to accept Michelet's indulgent statement that most of the confiscated Church property "returned to its true destination, to the schools, the hospitals, the communes; to its true proprietors, the aged, the child, the toiling family" (*Hist. de France*, x, 333; see the same assertion in Henderson, *Short History of Germany*, 1902, i, 344). Plans to that effect were drawn up; but, as the princes were left to carry out the arrangement, they took the lion's share. Ranke (*Hist. of the Ref.* bk. iv, ch. v; Eng. tr. 1-vol. ed. 1905, pp. 466-67) admits much grabbing of Church lands as early as 1526; merely contending, with Luther, that papist nobles had begun the spoliation. (Cp. Bezold, pp. 564-65; Menzel, *Gesch. der Deutschen*, cap. 393.) In Saxony, when monks broke away from their monasteries, the nobles at once appropriated the lands and buildings (Ranke, p. 467). Luther made a warm appeal to the Elector against the nobles in general (Ranke, p. 467; Luther's letter, Nov. 22, 1526, in *Werke*, ed. De Wette, iii, 137; letter to Spalatin, Jan. 1, 1527, *id.* p. 147; also p. 153). See too his indignant protests against the rapine of the princes and nobles and the starvation of the ministers in the *Table Talk*, chs. 22, 60. Even Philip of Hesse did not adhere to his early and disinterested plans of appropriation (Ranke, pp. 468-69, 711-12). All that Ranke can claim is that "some great institutions were really founded"—to wit, two homes for "young ladies of noble birth," four hospitals, and the theological school of Marburg. And this was in the most hopeful region.

There is positive evidence, further, that not only ecclesiastical but purely charitable foundations were plundered by the Protestants (Witzel, cited by Döllinger, *Die Reformation, ihre innere Entwicklung und ihre Wirkungen*, 1846, i, 46, 47, 51, 62); and, as school foundations were confiscated equally with ecclesiastical in England, there is no reason to doubt the statement. Practically the same process took place in Scotland, where the share of Church property proposed to be allotted to the Protestant ministers was never given, and their protests were treated with contempt (Burton, *History of Scotland*, iv, 37-41). Knox's comments were similar to Luther's (*Works*, Laing's ed. ii, 310-12).

Dr. Gardiner, a fairly impartial historian, sums up that, after the German settlement of 1552, "The princes claimed the right of continuing to secularize Church lands within their territories as inseparable from their general right of providing

for the religion of their subjects.....About a hundred monasteries are said to have fallen victims in the Palatinate alone; and an almost equal number, the gleanings of a richer harvest which had been reaped before the Convention of Passau, were taken possession of in Northern Germany" (*The Thirty Years' War*, 8th ed. p. 11).

The credit of bringing the various forces to a head, doubtless, remains with Luther, though ground was further prepared by literary predecessors such as John of Wesel and John Wessel, Erasmus, Reuchlin, and Ulrich von Hutten. But even the signal courage of Luther could not have availed to fire an effectual train of action unless a certain number of nobles had been ready to support him for economic reasons. Even the shameless sale of indulgences by Tetzels was resented most keenly on the score that it was draining Germany of money;¹ and nothing is more certain than that Luther began his battle not as a heretic but as an orthodox Catholic Reformer, desiring to propitiate and not to defy the papacy. Economic forces were the determinants. This becomes the more clear when we note that the Reformation was only the culmination or explosion of certain intellectual, social, and political forces seen at work throughout Christendom for centuries before. In point of mere doctrine, the Protestants of the sixteenth century had been preceded and even distanced by heretics of the eleventh, and by teachers of the ninth. The absurdity of relic-worship, the folly of pilgrimages and fastings, the falsehood of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the heresy of prayers to the saints, the unscripturalness of the hierarchy—these and a dozen other points of protest had been raised by Paulicians, by Paterini, by Beghards, by Apostolics, by Lollards, long before the time of Luther. As regards his nearer predecessors, indeed, this is now a matter of accepted Protestant history.² What is not properly realized is that the conditions which wrought political success where before there had been political failure were special political conditions; and that to these, and not to supposed differences in national character, is due the geographical course of the Reformation.

¹ As to the general resentment of the money drain cp. Strauss, *Gespräche von Ulrich von Hutten*, 1860, Vorrede, p. xiv, and the dialogues, pp. 159, 363. Cp. Ranke, bk. ii, ch. i (Eng. tr. as cited, pp. 123-26).

² See Ullmann, *Reformers before the Reformation*, passim. Even the Peasants' Rising was adumbrated in the movement of Hans Böheim of Nikleshausen (fl. 1476), whose doctrine was both democratic and anti-clerical. (Work cited, ii, 380-81; cp. Bezold, *Gesch. der deutschen Reform*, 1890, ch. vii.)

§ 2. *The Problem in Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands*

We have seen that the spirit of reform was strong in Italy three hundred years before Luther; and that some of the strongest movements within the Church were strictly reformatory, and originally disinterested in a high degree. In less religious forms the same spirit abounded throughout the Renaissance; and at the end of the fifteenth century Savonarola was preaching reform religiously enough at Florence. His death, however, was substantially due to the perception that ecclesiastical reform, as conducted by him, was a socio-political process,¹ whence the reformer was a socio-political disturber. Intellectually he was no innovator; on the contrary, he was a hater of literary enlightenment, and he was as ready to burn astrologers as were his enemies to burn him.² His claim, in his *Triumph of the Cross*, to combat unbelievers by means of sheer natural reason, indicates only his inability to realize any rationalist position—a failure to be expected in his age, when rationalism was denied argumentative utterance, and when the problems of Christian evidences were only being broached. The very form of the book is declamatory rather than ratiocinative, and every question raised is begged.³ That he failed in his crusade of Church reform, and that Luther succeeded in his, was due to no difference between Italian and German character, but to the vast difference in the political potentialities of the two cases. The fall of public liberty in Florence, which must have been preceded as it was accompanied by a relative decline in popular culture,⁴ and which led to the failure of Savonarola, may be in a sense attributed to Italian character; but that character was itself the product of peculiar social and political conditions, and was not inferior to that of any northern population.⁵

The Savonarolan movement had all the main features of the Puritanism of the northern "Reform." Savonarola sent organized bodies of boys, latterly accompanied by bodies of adults, to force their way into private houses and confiscate things thought suitable for the reformatory bonfire. Burckhardt, p. 477; Perrens, *Jérôme Savonarole*, 2e édit. pp. 140-41. The things burned included pictures and busts of inestimable artistic value, and manuscripts of exquisite beauty. Perrens, p. 229. Compare Villari, as cited; George Eliot's *Romola*, bk. iii,

¹ See Guicciardini's analysis of the parties, cited by E. Armstrong in the "Cambridge Modern History," vol. i, *The Renaissance*, p. 170.

² Burckhardt, *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, Eng. tr. pp. 476-77.

³ See the sympathetic analysis of the book by Villari, *Life of Savonarola*, Eng. tr. pp. 582-94, where it is much overrated.

⁴ As to the education of the Florentine common people in the fourteenth century cp. Burckhardt, pp. 203-204; Symonds, *Age of the Despots*, p. 202.

⁵ Cp. Armstrong, as cited, pp. 150-51.

ch. xlix; and Merejkowski's *The Forerunner* (Eng. tr.), bk. vii. Previous reformers had set up "bonfires of false hair and books against the faith" (Armstrong, as cited, p. 167); and Savonarola's bands of urchins were developments from previous organizations, bent chiefly on blackmail. (*Id.*) But he carried the tyranny furthest, and actually proposed to put obstinate gamblers to the torture. Perrens, p. 132. Villari in his sentimental commemoration lecture on Savonarola (*Studies Historical and Critical*, Eng. tr. 1907) ignores these facts.

When, a generation later, the propaganda of the Lutheran movement reached Italy, it was more eagerly welcomed than in any of the Teutonic countries outside of the first Lutheran circle, though a vigilant system was at once set on foot for the destruction of the imported books.¹ It had made much headway at Milan and Florence in 1525;² and we have the testimony of Pope Clement VII himself that before 1530 the Lutheran heresy was widely spread not only among the laity but among priests and friars, both mendicant and non-mendicant, many of whom propagated it by their sermons.³ The ruffianism and buffoonery of the German Lutheran soldiers in the army of Charles V at the sack of Rome in 1529 was hardly likely to win adherents to their sect;⁴ yet the number increased all over Italy. In 1541-45 they were numerous and audacious at Bologna,⁵ where in 1537 a commission of cardinals and prelates, appointed by Pope Paul III, had reported strongly on the need for reformation in the Church. In 1542 they were so strong at Venice as to contemplate holding public assemblies; in the neighbouring towns of Vicentino, Vicenza, and Trevisano they seem to have been still more numerous;⁶ and Cardinal Caraffa reported to the Pope that all Italy was infected with the heresy.⁷

Now began the check. Among the Protestants themselves there had gone on the inevitable strifes over the questions of the Trinity and the Eucharist; the more rational views of Zwingli and Servetus were in notable favour;⁸ and the Catholic reaction,

¹ McCrie, *Reformation in Italy*, ed. 1856, pp. 28-30, 41.

² *Id.* pp. 54, 68.

³ *Id.* p. 45, citing Reynald's *Annales*, ad. ann. 1530; Trechsel, *Lelio Sozzini und die Anti-trinitarier seiner Zeit*, 1844, pp. 19-35.

⁴ McCrie reasons otherwise, from the fact that the sack of Rome was by many Catholics regarded as a divine judgment on the papacy; but he omits to mention the pestilence which followed and destroyed the bulk of the conquering army (Menzel, *Gesch. der Deutschen*, Cap. 390).

⁵ McCrie, pp. 59-60.

⁶ *Id.* p. 66.

⁷ *Id.* pp. 112, 115.

⁸ *Id.* pp. 89, 98, 215. McCrie thinks it useful to suggest (p. 95) that anti-trinitarianism seems to have begun at Siena, "whose inhabitants were proverbial among their countrymen for levity and inconstancy of mind"—citing Dante, *Inferno*, canto xxix, 121-23. Thus does theology illumine sociology. In a note on the same page the historian cites the testimony of Melanchthon (*Epist.* coll. 852, 941) as to the commonness of "Platonic and skeptical theories" among his Italian correspondents in general; and quotes further the words of Calvin, who for once rises above invective to explain as to heresy (*Opera*, viii, 510) that "In Italis, propter rarum acumen, magis eminent." The historian omits, further, to trace German Unitarianism to the levity of a particular community in Germany.

fanned by Caraffa, was the more facile. Measures were first taken against heretical priests and monks; Ochino and Peter Martyr had to fly; and many monks in the monastery of the latter were imprisoned. At Rome was founded, in 1543, the Congregation of the Holy Office, a new Inquisition, on the deadly model of that of Spain; and thenceforth the history of Protestantism in Italy is but one of suppression. The hostile force was all-pervading, organized, and usually armed with the whole secular power; and though in Naples the old detestation of the Inquisition broke out anew so strongly that even the Spanish tyranny could not establish it,¹ the papacy elsewhere carried its point by explaining how much more lenient was the Italian than the Spanish Inquisition. Such a pressure, kept up by the strongest economic interest in Italy, no movement could resist; and it would have suppressed the Reformation in any country or any race, as a similar pressure did in Spain.

Prof. Gebhart (*Orig. de la Renais. en Italie*, p. 68) writes that "Italy has known no great national heresies: one sees there no uprising of minds which resembles the profound popular movements provoked by Waldo, Wiclif, John Huss, or Luther." The decisive answer to this is soon given by the author himself (p. 74): "If the Order of Franciscans has had in the peninsula an astonishing popularity; if it has, so to speak, formed a Church within the Church, it is that it responded to the profound aspirations of an entire people." (Cp. p. 77.) Yet again, after telling how the Franciscan heresy of the *Eternal Gospel* so long prevailed, M. Gebhart speaks (p. 78) of the Italians as a people whom "formal heresy has never seduced." These inconsistencies derive from the old fallacy of attributing the course of the Reformation to national character. (See it discussed in the present writer's *Evolution of States*, pp. 237-38, 302-307, 341-44.) Burckhardt, while recognizing—as against the theory of "something lacking in the Italian mind"—that the Italian movements of Church reformation "failed to achieve success only because circumstances were against them," goes on to object that the course of "mighty events like the Reformation.....eludes the deductions of the philosophers," and falls back on "mystery." (*Renaissance in Italy*, Eng. tr. p. 457.) There is really much less "mystery" about such movements than about small ones; and the causes of the Reformation are in large part obvious and

¹ A. von Reumont, *The Caraffas of Maddaloni*, Eng. tr. 1854, pp. 33-37; McCrie, p. 122. It was not Protestantism that made the revolt. The contemporary historian Porzios states that the Lutherans were so few that they could easily be counted. Von Reumont, as cited, p. 33. It was not heresy that moved the Neapolitans, but the knowledge that perjurers could be found in Naples to swear to anything, and that the machine would thus be made one of pecuniary extortion.

simple. Baur, even in the act of claiming special credit for the personality of Luther as the great factor in the Reformation, admits that only in the peculiar political conditions in which he found himself could he have succeeded. (*Kirchengeschichte der neueren Zeit*, 1863, p. 23.)

The broad explanation of the Italian failure is that in Italy reform could not for a moment be dreamt of save as *within* the Church, where there was no economic leverage such as effected the Reformation from the outside elsewhere. It was a relatively easy matter in Germany and England to renounce the Pope's control and make the Churches national or autonomous. To attempt that in Italy would have meant creating a state of universal and insoluble strife. (Symonds, *Renaissance in Italy*, vol. i, ed. 1897, p. 369. Symonds, however, omits to note the *financial* dependence of Italian society on the papal system; and his verdict that *Luther and the nations of the north* saw clearly "what the Italians could not see" is simply the racial fallacy over again.)

Apart from that, the Italians, as we have seen, were as much bent on reformation as any other people in mass; and the earlier Franciscan movement was obviously more disinterested than either the later German or the English, in both of which plunder was the inducement to the leading adherents, as it was also in Switzerland. There the wholesale bestowal of Church livings on Italians was the strongest motive to ecclesiastical revolution; and in Zürich, the first canton which adopted the Reformation, the process was made easy by the State guaranteeing posts and pensions for life to the whole twenty-four canons of the chapter. (Vieusseux, *History of Switzerland*, 1840, pp. 120, 128; cp. Zschokke, *Schweizerland's Geschichte*, 9te Ausg. ch. 32, and Jackson, *Huldreich Zwingli*, 1901, pp. 222-25, 295-96.) The Protestants had further the support of the unbelieving soldiery, made anti-religious in the Italian wars, who rejoiced in the process of priest-baiting and plunder (Vieusseux, p. 130).

The process of suppression in Italy was prolonged through sixty years. In 1543 numbers of Protestants began to fly; hundreds more were cast into prison; and, save in a few places, public profession of the heresy was suppressed. In 1546 the papacy persuaded the Venetian senate to put down the Protestant communities in their dominions, and in 1548 there began in Venice a persecution in which many were sent to the galleys. To reach secret Protestantism, the papacy dispersed spies throughout Italy, Ferrara being particularly attended to, as a known hotbed.¹ After the death

¹ McCrie, *Reformation in Italy*, p. 131.

of the comparatively merciful Paul III (1550), Julius III authorized new severities. A Ferrarese preacher was put to death; and the Duchess Renée, the daughter of Louis XII, who had notoriously favoured the heretics, was made virtually a prisoner in her own palace, secluded from her children. At Faenza, a nobleman died under torture at the hands of the inquisitors, and a mob in turn killed some of these;¹ but the main process went on throughout the country. An old Waldensian community in Calabria having reverted to its former opinions under the new stimulus, it was warred upon by the inquisitors, who employed for the purpose outlaws; and multitudes of victims, including sixty women, were put to the torture.² At Montalto, in 1560, another Waldensian community were taken captive; eighty-eight men were slaughtered, their throats being cut one by one; many more were tortured; the majority of the men were sent to the Spanish galleys; and the women and children were sold into slavery.³ In Venice many were put to death by drowning.⁴

Of individual executions there were many. In a documented list of seventy-eight persons burned alive or hanged and burned at Rome from 1553 to 1600,⁵ only a minority are known to have been Lutherans, the official records being kept on such varying principles that it is impossible to tell how many of the victims were Catholic criminals;⁶ while some heretics are represented—it would seem falsely—as having died in the communion of the Church. But probably more than half were Lutherans or Calvinists. The first in the list (1553) are Giovanni Mollio,⁷ a Minorite friar of Montalcino, who had been a professor at Brescia and Bologna, and Giovanni Teodori⁸ of Perugia; and the former is stated in the official record to have recommended his soul to God, the Virgin Mary, St. Francis, and St. Anthony of Padua, though he had been condemned as an obstinate Lutheran. The next victims (1556) are the Milanese friar Ambrogio de Cavoli, who dies “firm in his false opinion,” and Pomponio Angerio or Algieri of Nola, a student aged twenty-four, who, “as being obstinate, was burned

¹ McCrie, pp. 143-44.

² *Id.* pp. 158-61.

³ *Id.* pp. 161-63. This seems to have been one of the latest instances of enslavement in Italy. As to the selling of many Capuan women in Rome after the capture of Capua in 1501, see Burckhardt, p. 279, note.

⁴ McCrie, pp. 140-43.

⁵ Domenico Orano, *Liberi Pensatori bruciati in Roma dal XVI al XVIII Secolo*, Roma, 1904. Giordano Bruno is 77th in the list; and there are only eight more. The 85th case was in 1642; and the last—the burning of a dead body—in 1761.

⁶ Orano, p. 13.

⁷ Signor Orano gives the name as Buzio, citing the 1835 Italian translation of McCrie, and pronouncing Cantù (ii, 338) wrong in making it Mollio. But in the 1856 ed. of McCrie's work the name is given (pp. 57-58, 168-69) as John Mollio. Cantù then appears to have been right; but the date he gives, 1533, seems to be a blunder.

⁸ McCrie gives this name as Tisserano.

alive."¹ These were the first victims of Caraffa after his elevation to the papal chair as Paul IV. Under Pius IV three were burned in 1560; under Pius V two in 1566, six in 1567, six in 1568, and so on. Francesco Cellario, an ex-Franciscan friar, living as a refugee and Protestant preacher in the Grisons, was kidnapped, taken to Rome, and burned² (1569). A Neapolitan nobleman, Pompeo de Monti, caught in Rome, was officially declared to have "renounced head by head all the errors he had held," and accordingly was benignantly beheaded.³ Quite a number, including the learned protonotary Carnesecchi (1567), are alleged to have died "in the bosom of the Church."⁴ On the other hand, some of the inquisitors themselves came under the charge of heresy, two cardinals and a bishop being actually prosecuted⁵—whether for Lutheranism or for other forms of private judgment does not appear.

Simple Lutheranism, however, seems to have been the usual limit of heresy among those burned. Aonio Paleario (originally Antonio della Paglia or de' Pagliaricci) of Veroli⁶—poet and professor of rhetoric at Milan, hanged in 1570 (in his seventieth year) either for denouncing the Inquisition or for Lutheranism—was an extreme heretic from the Catholic point of view. His *Actio in Romanos Pontificos et eorum asseclas* is still denounced by the Church.⁷ If, however, he was the author of the *Trattato utilissimo del beneficio di Giesu Crocifisso verso I Christiani*, he was simply an evangelical of the school of Luther, exalting faith and making light of works; and its "remedies against the temptation of doubt" deal solely with theological difficulties, not with critical unbelief.⁸ This treatise, immensely popular in the sixteenth century, was so zealously destroyed by the Church that when Ranke wrote no copy was known to exist.⁹ The *Trattato* was placed on the first papal *Index Expurgatorius* in 1549; and the nearly complete extinction of the book is an important illustration of the Church's faculty of suppressing literature.

The *Index*, anticipated by Charles V in the Netherlands several years earlier, was established especially to resist the Reformation; and its third class contained a prohibition of all anonymous books

¹ Orano, p. 6; McCrie, pp. 169-70.

² McCrie, p. 212; Orano, p. 33.

³ Orano, pp. 15-16. McCrie, p. 165, says he was strangled; but the official record is "fu mozza la testa."

⁴ Orano, p. 22. As to Carnesecchi's career see McCrie, pp. 173-79; and Babington's ed. of Paleario, 1855, Introd. pp. lxx-lxvi.

⁵ McCrie, p. 164. See Trechsel, *Lelio Sozzini*, p. 35, as to Baldo Lupetino.

⁶ As to whom see McCrie, pp. 81-84, 179-82, and the copious *Life and Times of Aonio Paleario*, by M. Young. 2 vols. 1860.

⁷ Marini, *Galileo e l'Inquisizione*, Roma, 1850, p. 37, note. ⁸ Babington's ed. p. 46 sq.

⁹ It was afterwards unearthed, however; and Babington's ed. (1855) is an almost facsimile reprint, with old French and English versions.

published since 1519. The destruction of books in Italy in the first twenty years of the work of the Congregation of the Index was enormous, nearly every library being decimated, and many annihilated. All editions of the classics, and even of the Fathers, annotated by Protestants, or by Erasmus, were destroyed; the library of the Medicean College at Florence, despite the appeals of Duke Cosmo, was denuded of many works of past generations, now pronounced heretical; and many dead writers who had passed for good Catholics were put on the *Index*. Booksellers, plundered of their stocks, were fain to seek another calling; and printers, seeing that any one of them who printed a condemned work had every book printed by him put on the *Index*, were driven to refuse all save works officially accredited. It was considered a merciful relaxation of the procedure when, after the death of Paul IV (1555), certain books, such as Erasmus's editions of the Fathers, were allowed to be merely mutilated.¹ The effect of the whole machinery in making Italy in the seventeenth century relatively unlearned and illiterate cannot easily be overstated.

In fine, the Reformation failed in Italy because of the economic and political conditions, as it failed in Spain; as it failed in a large part of Germany; as it would have failed in Holland had Philip II made his capital there (in which case Spain might very well have become Protestant); and as it would have failed in England had Elizabeth been a Catholic, like her sister. During the sixty years from 1520 to 1580, thousands of Italian Protestants left Italy, as thousands of Spanish Protestants fled from Spain, and thousands of English Protestants from England in the reign of Mary.² To make the outcome in Italy and Spain a basis for a theory of racial tendency in religion, or racial defect of "public spirit," is to explain history in a fashion which, in physical science, has long been discredited as an argument in a circle.

McCrie, at the old standpoint, says of the Inquisition that "this iniquitous and bloody tribunal could never obtain a footing either in France or in Germany"; that "the attempt to introduce it in the Netherlands was resisted by the adherents of the old as well as the disciples of the new religion; and it kindled a civil war which.....issued in establishing civil and religious liberty"; and that "the ease with which it was introduced into Italy showed that, whatever illumination there was among the Italians.....they were destitute of that public

¹ Cp. McCrie, pp. 114-17.

² Cp. McCrie, *Ref. in Italy*, ch. v; *Ref. in Spain*, ch. viii; Green, *Short Hist.* pp. 358, 362.

spirit and energy of principle which were requisite to shake off the degrading yoke by which they were oppressed." The ethical attitude of the Christian historian is noteworthy; but we are here concerned with his historiography. A little reflection will make it clear that the non-establishment of the Inquisition in France and Germany was due precisely to the fact that the papacy was not *in* these countries as it was in Italy, and that the native Governments resented external influence.

As to the Netherlands, the statement is misleading in the extreme. The Inquisition set up by Charles V was long and fully established in the Low Countries; and Motley recognizes that it was there more severe even than in Spain. It was Charles V who, in 1546, gave orders for the establishment of the Inquisition in Naples, when the people so effectually resisted. The view, finally, that the attempt to suppress heresy caused the Dutch revolt is merely part of the mythology of the Reformation. Charles V, at the outset of his reign, stood to Spain in the relation of a foreign king who, with his Flemish courtiers, exploited Spanish revenues. Only by making Madrid his capital and turning semi-Spanish did he at all reverse that relation between the two parts of his dominions. So late as 1550 he set up an exceptionally merciless form of the Inquisition in the Low Countries, and this without losing any of the loyalty of the middle and upper classes, Protestantism having made its converts only among the poor. In 1546 too he had set up an *Index Expurgatorius* with the assistance of the theological faculty at Louvain; and there was actually a Flemish *Index* in print before the papal one (McCrie, *Ref. in Italy*, p. 184; Ticknor, *Hist. of Spanish Lit.* 6th ed. i, 493).

What set up the breach between the Netherlands and Spain was the failure of Philip II to adjust himself to Dutch interests as his father had adjusted himself to Spanish. The sunderance was on lines of economic interest and racial jealousy; and Dutch Protestantism was not the cause but the effect. In the war, indeed, multitudes of Dutch Catholics held persistently with their Protestant fellow-countrymen against Spain, as many English Catholics fought against the Armada. As late as 1600 the majority of the people of Groningen were still Catholics, as the great majority are now in North Brabant and Limburg; and in 1900 the Catholics in the Netherlands were nearly a third of the whole. From first to last too the Dutch Protestant creed and polity were those set up by Calvin, a Frenchman.

To those accustomed to the conventional view, the case may become clearer on a survey of the course of anti-papalism in other countries than those mentioned. The political determination of the process in

the sixteenth century, indeed, cannot be properly realized save in the light of kindred movements of earlier date, when the "Teutonic conscience" made, not for reform, but for fixation.

§ 3. *The Hussite Failure in Bohemia*

That the causal forces in the Reformation were neither racial religious bias nor special gift on the part of any religious teachers is made tolerably clear by the pre-Lutheran episode of the Hussites in Bohemia a century before the German movement. In Bohemia as elsewhere clerical avarice, worldliness, and misconduct had long kept up anti-clerical feeling; and the adoption of Wiclif's teaching by Huss¹ at the end of the fourteenth century was the result, and not the cause, of Bohemian anti-papalism.² The Waldensians, whose doctrines were closely akin to those of Huss, were represented in Bohemia as early as the twelfth century; and so late as 1330 their community was a teaching centre, able to send money help to the Waldensians of Italy. So apparent was the heredity that Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II, maintained that the Hussites were a branch of the Waldenses.³

Before Huss too a whole series of native reformers, beginning with the Moravian Miltz, Archdeacon of Prague, had set up a partly anti-clerical propaganda. Miltz, who gave up his emoluments (1363) to become a wandering preacher, actually wrote a *Libellus de Anti-christo*, affirming that the Church was already in Anti-christ's power, or nearly so.⁴ It was written while he was imprisoned by the Inquisition at Rome at the instance of the mendicant orders, whom he censured. As, however, the later hostility he incurred, up to his death, was on the score of his influence with the people, the treatise cannot well have been current in his lifetime. A contemporary, Conrad of Waldhausen, holding similar views, joined Miltz in opposing the mendicant friars as Wiclif was doing at the same period; and the King of Bohemia (the emperor Charles IV) gave zealous countenance to both. A follower of Miltz, Matthias of Janow, a prebendary of Prague, holding the same views as to Anti-christ, wrote a book on *The Abomination of Desolation of Priests and Monks*, and yet another to similar effect.

There was thus a considerable movement in the direction of

¹ Huss, in his youth, at first turned from Wiclif's writings with horror. Bonnechose, *The Reformers before the Reformation*, Eng. tr. 1844, i, 72.

² Cp. Krasinski, *Histor. Sketch of the Reformation in Poland*, 1838, i, 58.

³ Krasinski, *Sketch of Relig. Hist. of Slav. Nations*, ed. 1851, pp. 26-27.

⁴ Neander, ix, 242 sq.; Hardwick, pp. 426-27. Miltz effected a remarkable reformation of life in Prague. Neander, p. 241.

Church reform before either Huss or Wiclif was heard in Bohemia ; and a Bohemian king had shown a reforming zeal, apparently not on financial motives, before any other European potentate. And whereas racial jealousy of the dominant Italians was a main factor in the movement of Luther, the much more strongly motivated jealousy of the Czechs against the Germans who exploited Bohemia was a main element in the salient movement of the Hussites.¹ Called in to work the silver mines, and led further by the increasing field for commerce and industry,² the more civilized Germans secured control of the Czech church and monasteries, appropriating most of the best livings. As they greatly predominated also at the University of Prague, Huss, whose inspiration was largely racial patriotism, wrought with his colleague Jerome to have the university made strictly national.³ When, accordingly, the German heads of the university still (1403 and 1408) condemned the doctrines of Wiclif as preached by Huss, the motives of the censors were as much racial and economic as theological ; that is to say, the " Teutonic conscience " operated in its own interest to the exaltation of papal rule against the Czech conscience.

The first crisis in the racial struggle ended in Huss's obtaining a royal decree (1409) giving three votes in university affairs (wherein, according to medieval custom, the voting was by nations) to the Bohemians, and only one to the Germans, though the latter were the majority. Thereupon a multitude of the German students marched back to Germany, where there was founded for them the university of Leipzig ;⁴ and the racial quarrel was more envenomed than ever.

At the same time the ecclesiastical authorities, closely allied with the German interest, took up the cause of the Church against heresy ; and Archbishop Sbinko of Prague, having procured a papal bull, caused a number of Wiclifian and other manuscripts to be burned⁵ (1410), soon after excommunicating Huss. The now nationalist university protested, and the king sequestrated the estates of the archbishop on his refusal to indemnify the owners of the manu-

¹ See the very intelligent survey of the situation in Kautsky's *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation*, Eng. tr. 1897, p. 35 sq.

² Kautsky, p. 42.

³ K. Raumer, *Contrib. to the Hist. of the German Universities*, New York, 1859, p. 19 ; Dr. Rashdall, *Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol. ii, pt. i, 223-26 ; Bonnechose, i, 78 ; Mosheim, 15 Cent. pt. ii, ch. ii, § 6 ; Gieseler, Per. iii, Div. v, § 150 ; Krasinski, as cited, pp. 31-33.

⁴ Krasinski, *Sketch*, p. 33 ; Kautsky, p. 43 ; Maclaine's note to Mosheim, as last cited ; Rashdall, pp. 225-26, 254. The exodus has been much exaggerated. Only 602 were enrolled at Leipzig.

⁵ Many of these were of great beauty and value, and must have been owned by rich men. Krasinski, *Sketch*, p. 34.

scripts. In 1411, further, Huss denounced the proposed papal crusade against Naples, and in 1412 the sale of indulgences by permission of Pope John XXIII, exactly as Luther denounced those of Leo X a century later, calling the Pope Antichrist in the Lutheran manner, while his partizans burned the papal bulls.¹ For the rest, he preached against image-worship, auricular confession, ceremonialism, and clerical endowments.² At the Council of Constance (1415), accordingly, there was arrayed against him a solid mass of German churchmen, including the ex-rector of Prague University, now bishop of Misnia. Further, the Germans were scholastically, as a rule, Nominalists, and Huss a Realist; and as Gerson, the most powerful of the French prelates, was zealous for the former school, he threw his influence on the German side,³ as did the Bishop of London on the part of England.⁴ The forty-five Wiclifian heresies, therefore, were re-condemned; Huss was sentenced to imprisonment, though he had gone to the Council under a letter of safe-conduct from the emperor;⁵ and on his refusal to retract he was burned alive (July 6, 1415). Jerome, taking flight, was caught, and, being imprisoned, recanted; but later revoked the recantation and was burned likewise (May 30, 1416).

The subsequent fortunes of the Hussite party were determined as usual by the political and economic forces. The King of Bohemia had joyfully accepted Huss's doctrine that the tithes were not the property of the churchmen; and had locally protected him as his "fowl with the golden eggs," proceeding to plunder the Church as did the German princes in the next age.⁶ When, later, the revolutionary Hussites began plundering churches and monasteries, the Bohemian nobles in their turn profited,⁷ and became good Hussites accordingly; while yet another aristocracy was formed in Prague by the citizens who managed the confiscations there.⁸ As happened earlier in Hungary and later in Germany, again, there followed a revolt of the peasants against their extortionate masters;⁹ and there resulted a period of ferocious civil war and exacerbated fanaticism. Ziska, the Hussite leader, had been a strong anti-German;¹⁰ and when the emperor entered into the struggle the racial hatred grew more intense than ever. On the Hussite side the claim for "the

¹ Hardwick, p. 433. Jerome caused the bull to be "fastened to an immodest woman," and so paraded through the town before being burnt. Gieseler, iv, 114, note 15.

² Bonnechose, ii, 122; Gieseler, as cited.

³ See Mosheim's very interesting note; and Gieseler, iv, 104-105. ⁴ Krasinski, p. 51.

⁵ For an account of the devices of Catholic historians to explain away the Council's treachery see Bonnechose, note E. to vol. i, p. 270. The Council itself simply declared that faith was not to be kept with a heretic. *Id.* p. 271; Gieseler, p. 121.

⁶ Bonnechose, ii, 118-20. Cp. Krasinski, p. 37.

⁷ Kautsky, pp. 48-49.

⁸ *Id.* p. 51.

⁹ *Id.* p. 52.

¹⁰ Krasinski, p. 65.

cup" (that is, the administration of the eucharist with wine as well as bread, in the original manner, departed from by the Church in the eleventh century) indicated the nature of the religious feeling involved. More memorable was the communistic zeal of the advanced section of the Taborites (so called from the town of Tabor, their headquarters), who anticipated the German movement of the Anabaptists,¹ a small minority of them seeking to set up community of women. For the rest, all the other main features of later Protestantism came up at the same time—the zealous establishment of schools for the young;² the insistence on the Bible as the sole standard of knowledge and practice; inflexible courage in warfare and good military organization, with determined denial of sacerdotal claims.³

The ideal collapsed as similar ideals did before and afterwards. First the main body of the Hussites, led by Ziska, though at war with the Catholics in general and the Germans in particular, warred murderously also on the extremer communists, called the Adamites, and destroyed them (1421). Then, as the country became more and more exhausted by the civil war, the common people gradually fell away from the Taborites, who were the prime fanatics of the period. The zeal of the communist section, too, itself fell away; and at length, in 1434, the Taborites, betrayed by one of their generals, were defeated with great slaughter by the nobles in the battle of Lipan. Meanwhile, the upper aristocracy had reaped the economic fruits of the revolution at the expense of townsmen, small proprietors, and peasants;⁴ and, just as the lot of the German peasants in Luther's day was worse after their vain revolt than before, so the Bohemian peasantry at the close of the fifteenth century had sunk back to the condition of serfdom from which they had almost completely emerged at the beginning. It is doubtful, indeed, whether the material lot of the poor was bettered in any degree at any stage of the Protestant revolution, in any country. So little efficacy for social betterment has a movement guided by a light set above reason.

That there was in the period some Christian freethinking of a finer sort than the general Taborite doctrine is proved by the recovery of the unprinted work of the Czech Peter Helchitsky (Chelcicky), *The Net of Faith*, which impeached the current orthodoxy and the ecclesiastico-political system on the lines of the more

¹ See their principles stated in Kautsky, p. 59.

² Æneas Sylvius, who detested the Taborites, declared them to have only one good quality, the love of letters. Letter to Carvajal, cited by Krasinski, p. 93, note.

³ Kautsky, pp. 59-67.

⁴ *Id.* p. 76.

exalted of the Paulicians and the Lollards, very much to the same effect as the modern gospel of Tolstoy. In the midst of a party of warlike fanatics Helchitsky denounced war as mere wholesale murder, taught the sinfulness of wealth, declaimed against cities as the great corrupters of life, and preached a peaceful and non-resistant anarchism, ignoring the State. But his party in turn developed into that of the Bohemian Brethren, an intensely Puritan sect, opposed to learning, and ashamed of the memory of the communism in which their order began.¹ Of permanent gain to culture there is hardly a trace in the entire evolution.

§ 4. *Anti-Papalism in Hungary*

As in Bohemia, so in Hungary, there was a ready popular inclination to religious independence of Rome before the Lutheran period. The limited sway of the Hungarian monarchy left the nobles abnormally powerful, and their normal jealousy of the wealth of the Church made them in the thirteenth century favourable to the Waldenses and recalcitrant to the Inquisition.² In the period of the Hussite wars a similar protection was long given to the thousands of refugees led by Ziska from Bohemia into Hungary in 1424.³ The famous king Matthias Corvinus, who put severe checks on clerical revenue, had as his favourite court poet the anti-papal bishop of Wardein, John, surnamed Pannonicus, who openly derided the Papal Jubilee as a financial contrivance.⁴ Under Matthias's successor, the ill-fated Uladislau II, began a persecution, pushed on by his priest-ruled queen (1440), which drove many Hussites into Wallachia; and at the date of Luther's movement the superior clergy of Hungary were a powerful body of feudal nobles, living mainly as such, wielding secular power, and impoverishing the State.⁵ As the crusade got up by the papacy against the Turks (1514) drew away many serfs, and ended in a peasant war against the nobility, put down with immense slaughter, and followed by oppression both of peasants and small landholders, there was a ready hearing for the Lutheran doctrines in Hungary. Nowhere, probably, did so many join the Reformation movement in so short a time.⁶ As elsewhere, a number of the clergy came forward; and the resistance of the rest was proportionally severe, though Queen

¹ Kautsky, pp. 78-82. See further the account of Helchitsky's book in Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, ch. i.

² *Hist. of the Prot. Church in Hungary* (anon.), Eng. tr. 1854, p. 17.

³ *Id.* p. 19.

⁵ *Id.* pp. 24, 32, citing the chronicler Thurnschwamm.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 23, 28.

⁶ *Id.* pp. 29-31.

Mary, the wife of King Louis II, was pro-Lutheran.¹ Books were burned by cartloads; and the diet was induced to pass a general decree for the burning of all Lutherans.² The great Turkish invasion under Soliman (1526) could not draw the priests from their heresy-hunt; but the subsequent division of sovereignty between John Zapoyla and Ferdinand I, and above all the disdainful tolerance of the Turkish Sultan in the parts under his authority,³ permitted of a continuous spread of the anti-papal doctrine. About 1546 four bishops joined the Lutheran side, one getting married; and in Transylvania in particular the whole Church property was ere long confiscated to "the State"; so that in 1556, when only two monasteries remained, the Bishop withdrew. Of the tithes, it is said, the Protestant clergy held three-fourths, and retained them till 1848.⁴ In 1559, according to the same authority, only three families of magnates still adhered to the pope; the lesser nobility were nearly all Protestant; and the Lutherans among the common people were as thirty to one.⁵

As a matter of course, Church property had been confiscated on all hands by the nobles, Ferdinand having been unable to hinder them. Soon after the battle of Mohács (1526) the nobles in diet decided not to fill up the places of deceased prelates, but to make over the emoluments of the bishoprics to "such men as deserved well of their country." Within a short time seven great territories were so accorded to as many magnates and generals, "nearly all of whom separated from the Church of Rome, and became steady supporters of the Reformation."⁶ The Hungarian "Reformation" was thus remarkably complete.

Its subsequent decadence is one of the proofs that, even as the Reformation movement had succeeded by secular force, so it was only to be maintained on the same footing by excluding Catholic propaganda. In Hungary, as elsewhere, strife speedily arose among Reformers on the two issues on which reason could play within the limits of Scripturalism—the doctrine of the eucharist and the divinity of Jesus. On the former question the majority took the semi-rationalist view of Zwingli, making the eucharist a simple commemoration; and a strong minority in Transylvania became Socinian. The Italian Unitarian Giorgio Biandrata (or Blandrata⁷), driven to Poland from Switzerland for his anti-trinitarianism, and called from Poland to be the physician of the Prince of Transylvania,

¹ *Hist. of the Prot. Church in Hungary*, p. 34.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 69-70.

⁵ *Id.* pp. 45, 73.

² *Id.* p. 37.

³ *Id.* p. 58.

⁶ *Id.* p. 45.

⁷ Called Blandvater in the History above cited, which is copied in this error by Hardwick.

organized a ten days' debate between Trinitarians and Unitarians at Weissenberg in 1568; and at the close the latter obtained from the nobles present all the privileges enjoyed by the Lutherans, even securing control of the cathedral and schools of Clausenburg.¹ It is remarkable that this, the most advanced movement of Protestantism, has practically held its ground in Transylvania to modern times.²

The advance, however, meant desperate schism, and disaster to the main Protestant cause. The professors of Wittenberg appealed to the orthodox authorities to suppress the heresy, with no better result than a public repudiation of the doctrine of the Trinity at the Synod of Wardein,³ and an organization of the Unitarian Churches. In due course these in turn divided. In 1578 Biandrata's colleague, Ferencz Davides, contended for a cessation of prayers to Christ, whereupon Biandrata invited Fausto Sozzini from Basel to confute him; and the confutation finally took the shape of a sentence of perpetual imprisonment on Davides in 1579 by the Prince of Transylvania, to whom Biandrata and Sozzini referred the dispute. The victim died in a few days—by one account, in a state of frenzy.⁴ Between the Helvetic and Augsburg confessionalists, meanwhile, the strife was equally bitter; and it needed only free scope for the new organization of the Jesuits to secure the reconquest of the greater part of Hungary for the Catholic Church.

The course of events had shown that the Protestant principle of private judgment led those who would loyally act on it further and further from the historic faith; and there was no such general spirit of freethought in existence as could support such an advance. In contrast with the ever-dividing and mutually anathematizing parties of the dissenters, the ostensible solidity of the Catholic Church had an attraction which obscured all former perception of her corruptions; and the fixity of her dogma reassured those who recoiled in horror from Zwinglianism and Socinianism, as the adherents of these systems recoiled in turn from that of Davides. Only the absolute suppression of the Jesuits, as in Elizabethan England, could have saved the situation; and the political circumstances which had facilitated the spread of Protestantism were equally favourable to the advent of the reaction. As the Huguenot nobles in France gradually withdrew from their sect in the seven-

¹ Schlegel's note to Mosheim, Reid's ed. p. 708.

² Cp. Mosheim, last cit.

³ *Hist. of the Prot. Church in Hungary*, p. 86.

⁴ Wallace, *Antitrinitarian Biog.* ii, 257-60. Schlegel, as cited. Biandrata later gave up his Unitarianism, turning either Jesuit or Protestant. He was murdered by his nephew for his money. Wallace, ii, 144.

teenth century, so the Protestant nobles in Hungary began to withdraw from theirs towards the end of the sixteenth. What the Jesuits could not achieve by propaganda was compassed by imperial dragonnades; and in 1601 only a few Protestant congregations remained in all Styria and Carinthia.¹ Admittedly, however, the Jesuits wrought much by sheer polemic, the pungent writings of their Cardinal Pazmány having the effect of converting a number of nobles;² while the Protestants, instead of answering the most effective of Pazmány's attacks, *The Guide to Truth*, spent their energies in fighting each other.³

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there ensued enough of persecution by the Catholic rulers to have roused a new growth of Protestantism, if that could longer avail; but the balance of forces remained broadly unchanged. Orthodox Protestantism and orthodox Unitarianism, having no new principle of criticism as against those turned upon themselves by the Jesuits, and no new means of obtaining an economic leverage, have made latterly no headway against Catholicism, which is to-day professed by more than half the people of Hungary, while among the remainder the Greek Catholics and Greek Orientals respectively outnumber the Helvetic and Lutheran Churches. The future is to some more searching principle of thought.

§ 5. Protestantism in Poland

The chief triumph of the Jesuit reaction was won in Poland; and there, perhaps, is to be found the best illustration of the failure of mere Protestantism, on the one hand, to develop a self-maintaining intellectual principle, and the worse failure, on the other hand, of an organized and unresisted Catholicism to secure either political or intellectual vitality.

Opposition to the papacy on nationalist as well as on general grounds is nearly as well marked in Polish history as in Bohemian, from the pagan period onwards, the first Christian priesthood being chiefly foreign,⁴ while, as in Bohemia, the people clung to vernacular worship. In 1078 we find King Boleslav the Dauntless (otherwise the Cruel) executing the Bishop of Cracow, taxing the lands of the Church, and vetoing the bestowal of posts on foreigners.⁵ He in turn was driven into exile by a combination of clergy and nobles. A century later a Polish diet vetoes the confiscation of the property

¹ *History* cited, p. 109. As to the persecutions see pp. 108-15.

² *Id.* pp. 128-29, 132.

⁴ Krasinski, *Hist. of the Reformation in Poland*, 1838, i, 29-30.

³ *Id.* p. 134.

⁵ *Id.* pp. 30-34.

of deceased bishops by the sovereign princes of the various provinces; and a generation later still the veto is seen to be disregarded.¹ In the middle of the thirteenth century there are further violent quarrels between dukes and clergy over tithes, the former successfully ordering and the latter vainly resisting a money commutation; till in 1279 Duke Boleslav of Cracow is induced to grant the bishops almost unlimited immunities and powers.² Under Casimir the Great (1333-1370) further strifes occur on similar grounds between the equestrian order and the clergy, the king sometimes supporting the latter against the former, as in the freeing of serfs, and sometimes enforcing taxation of Church lands with violence.³ In the next reign the immunities granted by Boleslav in 1279 are cancelled by the equestrian order, acting in concert. And while these strifes had all been on economic grounds, we meet in 1341 with a heretical movement, set up by John Pirnensis, who denounced the pope as Antichrist in the fashion of the Bohemian reformers of the next generation. The people of Breslau seem to have gone over bodily to the heresy; and when the Inquisition of Cracow attempted forcible repression the Chief Inquisitor was murdered in a riot.⁴

It was thus natural that in the fourteenth century the Hussite movement should spread greatly in Poland, and the papacy be defied in matters of nomination by the king.⁵ The Poles had long frequented the university of Prague; and Huss's colleague Jerome was called in to organize the university of Cracow in 1413. Against the Hussite doctrines the Catholic clergy had to resort largely to written polemic,⁶ their power being small; though the king confirmed their synodical decree making heresy high treason. In 1450 Poland obtained its law of Habeas Corpus,⁷ over two centuries before England; and under that safeguard numbers of the nobility declared themselves Hussites. In 1435 some of the chief of these formed a confederation against Church and crown; and in 1439 they proclaimed an abolition of tithes, and demanded, on the lines of the earlier English Lollards, that the enormous estates of the clergy should be appropriated to public purposes. In the diet of 1459, again, a learned noble, John Ostrorog, who had studied at Padua, delivered an address, afterwards expanded into a Latin book, denouncing the revenue exactions of the papacy, and proposing to confiscate the annates, or first fruits of ecclesiastical offices so exacted; proceeding further to bring against the Polish clergy in

¹ *Hist. of the Reformation in Poland*, p. 38.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 55-56.

⁵ *Id.* pp. 47-50.

² *Id.* i, 40-42.

⁶ *Id.* pp. 65-66.

³ *Id.* p. 45.

⁷ *Id.* p. 67.

general all the usual charges of simony, avarice, and fraud, and indicting the mendicant orders as having demoralized the common people.¹

The Poles having no such nationalist motive in their Hussitism as had the Bohemians, who were fighting German domination, there took place in Poland no such convulsions as followed the Bohemian movement; but, when the Lutheran impulse came in the next century, the German element which had been added to Poland by the incorporation of the order and territory of the Teutonic knights in 1466 made an easy way for the German heresy. In Dantzic the Lutheran inhabitants in 1524 took the churches from the Catholics, and, terrorizing the town council, shut up and secularized the monasteries and convents.² In 1526, with due bloodshed, the king effected a counter-revolution in the Catholic interest; but still the heresy spread, the law of Habeas Corpus thwarting all clerical attempts at persecution, and the king being at heart something of an indifferentist in religion.³ In the province of Great Poland was formed (1530-40) a Lutheran church, protected by a powerful family; and in Cracow a group of scholars formed a non-sectarian organization to evangelize the country. Among them, about 1546, occurred the first expression of Polish Unitarianism, the innovator being Adam Pastoris, a Dutch or Belgian priest, who seems to have used at times the name of Spiritus.⁴

On lines of simple Protestantism the movement was rapid, many aristocrats and clergy declaring for it;⁵ and in the Diets of 1550 and 1552 was shown an increasingly strong anti-Catholic feeling, which the Church was virtually powerless to punish. In 1549 a parish priest publicly married a wife, and the bishop of Cracow abandoned the attempt to displace him. The next bishop, Zebrzydowski, a favourite pupil of Erasmus, was said by a Socinian writer of the period to have openly expressed disbelief in immortality and other dogmas;⁶ but when in 1552 a noble refused to pay tithes, he ecclesiastically condemned him to death, and declared his property confiscated. The sentence, however, could not be put in force; and when the other heads of the Church, seeing their revenues menaced and their clergy in large part tending to heresy,⁷ attempted a general and severe prosecution of backsliding priests, the resistance of the magistracy brought the effort to nothing.⁸ The Diet of 1552

¹ *Hist. of the Reformation in Poland*, i, 91-98.

² *Id.* pp. 111-16.

³ *Id.* p. 134.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 139, 345. following Wengierski; Wallace, *Antitrin. Biog.* ii, Art. 41.

⁵ Krasinski, pp. 143, 344, note.

⁶ *Id.* i, 163.

⁷ *Id.* p. 173, note.

⁸ *Id.* pp. 176-77.

practically abrogated the ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and despite much intrigue the economic interest of the landowners continued to maintain the Protestant movement, which was rapidly organized on German and Swiss models. It was by the play of its own elements of strife that its ascendancy was undermined.

On the one hand, an influential cleric, Orzechowski, who had married and turned Protestant, reconciled himself to Rome on the death of his wife, having already begun a fierce polemic against the Unitarian tendencies appearing on the Protestant side in the teaching of the Italian Stancari (1550); on the other hand, those tendencies gained head till they ruptured the party, of which the Trinitarian majority further quarrelled violently among themselves till, as in Hungary, many were driven back to the arms of Catholicism. In a Synod held in 1556, one Peter Goniondzki¹ (Gonesius)—who as a Catholic had violently opposed Stancari in 1550, but in the interim had studied in Switzerland and turned Protestant—took up a more anti-Trinitarian position than Stancari's, affirming three Gods, of whom the Son and the Spirit were subordinate to the Father. A few years later he declared against infant baptism—here giving forth opinions he had met with in Moravia; and he rapidly drew to him a considerable following alike of ministers and of wealthy laymen.²

It was thus not the primary influence of Lelio Sozzini, who had visited Poland in 1551 and did not return till 1558, that set up the remarkable growth of Unitarianism in that country. It would seem rather that in the country of Copernicus the relative weakness of the Church had admitted of a more common approach to freedom of thought than was seen elsewhere;³ and the impunity of the new movements brought many heterodox fugitives (as it did Jews) from other lands. One of the newcomers, the learned Italian, George Biandrata, whose Unitarianism had been cautiously veiled, was made one of the superintendents of the "Helvetic" Church of Little Poland, and aimed at avoidance of dogmatic strifes; but after his withdrawal to Transylvania Gregorius Pauli, a minister of Cracow, of Italian descent, went further than Gonesius had done, and declared Jesus to be a mere man.⁴ He further preached community of goods, promised a speedy millennium, and condemned the bearing of arms.⁵ After various attempts at suppression and

¹ *I.e.*, Peter of Goniond, a small town in Podlachia.

² Krasinski, i, 346-48; Mosheim, 16 Cent. sect. III, pt. ii, ch. iv, § 7; and Schlegel's and Reid's notes.

³ Cp. Mosheim, chapter last cited, § 15 sq.

⁴ Krasinski, i, 357.

⁵ Wallace, *Antitrin. Biog.* ii, 181-82.

compromise by the orthodox majority, a group of Unitarian ministers and nobles formally renounced the doctrine of the Trinity at the Conference of Petrikov in 1562; and, on a formal condemnation being passed by an orthodox majority at Cracow in 1563, there was formed a Unitarian Church, with forty-two subscribing ministers, Zwinglian as to the eucharist, and opposed to infant baptism.¹ Ethically, its doctrine was humane and pacificatory, its members being forbidden to go to law or to take oaths; and for a time the community made great progress, the national Diet being, by one account, "filled with Arians" for a time.²

Meantime the Calvinist, Zwinglian, and Lutheran Protestant Churches quarrelled as fiercely in Poland as elsewhere, every compromise breaking down, till the abundant relapses of nobles and common people to Catholicism began to rebuild the power of the old Church, which found in "the Great Cardinal," Hosius, a statesman and controversialist unequalled on the Protestant side. Backed by the Jesuits, he gained by every Protestant dispute, the Jesuit order building itself up with its usual skill. And the course of politics told conclusively in the same direction. King Stephen Battory favoured the Jesuits; and King Sigismund III, who had been educated as a Catholic by his mother, systematically gave effect to his personal leanings by the use of his peculiar feudal powers. Under the ancient constitution the king had the bestowal of a number of life-tenures of great estates, called *starosties*; and the granting of these Sigismund made conditional on the acceptance of Catholicism.³ Thus the Protestantism of the nobles, which had been in large part originally determined by economic interests, was dissolved by a reversal of the same force, very much in the fashion in which it was disintegrated in France by the policy of Richelieu at the same period. At the close of Sigismund's reign Protestantism was definitively broken up; and the Jesuit ascendancy permitted even of frequent persecutions of heresy. From these Unitarians could not escape; and at length, in 1658, they were expelled from the country, now completely subject to Jesuitism. In the country in which Protestantism and Unitarianism in turn had spread most rapidly under favouring political and social conditions, the rise of contrary conditions had most rapidly and decisively overthrown them.

The record of the heresy of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, in fine, is very much a reduplication of that of early Christianity.

¹ Krasinski, pp. 357-60.

² *Id.* p. 363.

³ Krasinski, *Ref. in Poland*, ii, 93-94; *Rel. Hist. of Slav. Nations*, p. 188.

Men presented with an obscure and self-contradictory "revelation" set themselves zealously to extract from it a body of certain truth, and in that hopeless undertaking did but multiply strife, till the majority, wearied with the fruitless quest, resigned themselves like their ancient prototypes to a rule of dogma under which the reasoning faculty became inert. Sane rationalism had to find another path, in a more enlightened day.

§ 6. *The Struggle in France*

The political and economic conditioning of the Reformation may perhaps best be understood by following the fortunes of Protestantism in France. When Luther began his schism, France might reasonably have been held a much more likely field for its extension than England. While King Henry was still to earn from the papacy the title of "Defender of the Faith" as against Luther, King Francis had exacted from the Pope (1516) a Concordat by which the appointment of all abbots and bishops in France was vested in the crown, the papacy receiving only the annates, or first year's revenue. For centuries too the French throne and the papacy had been chronically at strife; for seventy years a French pope, subservient to the king, had sat at Avignon; and before the Concordat the "Pragmatic Sanction," first enacted in 1268 by the devout St. Louis, had since the reign of Charles VII, who reinforced it (1438), kept the Gallican Church on a semi-independent footing towards Rome. By the account of the chancellor Du Prat in 1517, the "Pragmatic," then superseded by the Concordat, had isolated France among the Catholic peoples, causing her to be regarded as inclined to heresy.¹ In 1512 the Council of Pisa, convoked by Louis XII, had denounced Pope Julius II as a dangerous schismatic, and he had retaliated by placing France under interdict. In the previous year the French king had given his protection to a famous farce by Pierre Gringoire, in which, on Shrove Tuesday, the Pope was openly ridiculed.² Nowhere, in short, was the papacy as such less respected.

The whole strife, however, between the French kings and the popes had been for revenue, not on any question of doctrine. In the three years (1461-64) during which Louis XI had for his own purposes suspended the Pragmatic Sanction, it was found that 2,500,000 crowns had gone from France to Rome for "expetatives" and "dispensations," besides 340,000 crowns for bulls for arch-

¹ Lutteroth, *La Reformation en France pendant sa première période*, p. 2.

² A. A. Tilley, in vol. ii of *Camb. Mod. Hist. The Reformation*, ch. ix, p. 281.

bishoprics, bishoprics, abbeys, priories, and deaneries.¹ This drain was naturally resisted by Church and Crown alike. Louis XI restored the Pragmatic Sanction. Louis XII re-enacted it in 1499 with new severity; and the effect of the Concordat of Francis I was merely to win over the Pope by dividing between the king and him the power of plunder by the sale of ecclesiastical offices.² It was accordingly much resented by the Parlement, the University, the clergy, and the people of Paris; but the king overbore all opposition. Though, therefore, he had at times some disposition to make a "reform" on the Lutheran lines, he had no such motive thereto as had the kings and nobles of the other northern countries; and he had further no such personal motive as had Henry VIII of England. Under the existing arrangement he was as well provided for as might be, since "the patronage of some six hundred bishoprics and abbeys furnished him with a convenient and inexpensive method of providing for his diplomatic service, and of rewarding literary merit."³ The troubles in Germany, besides, were a warning against letting loose a movement of popular fanaticism.⁴

When, therefore, Protestantism and Lutheranism begun to show head in France, they had no friends at once powerful and zealous. Before Luther, in 1512, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples laid down in the commentary on his Latin translation of the Pauline Epistles the Lutheran doctrine of grace, and in effect denied the received doctrine of transubstantiation.⁵ In 1520 his former pupil, Guillaume Briçonnet, Bishop of Meaux, invited him and some younger reformers, among them Guillaume Farel, to join him in teaching in his diocese; and in 1523 appeared Lefèvre's translation of and commentary on the gospels, which effectually began the Protestant movement in France.⁶

Persecution soon began. The king's adoring sister, Margaret, Duchess of Alençon (afterwards Queen of Navarre), was the friend of Briçonnet, but was powerless to help at home even her own intimates.⁷ At first the king and his mother encouraged the movement at Meaux while sending out a dozen preachers through France to combat the Lutheran teaching;⁸ but in 1524, setting out on his Italian campaign, the king saw fit to conciliate his clergy, and his clerical chancellor Du Prat began measures of repression, the queen-mother assenting, and Briçonnet's own brother assisting. Already, in 1521, the Sorbonne had condemned Luther's writings, and the

¹ Prof. H. M. Baird, *Hist. of the Rise of the Huguenots*, 1880, i, 33.

² *Id.* i, 35. ³ Tilley, as cited, p. 281.

⁴ Lutteroth, pp. 14-16.

⁵ Tilley, p. 282. The translation was notable as a revision of the Vulgate version, which was printed side by side with it.

⁶ Lutteroth, pp. 3-4; Baird, i, 79.

⁷ Michelet, *Hist. de France*, tom. x, *La Réforme*, ch. viii.

⁸ Lutteroth, p. 9.

Parlement of Paris had ordered the surrender of all copies. In 1523 the works of Louis de Berquin, the anti-clerical friend of Erasmus, were condemned, and himself imprisoned; and Briçonnet consented to issue synodal decrees against Luther's books and against certain Lutheran doctrines preached in his own diocese. Only by the king's intervention was Berquin at this time released.

The first man slain was Jean Chastellain, a shoemaker of Tournay, burned at Vic in Lorraine on January 12, 1525. The next was a wool-carder of Meaux,¹ who was first whipped and branded for a fanatical outrage, then burned to death, with slow tortures, for a further outrage against an image of the Virgin at Metz (July, 1525). Later, an ecclesiastic of the Meaux group, Jacques Banvan of Picardy, was prosecuted at Paris for anti-Lutheran heresy, and publicly recanted; but repented, retracted his abjuration, and was burned on the Place de Grève, in August, 1526; a nameless "hermit of Livry" suffering the same death about the same time beside the cathedral of Notre Dame.² Meantime Lefèvre had taken refuge in Strasburg, and, despite a letter of veto from the king, now in captivity at Madrid, his works were condemned by the Sorbonne. When released, the king not only recalled him but made him tutor to his children. Ecclesiastical pressures, however, forced him finally to take refuge under the Queen of Navarre at Nérac, in Gascony, where he mourned his avoidance of martyrdom.³

So determined had been the persecution that in 1526 Berquin was a second time imprisoned, and with difficulty saved from death by the written command of the captive king, sent on his sister's appeal.⁴ And when the released king, to secure the deliverance of his hostage sons, felt bound to conciliate the Pope, and to secure funds had to conciliate the clergy, Marguerite, compelled to marry the king of Navarre, could do nothing more for Protestantism,⁵ being herself openly and furiously denounced by the Catholic clergy.⁶ Bought by a clerical subsidy, the king, on the occasion of a new outrage on a statue of the Virgin (1528),⁷ associated himself with the popular indignation; and when the audacious Berquin, despite the dissuasions of Erasmus, resumed his anti-Catholic polemic, and in particular undertook to prove that Bédac, the chief of the Sorbonne, was not a Christian,⁸ he was re-arrested, tried, and condemned to be

¹ Michelet, éd. 1884, x, 308; Baird, i, 89, *note*.

² See Baird, i, 91, *note*, as to the dates, which are usually put a year too early.

³ Baird, i, 95-96, and *note*.

⁴ *Id.* p. 132.

⁵ Michelet, x, 314; Baird, i, 133-37.

⁶ Lutteroth, p. 15; Michelet, x, 337.

⁷ Other such outrages followed, and did much to intensify persecution.

⁸ Erasmus had said that one pamphlet of Bédac's contained "eighty lies, three hundred calumnies, and forty-seven blasphemies" (Michelet, x, 320).

publicly branded and imprisoned for life. On his announcing an appeal to the absent king, and to the pope, a fresh sentence, this time of death, was hurriedly passed; and he was strangled and burned (1529) within two hours of the sentence,¹ to the intense joy of the ecclesiastical multitude.

After various vacillations, the king in 1534 had the fresh pretext of Protestant outrage—the affixing of an anti-Catholic placard in all of the principal thoroughfares of Paris, and to the door of the king's own room²—for permitting a fresh persecution after he had refused the Pope's request that he should join in a general extermination of heresy,³ and there began at Paris a series of human sacrifices. It will have been observed that Protestant outrages had provoked previous executions; and there is some ground for the view that, but for the new and exasperating outrage of 1534, the efforts which were being officially made for a *modus vivendi* might have met with success.⁴ This hope was now frustrated. In November, 1534, seven men were condemned to be burned alive, one of them for printing Lutheran books. In December others followed; and in January, 1535, on the occasion of a royal procession "to appease the wrath of God," six Lutherans (by one account, three by another) were burned alive by slow fires, one of the victims being a school-mistress.⁵ It was on this occasion that the king, in a public speech, declared: "Were one of my arms infected with this poison, I would cut it off. Were my own children tainted, I should immolate them."⁶

Under such circumstances religious zeal naturally went far. In six months there were passed 102 sentences of death, of which twenty-seven were executed, the majority of the condemned having escaped by flight. Thereafter the individual burnings are past counting. On an old demand of the Sorbonne, the king actually sent to the Parlement an edict abolishing the art of printing;⁷ which he duly recalled when the Parlement declined to register it. But the French Government was now committed to persecution. The Sorbonne's declaration against Luther in 1521 had proclaimed as to the heretics that "their impious and shameless arrogance must be restrained by chains, by censures—nay, by fire and flame, rather than confuted by argument";⁸ and in that spirit the ruling clergy

¹ Baird, i, 143-44; Michelet, x, 321-26.

² Baird, i, 149.

³ Lutteroth, p. 17; Michelet, x, 340 (giving the text of a contemporary record); Baird, i, 173-78—a very full account.

⁴ See Baird, i, 176, note, as to the authenticity of the utterance, which was doubted by Voltaire.

⁵ Michelet, x, 342; Baird, i, 169.

⁶ Michelet, x, 338-39.

⁷ Cp. Tilley, p. 285.

⁸ Cit. by Baird, i, 24, note.

proceeded, the king abetting them. In 1543 he ordained that heresy should be punished as sedition;¹ and in 1545 occurred the massacres of the Vaudois, before described. The result of this and further savageries was simply the wider diffusion of heresy, and a whole era of civil war, devastation, and demoralization.

Meantime Calvin had been driven abroad, to found a Protestant polity at Geneva and give a lead to those of England and Scotland. The balance of political forces prevented a Protestant polity in France; but nowhere else in the sixteenth century did Protestantism fight so long and hard a battle. That the Reformation was a product of "Teutonic conscience" is an inveterate fallacy.² The country in which Protestantism was intellectually most disinterested and morally most active was France. "The main battle of erudition and doctrine against the Catholic Church," justly contends Guizot, "was sustained by the French reformers; it was in France and Holland, and always in French, that most of the philosophic, historical, and polemic works on that side were written; neither Germany nor England, certainly, employed in the cause at that epoch more intelligence and science."³ Nor was there in France—apart from the provocative insults to Catholics above mentioned—any such licence on the Protestant side as arose in Germany, though the French Protestants were as violently intolerant as any. Their ultimate decline, after long and desperate wars ending in a political compromise, was due to the play of socio-economic causes under the wise and tolerant administration of Richelieu, who opened the royal services to the Protestant nobles.⁴ The French character had proved as unsubduable in Protestantism as any other; and the generation which in large part gradually reverted to Catholicism did but show that it had learned the lesson of the strifes which had followed on the Reformation—that Protestantism was no solution of either the moral or the intellectual problems of religion and politics.

§ 7. *The Political Process in Britain*

It was thus by no predilection or faculty of "race" that the Reformation so-called came to be associated historically with the northern or "Teutonic" nations. They simply succeeded in making permanent, by reason of more propitious political circumstances, a species of ecclesiastical revolution in which other races led the way.

¹ Baird, i, 221-22.

² It is endorsed by Professor Clifford, *Lectures and Essays*, 2nd ed. p. 335.

³ *Hist. de la Civ. en France*, 13e édit. i, 18.

⁴ See the case well made out by Buckle, ch. viii—1-vol. ed. pp. 311-13.

As Hussitism failed in Bohemia, Lollardism came to nothing in England in the same age, after a period of great vogue and activity.¹ The designs of Parliament on the revenues of the Church at the beginning of the fifteenth century² had failed by reason of the alliance knit between Church and Crown in the times when the latter needed backing; and at the accession of Henry VIII England was more orthodox than any of the other leading States of Northern Europe.³ Henry was himself passionately orthodox, and was much less of a reformer in his mental attitude than was Wolsey, who had far-reaching schemes for de-Romanizing the Church alike in England and France, and who actually gave the king a handle against him by his plans for turning Church endowments to educational purposes.⁴ The personal need of the despotic king for a divorce which the pope dared not give him was the first adequate lead to the rejection of the papal authority. On this the plunder of the monasteries followed, as a forced measure of royal finance,⁵ of precaution against papal influence, and for the creation of a body of new interests vitally hostile to a papal restoration. The king and the mass of the people were alike Catholics in doctrine; the Protestant nobles who ruled under Edward VI were for the most part mere cynical plunderers, appropriating alike Church goods, lands, and school endowments more shamelessly than even did the potentates of Germany; and on the accession of Queen Mary the nation gladly reverted to Romish usages, though the spoil-holders would not surrender a yard of Church lands.⁶ Had there been a succession of Catholic sovereigns, Catholicism would certainly have been restored. Protestantism was only slowly built up by the new clerical and heretical propaganda, and by the state of hostility set up between England and the Catholic Powers. It was the episode of the Spanish Armada that, by identifying Catholicism with the cause of the great national enemy, made the people grow definitely anti-Catholic. Even in Shakespeare's dramas the old state of things is seen not yet vitally changed.

¹ See above, p. 348.

² Stubbs, *Const. Hist.* 3rd ed. ii, 469, 471, 510.

³ Cp. Froude, *Hist. of England*, ed. 1872, i, 173; Burnet, *Hist. of the Reformation*. Nares' ed. i, 17-18. Henry, says Burnet, "cherished Churchmen more than any king in England had ever done." Compare further Shaftesbury, *Miscellaneous Reflections*, in the *Characteristics*, Misc. iii, ch. i, ed. 1733, vol. iii, p. 151; Lea, *Hist. of the Inquisition*, as cited above, p. 316.

⁴ Rev. Dr. J. H. Blunt, *The Reformation of the Church of England*, ed. 1892, i, 72-100. Wolsey was more patient with Protestant heresy than Henry ever was, though on his death-bed he counselled the king to put down the Lutherans.

⁵ Cp. Burnet, as cited, pref. p. xl, and p. 3; Heylyn, *Hist. of the Ref.* pref.; Blunt, i, 293-94. In 1530 the king had actually repudiated his debts, cancelling borrowings made under the Privy Seal, and thus setting an example to the Catholic King Philip II in a later generation.

⁶ Heylyn, as cited, and i, 123-27, ed. 1849; A. F. Leach, *English Schools at the Reformation*, 1896, pp. 5-6; J. E. G. De Montmorency, *State Intervention in English Education*, 1902, pp. 62-65.

In Scotland, though there the priesthood had fewer friends than almost anywhere else, the act of Reformation was mainly one of pure and simple plunder of Church property by the needy nobility, in conscious imitation of the policy of Henry VIII, at a time when the throne was vacant; and there too Protestant doctrine was only gradually established by the new race of preachers, trained in the school of Calvin. In Ireland, on the other hand, Protestantism became identified with the cause of the oppressor, just as for England Romanism was the cause of the enemy-in-chief. "Race" and "national character," whatever they may be understood to mean, had nothing whatever to do with the course of events, and doctrinal enlightenment had just as little.¹ In the words of a distinguished clerical historian: "No truth is more certain than this, that the real motives of religious action do not work on men in masses; and that the enthusiasm which creates Crusaders, Inquisitors, Hussites, Puritans, is not the result of conviction, but of passion provoked by oppression or resistance, maintained by self-will, or stimulated by the mere desire of victory."² To this it need only be added that the desire of gain is also a factor, and that accordingly the anti-papal movement succeeded where the balance of political forces could be turned against the clerical interest, and failed where the latter predominated.

¹ The subject is treated at some length in *The Dynamics of Religion*, by "M. W. Wiseman" (J. M. R.), 1897, pp. 3-46; and in *The Saxon and the Celt*, pp. 92-97.

² Bishop Stubbs, *Const. Hist. of England*, 3rd ed. iii, 638. Cp. Bishop Creighton, *The Age of Elizabeth*, p. 6; Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, i, 366.

CHAPTER XII

THE REFORMATION AND FREETHOUGHT

§ 1. *Germany and Switzerland*

IN the circumstances set forth in the last chapter, the Reformation could stand for only the minimum of freethought needed to secure political action. Some decided unbelief there was within its original sphere;¹ the best known instance being the private latitudinarianism of such humanist teachers as Mutianus (Mudt) and Crotus (Jäger), of the Erfurt University, in the closing years of the fifteenth century. Trained in Italy, Mutianus, after his withdrawal to private life at Gotha, in his private correspondence² avowed the opinion that the sacred books contained many designed fables; that the books of Job and Jonah were such; and that there was a secret wisdom in the Moslem opinion that Christ himself was not crucified, his place being taken by someone resembling him. To his young friend Spalatin he propounded the question: "If Christ alone be the way, the truth, and the life, how went it with the men who lived so many centuries before his birth? Had they had no part in truth and salvation?" And he hints the answer that "the religion of Christ did not begin with his incarnation, but is as old as the world, as his birth from the Father. For what is the real Christ, the only Son of God, save, as Paul says, the Wisdom of God, with which he endowed not only the Jews in their narrow Syrian land, but also the Greeks, the Romans, and the Germans, however different might be their religious usages." Though some such doctrine could be found in Eusebius,³ it was remarkable enough in the Germany of four hundred years ago. But Mutianus went still further. To his friend Heinrich Urban he wrote that "there is but one God and one Goddess" under the many forms and names of Jupiter, Sol, Apollo, Moses, Christ, Luna, Ceres, Proserpina, Tellus, Maria. "But," he

¹ Ranke, *History of the Popes*, Bohn tr. 1908, p. 60; Hardwick, *Church History: Reformation*, ed. 1886, p. 250.

² Much of this has never been published. Most of it is in a MS. Codex of the City Library at Frankfurt. Extracts in Tentzel's *Supplementum Historiæ Gothanæ*, 1701, in the *Narratio de Eobano Hesso* of J. Camerarius, 1553, etc. See Strauss's *Ulrich von Hutten*, 2te Aufl. 1871, p. 32, n. (ed. 1858, i, 44) *et seq.*

³ *Eccles. Hist.* bk. i, ch. iv.

prudently added, "heed that you do not spread it abroad. One must hide it in silence, like Eleusinian mysteries. In religious matters we must avail ourselves of the cloak of fable and enigma. Thou, with the grace of Jupiter—that is, the best and greatest God—shouldst silently despise the little Gods. When I say Jupiter, I mean Christ and the true God. But enough of these all too high things." Such language hints of much current rationalism that can now only be guessed at, since it was unsafe even to write to friends as Mutianus did. On concrete matters of religion he is even more pronounced, laughing at the worship of the coat and beard and foreskin of Jesus, calling Lenten food fool's food, contemning the begging monks, rejecting confession and masses for the dead, and pronouncing the hours spent in altar-service lost time. In his house at Gotha, behind the Cathedral, his friend Crotus burlesqued the Mass, called the relics of saints bones from the gallows, and otherwise blasphemed with his host.¹

But such esoteric doctrine and indoors unbelief can have had no part in the main movement; and though at the same period we see among the common people the satirist Heinrich Bebel, a Swabian peasant's son, jesting for them over the doctrines of trinity in unity, the resurrection, doomsday, and the sacraments,² it is certain that that influence counted for little in the way of serious thinking. It was only as separate and serious heresies that such doctrines could long propagate themselves; and Luther in his letter to the people of Antwerp³ speaks of one sect or group as rejecting baptism, another the eucharist, another the divinity of Jesus, and yet another affirming a middle state between the present life and the day of judgment. One teacher in Antwerp he describes as saying that every man has the Holy Ghost, that being simply reason and understanding, that there is no hell, and that doing as we would be done by is faith; but this heretic does not seem to have founded a sect. The most extensive wave of really innovating thought was that set up by the social and anti-sacerdotal revolt of the Anabaptists, among whom occurred also the first popular avowals of Unitarianism.

In the way of literature, Unitarian doctrine came from John Campanus, of Jülich; Ludwig Hetzer, a priest of Zürich; and (in

¹ Strauss, *Ulrich von Hutten*, as cited, pp. 33-35; Bezold, *Gesch. der deutschen Reformation*, 1890, p. 226. Bezold describes Mutianus as "der freigeistige Kanonikus zu Gotha," and points out, concerning his universalism, that "the historic Christ thus slips through his fingers."

² Bezold, as last cited. "Here is the skepticism kept in the background by Mutianus and Celtis, popularized in the rudest way."

³ *Briefe*, ed. De Wette, iii, 60.

a minor degree) Johann Denk, school-rector in Nüremberg in 1524,¹ and afterwards one of the earlier leaders of the Anabaptist movement. All three were men of academic training; and Hetzer, who wrote explicitly against the divinity of Christ, had previously made with the aid of Denk a German translation, which was used by Luther, of the Hebrew prophets (1527). He was beheaded at Constance in 1529, nominally on the charge of practising free-love.² Campanus, who published a book attacking the doctrine of the Trinity and the teaching of Luther, had to leave Wittenberg in consequence, and finally died after a long imprisonment in Cleve. Denk—an amiable and estimable man³—is said, on very scant grounds, to have recanted before he died.

Not only from such thoroughgoing heresy, but from the whole Anabaptist secession, and no less from the rising of the peasants, the main Lutheran movement kept itself utterly aloof; and, though the Catholics naturally identified the extremer parties with the Reformation, its official or "Centre" polity made little for intellectual or political as distinct from ecclesiastical innovation. Towards the Peasants' Revolt, which at first he favoured, inasmuch as the peasants, whom he had courted, came to him for counsel, Luther's final attitude was so brutal that it has to-day almost no apologist; and in this as in some of his other evil departures the "mild" Melanchthon went with him.⁴ Their doctrine was the very negation of all democracy, and must be interpreted as an absolute capitulation to the nobles, without whose backing they knew themselves to be ecclesiastically helpless. In the massacres to which Luther gave his eager approval a hundred thousand men were destroyed.⁵ "From this time onwards," pronounces Baur, "Luther ceases to be the representative of the spirit of his time; he represents only one side of it.....Thenceforth his writings have no more the universal bearing they once had, but only a particular.....In the political connection we must date from Luther's attitude to the Peasants' War the Lutheran theory of unconditional obedience. Christianity, as Luther preached it, has given to princes unlimited power of despotism and tyranny; while

¹ Karl Hagen, *Deutschlands lit. u. relig. Verhältnisse im Reformations-zeitalter*, 1868, ii, 110; letter of Capito to Zwingli, *Ep. Zwinglii*, i, 47; F. C. Baur, *Kirchengeschichte*, iv, 450; Trechsel, *Der proto-Antitrinitarianismus vor Faustus Socinus*, 1839-44, i, 13-16, 33; Wallace, *Antitrinitarian Biography*, 1850, i, art. 3, 4, 5.

² Schlegel's note to Mosheim, Reid's ed. p. 689; Baur, iv, 450; Trechsel, i, 13-16.

³ See a good account of him by Beard, Hibbert Lectures on *The Reformation*, p. 204 sq.

⁴ For an impartial criticism of their language see Henderson's *Short Hist. of Germany*, i, 321-23. Cp. Baur, *Kirchengeschichte*, iv, 73-76; A. F. Pollard in *Camb. Mod. Hist.* ii, 192-95; Beard, Hibbert Lect. on *The Reformation*, p. 200; and Kautsky, *Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation*, Eng. tr. 1897, pp. 117-28.

⁵ Kohlrausch, *Hist. of Germany*, Eng. tr. p. 397.

the poor man, who, without right of protest, must submit to everything, will be compensated for his earthly sufferings in heaven."¹ Naturally the princes henceforth grew more and more Lutheran.

As naturally the crushed peasantry turned away from the Reformation in despair. Luther had in the first instance approached them, not they him. Before the revolt the reformers had made the peasant a kind of hero in their propaganda;² and when in the first and moderate stage of the rising its motives were set forth in sixty-two articles, these were purely agrarian. "There is no trace of a religious element in them, no indication that their authors had ever heard of Luther or of the Gospel."³ Then it was that Luther commended them; and thereafter "a religious element began to obtrude."⁴ When the overthrow began, doubtless sincerely reprobating the violences of the insurgents, he hounded on the princes in their work of massacre, Melanchthon chiming in. Thereafter, as Melanchthon admitted, the people showed a detestation of the Lutheran clergy;⁵ and among many there was even developed a kind of "materialistic atheism."⁶

The political outcome, as aforesaid, was a thoroughly undemocratic organization of Protestantism in Germany; and, though the ecclesiastical tyranny which resulted from the more democratic system of Calvin was not more favourable to progress or happiness, the final German system of *cujus regio, ejus religio*—every district taking the religion of its ruler—must be summed up as a mere negation of the right of private judgment. Save for the attempt of a Frenchman, François Lambert of Avignon, to organize a self-governing church, German Protestantism showed almost no democratic feeling.⁷ The one poor excuse for Luther was that the peasants had never recognized the need or duty of maintaining their clergy.⁸ And seeing how the wealth of the Church went to the nobles and the well-to-do, and how downtrodden were the peasants all along, it would be surprising indeed if they had. They were not the workers of the ecclesiastical Reformation, and it wrought little or nothing for them.

The side on which the whole movement made for new light was its promotion of common schools, which enabled many of the people for the first time to read.⁹ This tendency had been seen among the Waldenses, the Lollards, and the Hussites, and for the same reasons.

¹ To the same effect Menzel, *Gesch. der Deutschen*, Capp. 391, 492.

² Pollard, as cited, p. 175.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 179, 193.

⁷ Ranke, as cited, pp. 459-64.

⁹ Cp. Michelet, *Hist. de France*, x, *La Reforme*, ed. 1882, pp. 104, 332.

³ *Id.* p. 178.

⁶ *Id.* p. 192.

⁸ *Id.* p. 461.

Such movements depended for their existence on the reading of the sacred books by the people for themselves; and to make readers was their first concern. In this connection, of course, note must be taken of the higher educational revival *before* the Reformation,¹ without which the ecclesiastical revolution could not have taken place even in Germany. As we saw, a literary expansion preceded the Hussite movement in Bohemia; and the stir of concern for written knowledge, delightedly acclaimed by Ulrich von Hutten, is recognized by all thoughtful historians in Germany before the rise of Luther. Such enlightenment as that of Mutianus was far in advance of Luther's own; and enlightenment of a lower degree cannot have been lacking. The ability to read, indeed, must have been fairly general in the middle class in Germany, for it appears that the partisan favour shown everywhere to Luther's writings by the printers and booksellers gave him an immense propagandist advantage over his Catholic opponents, who could secure for their replies only careless or bad workmanship, and were thus made to seem actually illiterate in the eyes of the reading public.²

As regards Switzerland, again, it is the admitted fact that "the educational movement began before the religious revival, and was a cause of the Reformation rather than a result."³ So in Holland, the Brethren of the Common Lot (*Fratres Vitæ Communis*), a partially communistic but orthodox order of learned and unlearned laymen which lasted from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, did much for the schooling of the common people, and passed on their impulse to Germany.⁴ Similarly in Scotland the schools seem to have been fairly numerous even in the later Catholic period.⁵ There, and in some other countries, it was the main merit of the Reformation to carry on zealously the work so begun, setting up common schools in every parish. In Lutheran Germany this work was for a long period much more poorly done, as regarded the peasantry. These had been trodden down after their revolt into a state of virtual slavery. "The broad midlands and the entire eastern part of Germany were filled with slaves, who had neither status nor property nor education";⁶ and it was long before any

¹ Cp. Burckhard, *De Ulrichi Hutteni Vita Commentarius*, 1717, i, 65. For a general view see Ranke, pp. 126-39.

² Jakob Marx, *Die Ursachen der schnellen Verbreitung der Reformation*, 1847, § 12.

³ Prof. J. M. Vincent, in Prof. S. M. Jackson's *Huldreich Zwingli*, 1901, p. 37.

⁴ Cp. Ullmann, *Reformers before the Reformation*, i, 19; ii, *passim*; Mosheim, 15 Cent. Pt. ii, ch. ii, § 22; and Bonet-Maury's thesis, *De Opera Scholastica Fratrum Vitæ Communis*, 1889.

⁵ Burton, *History of Scotland*, iii, 399-401. But the end in view was probably, as Burton half admits, the recruiting of the Church. Cp. Cosmo Innes, *Sketches of Early Scotch History*, p. 134 sq., and *Scottish Legal Antiquities*, pp. 129-30.

⁶ Menzel, Cap. 492.

large number of the people were taught to read and write,¹ the schooling given at the best being a scanty theological drill.²

But indeed for two-thirds of its adherents everywhere the Reformation meant no other reading than that of the Bible and catechisms and theological treatises. Coming as it did within one or two generations of the invention of printing, it stood not for new ideas, but for the spread of old. That invention had for a time positively checked the production of new books, the multiplication of the old having in a measure turned attention to the past;³ and the diffusion of the Bible in particular determined the mental attitude of the movement in mass. The thinking of its more disinterested promoters began and ended in Bibliolatry: Luther and Calvin alike did but set up an infallible book and a local tyranny against an infallible pope and a tyranny centring at Rome. Neither dreamt of toleration; and Calvin, the more competent mind of the two, did but weld the detached irrationalities of the current theology into a system which crushed reason and stultified the morality in the name of which he ruled Geneva with a rod of iron.⁴ It is remarkable that both men reverted to the narrowest orthodoxies of the earlier Church, in defiance of whatever spirit of reasonable inquiry had been on the side of their movement. "It is a quality of faith," wrote Luther, "that it wrings the neck of reason and strangles the beast";⁵ and he repeatedly avowed that it was only by submitting his mind absolutely to the Scriptures that he could retain his faith.⁶ "He despised reason as heartily as any papal dogmatist could despise it. He hated the very thought of toleration or comprehension."⁷ And when Calvin was combated by the Catholic Pighius on the question of predestination and freewill, his defence was that he followed Christ and the Apostles, while his opponents resorted to human thoughts and reasonings.⁸ On the same principle he dealt with the Copernican theory. After once breaking away from Rome both leaders became typical anti-

¹ Menzel, Cap. 492 (ed. 1837, p. 762).

² Ranke (p. 466) becomes positively lyrical over the happy lot of the peasant who received Luther's Catechism (1529). "It contains enduring comfort in every affliction, and, under a slight husk, the kernel of truths able to satisfy the wisest of the wise." Such declamation holds the place that ought to have been filled by an account of economic conditions.

³ Bishop Stubbs, *Const. Hist. of England*, iii, 627. The bishop, however, holds that in the time of Lollard prosperity the ability to read was widely diffused in England (p. 628); and it seems certain that in the first half of the sixteenth century printing multiplied enormously. Cp. Michelet, *Hist. de France*, x, ed. 1884, p. 103 sq.

⁴ Cp. Willis, *Servetus and Calvin*, 1877, bk. ii, ch. i; Audin, *Histoire de Calvin*, éd. abrég. ch. xxiv-xxvii; and essay on "Machiavelli and Calvin" in the present writer's *Essays in Sociology*, 1903, vol. i.

⁵ *Werke*, ed. Walch, viii, 2043 (*On Ep. to Galat.*), cited by Beard.

⁶ *Id.* viii, 1181 (*On 1 Cor. xv*). Cp. other citations in Beard, pp. 161-65.

⁷ Green, *Short History*, ch. vi, § v, p. 315.

⁸ Cp. Stähelin *Johannes Calvin*, 1863, ii, 282-83.

freethinkers, never even making Savonarola's pretence to resort to rationalist methods, though of course not more anti-rationalist than he. The more reasonable Zwingli, who tried to put an intelligible aspect on one or two of the mysteries of the faith, was scouted by both, as they scouted each other.

It is noteworthy that Zwingli, the most open-minded of the Reformers, owed his relative enlightenment to his general humanist culture,¹ and in particular to the influence of Pico della Mirandola and of Erasmus. It has even been argued that his whole theological system is derived from Pico² but it appears to have been from Erasmus that he drew his semi-rationalistic view of the eucharist,³ a development of that of Berengar, representing it as a simple commemoration. Such thinking was far from the "spirit of the Reformation"; and Luther, after the Colloquy of Marburg (1529), in which he and Melanchthon debated against Zwingli and Oecolampadius, spoke of those "Sacramentarians" as "not only liars, but the very incarnation of lying, deceit, and hypocrisy."⁴ Zwingli's language is less ferocious; but it is confessed of him that he too practised coercion against minorities in the case alike of the Anabaptists and of the monasteries and nunneries, and even in the establishment of his reformed eucharist.⁵ The expulsion of the nuns of St. Katherinenthal in particular was an act of sheer tyranny; and the outcome of the methods enforced by him at Zürich was the bitter hostility of the five Forest Cantons, which remained Catholic. In war with them he lost his life; and after his death (1531) his sacramental doctrine rapidly disappeared from Swiss and Continental Protestantism,⁶ even as it failed to make headway in England.⁷ At his fall "the words of triumph and cursing used by Lutherans and others were shameful and almost inhuman."⁸ In the sequel, for sheer lack of a rational foundation, the other Protestant sects in turn fell to furious dissension and persecution, some apparently finding their sole bond of union in hatred of the rest.

See Menzel, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, 3te Aufl. Cap. 431, for

¹ He was educated at Basel and Berne and at Vienna University, and of all the leading reformers he seems to have had most knowledge of classical literature. Hess, *Life of Zwingli*, Eng. tr. 1812, pp. 2-7, following Myconius and Hottinger.

² Chr. Sigwart, *Ulrich Zwingli, der Charakter seiner Theologie, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Pico von Mirandola*, 1855, pp. 14-26. Prof. Jackson, *Huldreich Zwingli*, p. 85, note, states that Sigwart later modified his views.

³ So states Melanchthon, cited by Jackson, p. 85, note. Cp. pp. 201, 390-92.

⁴ Cited by Jackson, p. 316.

⁵ *Id.* p. 295.

⁶ *Id.* p. 361.

⁷ *Id.* p. 361, note.

⁸ *Id.* According to Heylyn, the Earl of Warwick countenanced the Zwinglians in his intrigues against the Protector Somerset; and their views were further welcomed by other nobles as making for the plundering of rich altars, *Hist. of the Reform. of the Ch. of Eng.* ed. 1849, pref. p. vii. But Heylyn appears to identify the Zwinglians at this stage with the Calvinists. Cp. p. x.

a sample of Lutheran popery; and as to the strifes cp. C. Beard, *The Reformation*, as cited, pp. 182-83; Dunham, *History of the Germanic Empire*, 1835, iii, 115-20, 153, 169; Strype, *Memorials of Cranmer*, ed. 1848, iii, 155-62; A. F. Pollard, in "The Cambridge Modern History," vol. ii, *The Reformation*, ch. viii, pp. 277-79. In the last-cited compilation, however, the strifes of the Protestant sects are barely indicated.

As to Luther's attitude towards new science, see his derision of Copernicus, on scriptural grounds, in the *Table Talk*, ch. lxi, *Of Astronomy and Astrology*. (The passage is omitted from the English translation in the Bohn Library, p. 341; and the whole chapter is dropped from the German abridgment published by Reclam.) Melanchthon was equally unteachable, and actually proposed to suppress the new teachings by punitive methods. (*Initia Doctrinæ Physicæ*, cited by White, *Warfare of Science and Theology*, 1896, i, 127.) It has been loosely claimed for Luther that he was "an enemy to religious persecution" (Lieber, *Manual of Political Ethics*, 1839, pt. i, p. 329), when the only evidence offered is (*id.* p. 205) that he declared against *killing* for heresy, because innocent men were likely to be slain—"Quare nullo modo possum admitttere, falsos doctores occidi." As early as 1524, renouncing his previous doctrine of non-coercion, he invoked the intervention of the State to punish blasphemy, declaring that the power of the sword was given by God for such ends (Bezold, p. 563). Melanchthon too declared that "Our commands are mere Platonic laws when the civil power does not give its support" (*id.* p. 565).

A certain intellectual illusion is set up even by Bezold when he writes that in Luther's resort to physical force "the hierarchical principle had triumphed over one of the noblest principles of the Reformation." "The Reformation" had no specific principles. Among its promoters were professed all manner of principles. The Reformation was the outcome of all their activities, and to make of it an entity or even a distinct set of theories is to obscure the phenomena.

Such flaws of formulation, however, are trifling in comparison with the mis-statement of the historic fact which is still normal in academic as in popular accounts of the Reformation. It would be difficult, for instance, to give seriously a more misleading account of the Lutheran reformation than the proposition of Dr. Edward Caird that, "in thrusting aside the claim of the Church to place itself between the individual and God, Luther had proclaimed the emancipation of men not only from the leading strings of the Church, but, in effect, from all external authority whatever, and even, in a sense, from all merely external teaching or revelation of the truth" (*Hegel*, 1883, p. 18). Luther thrust his own Church precisely where the Catholic Church had been; bitterly denounced new heresies;

and put the Bible determinedly "between the individual and God." In Luther's own day Sebastian Franck unanswerably accused him of setting up a paper pope in place of the human pope he had rejected. Luther's declaration was that "the ungodly papists prefer the authority of the Church far above God's Word, a blasphemy abominable and not to be endured, wherewith.....they spit in God's face. Truly God's patience is exceeding great, in that they be not destroyed" (*Table Talk*, ch. i).

Another misconception is set up by Pattison, who seems to have been much concerned to shield Calvin from the criticism of the civilized conscience (see below, p. 452). He pronounces that Calvin's "great merit lies in his comparative neglect of dogma. He seized the idea of reformation as a real renovation of human character" (*Essays*, ii, 23). If so, the reformer can have had little satisfaction, for he never admitted having regenerated Geneva. But the claim that he "comparatively" neglected dogma is true only in the sense that he was more inquisitorially zealous about certain forms of private conduct than was Luther. Gruet, indeed, he helped to slay upon political charges, taking a savage vengeance upon a personal opponent. But even in Gruet's case he sought later to add a religious justification to his crime. And it was in the name of dogma that he put Servetus to death, exiled Castalio, imprisoned Bolsec, broke with old friends, and imperilled the entire Genevan polity. Pattison's praise would be much more appropriate to Zwingli.

Luther, though he would probably have been ready enough to punish Copernicus as a heretic, was saved the evil chance which befel Calvin of being put in a place of authority where he could in God's name commit judicial murder. It is by acts so describable that the name of Calvin is most directly connected with the history of freethought. In nowise entitled to rank with its furtherers, he is to be enrolled in the evil catalogue of its persecutors. In the case of JACQUES GRUET on a mixture of political and religious charges, in that of MICHAEL SERVETUS on grounds of dogma pure and simple, he cast upon the record of Genevan Protestantism and upon his own memory an ineffaceable stain of blood. Gruet, an adherent of the Perrinist faction of Geneva, a party opposed to Calvin, on being arrested for issuing a placard against the clerical junto in power, was found, by the accounts of the Calvinist historians, to have among his papers some revealing his disbelief in the Christian religion.¹ This, however, proves to be a partisan account of the

¹ Henry, *Das Leben Calvins*, ii, Kap. 13, and Beilage 16 (Appendix not given in the English translation); Stähelin, *Johannes Calvin*, 1863, i, 399-400.

matter, and is hardly even in intention truthful. In the first place, it was admitted by Calvin that the placard, affixed by night to the chair of St. Peter in Geneva, was not in Gruet's handwriting; yet he was arrested, imprisoned, and *put to the torture* with the avowed object of making him confess "that he had acted at the instigation of François Favre, of the wife of Perrin, and of other accomplices of the same party whom he must have had." Perrin was the former Captain-General of Geneva, a popular personage, opposed to Calvin and detested by him. No match for the vigilant Reformer, Perrin had been through Calvin's intrigues deprived of his post; and there was a standing feud between his friends and the Calvinistic party in power.

The main part of the charges against Gruet was political; and the most circumstantial was based upon a draft, found among his papers, of a speech which he had ostensibly proposed to make in the General Council calling for reform of abuses. The speech contained nothing seditious, but the intention to deliver it without official permission was described as *lèse-majesté*—a term now newly introduced into Genevan procedure. The other documentary proofs were trivial. In one fragment of a letter there was an ironical mention of "notre galant Calvin"; and in a note on a margin of Calvin's book against the Anabaptists he had written in Latin "All trifles." For the rest, he was accused of writing two pages in Latin "in which are comprised several errors," and of being "*plutôt enclin* to say, recite and write false opinions and errors as to the true words of Our Saviour."¹ Concerning his errors the only documentary proof preserved is from an alleged scrap of his writing in corrupt Latin, cited by Calvin as a sample of his inability to write Latin correctly: *Omnes tam humane quam divine que dicantur leges factae sunt ad placitum hominum*, which may be rendered, "All so-called laws, divine as well as human, are made at the will of men." In the act of sentence, he is declared further to have written obscene verses justifying free love; to have striven to ruin the authority of the consistory, menaced the ministers, and abused Calvin; and to have "conspired with the king of France against the safety of Calvin and the State."

To make out these charges, for the last of which there seems to be no evidence whatever, Gruet was put to the torture many times

¹ Cp. Calvin's letter to Viret, July 2, 1547 (*Letters of Calvin*, ed. Bonnet, Eng. tr. 1857, ii, 109), where it is alleged that in the two pages "the whole of Scripture is laughed at, Christ aspersed, the immortality of the soul called a dream and a fable, and finally the whole of religion torn in pieces. *I do not think he is the author of it,*" adds Calvin; "but as it is in his handwriting he will be compelled to appear in his defence."

during many days "according to the manner of the time," says one of Calvin's biographers.¹ In reality such unmeasured use of torture was in Geneva a Calvinistic innovation. Gruet, refusing under the worst stress of torture to incriminate anyone else, at length, in order to end it, pleaded guilty to the charges against him, praying in his last extremity for a speedy death. On July 26, 1547, his half-dead body was beheaded on the scaffold, the torso being tied and the feet nailed thereto. Such were the judicial methods and mercies of a reformed Christianity, guided by a chief reformer.

The biographer Henry "cannot repress a sigh" over the thirty days of double torture of Gruet (ii, 66), but goes on to make a most disingenuous defence of Calvin, first asserting that he was not responsible, and then arguing that it would be as unjust to try Calvin by modern standards as to blame him for not wearing a perruque à la Louis XIV, or proceeding by the Code Napoléon! The same moralist declares (p. 68) that "it is really inspiring to hear how Calvin stormed in his sermons against the opposite party": and is profoundly impressed by the "deep religious earnestness" with which Calvin in 1550 claimed that "The council ought again to declare aloud that this blasphemer has been justly condemned, that the wrath of God may be averted from the city." Finally (p. 69), recording how Gruet's "book" was burned in 1550, the biographer pronounces that "The Gospel thus *gained a victory over its enemies*; in the same manner as in Germany freedom triumphed when Luther burnt the pope's bull."

As to the alleged anti-religious writings of Gruet, they were not produced or even specified till 1550, three years after his execution, when they were said to have been found partly in the roof of what had been his house (now occupied by the secretary of the consistory), partly behind a chimney, and partly in a dustbin. Put together, they amounted to thirteen leaves, in a handwriting which was declared by Calvin to be "juridically, by good examination of trustworthy men, recognized to be that of Gruet." The time and the singular manner of their discovery raises the question whether the papers had not been placed by the finders. The execution of Gruet, the first bloodshed under Calvin's *régime*, had roused new hatred against him; the slain man figured as a martyr in the eyes of the party to which he belonged; and it had become necessary to discredit him and them if the ascendancy of Calvin was to be secure. It is

¹ Stähelin, i, 400. Henry avows that Gruet was "subjected to the torture morning and evening during a whole month" (Eng. tr. ii. 66). Other biographers dishonestly exclude the fact from their narratives.

solely upon Calvin's account that we have to depend for our knowledge of Gruet's alleged anti-Christian doctrine; for the document, after being described and condemned, was duly burned by the common hangman. If genuine, it was a remarkable performance. According to the act of condemnation, which is in the handwriting of Calvin, it derided all religions alike, blasphemed God, Jesus, the Holy Ghost, the Virgin Mary, Moses, the Patriarchs, the Prophets, the Apostles, the disciples, the gospels, the Old and New Testaments, the gospel miracles, and the resurrection.¹ Not a single phrase is quoted; we have mere general description, execration, and sentence.

Whether the document was a planned forgery, or part of a copy by Gruet of an anti-Christian treatise theretofore secretly circulated, will never be known. The story of Gruet soon swelled into a legend. According to one narrative, he had copied with his own hand and circulated in Geneva the mysterious treatise, *De Tribus Impostoribus*, the existence of which, at that period, is very doubtful.² On the strength of this and other cases³ the *Libertines* have been sometimes supposed to be generally unbelievers; but there is no more evidence for this than for the general ascription to them of licentious conduct. It appears certain indeed that at that time the name *Libertine* was not recognized as a label for all of Calvin's political opponents, but was properly reserved for the sect so-called;⁴ but even a vindicator of Calvin admits that "it is undeniable that the Libertines [*i.e.* the political opponents of Calvin, so-called by modern writers] of 1555 were the true political representatives of the patriots of 1530."⁵ The presumption is that the political opposition included the more honest and courageous men of liberal and tolerant tendencies, as Calvin's own following included men of "free" life.⁶ The really antinomian *Libertini* of the period were to be found among the pantheistic-Christian sect or school so-called, otherwise known as Spirituals, who seem to have been a branch of the

¹ Cp. Calvin's letter to the Seignery of Geneva, in *Letters*, ii, 254-56.

² Henry, *Life of Calvin*, Eng. tr. ii, 47-48. Gruet's fragment can hardly have been the *De Tribus Impostoribus*, inasmuch as Calvin makes no mention of any reference to Mohammed in his fragment, whereas the title of the other book proceeded on the specification of Mohammed as well as Jesus and Moses. The existing treatise of that name, in any case, is of later date. Of the famous treatise in question, which was not published till long afterwards, Henry admits that it "professes to show tranquilly, and with regret, but without abuse," the fraudulent character of the three revealed religions. Concerning Gruet's essay he asks: "What are all the anti-Christian writings of the French Revolution compared with the hellish laughter which seemed to peal from its pages?" For this description he has not a line to cite.

³ For instance, one man was accused of having blasphemed against a storm which terrified the pious.

⁴ Dändliker, *Geschichte der Schweiz*, 1884-87, ii, 559; above, p. 2.

⁵ Mark Pattison, *Essays*, 1889, ii, 37.

⁶ Dändliker, as cited, endorsing Roget. Cp. Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, i, 306, and Hamilton, *Discus. on Philos. and Lit.* 2nd ed. p. 497, as to the "dissolution of morals" in the Lutheran world.

Brethren of the Free Spirit, or fraternity of the "Spirit of Liberty." These Calvin denounced in his manner; but in 1544 he had also forced into exile his former friend, Sebastian Castalio (or Castalion; properly Chatillon), master of the public school at Geneva, for simply rejecting his doctrine of absolute predestination, striving to have him driven in turn from Basel; and in 1551 he had caused to be imprisoned and banished a physician and ex-Carmelite, Jerome Bolsec, for publicly denying the same dogma. Bolsec, being prevented by Calvin's means from settling in any neighbouring Protestant community, returned to Catholicism,¹ as did many others. After Calvin's death Bolsec took his revenge in an attack on the reformer in his public and private character,² which has been treated as untrustworthy by the more moderate Catholic scholars who deal with the period;³ and which, as regards its account of his private morals, is probably on all fours with Calvin's own unscrupulous charges against the "Libertines" and others who opposed him.

The tenets of the *Libertini* are somewhat mystifying, as handled by Calvin and his biographer Henry, both alike animated by the *odium theologicum* in the highest degree. By Calvin's own account they were mystical Christians, speaking of Christ as "the spirit which is in the world and in us all," and of the devil and his angels as having no proper existence, being identical with the world and sin. Further, they denied the eternity of the human soul and the freedom of the will; and Calvin charges them with subverting alike belief in God and morality (Henry, *Life of Calvin*, Eng. tr. ii, 45-46). The last charge could just as validly be brought against his own predestinarianism; and as regards ethics we find Calvin alternately denouncing the Libertines for treating all sin as unpardonable, and for stating that in Christ none could sin. Apparently he gives his inferences as their doctrines; and the antinomianism which, in the case of the trial of Madame Ameaux, Henry identifies with pantheism, was by his own showing of a Christian cast. Little credit, accordingly, can be given to his summing up that among the Libertines of Geneva there exhibited itself "a perfectly-formed anti-Christianity," which he calls "a true offspring of hell" (ii, 49). The residuum of truth appears to be that in the pantheism of this sect, as Neander says concerning the Brethren of the Free Spirit among the Beghards, there were "the *foretokens* of a thoroughly anti-

¹ Mosheim, 14 Cent. sec. iii, Pt. ii, ch. ii, §§ 38-41; Audin, *Histoire de Calvin*, chs. xxix, xxx.

² *Histoire de la vie, mœurs, actes, doctrine, constance et mort de Jean Calvin, jadis ministre de Geneve*, recueilly par M. Hierosme Hermes Bolsec, docteur médecin à Lyon. Lyon, 1577.

³ The reprint of Bolsec's book prepared by M. L. F. Chastel (Lyon, 1875) appears to be faithful; but the Catholic animus shown deprives the annotations of critical value.