





ESSAY
ON
CATHOLICISM

LIBERALISM AND SOCIALISM

CONSIDERED IN THEIR FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

BY
DON JUAN DONOSO CORTÈS

MARQUIS OF VALDEGAMAS.

FROM THE ORIGINAL SPANISH.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THE AUTHOR

FROM THE ITALIAN OF G. E. DE CASTRO.

TRANSLATED BY
MADELEINE VINTON GODDARD.

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BEATISSIMO PADRE,

PIACCIA ALLA SANTITÀ SUA DI ACCETTARE I MIEI TRAVAGLI IN TRADURRE
COTESTO LIBRO; COME UN PEGNO SICURO DI FILIALE
AFFETTO, E VENERAZIONE MOLTO
PROFONDA.

DELLA SUA FIGLIA IN CRISTO,
MADDALENA VINTON GODDARD.

HOLY FATHER,

DEIGN TO ACCEPT THE LABORS OF THIS TRANSLATION, AS AN EXPRESSION
OF FILIAL AFFECTION AND MOST PROFOUND
VENERATION, FROM

YOUR CHILD IN CHRIST,
MADELEINE VINTON GODDARD.

ALLA SANTITÀ DI N. S. PIO IX.

BEATISSIMO PADRE:

Nella speranza di potere avanzare gli interessi della nostra Santa religione, col diffondere i sentimenti religiosi di uomini illustri, ho creduto dovere tradurre in lingua nostra vernacolare, le opere di Donoso Cortès, le quali furono altravolta tradotte in lingua Francese con approvazione di V. Santità. Degnisi però di accettare questo pegno di filiale affetto, e di darle la sua santa benedizione. Prostrata ai piedi della Santità Vostra li bacio reverentemente.

Di V. Santità

Divotissima figlia

MADDALENA VINTON GODDARD.

WASHINGTON, 16 Febbraio, 1862.

Die 27. Martii 1862.

Benedicat Te Deus, et dirigat cor
tuum et intelligentiam tuam.

Pii P. X.

Testor ego Card. Præfectus S. Congnis de
propaganda fide superiorem benedictionem sig-
natam fuisse manu SSmi. D. N. Pii Divina
Providentia PP. IX.

AL. CARD. BARNABO.

NOTICE.

THE dogmatical portion of this work has been examined by one of the most eminent theologians of Paris, belonging to the glorious school of the Benedictines of Solesmes. In the final revision of this work, the author has conformed to all his suggestions.

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NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.

JOHN DONOSO CORTÈS was born at Valdegamas, the sixth of May, 1809. At five years of age he entered a primary school, and at eleven he had finished the humanities; at twelve he entered the University of Salamanca, in order to study law; and at sixteen, like Leibnitz, he was prepared, had he not been too young, to receive his degree of Bachelor. In the mean time he devoted all his energies to the study of philosophy, history, and Belles-lettres, under that able and philosophical writer, Emanuel Quintana. From Quintana he received the current ideas of the day: an admiration of French authors, a contempt for those of Spain, in a word, that learned incredulity which prevailed among the last generation.

For more than two centuries Jansenism and philosophism had corrupted the land of Pelagio and the Cid. D'Aranda and Pom- bal had dared to attack those very laws, proclaimed by the Council of Toledo, which had shown the magnificent influence of the Church in the maintenance of liberty and justice. Spain was no longer distinguished above others as the Catholic nation, the nation of profound and heartfelt convictions; the traditional grandeur of her faith had taken the place of the reality; and faith, instead of being an absolute necessity, had degenerated into a mere habit.

Donoso was affected by the spirit of the age in which he lived, and was in his earlier youth, like the greater number of those

around him, a philosopher. This is evident in his first works, which he always held in slight estimation on that account. He afterward courageously renounced many of his early opinions, others were changed, and he had need to be ashamed of none, for his faith became firm, and was boldly defended. When he was only nineteen years of age, Quintana, surprised at his great talents, proposed to him to accept the professorship he was about to vacate. When any encomium was bestowed upon the youth, Quintana would always say, "Donoso is a diamond;" and he fully justified this eulogium. The result more than satisfied the general expectation, and it was admitted by all that he might accomplish still greater things in an enlarged sphere of action. Among those who always attended his lectures was a young girl. Her black eyes were continually fixed upon the animated countenance of the orator; and she regarded his every movement with the most intense admiration. Their hearts were touched, and they were married. Scarcely had Donoso enjoyed "the only true felicity of life," and it seemed as if his happiness was assured, when the two beings who had reconsecrated to him their lives, a beloved wife and infant daughter, were both laid in the tomb; as if he was only permitted this affection in order to make an offering of it to God.

He did not endure this first misfortune with resignation, and it was therefore terrible. Educated in an age which, if not altogether infidel, was at least so in ideas, he had imbibed that indifference, which is the greatest scourge of modern times. Although he was a philosopher from his earliest years, yet he was never irreligious; but divine love and a pious fervor were wanting; and religion is not an effect of human reason, but must come from the heart, which receives it through faith. Custom alone, not conscience, held him in union with the Church, and caused him to practice its duties, from which he was soon to experience such great blessings. Notwithstanding this religious apathy, he always

continued to fulfill his obligations as a Catholic ; nor had he any painful recollections to lament, nor need to blush on account of a single action, which could embitter the present or darken the future.

When Ferdinand VII., replaced upon the throne by a foreign army, wished, to the prejudice of the heir-apparent, Don Carlos, to favor his daughter Isabella, who, by the Salic law of Philip V., could not have succeeded him, Donoso caused a learned and eloquent memorial to be presented to the king, in which he sustained the cause of the Infanta, and appealed to the love of a husband and father. The king wished to recompense him, and in 1832 conferred upon him a distinguished place in the ministry of "Grace and Justice." He was in this way, at twenty-three years of age, thrown into political life, which he was destined never to abandon.

Ferdinand VII. died, but Donoso continued to support Isabella and her mother, Maria Christina. Spain loved her queens, and the memory of Isabella the Catholic, "the most illustrious being who had ever reigned over men," was affectionately cherished in popular traditions. Donoso considered that this sentiment was alone capable of saving his country, of delivering it from anarchy, of securing to it, not merely the order established in a beleaguered city, but the assured tranquillity of laws and of a just moderation. About this time he was elected a deputy to the Cortes, and afterward Secretary of the Council of the Ministry, under the presidency of the famous Mendizabal, the chief of the party of reform. Donoso soon resigned this office, as he remained firm in his principles, which were not those of the ministry ; so that he took no part whatever in the confiscation of the property of the Church, in the suppression of religious orders, or in any of those sacrilegious excesses which seemed to renew the times of Charles III.

The tribune and the press still remained open to him, and sometimes by means of the one, sometimes of the other, he continued,

as a citizen, courageously to persevere in the vindication of the opinions he had at first embraced. *L'Avvenire*, a journal established by him, the *Pilota*, the *Corriere Nazionale*, and especially the *Rivista di Madrid*, of which he was one of the editors, attest his activity and the superiority of his talents. He had already published his "Essay on European Diplomacy, from the Revolution of June to the Treaty of the Quadruple Alliance," a work which reflected great honor on his country, and in which the wide scope of his observation is equal to the truth of his applications.* It was at that time that he delivered a course of lectures on international law, in the Atheneum at Madrid, a course so much the more useful, as there no longer existed a just public opinion, and no one attempted to strengthen or confirm these languishing sentiments.

In the mean time, Espartero, emboldened by his decisive victory over the Carlists, not only deprived Maria Christina of the regency, but also of the guardianship of her children. Donoso did not change with this mutation of fortune, but continued unceasingly to defend her, if not as widow and regent, at least as mother and queen. His efforts were unsuccessful, and he had reason to esteem himself fortunate that this civic courage was not punished by death, as was that of his friend, Montes de Oca. Maria Christina appointed him her secretary, and in this capacity he shared her exile, and made known to all Europe the ingratitude and cruelty of the Duke of Victoria. Candidly, I do not know, all things considered, whether these representations were just or not. In 1843, when the Marshal Narvaez established a conservative policy, relying upon the protection of France, (an aid always injurious to the independence of a people,) Donoso succeeded in returning to his country, and changed his position of secretary of the queen for that of secretary and director of the

* *The Throne and the Constitution*, of May 17, 1843.

studies of Queen Isabella, whose majority had recently been declared. He was, moreover, proffered a place in the ministry, which he refused. He was a man whose convictions were too profound to permit him to alter them when placed in power; and men who are incapable of change cannot long exercise an influence over a mutable society.

At this juncture, Louis Philippe made him Grand-officer of the Legion of Honor, and the States of Castile conferred upon him a title, by erecting his estate of Valdegamas into a marquise. He afterward entered upon the diplomatic career, having been nominated minister plenipotentiary of Spain near Berlin, where he was surprised by the revolution of February, or, to speak more correctly, by the great European catastrophe of 1848.

Donoso was now on the verge of that uncertain epoch of human life, having reached the midway of the term of years usually granted by God to man, when the two periods of one's existence seem to be equally balanced, and it is difficult to say whether the culminating point is still to be reached or the descent has already commenced. Solemn hour, when the light of day begins to fade, but the setting sun still preserves its radiant splendor—hour, sacred to the past and the future, when the imagination is no longer enkindled, but the poetry of the heart remains. If our faith has, until then, been rather an act of the understanding than of the affections, and we meet with some disaster in such an hour, we find ourselves suddenly changed, a heavenly unction penetrates our souls, and we approach the end of life with an increase of strength and fervor.

At thirty, Chateaubriand wept and believed; in the death of two beloved objects he gained life, and from their graves ascended those pious desires, through which he acquired the gift of faith. Donoso loved at forty, and was converted. His brother died. He never alluded to this loss without weeping, and writing about him to an intimate friend, Mr. Rio, he said that he ought to ask

pardon of God for having so entirely loved a human creature. At the bedside of his dying brother he studied religion, and he there found in it a virtue superior to all others, the virtue of piety. Thenceforward his life was one of faith, love, and expiation; of devotion to the memory of his brother, and of prayer for the repose of his soul. Donoso wept and believed.

In reply to those who attributed this conversion to his own merits before God, he said: I cannot remember to have merited anything; but a certain feeling may have caused me cheerfully to return to God, for I can never behold a poor man at my door without thinking that I see in him a brother. He thus expresses himself, in a letter to Mr. Alberico de Blanche-Ruffin: "As you see, neither my understanding nor my reason have had any part whatever in my conversion. Had I depended upon my limited talents or my miserable reason, I should have descended into the tomb without coming to the knowledge of the true faith. The mystery of my conversion (for in every conversion a mystery is always involved) is a mystery of love. I did not love God; he wished me to love him, and I loved him, and was converted through love."

Notwithstanding his learning, Donoso, when converted, entered upon the path of Christian ignorance, and commenced to become sublime, by learning to be as a simple child, and, like the pilot of Homer, who at times watched the stars, and at times the sea, Donoso was not so entirely absorbed in celestial contemplations as to neglect mundane affairs: but, what is more meritorious, he considered this life as a necessary trial. We now behold him in full possession of truth and virtue, without being subjected to incessant contests, to harassing doubts, to cruel solicitude, to all of which had been added the difficulty of preserving the propensities of such a temperament as his in perfect equipoise. The works of St. Teresa and those of Father Lewis of Grenada, "the first mystic in the world," afforded nutriment to his own religious en-

thusiasm, for the activity of his exterior life did not indicate how great was his love of meditation. About this time he wrote from Dombenito: "I have never accomplished anything, I accomplish nothing, nor shall I ever, in all my life. I am a perfect example of those men who do nothing; I am always reading, I propose to act, and then I never commence. Sometimes I imagine myself standing before God, and God demanding of me, What hast thou done? and I tremble with excessive fear. I then think that perhaps I was destined for a contemplative life; but these are dangerous illusions presented to my mind. The truth is, that I am a man who has done nothing." The simplicity of his faith equaled that of the most humble countryman. Having learned that a relic of our Lord was preserved in the Church of Argenteuil, he wished to make a pilgrimage thither, in order to obtain of divine mercy the cure of one of his brothers, who was sick. There is such a fullness of affection in those souls who are inspired by divine love, that they desire every act and thought should correspond to this love, and they make of life a continual sacrifice; and yet the world considers them as objects of insult, and takes pleasure in calling them *guelfi da campanile*; so that, in consequence of a contempt for their example, truth is lost and the practice of virtue discontinued.

I will only say a few words respecting the political opinions of Donoso. "The Christian monarchy, which existed before the absolute monarchy caused the suppression of deliberative assemblies, placed a real and not a revolutionary limit to the royal will;" and then the government was the only social form that was deemed necessary, the only expression of that authority which proceeded from God. In this appeal to the middle ages, to this high Catholic arbitrament, to the feudal and aristocratic power, all the illustrious men of the theological school concur with Cortès, from De Maistre to Balmes, from Bonald to Canuta. It is a general complaint, the want of an age in which faith existed and was

potent for good, "and in which the rewards and punishments of a future life governed society." But what is the true Christian monarchy, the true Christian republic? Perhaps it is the monarchy of Gregory VII., that greatest representative of liberalism! But Donoso Cortès does not seem to think so, and in this matter many of the theological school to which he belongs disagree with him, and justly so.

Donoso had the consolation in his dying moments to reflect that "he had never failed to defend society, so cruelly assailed; and that he had never injured any one."*

* His words in his Discourse of January 4, 1849.

ESSAY

ON

CATHOLICISM, LIBERALISM, AND SOCIALISM.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

How every great political question always involves a great theological question.

MR. PROUDHON, in his *Confessions of a Revolutionist*, has written these remarkable words: "It is surprising to observe how constantly we find all our political questions complicated with theological questions." There is nothing in this to cause surprise, except it be the surprise of Mr. Proudhon. Theology being the science of God, is the ocean which contains and embraces all the sciences, as God is the ocean in which all things are contained. All things existed, both prior to and after their creation, in the divine mind; because as God made them out of nothing, so did he form them according to a model which existed in himself from eternity. All things are in God in the profound manner in which effects are in their causes, consequences in their principles, reflections in light, and forms in their eternal exemplars. In Him are united the vastness of the sea, the glory of the fields, the harmony of the spheres, the

grandeur of the universe, the splendor of the stars, and the magnificence of the heavens. In Him are the measure, weight, and number of all things, and all things proceed from Him with number, weight, and measure. In Him are the inviolable and sacred laws of being, and every being has its particular law. All that lives, finds in Him the laws of life; all that vegetates, the laws of vegetation; all that moves, the laws of motion; all that has feeling, the law of sensation; all that has understanding, the law of intelligence; and all that has liberty, the law of freedom. It may in this sense be affirmed, without falling into Pantheism, that all things are in God, and God is in all things. This will serve to explain how in proportion as faith is impaired in this world, truth is weakened, and how the society that turns its back upon God, will find its horizon quickly enveloped in frightful obscurity. For this reason religion has been considered by all men, and in all ages, as the indestructible foundation of human society. *Omnis humanæ societatis fundamentum convellit qui religionem convellit*, says Plato in book 10 of his laws. According to Xenophon, (on Socrates,) "the most pious cities and nations have always been the most durable, and the wisest." Plutarch affirms (contra Colotes) "that it is easier to build a city in the air than to establish society without a belief in the gods." Rousseau, in his *Social Contract*, book iv., ch. viii., observes, "that a State was never established without religion as a foundation." Voltaire says, in his *Treatise on Toleration*, ch. xx., "that religion is, on all accounts, necessary wherever society exists." All the legislation of the ancients rests upon a fear of the gods. Polybius declares that this holy fear is always more requisite in a free people

than in others. That Rome might be the eternal city, Numa made it the holy city. Among the nations of antiquity the Roman was the greatest, precisely because it was the most religious. Cesar having one day uttered certain words, in open Senate, against the existence of the gods, Cato and Cicero arose from their seats and accused the irreverent youth of having spoken words fatal to the Republic. It is related of Fabricius, a Roman captain, that having heard the philosopher Cineas ridicule the Divinity in presence of Pyrrhus, he pronounced these memorable words: "May it please the gods, that our enemies follow this doctrine when they make war against the Republic."

The decline of faith that produces the decline of truth does not necessarily cripple, but certainly misleads the human mind. God, who is both compassionate and just, denies truth to guilty souls, but does not deprive them of life. He condemns them to error, but not to death. As an evidence of this, every one has witnessed those periods of prodigious incredulity and of highest culture that have shone in history with a phosphorescent light, leaving more of a burning than a luminous track behind them. If we carefully contemplate these ages, we shall see that their splendor is only the inflamed glare of the lightning's flash. It is evident that their brightness is the sudden explosion of their obscure but combustible materials, rather than the calm light proceeding from purest regions, and serenely spread over heaven's vault by the divine pencil of the sovereign painter.

What is here said of ages may also be said of men. The absence or the possession of faith, the denial of God or the abandonment of truth, neither gives them under-

standing nor deprives them of it. That of the unbeliever may be of the highest order, and that of the believer very limited; but the greatness of the first is that of an abyss, while the second has the holiness of a tabernacle. In the first dwells error, in the second truth. In the abyss with error is death, in the tabernacle with truth is life. Consequently there can be no hope whatever for those communities that renounce the austere worship of truth for the idolatry of the intellect. Sophisms produce revolutions, and sophists are succeeded by hangmen.

He possesses political truth who understands the laws to which governments are amenable; and he possesses social truth who comprehends the laws to which human societies are answerable. He who knows God, knows these laws; and he knows God who listens to what He affirms of Himself, and believes the same. Theology is the science which has for its object these affirmations. Whence it follows that every affirmation respecting society or government, supposes an affirmation relative to God; or, what is the same thing, that every political or social truth necessarily resolves itself into a theological truth.

If everything is intelligible in God and through God, and theology is the science of God, in whom and by whom everything is elucidated, theology is the universal science. Such being the case, there is nothing not comprised in this science, which has no plural; because totality, which constitutes it, has it not. Political and social sciences have no existence except as arbitrary classifications of the human mind. Man in his feebleness classifies that which in God is characterized by the most simple unity. Thus, he distinguishes political from

social and religious affirmations; while in God there is but one affirmation, indivisible and supreme. He who speaks explicitly of what thing soever, and is ignorant that he implicitly speaks of God; and who does not know when he discusses explicitly any science whatever, that he implicitly illustrates theology, has received from God simply the necessary amount of intelligence to constitute him a man. Theology, then, considered in its highest acceptation, is the perpetual object of all the sciences, even as God is the perpetual object of human speculations.

Every word that a man utters is a recognition of the Deity, even that which curses or denies God. He who rebels against God, and frantically exclaims, "I abhor thee; thou art not!" illustrates a complete system of theology; as he does who raises to Him a contrite heart, and says, "Lord, have mercy on thy servant, who adores thee." The first blasphemes Him to His face, the second prays at His feet, yet both acknowledge Him, each in his own way; for both pronounce His incommunicable name.

In the manner of pronouncing this name rests the solution of the most profound enigmas; the vocation of races, the providential mission of nations, the great vicissitudes of history, the rise and fall of the most famous empires, their wars and their conquests, the different character of peoples, the physiognomy of nations, and their various fortunes. Where God is considered as the all-pervading essence, man, abandoned to silent contemplation, shuts out the senses and lives as it were in a dream, fanned by fragrant and enervating breezes. The adorer of the infinite substance is condemned to a perpetual slavery and unlimited indolence. For him the

desert has something divine which he finds not in the city, because it is more silent, more solitary, and more vast; and yet he will not adore it as his God, because the desert is not infinite. The ocean would become his divinity, because it absorbs all things, if it were not for its strange commotions and noise. The sun which illuminates the universe would be worthy of his worship, if the eye of man did not embrace its resplendent disk. The firmament would be his god, if it were not dotted by the sparkling luminaries; or night would be his god but for its mysterious sounds. His god is all these things united—immensity, obscurity, immobility, silence. There we behold suddenly arise, through the hidden impulsion of a powerful growth, colossal and barbarous empires, that as suddenly fall with a crash, overwhelmed by the weight of other empires more gigantic, and leaving no trace either of their rise or fall. Their armies are undisciplined and the people unintelligent. The army is chiefly characterized by the number of men that compose it. There war has less for its aim to prove the heroism of a nation than its populousness, and even victory would not establish a legal title, except that victory supposes strength, and strength is considered an attribute of the divinity.

Thus we see that the Hindoo theology and history are identical. Turning our eyes westward we behold, at the very portals, a region which ushers in a new world in politics, morals, and theology. The Oriental deity of infinitude is here decomposed, and loses its formidable and austere characteristics: its unity is multitude. There the deity was motionless; here multitude displays an unceasing activity. There silence reigned; here everything is sound, cadence, and har-

mony. The god of the East extended through all time and filled all space; here the family of divinities has its genealogical tree, and is confined to the summit of a mountain. The deity of the East dwells in an eternal peace; while here, in the seat of the gods, all is war, tumult, and confusion.

The political unity of these nations undergoes the same vicissitudes as the religious unity: here each city forms an empire; while there all the communities combined to form one. Among the Orientals we find one God and one King; while in the West we find a republic of Deities and a republic of Cities. In this multitude of divinities and cities all is disorder and confusion. To men is imputed something of the heroic and heavenly, and to the gods something of the human and terrestrial. The gods accord to men the intelligence of great things, and the perception of the beautiful, and receive in turn from them their discords and their vices. They have illustrious and virtuous men, and incestuous and adulterous gods. This people, impressionable and ardent, is distinguished for its poets and artists, and is an object of wonder to the world. Life has no charms for it, except as it reflects the light of glory; nor is death terrible, except in the oblivion that follows it. Utterly sensual, it values in life only its pleasures; and it considers death as happy, when it comes crowned with flowers. Familiarity and affinity with its gods, make it vain, capricious, and petulant. Without a due respect for the gods, it lacks dignity in its designs, fixedness of purpose, and stability of resolve. It regards the Oriental World as a region overspread with darkness, and peopled with statues; while the Orientals, contemplating the ephemeral life, premature death, and

brief glory of this people, consider it as a nation of pigmies. For the one, greatness consists in duration; for the other, it is action. Thus Grecian theology, Grecian history, and Grecian character are one and the same.

This phenomenon is conspicuous in the history of the Roman people. Their principal gods, of Etruscan origin, were Grecian in their quality of deities, and Oriental in so far as Etruscan. They were numerous as the gods of Greece, and at the same time austere and somber as the gods of the East. Rome combines the East and the West, both in politics and in religion. It is a city like that of Theseus, and an empire like that of Cyrus. Rome is a type of Janus, being two-faced, and each visage bearing a different aspect. One symbolizes Oriental duration, and the other Grecian activity; possessing a mobility so great as to reach the confines of the earth, and so prolonged in duration that the world proclaims it eternal. Chosen by the divine counsel to prepare the way for Him who was to come, its providential mission was to assimilate to itself all theologies, and to rule over all nations. In obedience to a mysterious influence, all the gods find a place in the Roman Capitol, and the awed nations, overcome with terror, lie humbled and prostrate under the Roman yoke. All the cities are successively despoiled of their gods, and all the gods are one after the other despoiled of their temples and cities. This vast empire holds as its own the Oriental legitimacy—multitude and strength; and the legitimacy of the West—intelligence and discipline. For this reason it subjects all, and none resist it, or complain of its crushing force. In the same way that its theology differs from, and yet has something in

common with, all theologies, so has Rome also much that is peculiar to herself, and much in common with all the cities conquered by her arms, or obscured by her glory. She has the Spartan severity, the Attic culture, the pomp of Memphis, and the grandeur of Babylon and Nineveh. In order to make a succinct proposition, we may indicate the Orient as the thesis, the West as the antithesis, and Rome as the synthesis. The Roman Empire represents the absorption of the Oriental thesis and the Western antithesis in the Roman synthesis. Let us, then, resolve this potent synthesis into its constituent elements, and it will be seen that there can be no synthesis in the political and social order, without a corresponding condition in the religious order. Both among the Oriental nations, the republics of Greece, and in the Roman Empire, theological systems serve to elucidate the political. Theology is the light of history.

The Roman Capitol could not be despoiled of its magnificence, except through the destruction of the means which had enabled it to attain its culminating point. No one could establish his power in Rome without the permission of the gods, and no one could obtain possession of the Capitol without first displacing the supreme god, *Jupiter Optimus Maximus*. The ancients, who had a confused idea of the vital power inherent in all religious systems, believed that no city could be conquered so long as it was not abandoned by the national deities. Consequently, in all the wars of city against city, nation against nation, and race against race, a spiritual and religious controversy accompanied the material and political struggle. The besieged, while making an armed resistance, implored their gods not to forsake them. The besiegers, in their turn, conjured the gods,

with mysterious imprecations, to desert the city. Woe to that city wherein resounds the fearful cry, "The gods have fled—the gods have abandoned us!" The people of Israel were invincible so long as Moses held uplifted hands toward God, and could no longer conquer when these fell powerless. Moses is a type of the human race, proclaiming through all ages, though under various and diverse forms, the omnipotence of God and man's dependence, the power of religion, and the efficacy of prayer.

Rome fell because her gods succumbed; her empire was destroyed because her theology became extinct; and history thus plainly exhibits the great principle that lies in the deepest recesses of the human conscience. Rome had given to the world her Cesars and her gods. Jupiter and Cesar Augustus divided between them the imperial authority over things human and divine. Amid the rise and fall of mighty empires, never since the creation had a power existed under the sun of so august a majesty, and so surprising a grandeur. All nations, even the most rude and unpolished, had submitted to her yoke. The world had laid down its arms, and held still.

About this time was born in the land of prodigies, in an humble stable, and of mean parentage, a most wonderful child. It was said of Him, that at the time of his advent among men, a new star shone forth in the heavens; that, scarcely born, he was worshiped by shepherds and kings; that heavenly spirits had spoken to men, and appeared in the sky; that his mysterious and incommunicable name had been predicted from the beginning of the world; that the prophets had foretold his reign; and that even the sibyls had chanted his vic-

tories. These extraordinary rumors having reached the ears of the servants of Cesar, inspired them with vague apprehensions and terror. This vague uneasiness and fear soon passed, however, when they saw the days and nights succeed each other as always, in their perpetual rotations, and that the sun continued as before to illumine the horizon of Rome. Then the imperial governors said to each other, Cesar is immortal, and the reports which have reached us were spread by timid and idle people. The most efficacious remedy against the prejudices of the vulgar is contempt and oblivion.

Thus passed away thirty years. But, at the expiration of thirty years, silly and discontented people again sought, in new and still more surprising rumors, a fresh aliment for their stupidity. They said that the child had become a man, and, while receiving upon his head the waters of Jordan, the heavens opened, and a spirit, in shape like a dove, descended upon him, and a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son." In the mean time, he who had baptized him, a grave and austere man, an inhabitant of the desert, and a man who avoided society, exhorted the people, continually saying, "Repent ye;" and, pointing to the child made man, gave this testimony of him: "This is the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world."

There was no doubt whatever among the strong minded of the age that all this was simply a farce, badly enacted, and performed by players of low repute. The Jewish people had always been prone to sorceries and superstitions. In past ages, and when captives of Babylon, they turned their eyes, dimmed with weeping, toward their abandoned temple and lost country; a great

conqueror, foretold by their prophets, had redeemed them from captivity, and had restored to them both their country and their temple. It was then very natural that this people should expect a new redemption and a new redeemer, who would forever release them from the yoke of Rome.

If this had been all, *unprejudiced and intelligent people*, of whatever condition in life, would have disregarded these rumors, as they had done those of the past, depending upon time, that great minister of human reason, to dissipate them. But some inevitable fate disposed otherwise of matters, because it came to pass that Jesus (this was the name of the person of whom such great wonders were related) commenced to teach a new doctrine, and to perform marvelous works. His boldness or madness went so far as to call those who were hypocritical and arrogant by their true names, and to designate as whitened sepulchers those who were so. He counseled the poor to be patient, and then scoffing at them, proclaimed them blessed. In order to punish the rich, who despised him, he admonished them to "be merciful." He condemned fornication and adultery, yet he sat at table with adulterers and fornicators. Filled with jealousy, he affected contempt for the doctors and wise men; and so mean were his sentiments that he found pleasure in conversing with common and vulgar people.

His arrogance was so extreme that he styled himself the Lord of Earth, Sea, and Heaven; and he was so consummate in the arts of hypocrisy that he washed the feet of some poor fishermen. In spite of his studied austerity of manner, he announced that his doctrine was love, condemned the industry of Martha, and blessed

the idleness of Mary. He held secret relations with infernal spirits, and bartered his soul for the power of working miracles. He was followed by a crowd who adored him.

Notwithstanding their good-will, it is plain that the guardians of holy things and of the imperial prerogatives could no longer remain passive; as they were officially responsible for the preservation of the majesty of religion and the peace of the empire. That which chiefly disturbed them was the information they received that a great number of people were ready to proclaim him king of the Jews; and, moreover, that he had announced himself as the Son of God, and intended to dissuade the people from the payment of the tribute.

He who had said such things and performed such works could not but die by the hands of the people. It was only necessary to explain and substantiate the charges against him. When he was questioned concerning the tributes, he made the celebrated answer which disconcerted the inquisitor: "Render unto Cesar the things which are Cesar's, and unto God the things which are God's;" which was equivalent to saying: "I leave unto you Cesar, and I take away from you Jupiter." When questioned by Pilate and the high priest, he repeated the assertion that he was the Son of God, and that his reign was not of this world. Then Caiphas said: "This man is guilty, and must die;" but Pilate, on the contrary, said: "Liberate this man, for he is innocent."

Caiphas viewed the matter in its religious aspect as high priest; Pilate considered the subject in its political bearings as a laic. Pilate could not understand the connection between the State and religion, between Cesar and Jupiter, between politics and theology.

Caiphas, however, judged that the introduction of a new religion would overturn the government; that a new God would dethrone Cesar; and that the theological question involved the political. The multitude instinctively thought as Caiphas did, and with rude clamors accused Pilate of being an enemy of Tiberius. Such was then the condition of affairs.

Pilate, the immortal type of corrupt judges, in his timidity sacrificed Jesus, and delivered him up to the furious populace, thinking to absolve his conscience by the washing his hands of it. The Son of God was crucified, reviled, and derided. Then he was assailed by the rich and the poor, by the hypocritical and the proud, by the priests and the learned, by women of bad repute and men of evil conscience, the adulterers and fornicators. Jesus expired on the cross while praying for his enemies and commending his soul to his Father.

For a time tranquillity was restored, but soon afterward events occurred never before witnessed by men: the abomination of desolation in the temple, the mothers of Sion cursing their fecundity, the sepulchers burst asunder, Jerusalem depopulated, its walls leveled to the ground, its inhabitants dispersed throughout the earth, and the world in arms; the eagles of Rome piercing the air with their cries of terror, Rome despoiled of her Cesars and her gods, the cities laid waste and the deserts peopled; men clothed in skins, and who could not read, governing the nations, and multitudes obeying that voice from Jordan which had said, "Repent ye;" and that other voice which cried out, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me;" and kings adoring the cross, which was everywhere erected.

What was the cause of so great changes and revolutions? Why so vast a desolation, and so universal a cataclysm? What did it mean? What had happened? Nothing, except that some theologians went about proclaiming a new theology throughout the world.

CHAPTER II.

Of society as regulated by Catholic theology.

THIS new theology is called Catholicism. Catholicism is a complete system of civilization. It is so complete that in its immensity it includes everything—the science of God, of angels, of the universe, and of men. The unbeliever is astonished at the incredible extravagance of its claims, and the believer at its surprising grandeur. If any one look upon it derisively, men are even more surprised at this stupid indifference than at its colossal grandeur and wonderful extravagance, and they exclaim, “Let the insensate pass by.”

During nineteen centuries the world has frequented the schools of Catholic theologians and doctors; and yet, notwithstanding all this diligent investigation, no one has explored the depths of Catholic science. In this school is taught how and when events and nations have had their rise and fall, and by it are disclosed the wonderful secrets, always concealed from the speculations of heathen philosophers and the comprehension of their learned men. There stand revealed the final causes of all things, the adjustment of human events,

the nature of bodies and that of spirits, by what ways men proceed, the limit of their progression, from whence they came, the mystery of their peregrination, the course of their journey, the enigma of their sorrows, the secret of life, and the arcana of death. Children who are nourished at this fruitful source know more to-day than did Aristotle and Plato, the two luminaries of Athens. And yet the doctors who teach such wonderful things, and who attain heights so great, have received humility as an inheritance. It has been alone permitted to Catholicism to offer to the world the spectacle, before then reserved for the angels, of science deposed by humility in the presence of God.

This theology is called Catholic because it is universal; and it is so in every sense, under every aspect, and in all respects. It is universal, because it includes the substance of all truth. It is so because in its very nature it is destined to extend everywhere, and to last through all time. It is universal in its God and in its dogmas.

God was *unity* in India, *dualism* in Persia, *diversity* in Greece, *multitude* at Rome. The living God is one in substance as the Indian; multiple in person as the Persian; diverse in his attributes as the Grecian; and through the great number of spirits (gods) that serve him, he is multitudinous as were the Roman deities. He is the universal cause, the infinite and impalpable essence, the eternal repose and yet the author of all movements, the supreme intelligence, the sovereign will. He contains all things, and nothing contains him. It is he who formed all things out of nothing, who maintains each thing in its entity, and who governs things angelical, human, and infernal. He is most merciful, most

just, most loving, most strong, most powerful, most pure, most prudent, most beautiful, most wise. The East knows his voice, the West obeys him, the South venerates him, the North acknowledges him. His word fills creation, the stars stand as his sentinels, the seraphim reflect his glory from their glowing wings, the heavens are his throne, and he holds suspended in his hand the fullness of the earth. When, in the fulfillment of prophecy, the Catholic God appeared, it was the signal for the downfall of all the idols made by men. Nor could it have been otherwise, inasmuch as all these human theologies were only mutilated fragments of the Catholic theology; and the gods of various nations were merely the deification of some of the essential properties of the true God, the God of the Bible.

Catholicism controls the body, the senses, and the soul of man. Its dogmatic theology teaches men what they must believe; its ethics instruct them as to the duties of life, while its mystic theologians, soaring still higher, teach men to rise on the wings of prayer, to ascend the effulgent steps of the ladder of Jacob, on which God descends to the earth and men ascend to heaven, until the heavens and the earth, men and angels, alike glow in the fire of divine love.

Through Catholicism man recognized the law of order, and through man this order entered into society. The redemption regained for the moral world the laws which it had lost through prevarication and sin. Catholic dogma became the criterion for the sciences, Catholic ethics the guide for human actions, and Catholic charity the standard for the affections. Human conscience, freed from the corrosive action of error and sin, was thus enlightened in its interior, as in its exterior dark-

ness, and, guided by the light of these three criterions, was restored to the felicity of lost innocence.

Order was thus transmitted from the religious into the moral world, and passed from the moral into the political world. The Catholic God, the creator and preserver of the universe, subjects all things to the laws of his Providence, and governs them by his vicars. St. Paul says in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. xiii.: "*Non est potestas nisi a Deo;*" and Solomon has written in the Book of Proverbs, chap. viii. v. 15: "*Per me reges regnant, et legum conditores justa discernunt.*" The authority exercised by his vicars is holy, chiefly on account of what it possesses extrinsic to them; that is to say, it is divine. The idea of authority is of Catholic origin. The rulers over the nations of antiquity placed their right of supremacy on human foundations; they governed for themselves, and they governed by force. The Catholic rulers did not claim to exercise authority through any inherent right, but only as the delegated agents of God, and as the servants of the people. When man became the child of God, then he ceased to be the slave of man. There is nothing more solemn, more impressive, and at the same time more respectable, than the words which the Church addressed to Christian princes at their consecration: "Receive this scepter as an emblem of the sacred power confided to you in order that you may protect the weak, sustain the wavering, correct the vicious, and conduct the good in the way of salvation. Receive this scepter as the rule of divine justice, which upholds the good and punishes the wicked; learn by it to love justice, and to abhor iniquity." These words are in perfect consonance with the idea of legitimate authority as revealed to the world by our Lord

Jesus Christ: "*Scitis quia hi, qui videntur principari gentibus, dominantur eis; et principes eorum potestatem habent ipsorum. Non ita est autem in vobis, sed quicumque voluerit fieri major, erit vester minister: et quicumque voluerit in vobis primus esse, erit omnium servus. Nam et Filius hominis non venit ut ministraretur ei, sed ut ministraret, et daret animam suam redemptionem pro multis.*"*

People and rulers alike gained by this happy revolution. The latter, because their former power only extended over the bodies of men, and they had reigned by the right of force; while now they exercised a lawful authority over both bodies and minds. The former gained, because obedience to God is preferable to obedience to man, and because a willing compliance is better than an imposed consent; and this proves that the results of this revolution were more favorable for the people than for their rulers; for while princes, by the very act of governing in the name of God, represented humanity as impotent to constitute a legitimate authority of itself, and in its own name, the people, who only submitted to their princes in obedience to the divine command, became the representatives of the highest and the most glorious of human prerogatives, that of submitting to no yoke except the divine authority. This serves to explain, on the one hand, the singular modesty for which those happy princes are eminent in history, whom men call great, and the Church holy; and, on the other hand, the singular dignity and elevation for which truly Catholic nations are conspicuous. A voice of peace, consolation, and mercy had been

* Mark, x. 42-45.

heard throughout the world, and had penetrated deeply into the human conscience; and this voice taught the nations, that those of low and mean condition are so placed, in order to be cared for on account of their necessities, and that the rich and great are born to serve others, because they are great and rich. Catholicism, in deifying authority, sanctified obedience; and, in deifying the one and sanctifying the other, condemned pride in its most terrible manifestations, the spirit of domination and that of rebellion. Two things are entirely impossible in a truly Catholic society, despotism and revolutions. Rousseau, who was sometimes capable of sudden and great inspirations, has written these remarkable words: "The rulers of modern times are undoubtedly indebted to Christianity both for the stability of their authority and the less frequent recurrence of revolutions. Nor has its influence here ceased, for, acting upon the rulers themselves, it has made them more humane. In order to be convinced of this, one has only to compare them with the rulers of ancient times."* And Montesquieu has said: "We are undoubtedly indebted to Christianity for the public law recognized in peace and respected by nations during time of war, and for whose benefits we can never be sufficiently grateful."†

The same God, who is the author and governor of civil society, has also created and regulated domestic society. Placed in the most hidden, the highest, the purest, and the brightest of the celestial regions, is a tabernacle, which is inaccessible even to the choirs of

* Emile, vol. i. ch. iv.

† Spirit of Laws, b. iii. ch. iii.

the angels. In this unapproachable tabernacle is perpetually enacted the prodigy of prodigies, and the mystery of mysteries. There dwells the Catholic God, one and triune: one in essence, three in person. The Son is coeternal with and engendered by the Father; and the Holy Ghost is coeternal with and proceeds from the Father and the Son; and the Holy Ghost is God, and the Son is God, and the Father is God; and God has no plural, because there is only one God, three in person and one in substance. The Holy Ghost is God even as the Father is God, but He is not the Father: He is God even as the Son is God, but He is not the Son. The Son is God even as the Holy Ghost is God, but He is not the Holy Ghost; He is God even as the Father is God, but He is not the Father. The Father is God even as the Son is God, but He is not the Son; He is God even as the Holy Ghost is God, but He is not the Holy Ghost. The Father is omnipotence; the Son is wisdom; the Holy Ghost is love; and the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost are infinite love, supreme power, and perfect wisdom. There unity, expanding perpetually, begets variety, and variety in self-condensation is perpetually resolved into unity. God is thesis, antithesis, and synthesis; and He is the supreme thesis, the perfect antithesis, the infinite synthesis. Because He is one, He is God; because He is God, He is perfect; because He is perfect, He is most fruitful; because He is most fruitful, He is diversity; because He is diversity, He is the family. In his essence exist, in an inexpressible and incomprehensible manner, the laws of creation, and the exemplars of all things. Everything has been made in his image, and, therefore, creation is one and many. He is the universal word, which

implies unity and variety combined in one. Man was made by God, and in his image, and not only in his image, but also in his likeness; and for this reason man is one in essence, and represents a sort of trinity of persons. Eve proceeds from Adam, Abel is begotten by Adam and Eve, and Adam, Abel, and Eve are the same thing: they are man, they are human nature. Adam is man the father, Eve is man the woman, Abel is man the son. Eve is man as Adam, but she is not the father; she is man as Abel, but she is not the son. Adam is man as Abel without being the son, and as Eve without being the woman. Abel is man as Eve without being the woman, and as Adam without being the father.

All these names are divine, even as the functions which they signify are divine. The idea of paternity, the foundation of the family, could not have had its origin in the human mind. No fundamental differences exist, in the relation between father and son, of sufficient importance to constitute in themselves a right. Priority is simply a fact, and nothing more; and the same thing may be said of power; and both united cannot of themselves make the right of paternity, although they may originate another fact, that of servitude. This fact supposed, the proper name of father is *master*, as that of son is *slave*. This truth, which reason suggests to us, is confirmed by history. Among those nations who have forgotten the great biblical traditions, the title of paternity has ever been but the synonym for domestic tyranny. If there could have existed a nation forgetful, on the one hand, of those great traditions, and on the other neglecting the worship of material power, among this people the fathers and sons would have been, and would have called themselves, brothers. Paternity comes

from God, and can alone exist through him, either in name or in reality. Had God permitted an entire oblivion of all paradisiacal traditions, mankind would have lost even the name of this institution.

The family relation is divine in its institution and in its nature, and has everywhere shared the vicissitudes of Catholic civilization; and it is very certain that the purity or the corruption of the first is invariably an infallible symptom of a corresponding condition of the second; as the history of the various vicissitudes and changes of the latter becomes equally the history of similar alternations in the former.

In Catholic ages, the family relation tends to the highest degree of excellence; its human element is spiritualized, and the cloister takes the place of the domestic circle. While in the domestic life children reverently submit to their father and mother, the inmates of cloisters, with a still greater reverence and submission, bathe with their tears the sacred feet of a better Father, and the holy habit of a more tender mother. When Catholic civilization is no longer in the ascendant and begins to decline, the family relation immediately becomes impaired, its constitution vitiated, its elements disunited, and all its ties enfeebled. The father and mother whom God had united in the bonds of affection, substitute for this sacred tie a severe formality; while the children lose that filial reverence enjoined upon them by God, and a sacrilegious familiarity usurps its place. The ties which unite the family are loosened, debased, and profaned. Finally, they become obliterated, the family disperses, and is lost in the circles of the clubs and places of amusement.

The history of the family may be traced in a few

words. The divine family is the exemplar and model of the human family, and all its persons are eternal. The spiritual human family, which most closely approaches the divine in perfection, exists through all time. Between the father and mother in the natural human family the tie lasts during life; and between them and their children it is prolonged many years. But in the human anti-Catholic family the relation between the father and mother lasts only some years; between them and the children only some months; in the artificial family of clubs only a day; and in that of places of amusement but for a moment.

In this, as in many other things, duration is the measure of perfection. Between the divine family and the human family of the cloister, we find the same proportion as between time and eternity. When we compare the spiritual family of the cloister, which is the most perfect human type, and the sensual life of the clubs, which is the most imperfect, we again find the same proportion, as between the brevity of a moment and the immensity of all time.

CHAPTER III.

Society as regulated by the Catholic Church.

A CRITERION for the sciences, for the affections, and for human actions being fixed on the one hand, and on the other political authority being established for society, and domestic authority for the family, it was necessary to establish another authority placed above all human standards, as the infallible exponent of all dogmas, the august depository of all criterions, which should be at the same time sacred and sanctifying; the word of God incarnate in the world, the light of God reflected in all directions, the divine charity inflaming all souls; an authority which would accumulate the infinite treasures of heavenly favors in the highest and most hidden tabernacle, in order to spread them over the world; which would be a place of refuge for sinful men, the refreshment of wearied souls, a source of living waters for the thirsty, bread of eternal life for the hungry, a light to the ignorant, and a guide to the wanderer; an authority which would admonish and instruct the powerful and protect and cherish the poor; an authority so elevated as to command all, and based upon a rock too firm to be moved by the stormy waves of life's restless ocean; an authority which, being founded on God, could not be subjected to the fluctuations incident to all human events, and which would be ever ancient and ever new, duration and progress, and under the especial protection of God.

This sovereign, infallible authority, created for eternity, and in which God is eternally pleased, is the holy Catholic, apostolic, and Roman Church; the mystical body of our Lord, blessed spouse of the Word, whose teachings to the world are the direct inspirations of the Holy Ghost; and which, being placed as it were between heaven and earth, exchanges the prayers of her children for celestial gifts, and unceasingly offers to the Father, for the salvation of the world, the most precious blood of the Son, as a perpetual sacrifice and a most perfect holocaust.

It would not be in accordance with the infinite wisdom of God, who does all things in a complete and perfect manner, to give the truth to the world, and then, re-entering into an eternal repose, leave it exposed to the inroads of time, and subjected to the presumptuous disputes of men. Hence he conceived from all eternity the idea of his Church, which shone forth in the world, in the plenitude of time, resplendent with that high perfection and sovereign beauty that always exist in the divine mind. Since then, placed on a rocky eminence in the tempestuous sea of life, she stands a luminous beacon to the mariner. She knows in what consists our safety and in what our danger, our first beginning and our last end; what will cause the salvation and what the condemnation of mankind; and she alone knows it. The only guide of souls, the sole illuminator of minds, the sole director of the will, the sole stimulator and purifier of the affections, she moves hearts, and moves them by the grace of the Holy Ghost. In her is neither sin, error, nor weakness; no stain rests on her robe; for her tribulations are triumphs, and the fury of the tempest but serves to lead her into a secure harbor.

All in her is spiritual, supernatural, and miraculous. She is spiritual, because her sway is over the mind, and her weapons of defense and of victory are spiritual; she is supernatural, because she disposes everything with regard to a supernatural end, and because it is her mission to make men holy, and supernaturally sanctify them; she is miraculous, because all the great mysteries were ordained for her institution, and because her existence, her duration, her conquests are a perpetual miracle. The Father sent his Son upon the earth, the Son sent his apostles to the world, and the Holy Ghost to his apostles; so that in the fullness as in the beginning of time, in the institution of the Church as in the creation of the universe, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost assisted. Twelve sinners proclaim mysterious truths, which convulse the earth and enkindle in her veins a hitherto unknown fire. A mighty whirlwind envelops nations, carries away the people, subverts empires, and confounds races. Mankind sweat blood under the pressure of a divine force. But out of all this distress, this confusion of races, of nations, of people—out of these devouring tempests, and of this fire which consumes the earth—the world comes forth radiant and renovated, reposing at the feet of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gates of this mystical city of God lead in every direction, to signify her universal mission. "*Unam omnium Rempublicam agnoscimus mundum,*" says Tertullian. For her there exists neither barbarian nor Greek, neither Jew nor Gentile. In her dwell the Scythian and the Roman, the Persian and the Macedonian, those who come from the east and the west, the north and the south. Her holy mission is to teach

wisdom; her sway and her priesthood are both universal; her subjects are kings and emperors, and her heroes are saints and martyrs; her invincible soldiery are the brave men who have subdued their carnal inclinations and irregular desires. It is God who invisibly presides over her grave deliberations, and her most sacred councils. When her pontiffs speak to the earth, their infallible word has already been recorded by God in the heavens.

The Church rests upon no human foundation. After having rescued the world from an abyss of corruption, she has brought it forth out of the darkness of barbarism. She has always fought the battles of the Lord, and, having suffered much tribulation, has always proved victorious. Heretics deny her doctrine, but she triumphs over heretics. Every human passion rebels against her empire, but she triumphs over all human passions. The final struggles of paganism were directed against her, but paganism lies vanquished at her feet. Kings and emperors persecute her, but the constancy of her martyrs overcomes the ferocity of their executioners. She only contends for her sacred liberty, and the world accords her sovereign power.

Under her most prolific rule the sciences have flourished, manners have been reformed, laws perfected, and all the great domestic, political, and social institutions have had a rich and spontaneous growth. Her anathemas have only been directed against impious men, rebellious nations, and tyrannical kings.

She has, in the defense of liberty, opposed those kings who have made a despotic use of power, and she has maintained the principle of authority in opposition to those nations who have attempted to effect an abso-

lute emancipation. Everywhere she has upheld the rights of God and the inviolability of his holy commandments. There is no truth that she has failed to proclaim, nor error that she has not anathematized. Liberty in truth she has always held sacred, but liberty in error is as hateful to her as error itself. She looks upon error as born and existing without rights, and she has therefore pursued, resisted, and extirpated it in the most hidden recesses of the human mind. As the perpetual illegitimacy and ignoring of error has been a religious dogma, so has it also been a political dogma, proclaimed in all ages and by all rulers. All have considered as beyond the pale of discussion the principle on which their power rested; all have denounced as error, and have deprived of all legitimacy and right, any principle opposed to that principle. They have all considered themselves infallible in this judgment, without appeal, and if all political errors have not been condemned, it is not because the conscience of mankind recognizes the legitimacy of any error, but because it has never admitted, in any human potentates, the privilege of infallibility in the qualification of error. As a consequence of this radical incapacity of human potentates to discriminate error, has arisen the principle of freedom of discussion, the foundation of modern constitutions. This principle does not suppose in society, as might appear at first sight, an incomprehensible and culpable impartiality between truth and error; it is based upon two other hypotheses, one of which is true and the other false. The first supposition is, that those who govern are not infallible, which is an evident truth; the other is based on the infallibility of discussion, which is false in every point of view. Infallibility cannot result

from discussion, if it does not previously exist in those who argue; and it cannot exist in those who argue, if it does not also exist in those who govern. If infallibility is an attribute of human nature, it is found in the first as well as in the second; but if it is not an attribute of human nature, neither the first nor the second possess it. Either all are infallible or all are fallible. The question then is to decide whether human nature is fallible or infallible; which question resolves itself into this other: whether human nature is in a sound condition or vitiated and fallen.

According to the first supposition, infallibility, an essential quality of a sound understanding, is the first and greatest of all its attributes, and from this principle the following consequences naturally follow: If the reason of man is infallible because it is sound, it cannot err because it is infallible; if it cannot err because it is infallible, then all men possess the truth, no matter whether we consider them collectively or separately. If all men possess the truth, either singly or collectively considered, then all their affirmations and negations are necessarily identical. If all their affirmations and negations are identical, discussion is inconceivable and absurd.

According to the second supposition, fallibility is a weakness of human reason, and is the first and greatest of human imperfections; and proceeding from this principle are the following consequences: If the reason of man is fallible because it is infirm, it can never be certain of discerning the truth, because it is fallible; if it can never be sure of the truth because it is fallible, then this uncertainty is an essential characteristic of all men, whether we consider them singly or in the aggre-

gate. If this uncertainty exists in all men, collectively or individually, all their affirmations and negations must be a contradiction in terms, because they are necessarily uncertain; and if all their affirmations and negations are uncertain, discussion becomes absurd and inconceivable.

Catholicism alone, as on all other points, has given a satisfactory and legitimate solution of this fearful problem. Catholicism teaches the following doctrine: Man comes from God, and sin from man; ignorance and error, as well as sorrow and death, come from sin; fallibility comes from ignorance, and from fallibility results the absurdity of discussion. But it adds, man was redeemed; which does not mean that by the act of redemption, and without any effort on his part, he was delivered from the slavery of sin; but it signifies, that through the redemption he acquired the power to break these chains, and, ennobled and restored, to convert ignorance, error, sorrow, and death into means of sanctification by the proper use of his regained liberty. For this end, God instituted his Church, immortal, impeccable, and infallible. The Church represents human nature without sin, such as it came from the hands of God, full of original justice and of sanctifying grace; and this is the reason why she is infallible, and not subject to death. God has established his Church upon the earth, in order that man, aided by grace, which is granted to all, may make himself worthy of having the blood, which was shed for him on Calvary, applied to him, by a free submission to its divine inspirations. By faith he will be enabled to vanquish ignorance, by patience he will overcome sorrow, and resignation will conquer death; while death,

sorrow, and ignorance only exist in order to be subdued by faith, resignation, and patience.

It follows, then, that the Church alone has the right of affirmation and negation, and that there can exist no right to deny what she asserts, or to assert what she denies. When society forgot the doctrinal decisions of the Church, and consulted either the press or the pulpit, the magazines or the public assemblies, as to what was truth or what was error, then all minds confounded truth and error, and society was plunged into a region of shadows and illusions. Finding it to be an imperative necessity to submit to truth and withdraw from error, yet finding it impossible to define what is error and what is truth, she forms a catalogue of conventional and arbitrary truths, and another of pretended errors; and then she attempts to dictate as to what is to be believed, and what condemned. But she does not know, so great is her blindness, that in asserting some things and denying others, she neither believes nor rejects anything; or, if she condemns and adores anything, she condemns and adores herself.

The doctrinal intolerance of the Church has saved the world from chaos. It has placed political, domestic, social, and religious truths beyond controversy. These primitive and sacred truths are not subject to discussion, because they are the basis of all discussion. The moment there arises a doubt about them, that moment the mind becomes unsettled, being lost between truth and error, and the clear mirror of human reason is obscured. This serves to explain why society, whenever emancipated from the Church, has only wasted its time in ephemeral and sterile disputes, which can only result in complete skepticism, because complete skepticism is

their point of departure. The Church, and the Church alone, has the sacred privilege of profitable and fruitful discussions. The Cartesian theory, according to which truth proceeds from doubt, as Minerva from the head of Jupiter, is at variance with that divine law, which regulates the generation of ideas as well as that of bodies, and in virtue of which contraries perpetually exclude their contraries, and like always begets like. As a consequence of this law, doubt always produces doubt, and skepticism begets skepticism, just as truth is derived from faith and science from truth.

To the profound comprehension of this law of the intellectual generation of ideas we are indebted for the wonders of Catholic civilization. We owe to this marvellous civilization all that we contemplate that is worthy of admiration. Its theologians, even humanly considered, surpass all the modern and ancient philosophers; its doctors astonish by the immensity of their learning; and its historians eclipse those of antiquity, by the comprehensiveness and generalization of their views. The *City of God*, by St. Augustin, is even now the most profound history that human genius, illumined by the light of Catholicism, has ever presented to the admiration of mankind. The decrees of its councils, aside from divine inspiration, are the most perfect monument of human prudence. The canon law is superior in wisdom to the Roman and feudal laws. Who surpasses St. Thomas in science, St. Augustin in genius, Bossuet in majesty, St. Paul in power? Who is a better poet than Dante? Who equals Shakspeare? Who excels Calderon? Who, like Raphael, has ever clothed canvas with inspiration and life?

The Egyptian pyramids prove to the world the former

existence of a great and barbarous civilization; the Grecian statues and temples exhibit a graceful, ephemeral, and brilliant cultivation; the Roman monuments show that a great nation created them; but the cathedral, in which is united so great majesty to so great beauty, so much grandeur to so much taste, such grace joined to such surpassing loveliness, unity so severe to so rich a variety, such a combination of moderation and boldness, such mellowness of tint and roundness of outline to such marvelous harmony between silence and light, shadows and colors,—this spectacle exhibits the most astonishing of civilizations and the greatest people of history; a people who combine the Egyptian grandeur, Grecian brilliancy, and Roman strength; and, added to all these, that which is beyond all strength, brilliancy and grandeur, the immortal and the perfect.

If we pass from the contemplation of the sciences, letters, and the arts, to the study of those institutions which the Church animates with her breath, nourishes with her substance, upholds with her spirit, and illumines with her light, we behold a spectacle equally surprising and wonderful. Catholicism, which refers all things to God, and orders all things in reference to God, and thus converts the most entire freedom into a constitutive element of order, and infinite variety into a constitutive element of infinite unity, is, by its very nature, the religion of vigorous associations, which are closely united through sympathetic affinities.

In Catholicism, man never stands alone; so that, in order to find a man severed from all ties, and consigned to that dismal and gloomy solitude where he becomes an embodiment of ignorance and pride, we must go beyond its confines. In the vast circle described by limits

so immense, men live grouped together, in obedience to the impulsion of their most noble affinities. These groups are connected one with the other, and all are united in a more general and comprehensive body, and move in submission to the law of a sovereign harmony. The child is born, and lives in the domestic association, which is the divine foundation of human associations. Families are grouped among themselves in conformity with the law of their origin, and, assembled in this manner, they form superior groups, which are called classes. The different classes have each their particular functions. Some cultivate the arts of peace, others those of war; some acquire glory, others administer justice; while others are devoted to industrial pursuits. Out of these natural groups others spontaneously arise, composed of those who seek glory by the same path, those who are devoted to the same industrial avocations, and those who have the same professions. These various groups are arranged in classes, and all these classes, hierarchically arranged among themselves, constitute the State, a vast association, of sufficient amplitude for all. This is the social point of view.

Considered in a political aspect, families are associated into various groups; each group of families constitutes a municipality, and each municipality is, for the families that compose it, a participation in common in the right of worshiping God, administering their own goods, providing nourishment for the living, and burial for the dead. For this reason each municipality has its temple, the symbol of its religious unity; a municipal hall, the symbol of its administrative unity; its territory, the symbol of its jurisdictional and civil unity; and its cemetery, the symbol of its right of sepulture.

This combination forms a municipal unity, which also has its symbol in the right to take up arms and display its banner. A confederation of municipalities forms a national unity, which in its turn is symbolized by a throne, and personified by a king. Above all these magnificent associations is that of all the Catholic nations, with their Christian princes fraternally united in the bosom of the Church. This perfect and sovereign association is one in its chief, and manifold in its members. Its variety is in the faithful dispersed throughout the world; while its oneness is in that holy chair at Rome, which is all radiant and encircled by divine splendors. This high chair is the central point of humanity, as it represents diversity through its general councils, and unity through the common father of the faithful, the Vicar of Jesus Christ.

The Church, then, is the supreme variety, the sovereign unity, the most excellent society. The various discordant elements of human societies are here concordant. The pontiff is king, both by divine right and by human right. The divine right shines forth in the institution itself; the human right is chiefly manifested in the designation of the person. The designation of the sovereign pontiff is made by men, but it is God who ratifies their choice. As the pontifical dignity combines the human and divine sanction, so does it embrace the advantages of the elective and the hereditary monarchy. It has the popularity of the one and the inviolability and prestige of the other. Similar to the first, the pontifical monarchy is limited on every side; and, like the second, the limitations by which it is restrained do not come from without, but from within; they are not forced, but voluntary. These limitations have their

foundation in an ardent charity, a wonderful humility, and an infinite prudence. What a surprising monarchy, in which the king, being elected, is venerated; and in which, though all are eligible to the supreme command, yet the sovereign power remains intact and undisturbed by domestic wars or civil strife! Where can we find a monarch in which the king chooses the electors, who in their turn elect the king, where all are elected and all are electors? Who does not here perceive the high and hidden mystery of unity perpetually begetting diversity, and diversity perpetually resolving itself into unity? Who does not see here a representation of the concurrence of all things? And who can fail to discover that this wonderful monarchy represents him who, being both true God and true man, unites in himself divinity and humanity, unity and variety?

The occult law which regulates the generation of unity and diversity, must necessarily be the highest, the most universal, the most excellent, and the most mysterious of all laws; because God has subjected all things to it, human and divine, created and uncreated, visible and invisible. It is one in essence, but infinite in its manifestations. All that exists seems to have being only in order to manifest it, and each separate existence reveals it under a new form. In one form it exists in God; in another manner in God made man; in another in his Church; in another in the family; in another in the universe; but it exists in all things in the whole and in each part of the whole. On the one hand it is an invisible and incomprehensible mystery; on the other, without ceasing to be a mystery, it is a visible phenomenon and a palpable fact.

Near the king, whose province is to reign with a sov-

ereign independence and an absolute power, there is a perpetual senate, composed of princes who hold their office from God. This perpetual and sacred senate is invested with a governing power; and yet this power is exercised in such a manner as neither to restrict, to diminish, or eclipse the supreme power of the monarch. The Church presents the only example of a monarchy remaining in continual contact with a powerful oligarchy, and preserving intact the plenitude of its rights; and hers is the only oligarchy which has remained in contact with an absolute monarch, without turbulence and rebellion.

In the same manner as the princes of the Church come after their chief, so after the princes come the priests, who are charged with a most sacred ministry. This wonderful society entirely differs in its arrangements from all human associations. In the latter, the distinctions existing in the social hierarchy are so great that those of humble condition are tempted to rebel, and the elevated in rank are disposed to tyrannize.

In the Church the disposition of things is such that neither tyranny nor rebellion is possible. Here the dignity of the subject is so great, that the greatness of the prelate is rather on account of that which he holds in common with the subject, than in consequence of any special prerogative which he enjoys as prelate. The peculiar dignity of the bishops does not consist in their being princes, nor that of the pontiff in his being king; but it is in this, that both pontiff and bishops are priests like their subjects. Their highest and incommunicable privilege is not in their authority, but in the power to make the Son of God obedient to their voice, to offer the Son to the Father as an unbloody sacrifice for the sins of the

world, in their being the channels through which men receive the grace of God, and in the supreme and incommunicable right to remit and retain sins. In a word, the highest dignity is not the privilege of a portion, but that which belongs alike to all; this supreme dignity is neither the episcopacy nor the pontifical authority, but that of priest.

If we take an isolated view of the pontifical authority, the Church would seem to be an absolute monarchy. If we consider by itself its apostolical constitution, it would seem to be a powerful oligarchy. If we regard on the one side the dignity common to prelates and priests, and on the other the wide distinction between priests and the people, it would seem to be an immense aristocracy. But when we behold the vast multitude of the faithful spread throughout the world, and see priests, bishops, and pontiffs employed in their service, and that nothing is ordained in this great society for the aggrandizement of those who govern, but for the salvation of those who obey; when we consider the consoling dogma of the essential equality of souls; when we remember that the Saviour of mankind suffered the torments of the cross for each and every man; when the principle is proclaimed that it is the duty of the good pastor to die for his flock if necessary; when we reflect that the ultimate object of the different ministries of the priesthood is the reunion of the faithful,—the Church viewed in this light appears like an immense democracy, in the most glorious acceptation of this word, or at least like a society instituted for an end essentially popular and democratic.

And, what is most surprising of all is, that the Church really is all that it appears to be. In other societies

these various forms are incompatible with each other, or if by accident they are united, they invariably lose, by being so, many of their essential properties. A monarchy cannot exist in conjunction with an oligarchy or an aristocracy, without the first losing much that naturally appertains to absolutism, nor can the second exist without a loss of power. A monarchy, an oligarchy, and an aristocracy cannot coexist with a democracy, without the latter losing its exclusive and absorbing character, as an aristocracy loses its power, an oligarchy its aggressive tendencies, a monarchy its absolutism. Their reciprocal relations cause their common annihilation. It is only in that supernatural society, the Church, that we find all these forms harmoniously combined without any diminution of their original purity and their primitive grandeur. This pacific combination of antagonistic forces, and of forms of government whose only law, humanly speaking, is to oppose each other, presents the most beautiful spectacle the world can offer. If the government of the Church could be defined, we might define it as an immense aristocracy that wields an oligarchic power, which is placed in the hands of an absolute king, whose peculiar function is to offer himself perpetually as a holocaust for the salvation of his people. This would indeed be the most surprising of definitions, as that which it defines is the greatest marvel of history!

To briefly recapitulate what has been said, we may venture to assert, without fear of being contradicted by facts, that through Catholicism all things have been regulated and made harmonious. This order and harmony as regards man, proves that Catholicism has subjected the passions to the will, the will to the understanding, the understanding to reason, reason to faith,

and faith to charity, in virtue of which man is renewed in God, and purified with an infinite love. With respect to the family, it shows that by Catholicism the three domestic persons have been definitively constituted, being united in one, and bound together by the happiest ties. It also proves, as regards rulers, that Catholicism has sanctified authority and obedience, and forever condemned tyranny and revolution. As relates to society, we likewise see the influence of Catholicism in putting a stop to the war of classes, in harmonizing the various social groups, and in introducing a spirit of union in place of that egotism and isolation which before existed, and in substituting charity for pride. With regard to the sciences, letters, and the arts, we find that mankind are indebted to Catholicism for the discovery of the true and the beautiful; of the true God and his divine splendor. And finally, we see that with Catholicism has appeared in the world a supernatural society, which is most excellent and perfect, and founded by God; a society preserved and assisted by God, and which is the perpetual depository of his eternal word, which nourishes the world with the bread of life, which can neither deceive nor be deceived, which teaches to all men the lessons of its divine Master, and is the perfect likeness of his divine excellence, the sublime exemplar and finished model of human societies.

In the following chapters we shall fully demonstrate that neither Christianity nor the Catholic Church (which is its positive expression) has been able to do such great things, to cause such marvelous changes, without the unceasing and supernatural action of God, who governs society supernaturally through his providence, and man through his grace.

CHAPTER IV.

Catholicism is Love.

THERE exists the same difference between the Catholic Church and the other societies spread throughout the world, as between natural and supernatural conceptions, and as between the human and the divine.

The pagan world considered society and the city as identical. For the Roman, society was Rome; and for the Athenian, it was Athens. Outside of Athens and of Rome were only a barbarous and rude people, who were coarse and unpolished, and unsocial by nature. Christianity not only revealed human society to man, but also another society, much higher and more excellent, whose immensity has neither bounds nor limits, whose citizens are the saints who triumph in heaven, the just who suffer in purgatory, and the Christians who combat on the earth.

If we carefully investigate the records of history, and meditate upon them, we shall discover with amazement that this gigantic conception cannot be explained by anything we find there recorded. It made its appearance alone, unexpectedly, and without antecedents. It came as a supernatural revelation, communicated to man supernaturally. The world received it at once, and without having perceived its coming; when it was seen, it was already come, when it was recognized at a glance, and as by inspiration. Who but God, who is love, could

teach those who combat here, that they are in communion with those who suffer in purgatory, and those who triumph in heaven? Who but God could unite in loving bonds the living and the dead, the just, saints, and sinners? Who but God could connect oceans so immense?

The law of unity and of variety, that law by excellence which is both human and divine, without which nothing can be explained, and which explains all things, is here shown to us in one of its most surprising manifestations. Diversity exists in heaven, since the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three persons; and this diversity is merged, without confusion, into unity; because the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and God is one. Diversity existed in the terrestrial paradise, because Adam and Eve were different persons; and this diversity is merged, without being blended, into unity, because Adam and Eve represent human nature, and human nature is one. In our Lord Jesus Christ there is diversity, because there is a conjunction of the divine nature on the one hand and the corporal and spiritual elements of his human nature on the other. The human and divine natures are merged, without being confounded, in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is only one in person. Finally, diversity also exists in the Church, because she is militant on earth, suffering in purgatory, and triumphant in heaven; and this diversity is merged, without being confounded, in our Lord Jesus Christ, the sole head of the universal Church; and who, as the only Son of the Father, is, like the Father, the symbol of a diversity of persons in a unity of essence: as he is also, in quality of God-man, the symbol of a diversity of essence in a unity of person; and, being at

the same time God-man and the Son of God, he is the symbol of all possible diversities and of infinite unity.

As supreme harmony consists in this, that the unity, out of which all diversity arises, and into which all diversity resolves itself, should be identical with itself in all its manifestations, it follows that it is always in virtue of one and the same law that diversity resolves itself into unity. The diversity of the Holy Trinity becomes one through love. Human diversity, composed of the father, the mother, and the son, becomes one through love. The human and divine natures become one, in our Lord Jesus Christ, through the incarnation of the Word in the womb of the Virgin, which is a mystery of love. The Church militant, the Church suffering, and the Church triumphant are one in our Lord Jesus Christ, through the prayers of Christians in heaven, whose petitions descend as a beneficent dew upon those who combat; and, through the prayers of the Church militant, whose efficacy falls like a revivifying shower upon those who suffer, for perfect prayer is the ecstasy of love. "God is charity; and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him." If God is charity, then charity is the infinite unity, because God is infinite unity. If he who has charity is in God, and God in him, then God may descend even unto man through charity, and man may ascend even unto God through charity; and all this, without confusion, and in such a manner that neither God, made man, loses his divine nature, nor man, made God, loses his human nature, man always remaining man, although he is God, and God always God, although he is man. All this is accomplished by means exclusively supernatural, that is, by means exclusively divine.

All nations have had some comprehension of this greatest of all Catholic dogmas; as they have possessed a knowledge more or less correct, more or less complete, of other Catholic dogmas. In every zone, in all ages, and among every human race, an immortal belief has been preserved of a future transformation, which will be so radical and supreme that it will forever unite the creature to the Creator, the human to the divine nature. Even in the paradisiacal era, the enemy of mankind spoke to our first parents of their being gods. Since the prevarication and the fall, this wonderful tradition has everywhere been prevalent, and every scholar will find traces of its existence in all theologies, however slight may be his investigations. The difference between the pure dogma, as preserved in Catholic theology, and the dogma as corrupted by human traditions, is in the manner in which this supreme transformation and sovereign end is attained. The angel of darkness did not deceive our first parents, when he affirmed that they would become as gods. The fraud consisted in hiding from them the supernatural way of love, and revealing to them the natural way of disobedience. The error committed by pagan theologians was not in asserting that humanity ought to be elevated to a union with God, but their error consisted in having considered the divine and human natures as nearly identical; while Catholicism regards them as essentially distinct, and arrives at unity through the supernatural deification of man. This pagan superstition is manifest in the divine honors paid to the earth, as the immortal and prolific mother of the gods; and likewise in the worship of various creatures, whom they confounded with their gods. Lastly, the difference between Pantheism and Catholicism is not, that the one

affirms and the other denies the deification of man, but that Pantheism asserts that man is God in virtue of his own nature; while Christianity teaches that man may become as God, supernaturally, through grace. Pantheism teaches that man, a part of the being which is God, is completely absorbed by the being of which he forms a part; while Catholicism teaches that man, even after being deified, that is to say, penetrated with the divine essence, yet preserves inviolate the individuality of his own existence. The respect which God has for human individuality, or, what is the same thing, for the free will of man, which is what constitutes his absolute and inviolable individuality, is so great, according to Catholic dogma, that God has been willing to divide with it the direction of all human associations, which are governed both by the freedom of man and by the divine counsel. Love is in its nature fruitful, and because it is fruitful, it engenders diversity without impairing its own unity; and because it is love, it resolves all things into one, without blending them. Love is, then, infinite variety and infinite unity. It is the sole law, the highest rule, the only way, the last end. Catholicism is love, because God is love. Only he who loves is Catholic, and only the Catholic learns the true nature of love, because he alone receives what he knows through supernatural and divine means.

CHAPTER V.

That our Lord Jesus Christ has not triumphed over the world by the sanctity of his doctrines, or by prophecies and miracles, but in spite of all these things.

THE Father is love, and through love he sent his Son into the world; the Son is love, and he sent the Holy Ghost through love; the Holy Ghost is love, and he inspires the Church perpetually with his love; the Church is love, and she will inflame the world with the same spirit of love. Those who do not comprehend, or who have forgotten this, are entirely ignorant of the supernatural and secret cause of evident and natural phenomena; of the invisible cause of all that is visible; of that which binds the temporal to the eternal; of the most secret impulses of the soul; and of the manner in which the Holy Spirit acts in man, Providence in society, and God in history.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not conquer the world by his wonderful doctrine. Had he only been a teacher of surprising tenets, the world would have admired him for a moment, and then forgotten both the doctrine and the man. Astonishing as was his doctrine, it was only embraced by a few among the common people, always despised by the greater portion of the Jewish nation, and was unknown to mankind during the life of the Master.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not conquer the world by his miracles. Among those who saw him change the

nature of things by his word alone, who saw him walk upon the waters, quiet the sea, calm the winds, and restore the dead to life, some called him God, others devil, and others again, a juggler and a magician.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not conquer the world because the ancient prophecies were fulfilled in him. The synagogue, which had the keeping of them, was not converted, nor the doctors who knew these prophecies by heart, nor the multitude who had learned them from the doctors.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not conquer the world by the power of truth. The essential truth of Christianity was in the Old as in the New Testament, as it is necessarily one, eternal, and the same. This truth, which existed forever in the mind of God, was revealed to man, instilled into his soul, and preserved in history, from the first promulgation of the divine word to the world. Yet the Old Testament, both in its eternal and essential teachings, and in what was secondary, local, and contingent, both in its dogmas and its rites, never passed beyond the territory of the chosen people of God. This people were many times guilty of rebellion, they persecuted their prophets, treated their doctors with derision, worshiped the idols of the heathen nations, made unlawful covenants with infernal spirits, gave themselves up, body and soul, to horrible and bloody superstitions; and, finally, when the Word became flesh, cursed him, denied him, and crucified him on Calvary. And while the Truth was crucified, which had been hidden in the ancient symbols, represented in the ancient types, announced by the prophets of old, and attested by striking prodigies and stupendous miracles; while this Truth came by its presence to explain the meaning of those

prodigies and of those stupendous miracles, in order to accomplish prophecy and teach the nations the signification of what was represented by ancient types and hidden in ancient symbols; at this very time error had spread over the whole world, and had obscured the entire horizon; and all this with the greatest rapidity, and unaided by prophets, symbols, types, and miracles. What a terrible lesson and memorable example for those who believe that the recondite and expansive force of truth will, in itself, suffice to prevail over the radical impotency of error throughout the world!

If our Lord Jesus Christ overcame the world, He did it in spite of being the Truth, in spite of being the one announced by the prophets of old, represented by ancient symbols, and prefigured by ancient types; He overcame it in spite of his prodigious miracles and most wonderful doctrine. No other doctrine than that of the Gospel could have triumphed with this immense mass of clearest testimony, irrefragable proof, and unanswerable argument. It is true that Mahometanism spread like a deluge over the African, Asiatic, and European continents, but there was nothing in it to embarrass its progress, and all its miracles, arguments, and proofs were established at the sword's point.

Fallen and corrupt man has not been made for the truth, nor the truth for him. Since man's prevarication, God has placed between truth and human reason an unconquerable and imperishable repugnance. Truth, by its very nature, claims supremacy, and cannot consent to solicit obedience as a favor; while, since he rebelled against God, man insists upon being governed by his own will, and refuses to receive any yoke imposed upon him without his consent. Therefore, when truth

is presented to him, he immediately denies it, and in so doing asserts his own absolute sovereignty. If he cannot deny it, he combats it, and in so doing strives to assert his own supremacy. If he conquers truth, he crucifies it; if he is conquered by it, he flies, and by flight he believes that he escapes from servitude; and in crucifying truth, he believes that he crucifies his tyrant.

There is, on the contrary, a secret and close affinity between human reason and absurdity. Sin has united them by the bonds of an indissoluble alliance. Absurdity triumphs over man, precisely because it possesses no right anterior and superior to human reason; man accepts it precisely on that account, because, having no right, it makes no pretensions. His will accepts it, because it is the child of his understanding; and his reason delights in it, because it is its own offspring, its own creation, and the living testimony of its creative power. In the act of its creation man resembles God, and he calls himself God; and if he is God after the manner of God, all the rest is but of little consequence to him. What matters it that the other be the God of truth, if he himself be the God of absurdity? At least he will be independent and sovereign like God. In worshipping his own work he will adore himself; and in exalting it he will exalt himself. You who aspire to subjugate people, to rule nations, and to control human reason, proclaim not that you are the depositaries of clear and evident truths; above all, beware of producing your proofs, if you have them, because the world will never acknowledge your authority, but will rather rebel against the rude yoke, which such evidence would impose upon them. Proclaim, on the contrary, that you possess an

argument which will disprove a mathematical truth, which will demonstrate that two and two do not make four, but five; that there is no God, or that man is God; that the world has until now been the slave of shameful superstitions; that the wisdom of ages is simply pure ignorance; that all revelation is an imposture; that all government is tyranny and all obedience slavery; that beauty is deformity and deformity most beautiful; that good is evil and evil is good; that the devil is God and God is the devil; that beyond this world there is neither hell nor heaven; that the world we inhabit is, and has been, a real hell, but that man can transform it into a true paradise, which it is destined to become; that liberty, equality, and fraternity are dogmas incompatible with the Christian superstition; that theft is an imprescriptible right, and that property is theft; that order does not exist except in anarchy, and that there is no anarchy without order. Announce these propositions, and you may rest assured that, at the mere assertion of such things, the world will wonder at your wisdom, and, fascinated by such a display of science, will listen to your opinions with the greatest attention and respect. If, in addition to the good sense you will display in offering to prove these statements, you make no attempt to prove any one of them; or if, as the proof of these blasphemies and affirmations, you simply reiterate the very same things, then the world will praise you beyond measure, and raise you to the skies. If, after all this, you direct attention to your good faith, which does not fear to present things as they are, unaided by the vain show of futile reasons and useless historical antecedents or miracles, and thus give a public testimony of your belief that truth will triumph of itself; if, finally, you

challenge a refutation of your statements, no matter from what quarter it may come—then the world, in an ecstasy of astonishment, will unanimously proclaim your magnanimity, your greatness, and your success, and will pronounce you pious, happy, and triumphant!

I know not if there exists anything under the sun, more vile and despicable than mankind, outside of the Catholic way.

In the scale of degradation and vileness, the multitude who are oppressed by tyrants and deceived by sophists are the most degraded and abject; the sophists who deceive them rank next; and the tyrants, who sway a bloody scepter over both, are, to the eye of the careful observer, the least debased and contemptible of all. The first idolaters had scarcely abandoned God, when they delivered themselves up to the Babylonian tyrants. We see ancient paganism going from one abyss to another, from sophism to sophism, from tyrant to tyrant, until it falls into the hands of Caligula, a horrid and frightful monster in human shape, the victim of insensate desires and bestial inclinations. Modern paganism commenced by self-worship in the person of a prostitute, to be crushed at the feet of Marat, the cynical and bloody tyrant, and the cruel Robespierre, who, with his inexorable and ferocious instincts, was the supreme embodiment of human vanity. The new form of paganism is destined to fall into a still more profound and obscure abyss. Already, perhaps, from under the depths of social corruption, the monster gains strength, who will one day impose upon society a still heavier and more shameless yoke than any it has as yet borne.

CHAPTER VI.

That our Lord Jesus Christ has triumphed over the world exclusively by supernatural means.

WHEN I shall be raised on high, that is to say, on the cross, then will I draw all things unto me; or, in other words, then will my dominion and my victory over the world be assured. Our Lord revealed to his disciples, in these solemnly prophetic words, how little availed for the conversion of the world the prophecies which announced his coming, the miracles which manifested his omnipotence, the sanctity of his doctrine, the testimony of his glory; and how powerful in effecting that object would be his immense love, as made known to the world by his crucifixion and death.

*“Ego veni in nomine Patris mei, et non accipitis me: si alius venerit in nomine suo, illum accipietis.”** In these words our Lord announced the natural triumph of error over truth, of evil over good. They contain the secret of the universal forgetfulness of God, of the terrible propagation of pagan superstitions, and of the gloomy darkness prevailing over the world. They also foretell the spread of error among men, the tribulations of the Church, the persecutions of the just, the victories of the sophists, and the popularity of blasphemers. These words are a summary of history, with all its scandals, all its heresies, and all its revolutions. They

* John, v. 4, 3.

also explain why the Jewish people, when called upon to choose between Barabbas and Jesus, condemned Jesus and liberated Barabbas; and why the world to-day, having the power of choice between Catholic theology and socialism, chooses socialism and rejects Catholicism; and why human discussions result in the denial of the evident and in the acceptance of the absurd.

We find included in these truly wonderful words the secret of all that our fathers witnessed, of all that our children will witness, and of all that we ourselves see. No; it is impossible for any one to go to the Son, that is, to discover the truth, if the Father do not call him. These are profound words, which attest at the same time the omnipotence of God, and the radical, invincible impotence of mankind.

But the Father will call, and the nations will respond; the Son will be raised on the cross, and will draw all men unto him. This is the saving promise of the supernatural triumph of truth over error, of good over evil. This is the promise which will be fulfilled even to the end of time.

*“Pater meus usque modo operatur: et ego operor. Sicut Pater. . . . sic et filius quos vult vivificat.”**
“Expedit vobis ut ego vadam: si enim non abiero, Paraclitus non veniet ad vos: si autem abiero mittam eum ad vos.”†

Neither the tongues of all the doctors, nor the pens of all the scholars, would suffice to explain all that is embraced in these words. They proclaim the sovereign virtue of grace, and the supernatural, invisible, and permanent action of the Holy Ghost. In them we find the

* John, v. 17, 21.

† John, xvi. 7.

Catholic supernaturalism, with its infinite fecundity and its unspeakable marvels, and, above all, an explanation of the greatest and most inconceivable of wonders—the triumph of the cross.

Christianity, humanly speaking, must of necessity have succumbed: First, because it was the truth; and secondly, because it adduced in its support the most eloquent testimony, wonderful miracles, and irrefragable proofs. Mankind have never failed to protest against all and each one of these things; and it was not probable, nor credible, nor in any way possible, that they should fail to protest against and oppose all these things when united. Hence their blasphemies, protests, and rebellions.

But, the Just One was crucified through love, shed his blood through love, and gave up his life through love; and this infinite love, this most precious blood, merited for the world the coming of the Holy Spirit. Then all things were changed by faith, because reason was conquered by faith, and nature by grace.

How admirable in his works is God! how wonderful in his designs! how sublime in his thoughts! Man and truth were antagonistic; the indomitable pride of the one could not brook the rude and imperious evidence of the other. God tempered this evidence of truth, by veiling it in a transparent cloud, and he sent faith to man, and added to the gift this compact, saying, "I will divide my power with thee; I will tell thee what thou hast to believe, and I will give thee strength to receive my word, but I will not oppress thy sovereign will with the weight of evidence. I will help thee to save thyself, but I will leave thee the power to lose thyself. Work out thy salvation with me, or, unaided

by me, lose thyself if thou wilt. I will not deprive thee of what I have given to thee, and the day that I created thee out of nothing I gave to thee free will." Such was the pact that God made with man, which, by the grace of God, was freely accepted by him; and in this way the dogmatical obscurity of Catholicism saved its historical evidence from certain shipwreck. Faith, having a greater conformity than evidence with human reason, saved this reason from destruction. Truth had to be proposed by faith, in order to be accepted by man, who is naturally disposed to rebel against the tyranny of evidence.

The same Spirit that indicates to us what we must believe, and gives us the strength to accept it, likewise makes known to us what we must do, gives us the wish to perform it, and assists us in the performance. The wretchedness of man is so great, his abjection so profound, his ignorance so absolute, and his impotency so radical, that he cannot of himself form a good intention, nor plan any great design, nor conceive an earnest desire of anything that will please God or save his soul. On the other hand, his dignity is so great, his nature so noble, his origin so excellent, his end so glorious, that God himself thinks with his thought, sees with his eyes, walks with his feet, and works with his hands. It is God who supports man that he may walk, upholds him that he may not falter, and gives his angels charge over him, that he may not fall. And if, notwithstanding all this, he should fall, He lifts him up, restores him, gives him the wish to persevere, and aids him to do so. For this reason, St. Augustin says, we believe that no one finds the way of salvation unless God calls him, and that no one after being called performs works unto sal-

vation, if God does not aid him. In effect, God thus speaks in the gospel of St. John, xv. 4, 5: "*Manete in me et ego in vobis. Sicut palmes non potest ferre fructum à semetipso, nisi manserit in vite; sic nec vos, nisi in me manseritis. Ego sum vitis: vos palmites; qui manet in me, et ego in eo, hic fert fructum multum: quia sine me nihil potestis facere.*" The Apostle, in the second epistle to the Corinthians, iii. 4, 5, says: "*Fiduciam autem talem habemus per Christum ad Deum, non quod sufficientes simus cogitare aliquid à nobis quasi ex nobis: sed sufficientia nostra ex Deo est.*" Holy Job confessed the same radical impotency of man in the affair of salvation, when he said, (ch. xiv.): "Who can make him clean, that is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not Thou who only art?" Moses says, (Exodus, ch. xxxiv.): "No man of himself is innocent before Thee." St. Augustin, in the inimitable book of his *Confessions*, addressing God, says: "Lord, give me grace to do what thou directest, and direct what seems best unto thee." So that in the same manner that God declares to me what I must believe, and gives me strength to believe it, he declares to me what I must do, and gives me grace to perform what he has ordained.

What mind can comprehend, what tongue declare, what pen describe, the manner in which God performs these wonderful prodigies in man; and how he leads him in the way of salvation with mercy and justice, sweetness and power? Who can define the boundaries of this spiritual empire, between the divine will and the free will of man? Who can explain how they co-operate without confusion, and without impairing each other? Only one thing do I know, O Lord, that poor and humble as I am, and great and powerful as thou art, thou

respectest me as much as thou lovest me, and thou lovest me as much as thou respectest me. I know that thou wilt not abandon me to myself, because, without thy aid, I can do nothing but forget thee and lose myself: and I know that thou extendest to me a helping hand in so mild, so loving, and so tender a manner, that I do not feel its weight. Thou art as the gentle zephyr and as the strong north wind. Thou compellest me as the north wind, and I move toward thee freely, as if attracted by the gentle breeze. Thou urgest me to advance by the force of a potent impulsion, but thou dost not constrain me except by entreaty. It is I who act, and yet thou dost act in me. Thou comest to my door, and sweetly callest me, and if I do not answer, thou waitest, and again thou dost call. I know that I can refuse to admit thee, and lose myself; and I can likewise receive thee, and save myself. But I also know that I cannot answer thee if thou dost not call me, and that when I answer thee, I reply as thou instructest me; thine being the invitation, and thine and mine being the response. I know that I can do nothing without thee, that I act by thee, and that my acts are meritorious. But if I merit, it is by thy aid, as it is through thy aid I have been enabled to act. When thou rewardest me because my works are meritorious, and when I merit on account of my good works, thou givest me three graces: the grace of recompense, with which thou requitest the grace of merit, which thou gavest me, and which is the reward of the grace by which I was enabled to act through thee. Thou art like the mother, and I am as the infant, which the mother encourages to walk, extending her hand that it may do so, and when it makes the attempt embraces it, because it walks guided

by her hand. I know that if I write, it is because thou hast inspired me with the desire to do so, and that I only write that which thou teachest me, or permittest me to write; I believe that he who attempts to accomplish anything without thee, neither knoweth thee, nor is he a Christian.

I beg that my readers will pardon a laic and a secular for daring to enter upon the abstruse and thorny question of grace. But all must acknowledge, notwithstanding, that the discussion of this vexed question was an imperative exigency, arising from the very grave subject that I have just treated in the preceding chapters. I attempted to give a proper explanation of that prodigy—ever ancient and ever new—the powerful action that Christianity has exercised in the world, in order to understand, through it, the no less stupendous and prodigious mystery of the power it possesses of transforming human societies. The prodigy of its propagation and its triumph is not due to historical proofs, to prophetic predictions, or to the sanctity of its doctrines. In the condition to which man was reduced by the prevarication and the fall, all these were circumstances rather fitted to embarrass Christianity than to carry it triumphant to the remotest corners of the earth. Neither had miracles any part in working this prodigy, because, although considered in themselves, they certainly are supernatural, yet, as exterior evidence, they only constitute a natural proof, subjected to the same conditions as other human testimony. The propagation and the triumph of Christianity are supernatural facts, because its propagation and triumph have taken place in spite of its containing within itself all the elements which would have impeded its advancement and victory. As

supernatural facts they could not be legitimately explained, without referring to a cause which, in its nature supernatural, must have had an exterior manifestation in conformity with its own essence, that is, supernatural. This cause, which is supernatural in itself and supernatural in its action, is grace.

Grace was merited for us by our Lord when he suffered a frightful death on the cross, and the Apostles received it, when the Holy Ghost, the author of all grace and of all sanctification, descended upon them. The Holy Ghost infused into the Apostles the grace which was merited for us by the death of the Son, through the compassion of the Father. The Holy Trinity in this manner effected the ineffable work of our salvation, as before it had created the world.

This helps to explain two things, which otherwise would be quite unintelligible, namely, why it was that the Apostles performed greater miracles than their Divine Master, and why their miracles were productive of greater results than those of our Lord, as he himself repeatedly and on different occasions foretold to them. The reason is that, during the prolongation of ages, extending from the days of Adam to the end of time, the universal redemption of mankind was to be the price of the bloody tragedy on the cross; and until this sacrifice was consummated, the gates of the heavenly mansions were firmly closed against the unfortunate race of Adam.

In the fullness of time, the Spirit of God descended upon the Apostles like a whirlwind, under the form of tongues of fire. Then it came to pass that, without any transition whatever, they were instantly and completely renewed, by the action of a supernatural and divine

power. The Apostles were the first to experience this change. They had not seen, and their eyes were opened; they had not comprehended, and they were enlightened; they were ignorant, and they became wise; their language had been vulgar, and now they discoursed of wonderful things. The malediction of Babel was removed. Until then, each nation had spoken its own tongue; the Apostles spoke them all without confusion. They had been pusillanimous, and they became courageous; they had been cowardly, and they became intrepid; they had been indolent, and they became diligent. They had forsaken their Master for the flesh and the world, and now they abandoned the world and the flesh for their Master; they had deserted the cross to save their lives, and now they gave their lives to embrace the cross. They died in their members, that their souls might live, and be renewed in God; they ceased to be as men, and lived like angels; they no longer lived a human life.

As the Holy Spirit transformed the Apostles, the Apostles transformed the world; yet not they in truth, but the invincible spirit that was infused into them. The world had seen God, and had not known him; and, now that he was no longer with it, it acknowledged him. It had not believed in his word, and, now that he no longer spoke to it, it believed in his word. It had witnessed his miracles in vain, and, now that he had gone to his Father, it received them as true. It had crucified Jesus, and now it adored him whom it had crucified. It had worshiped idols, and now it destroyed them. What it had considered as fallacious arguments, it now assented to as invincible and victorious truths. Its profound hatred was changed into love.

He who has no idea of grace, has no idea of Christianity; and he who takes no heed of the providence of God, is in the most complete ignorance of all things. Providence, understood in its most general acceptation, is the care of the Creator over all things created. Things exist, because God created them; but they would cease to exist without his constant protection, which is truly an unceasing creation. That which, previous to its creation, had in itself no necessity of existence, has no inherent power of continuance after its creation. God alone is life, and the reason of life; being, and the reason of being; subsistence, and the reason of subsistence. Nothing exists, nothing lives, and nothing subsists of itself. Outside of God, these supreme attributes have no existence. God does not resemble the artist who, after making a picture, leaves, abandons, and forgets his work; nor does that which God creates subsist like the painting, which subsists of itself. God created things in a more sovereign manner, and after their creation they depend on him in a more substantial and more excellent way. Those which belong to the natural order, to the supernatural, and also those which, out of the common, natural, and supernatural order are called, and really are, miraculous, though they cease not to have points of difference, under the distinct laws which govern them, still retain in common their absolute dependence on the divine will. We do not affirm all that may be affirmed with regard to fountains and trees, when we assert that the former flow and the latter bear fruit, because this is their nature. Things possess no inherent virtue of their own, independent of the will of their Creator, but only a certain determined mode of their existence, which leaves them

in an unceasing dependence upon the will of the sovereign Maker and divine Architect. The fountains flow and the trees bear fruit, because God has so ordained them through a positive law, and he orders their course now, as in the day of their creation, because he sees that it is good to do so. Consequently, we perceive how mistaken are those persons who seek the ultimate explanation of events, either in their secondary causes, which exist entirely under the general and particular care of God, or in chance, which has no existence whatever. God alone is creator of all that exists, and preserver of all that subsists, and the author of all that happens, as we learn from these words of Ecclesiasticus, xi. 14: "*Bona et mala, vita et mors, paupertas et honestas, à Deo sunt.*" For this reason, St. Basil says, that to refer all to God, is the sum of all Christian philosophy; and in conformity with what our Saviour says in St. Matthew, x. 29, 30: "*Nonne duo passeret asse vaneunt? Et unus ex illis non cadet super terram sine patre vestro. Vestri autem capilli capitis omnes numerati sunt.*"

Regarding things from this height, we clearly see that the natural depends on God in the same manner as the supernatural and the miraculous. The miraculous, the supernatural and the natural, are substantially identical phenomena, on account of their origin, which is the will of God—a will which is actually exercised over them all—and is in all eternal. God actually and eternally intended the resurrection of Lazarus, even as he actually and eternally intended that the trees should fructify. And the trees, apart from the will of God, have no inherent power to produce fruit, more than Lazarus had to rise from the grave after death. The difference between these phenomena is not in their essence, because

both alike depend on the divine will, but in the mode of their dependence, because in these two cases the divine will is simply effected and accomplished in different ways, and in virtue of distinct laws. One of these two modes is called, and is, natural; and the other is called, and is, supernatural. Men designate daily prodigies, natural, and those which occur at intervals, miraculous. Wherefore we see how great is the folly of those who deny the power of performing occasional prodigies to Him who works daily miracles. What is this but to deny to Him who does greater things, the power to do less things; or, what amounts to the same thing, to deny the occasional power of creation to Him who incessantly creates? You, who deny the resurrection of Lazarus, because it is a miraculous work, why do you not refuse to believe other and greater prodigies? Why not deny the existence of the sun, when it rises in the east, and of the beautiful and refulgent expanse of the heavens, with their eternal luminaries? Why not deny the existence of the turbulent and majestic oceans, and of their smooth and placid shores, where their stormy waves humbly die? Why not deny the existence of the sweet, breathing fields; of forests, the retreat of silence, majesty, and shade; the mighty fall of immense cataracts, and the dazzling crystal of clearest fountains? But if you do not deny these things, what madness and palpable inconsistency to reject as impossible, or even as difficult, the resurrection of a man! Whether we view what surrounds us, or examine into our interior life, all that we behold, within us as well as around us, is miraculous.

It follows from the above, that the distinction on the one side, between the natural and the supernatural,

and on the other, between the ordinary phenomena of the natural and supernatural order and miraculous facts, neither supposes, nor can suppose, any rivalry or hidden antagonism between that which exists by the will of God and that which has a natural existence, because God is the author, preserver, and sovereign director of all things.

All these distinctions, beyond their dogmatic limits, have resulted in what we see—the deification of the material, and the absolute and radical negation of Providence and grace.

Finally, to resume the thread of this argument: Providence is a universal grace, in virtue of which all things are maintained and governed according to the divine counsel, as grace is a special providence, by which God takes care of man. The dogmas of Providence and of grace reveal to us the existence of a supernatural world, where we find the reason and cause of all that we see. Without the light which we receive from this direction, all is darkness; without the explanation herein found, all is inexplicable; without this solution and this light, all is phenomenal, ephemeral, and contingent, all things are as smoke that melts away, as phantasms that vanish, shadows that disappear, and dreams that have no reality. We find the supernatural above us, around us, and within us. It surrounds the natural, and penetrates it everywhere.

The knowledge of the supernatural is then the foundation of all the sciences, and especially so of the political and moral sciences. It is useless to attempt to explain the existence of man without grace, or of society without Providence; for, deprived of these, society

and man would remain an unfathomable mystery to mankind.

The importance of this demonstration, and its transcendent height as a stand-point, will be better seen farther on, when we shall sketch the sad and lamentable picture of our wanderings and our errors; and we shall find them all to arise, as from a fountain-head, from the negation of the Catholic supernaturalism. In this connection I may add, that the constant and supernatural action of God upon society and upon man, is the wide and secure basis on which the edifice of Catholic doctrine rests; and that, deprived of this fundamental principle, this great edifice, in which the human race has free movement, falls leveled to the earth.

CHAPTER VII.

That the Catholic Church has triumphed over society, notwithstanding the same obstacles, and by the same supernatural means which rendered our Lord Jesus Christ victorious over the world.

THE Catholic Church, as a religious institution, has exercised the same influence in society that Catholicism, as a doctrine, has exercised in the world; the same that our Lord Jesus Christ has exercised in man. And the reason is this: that our Lord Jesus Christ, his doctrine and his Church, are in reality only three different manifestations of the same thing; that is, the divine action supernaturally and simultaneously working in man and in all his faculties, in society and in all its institutions, our Lord Jesus Christ, Catholicism, and the Catholic

Church, are the same word—the word of God perpetually resounding from the heavens.

His word has had the same obstacles to overcome, and has triumphed by the same means, in its various incarnations. The prophets of Israel had announced the coming of the Lord in the fullness of time; they had written his life; they had sighed over his awful sorrows; they had described his labors; they had counted, one by one, the drops which made up the ocean of his tears; they had seen him reviled, and in deepest anguish; they had beheld his passion and death. In spite of all this the people of Israel did not know him when he came, and accomplished all the prophecies without remembering the prophets. The life of our Lord was most holy; he alone had dared to utter before men those words, either stupidly blasphemous or ineffably divine, “which of you will convince me of sin?” Notwithstanding these words, never before or since pronounced by man, the world knew him not, and covered him with reproach. His doctrine was wonderful and true; so much so that it rendered all things fragrant with its great sweetness, and irradiated them with its serene splendor. Each word that fell so gently from his sacred lips was an astonishing revelation; each revelation contained a divine truth, and each truth was fraught with hope and consolation. And yet the people of Israel shut their eyes to the light, and closed their hearts against these extraordinary consolations and sublime hopes. He performed miracles never before witnessed nor heard of; and yet they avoided him with horror, like one infected with leprosy, or as if he bore a curse set upon his brow by the divine anger and by men and nations. Even one of his disciples whom

he tenderly loved heeded not his imploring and caressing accents, and fell from the height of the apostolate into the abyss of treason.

From the beginning of time the Church of Jesus Christ was announced by great prophets, and represented by symbols and figures. In laying her immortal foundations and forming her divine hierarchy upon a superhuman model, her divine Author made known her future history to his Apostles. He announced to them her great tribulations and unexampled persecutions, and they beheld the bloody procession of her confessors and martyrs. He foretold that the powers of the world and of hell would combine to form horrible and sacrilegious alliances against her, and how, by the power of grace, she should triumph over all their machinations. His divine vision penetrated through the prolongation of ages, and he predicted the end of all things, the immortality of the Church, and her transformation into the celestial Jerusalem, clothed in light, glittering with jewels, filled with glory, and diffusing the sweetest fragrance. And yet the world, which has beheld the Church always persecuted and always triumphant; which could number and has numbered her victories by her tribulations, furnishes her continually the occasions of new victories by subjecting her to new trials, thus blindly fulfilling the great prophecy, even while it forgets alike the prophecy and the prophet. The Church is perfect and most holy, as her divine Founder was perfect and most holy. She likewise, and she alone, has been able to pronounce before the world that word, never before heard, "who shall convince me of error, who shall convince me of sin?" And in spite of this astonishing word, the world contradicts and pursues her

with unceasing contumely. Her doctrine is marvelous and true, because it is the teaching of the great Master of all truth, who is the great source of all wonders; and yet the world seeks for knowledge in the schools of error, and gives an attentive ear to the vain eloquence of shameless sophists and obscure impostors. The Church has received from her divine Founder the power of working miracles, and performs them, being herself a perpetual miracle; and yet the world treats this as a vain and shameful superstition, and she is held up as an object of scorn to men and nations. Her own children, so tenderly loved, have raised their sacrilegious hands against this most tender mother, have abandoned the sacred home that protected their infancy, and sought in new families and in new homes disgraceful pleasures and unchaste loves. In this way the Church follows the predicted path of her dolorous passion, unknown to the world and disowned by heresiarchs.

And, what is singular and admirable in this, and in perfect imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ, is that the Church does not suffer tribulations because the world has forgotten the prodigies she works, the life she lives, the truths she teaches, and the invincible testimonies that prove the divinity of her mission; but, on the contrary, she is persecuted on account of these invincible testimonies, on account of the truths she teaches, the sanctity of her life, and the miracles she performs. Suppress these but for a moment, and you will put an end at one blow and at once to all these tribulations, tears, misfortunes, and privations.

The mystery of her persecutions lies in the truths which she proclaims; the mystery of her victories is found in the supernatural force which assists her; and

these two things united explain both her triumphs and her afflictions.

The supernatural strength of grace is perpetually communicated to the faithful through the ministry of the priests and through the channel of the sacraments; and this supernatural strength, imparted in this way to the faithful, who are at the same time members of a civil society and of the Church, is what has produced the wonderful difference between ancient and Catholic societies, even in a political and social aspect. All things carefully considered, there is no other difference between these societies than that the former is composed of pagans, and the latter of Christians; that in pagan society men are moved by natural impulses, while in the Christian society men have subdued more or less their own nature, and obey more or less perfectly the supernatural and divine impulsion of grace. This serves to explain the difference between the political and social institutions of the ancients, and those that have arisen, almost spontaneously, among the moderns; for institutions are the social expression of ideas common to all; these ideas are the collective result of individual thought, and this thought is the intellectual manifestation of the mode of being and feeling of man; but the pagan and the Catholic man have ceased to be and to feel in the same way; one representing humanity fallen and disinherited, the other humanity redeemed. Ancient and modern institutions are the expression of two different societies only because they represent two different humanities. For this reason, when Catholic societies prevaricate and fall, it happens that paganism immediately gains a footing in them; and we behold ideas, customs,

institutions, and the entire society relapsing into paganism.

If we abstract for a moment from the supernatural and invisible force of Catholicism, whose action has slowly and silently transformed the visible and natural by means of its mysterious and secret operation, all becomes confused. The visible and the invisible, the natural and the supernatural are alike involved in obscurity; and all our explanations become false hypotheses which explain nothing, and are themselves inexplicable.

There is no spectacle more melancholy than that of a man of enlightened mind, who makes the impossible and absurd attempt to explain things visible by things visible, and the natural by the natural; for as all things visible and natural are in their quality of being such identical, it would be as absurd as to explain the existence of any fact by the fact itself, or to explain anything by the thing itself. Into this very grave error a man of eminent and great acquirements has fallen, whose writings it is impossible to read without a sentiment of profound respect, whose discourses inspire high admiration, and whose personal character places him still higher than even his writings, his discourses, or his talents. Mr. Guizot surpasses all contemporary writers in the calm view that he takes of the most intricate questions. His judgment, generally speaking, is true and impartial. He possesses a clear diction, a temperate style, which, in the embellishments of language, is severely modest. Even his great eloquence is inferior to, and controlled by, his reason. However elevated a question may be, whenever Mr. Guizot handles it he always proves himself superior to the question. When he describes the

phenomena that he sees, it never seems as if he described them, but rather as if he produced them. If he discusses party questions, he points out their relative proportions of truth and error with so delicate a discrimination that it does not seem as if he so decided, because of their merits and defects, but rather that these merits and defects were the result of his arrangement. He usually debates as if he instructed, and when he instructs he seems by nature to be invested with a superior authority. If he casually speaks of religion, his language is solemn, formal, and austere; and were it permitted in the present age to express a sentiment of veneration, he would be reverential. He concedes to it a great influence in the work of social restoration, as becomes such a man in speaking of so great an institution. Although it cannot be discovered that he considers religion as the queen and mistress of all other institutions, it may be affirmed that it is at all events in his eyes as an amnestied sovereign, who, even in the days of her utmost power, still retains the marks of past servitude. The distinguishing characteristic of Mr. Guizot is, that he sees well all that he observes, and that he sees whatever is visible, and considers each thing by itself and separately. The weak point of his mind is not to perceive that these visible things, although distinct, combine to form a harmonious, hierarchical, and united body, animated by an invisible force. His work, in which he makes an exposition of European civilization, displays his eminent characteristic and great defect more than any of his other writings. Mr. Guizot has seen, in this complex and prolific civilization, all that was to be seen, except this civilization itself. He who wishes to discover the numerous and various elements

which compose it will find them in his work; but if he wishes to find the powerful unity which constitutes that civilization, the principle of life which freely circulates through the healthy members of this robust and vigorous social body, he will not find it, because it is not there. Mr. Guizot has perfectly investigated all the visible elements of civilization, and has analyzed all that they contain that is visible. He has also carefully examined those elements which contain nothing that falls within the jurisdiction of the senses. But this is not sufficient. There exists yet another element, which is at the same time visible and invisible; and this element is the Church. The Church influences society in a manner analogous to the other political and social elements, but also in a manner peculiarly her own. Considered as an institution born in time, and made local in space, her influence was visible and limited, like that of other institutions under similar conditions. Considered as a divine institution, she had within herself an immense supernatural strength, which was neither subjected to the laws of time nor to those of space, but exerted a silent, secret, and supernatural influence that was pre-eminent and everywhere felt. To such a degree is this true that, amid the confusion of all the social elements which rendered this epoch so critical, the Church imparted to them all a portion of that which was peculiar to herself, while she alone remained intact, and always preserved her absolute identity. Placed in contact with her, the Roman society, without ceasing to be Roman, became that which it had never been; it became Catholic. And so of the Germanic nations. Political and social institutions, without losing that which was peculiarly their own, received that which was foreign to

them—the Catholic nature. And Catholicism was not a vain form, because it gave no form to any institution, but was, on the contrary, something intimate and essential, and for this reason imparted to them all something profound and intimate. Catholicism does not disturb forms, but it changes the substance of things; and at the same time that it leaves existing forms undisturbed and changes things in their essence, it receives indifferently from society its various forms. For example, the Catholic Church was feudal, as feudalism was Catholic; but the Church did not receive the equivalent of what she gave, as she received that which was purely exterior and non-essential, while she imparted something interior and intimate, which was to remain as essential.

It follows from this that in the common mass of European civilization, which, like all other civilizations, and in a greater measure than others, is composed of unity and variety, all the other elements combined and united only give it what it possesses of a diverse or varied character; while to the Church, and to the Church alone, it is indebted for its unity. But in its unity dwells its very essence, and that from which every institution derives what is most essential to it—its name. European civilization was not called German or Roman, absolute or feudal, but was called, and it calls itself, Catholic civilization.

Catholicism is not then merely what Mr. Guizot supposes, one among the many elements which compose this admirable civilization; it is more than this—much more; it is this civilization itself. How strange! Mr. Guizot sees all that is transient in time and circumscribed in space; and he fails to perceive that which is neither limited by time nor space. He sees that which

is here, that which is there, and that which is more remote; but he does not see that which is everywhere. He sees the members which form an organized and living body, but he does not recognize the life which animates these members.

If we reject, even for a moment, the divine virtue and the supernatural force which is in the Church, and consider her simply as a human institution, which is expanded and extended by purely human and natural means: in this case we must concede that Mr. Guizot is right. For, according to this hypothesis, the influence that the Church exercises by her doctrine cannot go beyond the natural limits that his sovereign reason assigns to it. But the difficulty still remains, because it is an evident fact that the Church has gone beyond these limits. Therefore an evident contradiction exists between history, which shows that this influence does go beyond these limits, and reason, which teaches that it cannot do so; a contradiction which must necessarily be resolved by a higher formula, capable of producing an entire reconciliation, which will harmonize facts with their causes and reason with history.

The principle expressed by this formula must necessarily be outside of history and of reason, outside of the natural and the visible. It is found in the invisible, supernatural, and divine element of the holy Catholic Church. It is this divine, supernatural, and impalpable power which has conquered the world, has overcome the most invincible obstacles, has subdued rebellious minds and proud hearts, and has elevated the Church above human vicissitudes, and has secured her sway over nations.

They who do not consider the supernatural and divine virtue inherent in the Church, will never understand her influence, nor her victories, nor her tribulations. Nor will they who fail to comprehend this ever be able to understand that which is spiritual, essential, and profound in European civilization.

BOOK II.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN REGARD TO ORDER IN GENERAL.

CHAPTER I.

Of free will in man.

✓ ASIDE from the action of God, there is nothing but the action of man; and, aside from Divine Providence, there is nothing but human liberty. The combination of this freedom with this providence forms the rich and varied web of history.

The free will of man is the master-piece of creation, and the most extraordinary, if it were permitted so to speak, of the divine wonders. In relation to it, all things are invariably ordained, and in such a way that the creation would be unintelligible without man, and man deprived of free will would be an unfathomable mystery. His liberty explains man, and is at the same time the interpretation of all things; yet who can explain this most high, inviolable and holy, freedom—so high, inviolable and holy, that He who bestowed it cannot take it away—and which is able to resist and vanquish Him who gave it, opposing an invincible resistance and obtaining an overwhelming victory? Who can explain in what way, notwithstanding this victory of man over God, God remains the conqueror and man the conquered; while the victory of man is a real victory, and

the defeat of God a real defeat? What can be the nature of this victory, which is necessarily followed by the defeat of the victor; and what can be the nature of the defeat which terminates in the elevation of the conquered? What is the meaning of paradise as the reward of defeat, and of hell as the punishment of victory? If in my defeat is my reward, why reject that which saves me; and if my condemnation is in my victory, why desire that which condemns me?

These questions have occupied the minds of all the great doctors of past ages. The petulant sophists of to-day affect to despise them, and yet they cannot even lift from the ground the formidable weapons which these holy doctors, in Catholic ages, easily and humbly wielded. In the present age, it is considered an inexcusable folly to examine with humility, and aided by grace, the high designs of God in his profound mysteries; as if man could comprehend anything without an investigation of these profound and high designs. All the great questions upon God are now considered as idle and sterile; as if it were possible to study God, who is intelligence and truth, without acquiring truth and intelligence.

✓ Regarding the tremendous question which is the subject of this chapter, and which I shall endeavor to confine within as narrow limits as possible, I affirm, that the opinion generally entertained respecting free will is in every respect false. Free will does not consist, as is commonly supposed, in the power of choice between good and evil, which importune man with contrary solicitations. If free will consisted in this faculty, the following consequences would necessarily result—the one relative to man, and the other relative to God, and both

evidently absurd. The consequence respecting man would be, that the higher the degree of excellence he attained, the less free he would become, as he could not advance toward perfection without becoming subjected to the influence of good; and he could not yield to the sway of truth without removing himself from the rule of evil. He must necessarily remove himself from under the sway of the one, in the same degree that he subjects himself to the other; and as this must alter, more or less, according to the measure of his perfection, the equilibrium between these two contrary influences, his freedom, that is, his power of choice, must therefore be diminished to the same extent that this equilibrium is disturbed. If we place the highest perfection of man in the annihilation of one of these opposing elements, and take it for granted that perfect freedom consists in the power of choosing between these antagonistic solicitations, it is evident that, between the perfection and the freedom of man, there is a patent contradiction and an absolute incompatibility. The absurdity of this deduction consists in this, that man being free, and at the same time aiming at perfection, he cannot preserve his freedom without renouncing perfection, neither can he become perfect without losing his liberty.

✓ As relates to God, the consequence of this hypothesis would be this, that God, not being subject in his nature to contradictory solicitations, would not be free, if freedom consisted in the full power to choose between opposing solicitations; and if, according to this supposition, he must have the power to choose between good and evil, between sanctity and sin, in order to be free, then there exists, between the nature of God and liberty thus defined, a radical contradiction and an absolute

incompatibility. And, as it would be an absurdity to suppose, on the one side, that God cannot be free if he is God, and that he cannot be God if he is free; and on the other, that man cannot attain perfection without losing his liberty, nor be free without renouncing perfection, it follows that the idea of liberty that we have just examined is altogether false, contradictory, and absurd.

✓ The error that we have just exposed consists in placing freedom in the faculty of choice, when it really rests in the faculty of will, which supposes the faculty of understanding. Every being endowed with understanding and will is free, and his liberty is not a distinct thing from his will and his understanding, but the two united. When we affirm of a being that he has will and understanding, and of another being that he is free, we assert with regard to both the same thing expressed in two different ways.

✓ If liberty consists in the faculties of will and understanding, then perfect liberty consists in a perfect will and understanding. These are the attributes of God alone, from which it follows, as a necessary inference, that God alone is perfectly free.

✓ Again, if liberty consists in the faculties of understanding and will, then man is free, because he is endowed with will and intelligence; but he is not perfectly free, as he is not endowed with an understanding and will infinite and perfect.

✓ The imperfection of his understanding is, that it is limited on the one hand, and on the other subject to error. The imperfection of his will is, that he does not desire all that he ought to wish for, and that he may be importuned and conquered by evil. From whence it

follows, that the imperfection of his liberty consists in his power of choosing evil and embracing error, that is to say, the imperfection of human liberty lies in precisely that faculty of choice which, according to the vulgar opinion, constitutes its absolute perfection.

✓ Man at his creation knew good, and because he perceived it he sought it, and because he sought it he practiced it; and in the possession of that good which he sought with his will and understanding, he was free. That this is the signification of Christian liberty, we clearly see in the following words: "*Cognoscetis veritatem et veritas liberabit vos.*"* Between the liberty of man and that of God there is, then, no other difference than that which exists between anything that can undergo diminution and loss, and that which cannot; the same difference that must exist between that which is limited and that which is essentially infinite.

✓ When the woman listened to the voice of the fallen angel, her will immediately began to be obscured and weakened; she ceased to rest on God, who had hitherto been her stay, and she experienced in consequence a speedy downfall. It was then that her freedom, which consisted in the exercise of will and understanding, was enfeebled. When she passed from the thought to the commission of sin, her understanding became obscured and her will weakened. The woman involved man in her ruin, and human liberty fell into a state of deep abasement.

✓ Some persons who confound the idea of liberty with that of absolute independence, ask why man became enslaved so soon as he fell under the power of the devil,

* John, viii. 32.

when it is at the same time affirmed that God created him free. To which we answer, that it cannot be asserted of man, that he is a slave only because he does not belong to himself; in which case he would always be a slave, inasmuch as he never belongs to himself in an independent and sovereign manner. But, it is affirmed of man, that he is enslaved only when he falls under the power of an usurper, as it is said that he is free when he obeys only his legitimate master. He only is enslaved who is ruled by a tyrant, and there is no greater tyrant than he who exercises an usurped authority; nor is there any other liberty than that which consists in a willing obedience to legitimate rulers.

Again, some persons cannot comprehend how the action of grace, through which we are redeemed and liberated, can be reconciled with this same liberty and redemption. It appears to them that in this mysterious operation God is the sole agent, and man is passive. This is an entirely erroneous opinion, because it is necessary that God and man concur in this great mystery—God working and man co-operating. For this reason God does not usually impart more grace than is needed to assist the will. Fearful of oppressing it, he is contented with inviting it, with the most loving request; while man, when he receives the impressions of grace, does so with incomparable sweetness and complacency; and when the loving will of man, who listens to this invitation, is joined to the loving will of God, who calling him rejoices, and rejoicing calls, then through this sweet concurrence of wills does the grace which was sufficient become efficacious.

With regard to those who imagine liberty to rest in the absence of all sollicitation which may affect the will

of man, I shall only say that they inadvertently fall into one of these two great errors—either that of supposing a rational being to act without any motive whatever, or that an unreasoning being can be free.

If the above is true, it is certain that the faculty of choice bestowed upon man, far from constituting a necessary condition of freedom, endangers liberty, since through it arises the possibility of a renunciation of good, and of falling into error, of a denial of God, and of a subjection to tyranny. All the efforts of man, with the assistance of grace, should be directed to the keeping of this faculty under, so that he may even lose it, if possible, by inaction. He alone who loses it understands good, desires it, and performs it; and he alone who does this is perfectly free; and he alone who is free is perfect; and only he who is perfect is happy. None of the blessed have this faculty of choosing between good and evil, neither God, nor his saints, nor the choirs of angels.

CHAPTER II.

Some objections respecting this dogma answered.

IF the faculty of choice does not constitute the perfection, but endangers the exercise of free will in man; if in this faculty originated man's prevarication and fall; if in it rests the mystery of sin, of condemnation, and death; how can we reconcile with the infinite goodness of God this fatal gift, which is the source of our misfortunes and calamities? Shall we regard the hand that bestows it as compassionate or rigorous? If it is

laid upon us in anger, why were we created? Why inflict upon us a burden so heavy, if this hand is merciful? Shall we call it just, or only strong? If it is just, what have we done previously to our creation to be thus punished? If it is simply strong, why are we not crushed and destroyed? If in using the gift we have received we have committed sin, who is the author of our sin? If we are lost on account of the transgressions which this faculty inclines us to commit, who is the cause of our condemnation and our punishment? O great and incomprehensible being, whom we know not if we must bless or detest; shall we, with bitter sighs and ardent prayers, fall prostrate at thy feet like thy servant Job, or shall we attempt against thee the war of the Titans, and pile mount upon mount, Pelion upon Ossa? O mysterious sphinx, we know not how to appease nor how to vanquish thee; nor do we know how to address thee. If as thou sayest thou art omniscient, tell us, we beseech thee, in which of thy sacred books thou hast inscribed thy name, that we may know how we must call upon thee; for the titles that are given thee are contradictory like thyself. Those who are saved call thee God; those who are condemned call thee tyrant.

This is the angry voice of the genius of pride and blasphemy. What an inconceivable madness and inexplicable aberration for man, who is the work of God, to summon before his tribunal that same God who grants him the very tribunal on which he sits as arbiter, the reason with which he judges, and even the voice with which he calls upon God! Thus man falls from blasphemy to blasphemy, from abyss to abyss. The blasphemer who summons, constitutes himself the judge to condemn or absolve. But the man who absolves or con-

demns, in place of adoring God, blasphemes. Woe to the arrogant who interrogate him, and happy are the humble who adore him! For he will come both to the one and to the other; to the one, as summoned, in the day of judgment, and to the other, as adored, in the day of adoration. He will respond to all who call upon him; to the ones in wrath, to the others in mercy.

Let it not be said that this doctrine is an absurdity, involving the denial of the competency of human reason to understand the things of God, and thereby implicitly condemns the theologians and holy doctors, and even the very Church, that have in past ages so fully discussed and investigated these questions. What this doctrine denies is, the capacity of reason unenlightened by faith to understand the truths of revelation and faith, in so far as they are supernatural. When we attempt to comprehend these mysteries unaided, we act in relation to God as judges against whose judgments there is no appeal. This supposition, whether its sentence is condemnatory or absolutory, is alike blasphemous. It is so, not so much on account of what is asserted or denied respecting God, as on account of what human reason implicitly affirms of itself; for whether it be condemnation or absolution, it always affirms the same thing, namely, its own independence and sovereignty. When the most holy Church asserts or denies anything respecting God, it simply repeats what it has learned from God. When eminent theologians and pious doctors investigate the profound depths of the divine excellencies, it is always with a secret terror and assisted by faith. They do not suppose that they can discover mysteries in God which are unknown to faith; but they unite the light of reason to the light of faith; so that

in this way they may take another aspect of these marvels and secrets. They do not contemplate God in order to discover new things in him, but that they may view the things, already known to faith, in a new light; so that these two ways of knowing God are only two different ways of adoring him.

There is no mystery taught by faith, and proposed by the Church, that does not combine, by an admirable arrangement of God, two qualities commonly antagonistic—obscurity and evidence. The Catholic mysteries may be compared to bodies that are both luminous and opaque; and in such a manner that their shadows can never be dissipated by their light, nor their light obscured by their shadows. They remain both perpetually obscure and perpetually luminous. While they diffuse their brightness over the world, they themselves remain impervious to light. They illuminate creation, yet nothing can throw light on them. They penetrate everywhere, and remain impenetrable. It appears an absurd thing to admit these mysteries, but it is more absurd to deny them; because for those who embrace them, there is no other obscurity than their own; while for those who reject them, darkness rests over all things. Yet, notwithstanding, the blindness of men is so great that they would rather deny these mysteries than concede them. Light is intolerable to their eyes if it proceed from an obscure region. In the madness of their gigantic pride they condemn themselves to an eternal blindness, regarding the clouds that enshroud a single mystery as more fatal than those which spread themselves over the entire horizon.

It is easy to demonstrate what we have just asserted, without turning aside from the contemplation of those

great questions which form the subject of this chapter. Let those who ask why this tremendous gift has been bestowed of choosing between good and evil, sanctity and sin, life and death, deny its existence but for a moment, and in this very moment they render altogether impossible the separate creations of angels and men. If in this faculty of choice lies the imperfection of liberty, you have but to take away this power, and you remove the only obstacle to entire freedom; and when this is effected, there would exist a simultaneous perfection of the will and the understanding. This perfection is in God, but if we likewise place it in the creature, God and the creature are then one and the same. All is God, or nothing is God; and in this way we fall into pantheism, or into atheism, which is the same thing expressed under another name. Imperfection is a condition so natural to the creature, and perfection is so natural to God, that we cannot deny either the one or the other without an incongruity of terms, a real contradiction, and an evident absurdity. To affirm of God that he is imperfect, is to deny his existence; to affirm of the creature that he is perfect, is to deny his existence also; from which we perceive that if this mystery is above reason, the denial of it is contrary to reason; and in rejecting one for the other, we abandon the obscure and accept the impossible.

As the negations of rationalism are false, contradictory, and absurd, the affirmations of Catholicism are simple, natural, and logical. Catholicism affirms of God that he is absolutely perfect; and, of created beings, that they have a relative perfection and an absolute imperfection; and that they are perfect and imperfect in so excellent a manner that their absolute imper-

fection, by which they are infinitely separated from God, constitutes their relative perfection, by which they perfectly fulfill their different functions, and in this way form the perfect harmony of the universe. Under the point of view we at present consider, the absolute perfection of God consists in his being sovereignly free; that is to say, in having a perfect comprehension of good, and in desiring it with a perfect will. Under this same point of view, the absolute imperfection of all other intelligent and free beings consists in their not understanding or desiring good in such way that they cannot understand evil and desire the evil which their mind conceives. Their relative perfection consists in this same absolute imperfection, by which on the one hand they differ from God in their nature, and on the other they can unite themselves to God, who is their end, by an effort of their own will, aided by grace.

Intelligent and free beings are disposed in hierarchies, and consequently they are hierarchically imperfect. These beings resemble each other inasmuch as they are all imperfect; but they are distinguished one from the other as to the degree of imperfection, although they are all imperfect in the same manner. The angel only differs from man in that the imperfection which is common to them both is greater in the man and less in the angel, as is suitable to their different positions in the immense scale of existences. They were both, in the beginning, endowed by their Creator with the faculty of understanding and the power to will evil, and to perform that which they understood; and in this was their resemblance. But in the angelical nature this imperfection was brief in its duration, while in human nature it always exists; and in this are they dissimilar.

There was granted to the angel a brief and solemn moment, in which he might choose between good and evil; and it was then that the angelical hosts divided. A portion of them inclined before the divine will, while the others tumultuously declared themselves rebels. This sudden and supreme resolution was followed by as great and sudden a fall. The rebellious angels were condemned, while the faithful were confirmed in grace.

Man, not being a pure spirit like the angel, was weaker in understanding and will, and consequently received a more feeble and imperfect liberty; and this imperfection was to last during life. Herein we see the unspeakable excellence of the divine designs. God saw, before the beginning of things, the beauty and fitness of hierarchies, and therefore established them between free and intelligent existences. On the other hand he saw, from eternity, the beauty and fitness of a certain manner of equality among all his creatures, and therefore the sovereign artificer so adjusted all things as to unite this beauty of equality to the beauty of the hierarchy. In order to form this hierarchy, God made the existences he had created unequal in their faculties; and, in order to fulfill the law of equality, he required more of those to whom he gave more, and less of those to whom he gave less: and in such a manner, that those who had received the most were more strictly called to an account, and those who had received the fewest gifts were held the least accountable. Because the natural excellence of the angel was so great, his fall was without hope or remedy, his punishment instantaneous, and his condemnation eternal. Because the natural goodness of man was less, when he fell he was raised again, and his prevarication was not without a remedy; therefore the

sentence passed upon him will not be without appeal, nor will his condemnation be irremediable, until, through repeated acts of sin, his guilt reaches that point alone known to God, where the angelical and human prevarication have an equal weight in the divine balance; so that no man may say to God, why didst thou not create me angel? Nor may the angel say, why didst thou not make me man?

O Lord, who is not terrified at the spectacle of thy justice? But what grandeur equals the greatness of thy mercy? What balance so even, as that thou holdest in thy hand? What measure so true, as that with which thou metest out justice? Who knowest as thou dost, numbers and their mysterious agreements? How admirably executed are thy prodigies! How excellently arranged are all things which thou hast established, and how harmoniously beautiful in their arrangement! O Lord, enlighten my understanding, that I may better comprehend something of thy designs from eternity, something of thy plans and their execution: because he who knows thee not, knows nothing; and he who understands thee, knows all things.

If man may not ask of God, why didst thou not create me an angel, nor why didst thou not create me perfect, may he not at least say to Him, Lord, it would have been better for me if thou hadst not created me; why didst thou create me such as I am? If thou hadst consulted me, I would never have consented to receive life with the power to lose it; hell terrifies me more than nothingness.

Man, left to himself, only falls into blasphemy. When he questions God, he blasphemes, unless the God who is to answer him teaches him how to inquire. When he

asks for anything, he blasphemes, unless the same God who is to grant his request teaches him what to ask, and how to ask it. Man neither knew how to pray nor what to ask for, until God, made man, taught him the Our Father, so that he might commit it to memory like a child.

What does man mean, when he says, it would be better for me never to have been born? Did he by chance exist before he was created? And what signifies his question, if, previous to his existence, he never existed? Man can form some idea of all that exists, even when it surpasses his reason, and therefore he can have some conception of all the mysteries; but he cannot form any idea whatever of non-existence, of nothingness. He who commits suicide does not wish to blot himself out of existence; he only wishes, by existing in a different way, to end his suffering. Man, then, expresses no idea whatever when he says, why do I exist? He can only express an idea when he asks, why am I what I am? This question resolves itself into another—why have I the power to lose myself? This is an absurd question, in whatever light you view it. In effect, if every created being is imperfect simply because he is a creature, and if the power to lose one's self constitutes the especial imperfection of man, he therefore who asks this question, asks in substance why he is a creature, or, what is its equivalent, why the creature is not the Creator, why man is not the God who created man? *Quod absurdum.*

And if this question simply means, why we are not saved in spite of the power to lose ourselves, the absurdity is still greater; because, why should the power to lose one's self be given, if no one can be lost? If man

was to be saved in spite of everything, what would be the final use of life in time? Why not, from the beginning, lead an immortal life in Paradise? Reason cannot comprehend how salvation can be both necessary and future, since the future is essentially only compatible with the contingent, and that which by its very nature is necessary, is present.

If man were destined to pass, without any transition, out of nothingness into eternity, and from the moment of his creation lead a glorified life, time, space, and the entire creation made for man, who is its king, would be annihilated. If his kingdom was not to be of this world, why create this world? If it was not to be temporal, why does time exist? If it was not to be local, why create space? And, without time and space, why were things created in time and space? We therefore see, in the suppositions we have admitted, that the contradiction between the power to lose one's self and the necessity of salvation, leads to the absurdity of suppressing, at one blow, the existence of time and space; and this, in turn, logically involves the suppression of all things created with man, for man, and on account of man. Man cannot substitute a human for a divine idea, without causing the immediate destruction of the entire plan of creation, and being himself crushed beneath its gigantic ruins.

Regarding this question under another aspect, we may affirm that, when man claims the absolute right to save himself, at the same time that he admits the power to lose himself, he falls into even a greater absurdity, if this is possible, than when he complains of God because He has given him the faculty to lose himself; because if, under the latter assumption, he would become as God,

under the former he would assume the privileges of divinity while being man.

Finally, if we attentively consider this grave subject, we shall clearly see, that it is incompatible with the divine excellence to save either angel or man, without anterior merit on their part. All in God is reasonable; his justice as his goodness, and his goodness as his mercy: since, if he is infinitely just, and good, and merciful, he is likewise infinitely reasonable. Consequently we cannot attribute to God, without blasphemy, even one single act of goodness, mercy, or justice, which is not founded on sovereign reason, as the only source of true goodness, mercy, or justice. Goodness without reason is weakness; mercy without reason is condescension; and justice not based on reason is revenge—for God is good, merciful, and just, and not weak, condescending, or vindictive. From this it follows, that when we pray for salvation on account of the infinite goodness of God, without regard to anterior merit, our prayers are unreasonable; since we ask for an action on the part of God without motive, and an effect without a cause. Strange inconsistency! Man asks of God, in virtue of His infinite goodness, what He daily condemns in man, whose reason is limited: and he calls that a just and merciful action in heaven, which on earth he would regard as the caprice of a foolish woman or the extravagance of a tyrant.

As regards hell, its existence is in all respects necessary, in order to preserve the perfect equilibrium in which God has placed all things; because God exists in a substantial manner in the divine perfections. Hell considered as a punishment, and heaven as a reward, form a perfect equipoise; the power of man to lose him-

self can alone balance his power to save himself, and that the justice and mercy of God be alike infinite, it is necessary that hell and heaven should simultaneously exist, the one as the term of the former, the other of the latter. Heaven supposes hell, and in such a manner that it can neither be explained nor conceived without it. These two things are correlative in the same manner that a consequence supposes its principle and a principle its consequence; and, as he who affirms the consequence contained in its principle and the principle which contains the consequence, in reality asserts the same thing, and not two different things; so he who asserts the existence of hell implies that there is a heaven; and he who affirms that there is a heaven implies the existence of hell. He does not in reality affirm two different things, but one and the same thing. There is then a logical necessity to admit these two affirmations, or to deny them both, as absolute negations. But before denying these affirmations, let us examine what would be denied by their negation. It would involve the denial of any power in man either to lose or save himself, and likewise the denial of the infinite justice and mercy of God. To these personal negations, if we may so style them, may be added another real negation, namely, the denial of virtue and vice, of good and evil, of reward and punishment; and as these negations deny all the laws of the moral world, so the negation of hell logically involves a similar denial. Nor can it be said that man may save himself without going to heaven, or lose himself without going to hell; because to go neither to heaven nor to hell is neither reward nor punishment, perdition nor salvation. God must either possess justice and mercy

in an infinite degree, or not at all; and infinitude requires a heaven for term on one side, and a hell for term on the other. Any other result would make these attributes useless, which would be equivalent to their non-existence.

If it is conceded that this intricate demonstration proves, on the one hand, that the power to save one's self necessarily implies the power to lose one's self, and, on the other hand, that heaven necessarily supposes hell, so it also follows that he who blasphemes against God because he has made hell, likewise blasphemes against him because he has made heaven. And he who asks to be deprived of the power to lose himself, likewise asks to be deprived of the power to save himself.

CHAPTER III.

Manicheism—Manicheism of Proudhon.

WHATEVER explanation may be given of free will in man, it will undoubtedly always remain one of our greatest and most fearful mysteries; and we must confess that the faculty granted to man to draw evil out of good, disorder out of order, and to disturb, even though it be accidentally, the perfect adjustment with which God has arranged all things, is a tremendous faculty. If we consider this power in itself, and not relatively to that which limits and controls it, it is almost inconceivable. The free will given to man is a power so high and transcendent, that it would rather seem to be an abdication

on the part of God than a grace conferred. Behold the evil it causes in the world.

If we watch the flow, through the prolongation of ages, of the turbid and impure waters of that ocean which bears humanity onward, we shall behold among the leaders of iniquity Adam the rebel, and then Cain the fratricide; and, succeeding them, the multitude of people who reject God and his law; such as the impious, the impure, the incestuous, and adulterers. There are indeed a few worshipers of God and his glory; but they soon forget his greatness and splendor, and they altogether tumultuously embark in that large vessel which has no pilot. The turbulent currents of that vast ocean whirl this excited crowd onward, while they know not whither they go, nor from whence they come, nor what is the name of the vessel that bears them, nor what wind impels them forward. If from time to time a sad, prophetic voice is heard, crying woe to the navigators! woe to the vessel! the ship neither arrests her course, nor do the crew listen, while the wind increases, and the boat commences to burst asunder. Then this frantic crew indulge in frightful orgies, up to that last dread moment when all suddenly ceases; the splendid banquets, frenzied laughter, lewd dances, insensate clamor, the splitting of the vessel, and the roar of the hurricane cease; the ocean overwhelms all, silence reigns over the waters, and the wrath of God over the silent waters.

God again constructs, and the new divine work is again destroyed by human liberty. A son is born to Noah, who puts his father to shame; he curses his son, and with him all his race, which will continue to bear this curse even to the fullness of time. After the deluge recommences the antediluvian disorder; and the sons of

God again contend with the sons of men. Here, the divine city is built, and there, the city of the world. The one worships Providence, and the other liberty; and liberty and Providence, God and man, renew the gigantic contest, whose great vicissitudes form the perpetual subject of history. The people of God are everywhere conquered, until even his incommunicable and holy name falls into profound oblivion; and men, in the frenzy of their victory, unite to erect a tower which shall touch the clouds. Fire from heaven descends upon this tower erected by pride, and God in his wrath confounds the languages of the nations, who disperse throughout the circumference of the earth, increase and multiply, and fill with inhabitants every zone and country. Then arise great and populous cities, gigantic empires full of pride and pomp, and brutal and ferocious hordes wander in insolent idleness through immense forests and incommensurable deserts. The world is consumed by discord, and stupefied with the frightful din of war. Empires fall upon empires, cities upon cities, nations upon nations, races upon races, until the earth becomes one scene of universal calamity and conflagration. The abomination of desolation is spread over the world. Where then is God? Why does he thus abandon the world, and permit human liberty everywhere to triumph? Why does he allow such universal rebellion and tumult, the erection of idols, and this great ravage and accumulated ruin?

One day God called unto him a just man, and said to him, I will make thy posterity as numerous as the sand on the sea-shore and as the stars of heaven; and out of this favored race shall be born the Saviour of mankind. I myself will conduct this people by my provi-

dence; and that they may not fall, I will give them in charge to my angels. I will perform many miracles for them, which shall testify my omnipotence before the nations. And the works of God were in conformity with his words. His people were enslaved, and he raised them up deliverers; they were strangers in a strange land, when he brought them forth from Egypt and gave them a home and country. They suffered hunger, and he gave them great plenty; they were thirsty, and the waters gushed forth from the rocks, obedient to his voice. Multitudes of enemies assailed them, and the wrath of God dissipated their numbers like a cloud. Weeping, they hung their melodious harps on the willows of Babylon; and he redeemed them from this sad captivity, and they again beheld Jerusalem the holy, predestined and beautiful. He gave them incorruptible judges, who ruled them with peace and justice, and kings who feared God, and were reputed prudent, good, and wise. He sent them prophets, who unveiled his high designs, and showed them things present and future. Yet this carnal and cruel people forgot his miracles, rejected his counsels, abandoned his temple, broke forth into blasphemies, fell into idolatry, outraged his incommunicable name, beheaded his holy prophets, and excited tumults and revolts.

In the mean time the seventy prophetic weeks of Daniel were accomplished; and he who was to come came; sent by the Father for the redemption of the world and the consolation of nations. This people, seeing him so poor, meek, and humble, despised his humility, outraged his poverty, scorned his gentleness, and were scandalized. They clothed him with garments of derision, and, secretly impelled by the demons of hell,

they made him drain even to the last dregs of ignominy, on the cross, after having loaded him with insult in the hall of judgment.

Being crucified by the Jews, the Son of God called the gentiles unto him, and they came. Yet after his coming, as before he came, the world followed the path of perdition, and remained seated in the shades of death. His most holy Church inherited from him the privilege of suffering persecution and outrage, and was insulted and persecuted by nations, kings, and emperors. Out of her own bosom came forth those great heresies which encircled her cradle, like monsters seeking to devour her. It is in vain that they are crushed by the divine Hercules. The tremendous battle between the divine and human Hercules, between God and man, is renewed. The rage of the servants of evil equals the ardor of the people of God, and success alternates. The battle-field is so vast that on the continents it stretches from sea to sea, and on the sea extends from continent to continent, until it covers the world from pole to pole. The conquering hosts of Europe are conquered in Asia, and the vanquished in Africa triumph in America. There is no man whatever, whether he knows it or not, who is not enlisted in this furious combat; no one who has not an active share in the responsibility of defeat or victory. All are alike engaged in this struggle; the galley slave in his chains, and the king upon his throne, the poor and the rich, the healthy and the sick, the wise and the foolish, the captive and the free, the old and the young, the civilized and the savage. Every word that is uttered is inspired either by the world or by God, and forcibly proclaims, either implicitly or explicitly, but always distinctly, either the

glory of the one or the triumph of the other. All are constrained to enlist in this strange army, in which no substitutes nor voluntary enlistments are allowed, nor any exception made for old age. None among this soldiery may say, I am the son of a poor widow, or the mother of a paralytic, or the wife of a cripple. All mankind alike belong to this army.

Nor is any one permitted to say that he is not disposed to combat; for, in the act of saying so, he already combats; and it is easy to perceive to which side he inclines; because by this very declaration he plainly betrays his inclinations. Nor can any one declare that he is neutral, because, if he wishes to be so, he is already enlisted; nor can he reiterate that he will continue indifferent, for by these very words he clearly indicates which side he embraces. Let no one seek to avoid the perils of this war, for he will do so in vain. This war extends throughout space, and will last to the end of time. Only in eternity, the home of the just, can rest be found; because then alone the combat ceases. Nor will the gates of heaven open to receive any who cannot show that they have suffered in this conflict. These portals are closed against all who do not here below bravely fight the battles of the Lord, and like him bear the cross.

The contemplation of the spectacle which history presents to us, must inevitably lead the man who is not enlightened by faith to adopt one of the two systems of manicheism: either the ancient system, according to which there is a principle of good and also a principle of evil, and each of these principles is embodied in a god, and between these gods the only law is war; or the system of Proudhon, who affirms that in God is the

principle of evil, that in man is the principle of good, and that the human and divine powers are two potent rivals, the only duty of man being to conquer God, who is his enemy.

✓ These two systems of manicheism are naturally derived from the consideration of the perpetual warfare to which the world is condemned. The first is in greater conformity with ancient traditions, and the second bears a closer resemblance to the doctrines of modern times. However, it must be confessed that if we only regard the notorious fact of this gigantic contest, apart from the glimpses we have of the existence of a marvelous harmony between things human and divine, between the visible and invisible, and the created and uncreated, this fact may be amply explained by either of these two systems.

The difficulty does not consist in explaining any fact, whatever it may be, considered in itself. There is no isolated fact which may not be viewed in this way, and sufficiently explained by a hundred different hypotheses. But the real difficulty is to satisfy the metaphysical conditions upon which every explanation must rest, and according to which it is necessary, that the explanation of any evident fact, in order to be admissible, should not render other manifest and evident facts inexplicable, or leave them unexplained. Now, either of the manichean systems explains that which by its nature implies a dualism, and a war supposes it; yet neither of them can explain that which by its nature is one: and reason even unenlightened by faith can fully prove, either that there is no God, or, if he exist, that he is one. Either of the manichean systems explains the warfare that is waged, but neither of them can give an ex-

plication of the final victory; because a definitive victory of evil over good, or of good over evil, implies the entire suppression of the one or of the other, while that which has a real and necessary existence cannot be definitively suppressed. According to the principles of manicheism, therefore, the combat which seemed to be sufficiently explained remains inexplicable; because a combat is unintelligible where victory is forever impossible.

If we pass from the investigation of the general absurdity of every manichean explanation to the especial inconsistency of the explanation of Proudhon, we shall clearly see that it implies every possible absurdity, and that there are even things in this explication unworthy of the majesty of the absurd. In effect, when Mr. Proudhon calls evil good, and good evil, he is not guilty of an absurdity; for the absurd supposes greater genius; but this is mere buffoonery. The peculiar absurdity is not simply in making this assertion, but in having no object whatever in doing so. From the moment that it is affirmed that good and evil coexist in man and in God, locally and substantially, the question which consisted in establishing from whence proceeds evil, and from whence good, becomes useless. Man will attribute evil to God and good to himself, and God will assert that in him is all good, and in man evil. Therefore evil and good will exist everywhere and nowhere. The question will then reduce itself to this: which side will be victorious? As this hypothesis makes no distinction between good and evil, it falls into the ridiculous puerility of contradicting the common sentiment of mankind. The absurdity which is peculiar to Mr. Proudhon is, that his dualism

is a dualism of three parts, constituting an absolute unity; by which we see that it is rather a mathematical than a religious absurdity. The manichean dualism asserts that in God is the principle of evil, and in man that of good; but in man, wherein exists the principle of good, there are two powers: a faculty essentially instinctive, and another faculty essentially logical; by the first he is God, by the second he is man; from which it follows that the two unities are divided into three, and this without their ceasing to be two; because, outside of man and of God, there exists neither substantial evil nor substantial good, no antagonism—there is nothing. We will now see how the two unities, which are three unities, are converted into one without ceasing to be two unities and three unities. Unity is in God; for besides that he is God, through the instinctive faculty which is also in man, he is man. Unity is also in man, because he is man by his logical faculty, and he is God by his instinctive faculty; and consequently man is both man and God. It results from all this, that dualism, without ceasing to be dualism, is threefold; that trinity, without ceasing to be threefold, is dualism; and that dualism and trinity, without ceasing to be what they are respectively, are unity; and that unity, which is unity without ceasing to be dualism and trinity, is in two parts.

If the citizen Proudhon were to proclaim that he has a mission, which he does not; and if he were able to prove that his mission is divine, which he cannot; yet his theory, which we have just exposed, ought to be rejected as absurd and impossible. The personal union of evil and good, considered as substantially existing, is impossible and absurd, because it involves an evident

contradiction. In the diversity of persons and unity of essence, which constitute the triune and one God of the Christians, as in the distinction of two natures in the person of the Son made man, there is doubtless a profound obscurity, yet not a logical impossibility, as there is no contradiction in the terms. If it involves much that is obscure to the eye of reason, yet there is nothing essentially contradictory in affirming of three persons that they are one in substance; or in the assertion that three substances exist in one person. That which is radically impossible, because it is an evident absurdity and a palpable contradiction, is, after having asserted the substantial existence of good and evil, to assert that they substantially exist sustained by one and the same person. How admirable! Man cannot fly from the obscurity of Catholicism without being enveloped in still greater darkness; nor can he fly from that which baffles his reason without meeting that which is contradictory to it, and therefore a denial of reason.

Let it not be supposed that the world adopts the views of rationalism in spite of its absurd contradictions and its profound obscurity; it adopts them on that very account. Reason adopts error wherever it can be found, like a doting mother, who follows the child of her love, the fruit of her womb, wherever this child may go, even though it be into the deepest abyss. Error will cause her death; but what matters it to the mother to die if she receive her death at the hands of her child?

CHAPTER IV.

How Catholicism explains the dogmas of Providence and of Liberty, without adopting the theory of a rivalry between God and man.

IN nothing does the incomparable beauty of Catholic solutions show itself so conspicuously as in its universality, that incommunicable attribute of divine solutions. The moment we embrace a Catholic solution, all that was previously dark and obscure becomes clear, night becomes day, and order proceeds from chaos. In each of these explanations may be found that sovereign attribute and secret virtue which produces the great wonder of universal light. The only obscure point, amid the light thus diffused, is the mystery itself, from which proceeds so much brightness; and the reason of this is, that man, not being God, cannot possess that divine attribute, by which the Lord, in his ineffable glory, clearly sees all things created. Man is condemned out of darkness to receive light, and out of light the explanation of what is obscure. For him, there is nothing evident which does not proceed from an impenetrable mystery. But between things mysterious and those that are evident, there is, however, this notable difference: that man may render obscure that which is evident, but he cannot explain the mysterious. When, in attempting to acquire that ineffable knowledge which is in God, but which he has not himself, he rejects as obscure the divine explanations, he consigns himself to

the intricate and gloomy labyrinths of human solutions; then follows, what we have just demonstrated, that his solution is partial, and as such incomplete, and therefore false. At first view, his solution may seem to explain something, but upon investigation it will be seen that it really fails to give an explanation of what it appears to solve, and reason, which begins by accepting it as plausible, finally rejects it as insufficient, contradictory, and absurd. This has been completely proved in the preceding chapter, with regard to the question which we are now considering; and, having shown the manifest deficiency of the human solution, it only remains for us to demonstrate the adequacy and entire consistency of the Catholic solution.

God, who is the absolute good, is the supreme creator of all good; and all that he creates is good. But as God cannot give the creature all that He possesses, nor give him that which He himself has not, it follows that it is altogether impossible either that God should communicate evil, which dwells not in Him, to any creature, or that He should communicate absolute good; both are manifest impossibilities, because we cannot conceive the imparting of that which one does not possess, nor can we conceive that the creator should remain absorbed by the creature. Not being able to communicate absolute goodness, which would be to make of the creature another God like himself, nor to impart evil, which dwells not in him in any manner, he therefore bestows a relative goodness, whereby he imparts all that it is in his power to give, namely, something of that which is in him, but which is not himself; thus producing between him and the creature a likeness which attests the derivation, and at the same time showing a difference which attests the

infinite distinction between him and his creature; so that every creature, by the very fact of its existence, testifies that he is but a creature, and that God is his creator.

God being the creator of all things created, all creation is good by a relative goodness. Man is good as man, the angel as angel, and the tree as tree. Even the angel who gleams with lurid light in the abyss, and the very abyss from which proceeds this ghastly splendor, are things good and excellent. The prince of darkness is in himself good, because, in becoming what he is, he has not ceased to be an angel, and God created the angelical nature excellent above all things created; and the abyss is in itself good, because it is ordained for an end sovereignly good.

And, though all things created are good and excellent, Catholicism affirms the existence of evil, and the great and fearful ravage committed by it in the world. The question consists in establishing what is evil; and, on the other hand, whence it comes; and finally, in what way even its dissonance contributes to the general harmony.

Evil has its origin in the use which man made of the faculty of choice, which, as we have said, constitutes the imperfection of human liberty. This faculty was confined within certain limits imposed by the very nature of things. As all things were good, this faculty could not consist in choosing between things good, which necessarily existed, and things evil, which had no existence; it consisted only in embracing or renouncing good, in affirming or denying it. When the human mind, in the exercise of this power, withdrew itself from the divine mind, it was thus separated from truth, and ceased to

comprehend it. When the human will deviated from the divine will, it was thus separated from good, ceased to desire it, and therefore to execute it. But as man could not cease to exercise his inherent and inamissible faculties, so he could not cease to understand, to will, and to act; for this would have been ceasing to exist. But, separated from God, what he understood was not the truth, which dwells in God alone; what he willed was not the good, which is to be found only in God; and what he did, could not be that which he neither understood nor willed; and which, not being accepted by his understanding or will, could not be the term of his actions. The term of his understanding was therefore error, which is the negation of truth; the term of his will was evil, which is the negation of good; and the end of his actions was sin, which is the simultaneous negation of truth and good; these being only diverse manifestations of the same thing, considered under different points of view.

As sin denies all that God affirms with his understanding, which is truth; and all that he affirms with his will, which is good; and as there are no other affirmations in God than truth, which is in his understanding, and good which is in his will—God being these same affirmations substantially considered—it follows that sin, which denies all that God affirms, virtually denies God in all his affirmations; and because it denies him, and does no other thing but deny him, it is therefore the supreme, universal, and absolute negation.

This negation did not and could not affect the essence of things that exist independently of the human will, and which, after as before the prevarication, were not only good in themselves, but likewise perfect and excellent.

But, if sin did not deprive them of this excellence, it disturbed the sovereign harmony that the divine creator established among them, that delicate connection and perfect order with which they were united the one to the other, and all to God, when they were brought forth from chaos by an act of God's infinite goodness. In this state of perfect order and admirable connection, all things tended toward God with a determined and irresistible impulsion. Impelled by the law of love, the angel, a pure spirit, gravitated with an ardent and impetuous desire toward God, as the center of all spirits. Man, less perfect but not less loving, was drawn by the same attraction to become associated with the angel in the bosom of God, the center of angelical and human gravitation. Even matter, agitated by a secret power of ascension, followed the gravitation of spirits toward the supreme creator, who sweetly attracts all things to himself. And thus, as all these things, considered in themselves, are the exterior manifestations of the essential good which is in God, so the manner of being we have just indicated is the exterior manifestation of God's manner of existence, and is, as his very essence, perfect and excellent. Things created had a perfection susceptible of change, and another perfection which was necessary and inamissible. Their inamissible and necessary perfection was the essential good that God imparted to every creature, and their perfection which is contingent and liable to be lost, was that manner of being which God gave to them when he created them out of nothing. God wished that they should always be what they are, but he did not wish that they should necessarily exist in the same manner; he withdrew the essences from all jurisdiction except his own, and he placed for a time

the order in which they are, under the jurisdiction of those beings whom he formed intelligent and free; from which it follows that the evil, produced either by angelical or human free will, could not be, and was not, anything else than the negation of the order in which God has placed all things created. This negation is expressed by the word even which declares it, since it is called *disorder*. Disorder is the negation of order, that is to say, of the divine affirmation with regard to the manner of being of all things. And thus, as order consists in the union of things that God wished to be united, and in the separation of those which he wished to be separated, so disorder consists in uniting those things which God wished to be separated, and in separating those which God wished to be united.

The disorder produced by the angelical rebellion consisted in a partial separation of the rebel angel from God, who was his center, by a change in his manner of being, which converted his movement of gravitation toward God into a movement of rotation upon himself.

The disorder caused by man's prevarication resembled that produced by the rebellion of the angels. As there cannot be two different ways of being a prevaricator and a rebel, after man ceased to gravitate toward God by his understanding, his will, and his actions, he constituted himself the center of his own movements, and made himself the ultimate end of his works, his will, and his understanding.

The confusion produced by this prevarication was deep and profound. When man separated himself from God, all his faculties became immediately disconnected one from the other, constituting themselves into so many divergent centers. His understanding lost its authority

over his will, his will no longer directed his actions, the flesh departed from its former obedience to the spirit, and the spirit, which had been submissive to God, became subjected to the flesh. Previously, all had been concordant and harmonious in man; but now, all was converted into war, tumult, contradiction, dissonance. His nature, which had been supremely harmonious, became profoundly antithetical.

This disorder, caused in man by himself, was transmitted from him to the universe, and affected the mode of being of all things which had been subjected to him, and which now revolted against him. When man ceased to be the servant of God, he ceased to be the prince of the earth, which is not surprising, when we reflect that the right to this terrestrial authority was based upon his obedience to God. Even the animals, to which he had given names, as a mark of his dominion over them, no longer heard his voice or obeyed his commands. The earth became overgrown with brambles; the heavens flashed lightning; the flowers armed themselves with thorns; all nature seemed as if possessed with an insensate rage against man; the seas, at his approach, lashed their waves into fury, and their depths resounded with a frightful clamor; the mountains raised their heads even to the clouds to arrest his progress; the fields were overrun by impetuous torrents; the whirlwind crushed his fragile dwelling; the reptiles spat forth against him their deadly venom; the herbs distilled their fatal poisons; and at every step he feared an ambush, and in every ambush death.

If we accept the Catholic interpretation of evil, all that without this explanation and outside of it appears and is inexplicable, becomes clear. Evil, according to

the Catholic dogma, not having a real but a negative existence, cannot serve as material for a new creation, and consequently the difficulty which would arise from the coexistence of two diverse and simultaneous creations, is avoided. This difficulty would increase at every step of our examination, if we accepted the supposition of a dualism in creation. For, this hypothesis admitted, it would forcibly imply another dualism much more repugnant to human reason, that of an essential dualism in the divinity, whom we must either suppose to be a simple essence, or we cannot conceive at all. This divine dualism involves the idea of a rivalry, which would be at the same time necessary and impossible; necessary, because two Gods who are antagonistic, and two essences that are repugnant to each other, are condemned, by the very nature of things, to an incessant struggle; and impossible, because a definitive victory is the final object of every contest; and this definitive victory would be either in the suppression of evil for good, or of good for evil; and yet neither can be suppressed, because they both exist in an essential, and therefore in a necessary manner. From the impossibility of suppression follows the impossibility of victory, which is the final object of all dispute, and therefore the radical impossibility of the dispute itself. The contradiction that exists in every system of manicheism, as applied to the divinity, also exists as applied to man, in whom we cannot suppose the substantial coexistence of good and evil. This contradiction is absurd, and therefore inconceivable. To affirm of man that he is at the same time essentially good and essentially evil, is equivalent to the assertion of one of these two things: either, that man is a unit, formed of two opposite natures, and

in this affirmation the manichean system would unite what in the divinity it is obliged to separate; or, to assert that the essence of man is one, and that, being one, it is evil and good at the same time, which is at once to affirm and deny of the same thing all that is denied and affirmed of that very thing.

The Catholic system admits the existence of evil, but its existence is modal, not essential. Evil, thus considered, is synonymous with disorder, and, in reality, it is nothing else than the disordered condition of that which is essentially good, and which, by a secret and mysterious cause, has ceased to be properly regulated. But the Catholic system points out to us this secret and mysterious cause, and if, in this indication, there is much that surpasses our reason, there is nothing which contradicts or is repugnant to it. It is not necessary to have recourse to a divine intervention, in order to explain a modal perturbation in things which, after this disturbance, preserve their essence pure and intact; in such an explanation there would be no proportion between the effect and its cause. This fact is sufficiently explained by the anarchical intervention of free and intelligent beings; for, if these beings could not in any way alter the marvelous order and concerted harmony of creation, they could not be regarded as free or intelligent. Evil, then, is accidental and ephemeral in its nature, and as such we may affirm of it, without contradiction or inconsistency, these two things: first, that evil cannot in any way be a work of God; second, that whatever is accidental and ephemeral must be the work of man. In this way the affirmations of reason blend with the affirmations of Catholicism. According to the Catholic system, all absurdities disappear and all contradic-

tions are suppressed. By this system, the creation is one, and God is one; and, in setting aside a divine dualism, we put an end to the war of the gods. Evil exists, because without it we cannot imagine human liberty. But the evil that exists is accidental and not essential, because, if it were essential and not accidental, it would be a work of God, the creator of all things. This would involve a contradiction, repugnant both to divine and human reason. Evil comes from man, and is in man, and, coming from and dwelling in him, there is in it a great agreement, and no contradiction whatever. There is agreement, because inasmuch as evil cannot be the work of God, man could not choose it, if he could not create it; and he would not be free, if he could not choose it. There is no contradiction in this, because Catholicism, in affirming of man that he is good in his essence, and evil, by accident, does not assert of him the same that it denies, nor does it deny what it affirms, because, to affirm of man that the evil in his nature is accidental and not essential, is not to affirm contradictory things, but only two different things.

Finally, the Catholic system subverts that blasphemous and impious system which supposes a perpetual antagonism between God and man, between the creator and the creature. Man, the author of evil, which is of itself accidental and transitory, cannot be compared with God, the creator, supporter, and regulator of all beings and all things. Nor can there exist any conceivable rivalry or possible competition between these two existences, which are separated by an infinite distance. The battle between the creator of essential good and the creator of essential evil, as asserted by the Manichean and Proudhonian systems, is inconceivable and ab-

surd, because victory would be an impossibility in such a contest. The Catholic system does not suppose a contest, because there cannot be a conflict between parties, where one side must necessarily be victorious and the other necessarily vanquished. Two conditions are requisite for the existence of a contest: one, that victory is possible; and the other, that it should be uncertain. Every struggle is useless when the victory is certain, or when it is impossible; from which it follows that, in whatever way we consider it, the hypothesis of these great battles fought for universal domination and supreme sway is absurd. And the inconsistency is equally great, whether one sovereign or two are supposed: in the first case, because he who is one will always be alone; and secondly, because the two would never be one, but perpetually two. These gigantic contests are such, that they are either decided before they commence, or will never be decided.

CHAPTER V.

Secret analogies between the physical and moral perturbations, caused by human liberty.

How far the lamentable fall of man changed the aspect of all creation, and up to what point the ruin it involved extended, is beyond the power of human investigation. But that which is established beyond all dispute is that the spirit and flesh both suffered a degradation in Adam; the former by pride, and the latter by concupiscence.

As the physical and the moral degradation proceed from the same cause, they both present surprising analogies and correspondencies in their various manifestations.

We have already said that sin, the primitive cause of all degradation, was nothing else than disorder; and as order consisted in the perfect equilibrium of all things created, and this equilibrium in their hierarchical subordination to each other, and in the absolute subjection of all to their Creator, it follows that sin, or disorder, which is the same thing, was nothing else than the weakening of this hierarchical order of things, and of their absolute subjection to the Supreme Being. Or, what is the same, sin consisted in the interruption of that perfect equilibrium and marvelous connection in which all things had been placed.

And as effects must always be analogous to their causes, the result produced by the fall was, to a certain point, like the fall itself; that is, *disorder, disunion, and a disequilibrium.*

Sin was the *disunion* of man and God.

Sin produced both a moral and a physical *disorder.*

The moral disorder consisted in the ignorance of the understanding and the weakness of the will.

This ignorance of the understanding was caused by its *disunion* from the divine mind. The weakness of the will was caused by its *disunion* from the supreme will.

The physical disorder produced by sin consisted in sickness and death; so that sickness is only disorder, disunion, and disequilibrium of the constitutive parts of our body.

Death is only the same disunion, the same disorder, the same disequilibrium, carried to its extreme point.

Therefore the physical and moral disorder, ignorance, and weakness of will on the one side, and sickness and death on the other, are the same thing.

This will be seen more clearly when we consider that all these disorders, physical as well as moral, come under the same denomination in their beginning and in their end.

The concupiscence of the flesh, and the pride of the spirit, bear the same name—sin; and the definitive disunion of the soul from God, and of the body from the soul, bear the same name—death.

By which we see that the connection between the physical and the moral is so close that we can alone perceive the difference at an intermediate point, inasmuch as the beginning and end are the same. And how could it be otherwise, if the physical and the moral alike come from God and end in God; if God exists before sin and after death?

This intimate connection between the moral and the physical might be unknown to the earth, which is purely material, and to the angels, who are purely spiritual; but how could it be hidden from man, who is composed of an immortal soul united to a corporeal substance, and placed by God at the confluence of the two worlds?

The great perturbation produced by sin did not stop here. Not only did Adam become subject to sickness and death, but likewise all the earth was cursed on his account and in his name.

As regards this tremendous, and, in a certain measure, incomprehensible curse, without daring to penetrate into a question so obscure, and acknowledging as we do

that the judgments of God are as secret as his works are marvelous, it nevertheless is evident that if we once admit in theory the mysterious relation that God has placed between the moral and the physical, and also admit it to be actually and in a certain degree visible in man, even if it is in some measure inexplicable, then all the rest is subordinate in this profound mystery. For the mystery lies in the law of relation, rather than in the applications which may be made of this law by way of inference.

It is proper to mention here, in order to throw light upon this difficult subject, and as a full proof of what we have stated, that physical things cannot be considered as possessing an independent existence; that is, as existing in themselves, by themselves, and for themselves; but they must rather be regarded as manifestations of spiritual things, which alone possess in themselves the reason of their existence. God, a pure spirit, being the beginning and end of all things, it is clear that all things, in their beginning and end, must be spiritual. This being the case, material things are either mere phantoms, that have no existence, or, if they really exist, they must have their being through God and for God, which means that they exist through the spirit and for the spirit. From which we infer that any perturbation, whatever it may be, in the spiritual world, must necessarily produce another analogous to it in the material world; as we cannot conceive that things themselves should remain in their proper order and agreement when there exists a perturbation in the superior order from which they have their beginning and their end.

The disorder, then, produced by sin was necessarily

general, and was felt both in the spiritual and in the material world. When the face of God, hitherto serene and placid, became clouded with wrath, then the seraphim veiled their brightness with their wings; the ground became covered with thorns and brambles; the trees became withered; vegetation lost its freshness; the harvests were parched; the grateful waters of the fountains became malignant; the earth was covered with gloomy, impenetrable, and frightful forests, and was intercepted with rugged mountains; and there was henceforth a torrid and a frigid zone, so that the earth was consumed with heat or chilled with frost; while impetuous whirlwinds arose, covering the whole horizon, until throughout the circumference of the world raged the wild fury of the hurricane.

Man was placed, as it were, in the center of this universal disorder, which he had caused, and which became his punishment. More profoundly and radically affected than any other portion of creation, he remained exposed, without any other aid than the divine clemency, to the violence of every physical and moral evil. His life was a constant temptation and contest, his wisdom was ignorance, his will was weakness, his flesh was corruption. Each of his actions was attended with remorse, each pleasure was succeeded by sorrow or bitter grief; his cares equaled his desires, his hopes were dispelled as illusions, and his illusions were equaled by his disappointments. The past and the future alike tormented him, and even his imagination could scarcely invest his nakedness and wretchedness with some glittering ornaments of gold and purple. Yearning after the good for which he was created, he pursued the evil path upon which he had entered; though feeling the need of a God, he fell into the unfathomable abyss of superstition.

He was condemned to suffer; and who can recount the extent of his sufferings? He was condemned to toil unto weariness; and who can enumerate his painful labors? He was condemned to gain his bread by the sweat of his brow; and who can count the dolorous drops wrung from his aching brow?

Whatever the condition of man may be, whether placed in the most elevated or in the lowest situation in life, he is never exempt from the consequences entailed upon all by sin. The high in rank are exposed to envy, and the lowly may be oppressed. Where is the man whose body has not felt pain? Where is the soul that has not suffered anguish? Who is so high that he fears not to fall? Who believes so firmly in the constancy of fortune that he has no fear of its reverses? All men in birth, through life, and in death, are equal, because all are guilty and all are punished.

If to be born, to live, and to die is not a punishment, why are we not born, why do we not live and die, in the same manner as other beings do? Why are we so afraid to die? Why is life so full of anxiety? Why do we come into the world at our birth in the posture of penitents, with our arms crossed? Why, when we first open our eyes to the light, do we weep, and why is the first sound we utter a groan?

The facts of history confirm the dogmas we have just announced, and all their mysterious agreements. The Saviour of the world, to the edification and profound awe of the few just souls that followed him, and to the scandal of the doctors, blotted out sin in the act of curing the sick; and when he healed the sick, he absolved them from their sins, sometimes suppressing the cause by the suppression of the effect, and again suppressing

the effect by removing the cause. A paralytic having been placed before him, when he was surrounded by the doctors of the law and the pharisees, he said to the man: "Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee." They that were present were scandalized, thinking that the assumption of the power of absolution was only pride and madness in the Nazarene, and that to attempt to heal the sick by absolving them from their sins, was the height of folly. And when the Lord saw these guilty thoughts arise in the hearts of these people, he added, "but that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, arise," said he, "take up thy bed, and go into thy house." And it was done as he had said. In this our Saviour shows us that the power to cure and the power to absolve are the same power, and that sin and sickness are the same thing.

Before we proceed further it will be well to notice here, in confirmation of what we have stated, two things worthy to be remembered: first, that our Lord before taking upon himself the sins of the world, was exempt from all infirmity and inconvenience, because he was exempt from sin; and secondly, that when he consented to bear these sins, willingly accepting the effects as well as their causes, and the consequences as well as their principles, he accepted sorrow, viewing it an inseparable companion of sin; and he sweat blood in the garden; and he suffered anguish in the judgment-hall; and he was overcome by the weight of the cross; and he endured thirst on Calvary, and a terrible agony when nailed to the frightful cross; and he beheld death with terror, yielding up his spirit in deep grief and anguish to his most holy Father.

As to the admirable correspondence of which we have spoken, between the disorders of the moral and those of the physical world, mankind unanimously proclaim it without understanding it, as if compelled by an invincible and supernatural power to give testimony to this great mystery. The united voice of tradition, the popular belief, all the vague rumors circulated by the winds, and all the echoes of the world, mysteriously tell us of a great physical and moral disturbance, which took place at a period anterior to the dawn of history, and even to that of fable, and as a consequence of a primitive fault, which was so great that it could neither be comprehended by the understanding nor expressed in words. And even now, if an elemental disturbance arises, or strange phenomena occur in the celestial spheres; if great chastisements fall upon nations by wars, pestilence, or famine; if the seasons alter the accustomed course of their harmonious revolutions, and seem to battle against each other; if the earth trembles and shakes; if the winds, freed from the limits which restrain their impetuosity, rush onward with the devastating force of the hurricane,—then the people, who have preserved in their inmost hearts this tremendous tradition, seek with fear and trembling for the cause of such unwonted disturbance, and attribute it to some great sin, which has drawn upon them the divine wrath, and upon the earth the malediction of heaven.

It is evident that these vague apprehensions are not only unfounded, but proceed from ignorance of the laws that govern natural phenomena; but it appears to us no less certain that the error is solely in the application and not in the idea; in the result deduced, and not in the principle; in practice and not in theory. Tradition

remains as a perpetual testimony to truth, notwithstanding all its false applications. The multitude may err, and frequently do so when they affirm that a certain sin is the cause of a certain disturbance; but they cannot err when they assert that disorder is caused by sin. It is precisely because tradition, considered in its generality, is the manifestation and visible form of an absolute truth, that it becomes difficult and almost impossible to withdraw people from those concrete errors which are the result of their practical applications. What there is true in tradition gives consistency to what is false in the application, so that error, in the concrete, lives and grows under the protection of absolute truth.

History is not wanting in remarkable examples which help to confirm this universal tradition, transmitted from father to son, from family to family, from race to race, from nation to nation, from country to country, even to the ends of the earth; because whenever crime has exceeded a certain limit, and has filled a certain measure, some terrible punishments have overtaken nations, and dreadful convulsions have shaken the world. The first perversion was that universal wickedness of which the holy Scripture speaks, when, in the antediluvian epoch, all men were united in a common apostacy and forgetfulness of God, and lived without any other god or law than their criminal desires and frenzied passions. Then the measure of divine wrath was filled, and the earth was overwhelmed by that fearful inundation of waters which leveled the mountains with the valleys, and wrapped all the earth in one common distress and ruin. Afterward, when time had run his course midway, the Desired of Nations came, in fulfillment of ancient promises and prophecies. The period of his coming was distinguished by

the perversity and malice of men, and by a universal corruption of manners. Then there came a day of sad and sorrowful memory, the most dismal and dolorous that the world has ever seen since the creation; when an enraged and insensate people arose in the madness of their wrath, made their God an object of derision, and covering him with contumely and subjecting him to every ignominy, crucified him between two thieves. Then the cup of divine wrath was filled to overflowing, and the sun withdrew his rays, and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, and the rocks were burst asunder, and the entire earth was abandoned to terror and dismay.

Many other examples might be adduced as evidence of the mysterious agreements between physical and moral perturbations, and in confirmation of the universal tradition which marks and proclaims them; but the limits which we have proposed to ourselves, and the grandeur of the examples we have already given, alike induce us to terminate the investigation of this subject.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the angelical and human prevarication; greatness, and enormity of sin.

WE have now exposed the Catholic theory respecting evil, the child of sin; and with regard to sin, the offspring of human liberty, which has a free movement within its limited sphere, under the eye, and with the consent of that sovereign Lord who, disposing all things

with weight, number, and measure, arranged them so wisely that his providence would not restrict the free will of man, nor the improper use of this will, however great and calamitous it might be, and to the disregard of his glory. Before proceeding further, it appears to me becoming the dignity of the subject, to give a connected recital of that wonderful tragedy which commenced in heaven and ended in the terrestrial paradise, without noticing the difficulties and objections, which will be answered elsewhere, and which would only serve to obscure the severe and simple beauty of this lamentable history.

We have seen in what manner the Catholic theory is superior to all others, in the entire consistency of all its solutions; and we shall now see in what way the facts upon which it is established, considered in themselves, are superior to any of the primitive histories, however imposing and dramatic they may be. We have, until now, presented the beauty of this theory by comparisons and deductions; now, we shall examine its intrinsic and incomparable excellence.

Before the creation of man, and in ages too remote for human investigations, God created the angels blessed and perfect creatures, to whom it was given to dwell in the serene radiance of the beatific vision, bathed in an ocean of unspeakable delights and perpetual adoration. The angels were pure spirits, and their nature surpassed that of man, who was composed of an immortal soul united to the dust of the earth. In the simplicity of his nature, the angel resembled God, while in his reasoning faculties, his liberty, and his limited wisdom, he was in affinity with man. So, man in his spiritual nature was conformed to the angel, and in his corporeal

nature to physical things, which were placed in subjection to his will and in obedience to his word. And all creatures were born with the inclination and the power to change their condition, and to ascend in that immense scale of being which, commencing in the lowest existences, terminates in that holy Being, who is above all, and whose incommunicable name the heavens and the earth, men and angels adore. Physical nature aspired in a certain way to a spiritual condition, to a resemblance with man; and man sought a higher spirituality and a nearer resemblance to the angel; and the angel a closer assimilation to that perfect Being, who is the source of all life, the creator of all creatures, whose vastness none may measure, and whose immensity none may comprehend. All things had come forth from God, and were to reascend to God, as to their first principle and origin; and because all things were created by him and were to return to him, so was there nothing that did not reflect, with more or less brightness, his beauty.

In this way infinite diversity was reduced, of itself, to that vast unity which created all things, and which established among them such a wonderful harmony and connection, separating those which were confused and uniting those which were disconnected. By this we see that the act of creation was complex, and composed of two different acts—that is, the act by which God created what before had no existence, and the act by which he disposed all that he had created, according to his wisdom. By the first of these acts he revealed his power to create all substances, and by the second he revealed the power to create every form that embellishes these substances; and, as there can be no other substance than that created by God, so there can be no beauty

except that which he has given to things. For this reason the universe, which signifies everything created by God, is the combination of all substance; and order, which signifies the form in which God has modeled all things, is the combination of all beauty. There exists no creator except God, there can be no beauty except in order, and no creature except in the universe.

If all beauty consists in the order originally established by God, and if beauty, justice, and goodness are the same thing, viewed under different aspects, it follows from this that, outside of this order established by God, there can be neither beauty, justice, nor goodness; and if these three things constitute the supreme good, order, which includes them all, must necessarily be the supreme good.

As there is no good except in order, everything not in conformity with order must be evil; nor can there be any evil which does not consist in a subversion of order; therefore, as order is the supreme good, disorder is the supreme evil, because outside of disorder there can be no evil, and outside of order no good. From what has been said, we deduce the inference that order, or, what is the same thing, supreme good, consists in the preservation of all things in that connection in which God placed them, when he created them out of nothing; and that disorder, or, what is its equivalent, supreme evil, consists in breaking this admirable connection and this sublime harmony.

This connection could not be broken nor this harmony interrupted except by the exercise of a will and power which were, to a certain point and in a possible manner, independent of the will of God. No creature was endowed to such an extent, except angels and men, who

were alone created in the image and likeness of their maker, that is to say, intelligent and free; consequently angels and men could alone be the cause of disorder, or, what is its equivalent, supreme evil. Angels and men could not disturb the order of the universe without rebelling against God; therefore, in order to explain the existence of evil and disorder, it is necessary to suppose the existence of rebellious angels and men.

All disobedience and rebellion being what is called sin, and all sin being a rebellion and disobedience, it follows that we can neither conceive of disorder in creation, nor of evil in the world, without supposing the existence of sin.

If sin consists in disobedience and rebellion, and if these are nothing but disorder, and disorder nothing but evil, then it follows that evil, disorder, rebellion, disobedience, and sin are absolutely identical—just as good, order, submission, and obedience are things presenting a perfect resemblance. Whence we conclude that submission to the divine will is the supreme good, and sin the supreme evil.

When all the angels were obedient to the voice of their Creator, viewing themselves in his divine countenance, rejoicing in his splendors, and moving with freedom and concerted harmony at his word, it came to pass that the most glorious among them forgot God in the contemplation of himself, and remained enraptured in self-adoration, and ecstatic at beholding his own beauty. Regarding himself as self-subsistent, and as his own ultimate end, he violated that universal and sacred law, according to which all diversity must have its beginning and its end in unity, which, embracing all without being embraced in anything, is the universal

container of all created things, as the creator is of all creatures.

The rebellion of the angel was the first disorder, the first evil, and the first sin. It was the origin of all sin, of all the evil and all the disorder which was to fall upon creation, and especially upon the human race, through subsequent ages; for, when the fallen angel, who was now deprived of light and beauty, saw the man and woman in paradise, so pure, so lustrous, and so beautiful with the splendors of grace, he felt the deepest dejection at the sight of an excellence which he had lost, and instantly formed the design of involving them in his condemnation, since he could not equal them in glory. Assuming the form of a serpent, which was to be forever the symbol of deceit and cunning, the horror of the human race, and an object of divine wrath, he entered the terrestrial paradise, and, gliding through its tender and fragrant herbage, entangled the woman in that most subtle snare, by which she lost her innocence, and with it her happiness.

Nothing can equal the sublime simplicity of the Mosaical narration of this tragedy, of which the terrestrial paradise was the theater, God the spectator, and the actors, on the one side the king and sovereign of the abyss, and on the other the kings and sovereigns of the earth; of which mankind was to be the victim, while the sad and sorrowful catastrophe was to be lamented with everlasting sorrowing, by the earth in its motion, by the heavenly bodies in their revolutions, by the angels on their thrones, and by us, unhappy children of those unfortunate parents, in the darksome valley of our pilgrimage.

The serpent commenced his discourse thus: "Why hath God commanded you that you should not eat of

every tree of paradise?" And immediately the woman felt her heart inspired with that vain curiosity which was the primal cause of her guilt. From that moment, her understanding and her will were enfeebled by the sweet temptation, and began to depart from the will of God and the divine mind.

And the serpent said to the woman: "In what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Under the disastrous influence of this promise, the woman felt in her heart the first sensations of pride, and regarding herself with complacency, the face of God was at that moment withdrawn from her sight. Proud and vain, she cast her eyes upon the tree of infernal illusions and divine vengeance; she saw that it was beautiful, and inferred that its fruit must be pleasant to the taste, and felt enkindled in her senses the fire, till then unknown, of corrosive delights. Thus the curiosity of the eyes, and gratification of the flesh, and pride of the spirit combined, deprived the first woman of her innocence, and afterward corrupted the first man. Then the many treasured hopes for his posterity vanished, as smoke is dissipated in the ambient air.

And then the entire universe was disturbed, and disorder, having commenced at the highest point of the scale of created beings, was communicated from one to the other, until everything was wrested from the course and place assigned to it by the sovereign Creator. The innate attraction of every creature to ascend and remount even to the throne of God, was changed into an aspiration to descend into some nameless abyss; for, to turn away from God was, as it were, seeking for death and striving to get rid of life.

However deep man may descend into the fathomless abyss of wisdom, however high he may mount in the investigation of the most hidden mysteries, yet he can never ascend so high nor descend so low, as to be able to comprehend the vast ravages inflicted by this first crime, and out of which all other calamities have arisen, as from a most prolific source.

No; never can man, never can the sinner, conceive the magnitude and the deformity of sin. In order to understand how great, how terrible, and how devastating are its effects, we must examine it under the divine point of view, and not as measured by human standards. As in the deity we find the supreme good, and in sin the supreme evil, the deity being order and sin disorder, the deity a complete affirmation and sin an absolute negation, the deity being plenitude of existence and sin its absolute decline, there exists between God and sin, as between affirmation and negation, order and disorder, good and evil, existence and non-existence, an incommensurable distance, an invincible contradiction, and an infinite repugnance.

No calamity, however overwhelming, can disturb the ineffable repose of the Divinity. When the universal deluge overspread the earth, God beheld the tremendous inundation, considered in itself and separated from its cause, with a serene countenance; because the angels, obedient to his command, had opened the floodgates of heaven; and the waters, obedient to his voice, covered the mountains and encompassed the earth; the clouds gathered from every corner of the obscured horizon, and united hung as a black pall over the earth; yet the face of God remained serene, because it was his will that darkness should cover the earth; for he called the

clouds, and they came; he commanded them to unite, and they did so. It is he who sends the hurricane to desolate a guilty city, and he who, in the fulfillment of his designs, arrests the waters, restrains the thunderbolt within the cloud, or hurls it flashing through the air. His eyes have witnessed the rise and fall of every empire; his ears have heard the prayers of nations, laid waste by the sword of the conqueror, by pestilence, slavery, and famine; and he has remained tranquil and impassive, because it is he who holds, as mere puppets in his hand, the empires of the world; it is he who puts the sword in the hand of the conqueror; it is he who sends tyrants to rule over guilty nations; it is he who punishes unbelieving peoples with famine and pestilence, when his sovereign justice demands it.

There is a frightful place, the abode of horror, fear, and suffering, where there is insatiable thirst and perpetual hunger without relief; where no light ever gladdens the eyes, nor peaceful sounds reach the ear; where all is agitation without repose, weeping without intermission, and grief without consolation. There, all may enter, but none may depart. There, hope dies, but memory is immortal. The limits of this place are known to God alone, and these torments are uninterrupted and endless in duration; yet this cursed abode, with its inexpressible agonies, does not disturb the tranquillity of God, because his omnipotence has so ordained it. God made hell for the reprobate, just as he made the earth for men and heaven for angels and saints. Hell declares his justice, as the earth proclaims his goodness and the heavens his mercy. Wars, inundations, plagues, conquests, famine, hell itself, are something good, because they are all ordained with regard

to the ultimate end of creation, and they all serve as useful instruments of the divine justice; and because they are all useful, and have been made by the author of all good, none of them can alter the ineffable repose of the creator of all things. Nothing is hateful to God but that which he has not made; and as he has created all that exists, nothing displeases him but the negation of what he has created. For this reason is it that disorder, which is the negation of the order which he established, and disobedience, which is the denial of the obedience due to him, are hateful in his sight. This disobedience, this disorder, are the supreme evil, inasmuch as they are the negation of the supreme good, the supreme evil consisting in this negation. But disobedience and disorder are nothing else than sin; from which it follows that sin, being an absolute negation on the part of man, of the supreme affirmation on the part of God, is therefore the supreme evil, which alone strikes God and his angels with horror.

Sin filled heaven with mourning, hell with lamentations, and the earth with calamities. It was sin which brought sickness, pestilence, famine, and death into the world. It was sin which caused the destruction of the most renowned and populous cities. It caused the downfall of Babylon and her splendid gardens, of Nineveh the proud, of Persepolis the daughter of the sun, of Memphis the seat of the most profound mysteries, of Sodom the impure, of Athens the witty, of Jerusalem the unfaithful, and of Rome the magnificent; for, if God ordained the destruction of all these cities, he only did so as a punishment and a remedy for sin. Sin has caused all the sighs that have agitated human breasts, and all the tears that have fallen, drop by drop, from

the eyes of men, and, what is much more than all, and beyond imagination to conceive or words to express, it has caused tears to flow from the most sacred eyes of the Son of God, the meek Lamb who suffered on the cross for the sins of the world. Neither men, nor the earth, nor the heavens ever saw him laugh; but men, the earth, and the heavens saw him weep. And he wept at the contemplation of sin. He wept over the grave of Lazarus, but he only bewailed, in the death of his friend, the loss of the soul through sin. He wept over Jerusalem, but he wept for the abominable sins of a people who could commit a deicide. He was sad and agitated in the garden, but it was horror of sin which there filled his soul with anguish, so that his brow sweat blood at the dreadful spectacle. He was crucified, but it was sin which nailed him to the cross, and caused him to expire there in bitter agony.

CHAPTER VII.

How God causes good to result from the angelical and human prevarication.

THE most fearful of all mysteries is that of free will, which constitutes man his own master, and associates him with the Divinity in the direction and government of human affairs.

As the partial liberty given to the creature consists in the supreme faculty of choosing between obedience to or rebellion against God, so the granting of this lib-

erty amounts to the same thing as bestowing the right to alter the immaculate beauty of creation. And as this spotless beauty consists in the order and harmony of the universe, so to confer the faculty of disturbing this order is the same thing as to grant the power to substitute disorder for order, perturbation for harmony, and evil for good.

This right, even restrained by the limits we have indicated, is so exorbitant, and this faculty is so monstrous, that God would never have consented to its exercise, had he not been certain of making it an instrument for the accomplishment of his designs, and of controlling the disasters it produces by his infinite power.

The principal reason why man should be permitted to convert order into disorder, harmony into perturbation, and good into evil, is found in the power of God to change disorder into order, perturbation into harmony, and evil into good. If we do not admit this sovereign power in God, it would be logically necessary to deprive the creature of the faculty of liberty, or to deny the divine intelligence and omnipotence.

If God permits sin, which is the sovereign evil and disorder, it is because sin, far from restraining the exercise of his justice and mercy, serves to exhibit new manifestations of those attributes. If the rebellious sinner had not existed, the divine justice and mercy would not thereby have been suppressed; but only one of their especial manifestations would no longer exist—that which is peculiarly applied to rebellious sinners.

As the supreme good of intelligent and free beings consists in their union with God, so God has, in his infinite goodness, and by a free act of his ineffable mercy, determined that they should be united to him not only

by natural, but also by supernatural ties. And as on the one side the divine will might fail to be accomplished through the voluntary refusal of intelligent and free beings, and on the other the liberty of the creature was essential to this voluntary choice, so the great problem rests in conciliating these things, which are to a certain point contradictory, in such a way that neither the liberty of the creature be destroyed, nor the will of God fail to be accomplished. The possibility of a separation from God being necessary, as an evidence of angelical and human freedom, and a union with God likewise essential as an evidence of the efficacy of the divine will, the difficulty consists in proving how the liberty of the creature and the will of God, the separation which the creature chooses, and the union which God desires, can be made compatible with each other, so that the creature neither ceases to be free nor God to be sovereign.

To show this it is requisite that the withdrawal from God should be in a certain respect real, and in another only apparent; that is to say, that the creature may be able to withdraw himself from God, but in such a way that this separation unite him to God in a different manner. Intelligent and free beings were born united to God by an effect of his grace. By sin they really separate themselves from God, because they really and truly break the bond of his grace, which unites them to him; and they thereby give testimony to his having made them intelligent and free beings. But this separation is, if we attentively regard it, only a new kind of union; since, in withdrawing from God by the free renunciation of his grace, they are drawn back to him by falling into the hands of his justice, or by becoming the objects of his mercy. In this way the separation

from, and union with God, which at first sight would seem to be incompatible, are in reality in all respects reconcilable; so much so that all separation resolves itself into a special mode of union, and all union into a special mode of separation. The creature is not united to God through grace, but because he has been separated from Him as regards His justice and mercy. The creature that falls into the hands of His justice only does so because he has withdrawn himself from His grace and mercy; and in the same way, if he is the object of God's mercy, he is so only inasmuch as he has separated himself from Him as regards grace, at the same time being separated from Him as regards His justice. The liberty of the creature consists, then, in the faculty of designating the kind of union that he prefers by the manner of separation that he chooses; as also the sovereignty of God consists in this, that whatever manner of separation the creature may adopt, he effects a union with the latter by every mode of separation and by every way. Creation resembles a circle. God is, in a certain point of view, its circumference, and in another its center; as the center he attracts, as the circumference he includes all. Nothing can exist beyond this circle that contains all, and everything obeys this irresistible attraction. The liberty of intelligent and free beings consists in their being able to fly from the circumference, which is God, and going to God, who is the center; and in flying from the center, which is God, to give themselves to God, who is the circumference. Nothing is more capable of expansion than the circumference, and nothing more contracting of itself than the center. What angel has the power, what man dare attempt, to break through this great circle that God has traced?

What creature is so presumptuous as to defy those mathematically inflexible laws which have been eternally established by the divine mind? What can be the center of that inexorable circle but those things which are infinitely united in God? What can be the circumference of this circle but those same things which have in God an infinite expansion? And what expansion can be greater than this infinite expansion? What contraction surpasses this infinite contraction? For this reason St. Augustin, the greatest of geniuses and the most illustrious of doctors, who was the embodiment of the spirit of the Church, is amazed, and, as it were, transported at beholding all things in God and God in all things, and man seeking to fly, he knows not how, at one time from the center that attracts him, and then from the circumference that encircles him. This great saint, lost in love and inundated by the fortifying waters of grace, beats his breast, and in anguish exclaims: *Poor mortal, thou seekest to fly from God: throw thyself into his arms.* Never have human lips uttered words so lovingly sublime, and of such sublime tenderness. God then points out the end of all things, but the creature chooses the way. In designating the term where all ways meet, God is the omnipotent sovereign; and in choosing the way which will bring him to the term, the creature is intelligently free.

Nor can it be said that the liberty which consists only in a choice among many paths by which to reach a necessary end, is a trivial affair. We cannot consider that freedom of little consequence which consists in the choice of salvation or perdition; inasmuch as the various ways of approaching God (who is the necessary limit of all things) are finally reduced to two—heaven

and hell. If the faculty that God has bestowed upon the creature of choosing the manner of approaching him, does not confer sufficient liberty, what extent of liberty would ever satisfy the desire of man?

If we do not accept this explication, there is no possible conciliation between things which we can imagine reconcilable only in an absolute way. But this explanation renders intelligible the secret causes of the most profound mysteries and of the most elevated designs. It enables us to comprehend the reason of the angelical and human prevarication, these two great evidences of the liberty permitted to men and angels. If God permitted the angelical prevarication, it was because he knew the secret mode of reconciling the angelical disorder with the divine order, even as the angels knew how to convert order into disorder. The angel changed order into disorder by transforming union into separation. God changed disorder into order, transforming a momentary separation into an indissoluble union. The angel would not be united to God by way of recompense, and he was eternally united to him by the way of punishment. He refused to listen to the gentle entreaties of grace, and he was forced to hear the stern sentence of justice. He sought an absolute separation from God, but the instant he did so he was united to him in a different manner. He became separated from a gracious God, and was united to a just God. He withdrew from God in heaven, and was united to him in hell. The order in which things are established does not consist in their being united to God in a certain manner, but simply in their being united to God; as disorder does not consist in their separation from God in a certain way, and in their being united to God in a different

way, but in an absolute separation from God. Therefore, true order always exists, and true disorder has no existence. Sin is so radical and absolute a negation that it not only denies order but also disorder; for, after having denied all affirmations, it denies its own negations, and even denies itself. Sin is the negation of negations, the shadow of a shadow, the appearance of an appearance.

If God permitted the prevarication of man, which was, as we have said, less radical and culpable than the angelical prevarication, it was because God knew, from all eternity, the perfect way of reconciling the divine order with the disorder created by man, even as man knew how to draw disorder out of order. Man changed order into disorder by separating that which God had united in a bond of love. God brought order out of disorder, reuniting what man had separated in bonds still more close and endearing. Man having rejected a union with God by the ties of original justice and sanctifying grace, found himself united to him through his infinite mercy. If God permitted man's prevarication, it was because he held, as in reserve, the Saviour of mankind, who was to come in the fullness of time. That sovereign evil was necessary to procure this supreme good; and for the reception of so great a blessing, that great catastrophe was requisite. Man sinned because God had resolved to become man, and because, having become man without ceasing to be God, his blood had a supreme virtue sufficient to wash away sin. Man vacillated because God had power to sustain the vacillating; he fell because God had power to raise him up again; he wept because he who had power to dry the earth when it was overflowed by the waves of

the deluge, could likewise dry the sad valley filled with our tears. Man endured bodily anguish because God could free him from pain; he suffered great misfortunes because God had still greater rewards in store for him. He went forth from Eden, endured death, and was laid in the tomb, because God had power to vanquish death, to deliver him from the grave, and to raise him to heaven.

Thus as the angelical and human prevarications enter into the elements of universal order, in consequence of an admirable divine action, in the same manner the liberty of the angel and the liberty of man, which caused their fall, are necessary elements of that supreme and universal law to which all things are subject—all creations, all worlds, moral, material, and divine. According to this law absolute unity, in its infinite fecundity, perpetually produces diversity, which as perpetually returns to its prolific source, the bosom of God, which is absolute unity.

Considered as the Father, God draws from himself eternally the Son by way of generation, and the Holy Ghost by way of procession, and thus the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit eternally constitute the divine diversity. The Son and the Holy Spirit are eternally identical with the Father, and eternally constitute with him an indestructible unity.

Considered as creator, God brought things out of nothing by an act of his will, and established in this way a physical diversity. He afterward subjected all things to certain eternal laws and to an immutable order, and in this way diversity in the physical world was only the exterior manifestation of absolute unity.

Considered as Lord and legislator, God conferred

upon man and the angels a liberty different from his own liberty, and in this manner constituted diversity in the moral world. He afterward subjected this liberty to certain inviolable laws and a necessary limit; and the necessity of this limit and the inviolability of these laws caused the angelical and human liberty to enter into the vast unity of his marvelous designs.

The divine will, which is absolute unity, is shown in the precept given to Adam in paradise, when God said to him, "*Thou shalt not eat.*" Human liberty, with the imperfection annexed to it, the power of choosing, which is diversity, is set forth in the condition, "*and if thou shalt eat.*" Finally, we behold diversity return to the unity from which it proceeds: first in the menace made by God to man when he says, "*thou shalt die the death;*" and then in the promise made to our first parents, when God announces to the woman that she should give birth to One who would crush the serpent's head. By means of this promise and threat God proclaims the two ways by which diversity, which proceeds from unity, returns to this unity—the way of his justice and that of his mercy.

If the prohibition enjoined upon man is suppressed, the exterior manifestation of absolute unity is destroyed.

If the condition annexed to the prohibition is suppressed, the exterior manifestation of diversity, which is human liberty, is destroyed.

If both the menace and the promise are suppressed, you destroy the ways by which diversity, in order not to be subversive, returns to the unity from whence it proceeds.

As union between the physical creation and the Cre-

ator consists in the eternal subjection of this creation to fixed and immutable laws, which are the perpetual manifestation of his sovereign will, so there is no union between God and man except that man, who is separated from God by sin, returns to him, either as impenitent to experience his justice, or as purified to enjoy his mercy.

If, after having attentively and separately considered the angelical and human prevarications, and found them to be each a perturbation by accident, but in essence a harmony, we consider both prevarications at the same time, we shall behold with admiration the manner in which their harsh dissonances are changed into marvelous accords by the irresistible power of the divine Thaumaturgus.

We must here observe, before proceeding further, that all the beauty of creation consists in the fact that each thing is, in itself, as a reflection of some one of the divine perfections; so that all united present a faithful likeness of his sovereign beauty. From the splendid orb which illumines space to the humble lily that lies unnoted in the valley, and from the most obscure depths of the valleys that are adorned with lilies to the height of the heavens, resplendent with worlds, all creatures, each in its own manner, recount, one to the other, the wonders of the Lord, and they altogether attest his ineffable perfections, and sing in an endless canticle his excellence and glory. The heavens show forth his omnipotence, the seas his grandeur, the earth his fecundity, and the stupendous masses of clouds figure to us the footstool of his throne. The lightning is his will, the thunder-bolt his voice. He broods in sublime silence over the abyss, and the impetuous hurricane and tem-

pestuous whirlwind declare the terrors of his wrath. *'Tis he that has adorned us*, proclaim the flowers of the field; and the heavens declare, *'tis he that has given us our brilliant expanse*; the stars cry out, *we are as jewels fallen from his splendid vestment*; and men and angels bear witness that, in passing before them, he left engraven upon them his most beauteous, glorious, and perfect image. In this way certain things in creation represented the grandeur of God, others his majesty, others again his omnipotence, and, above all, men and angels represented the treasures of his goodness, the marvels of his grace, and the splendor of his beauty. But God is not only perfect and wonderful in beauty, grace, goodness, and omnipotence; he is moreover, and above all these things, if his perfections could be measured, infinitely just and infinitely merciful. It follows from this that the supreme act of creation could not be considered as consummated and perfected, until after having realized, in all their various manifestations, his infinite justice and infinite mercy. And as God could not exercise that special mercy and justice which are applied to the guilty without the prevarication of intelligent and free beings, it follows that this prevarication itself was the occasion of the grandest of all harmonies and the most beautiful of all consonances.

After the prevarication of intelligent and free beings, God shone in the midst of creation with a new and greater splendor. The universe in general was the perfect reflection of his omnipotence; the terrestrial paradise especially exhibited his grace, the heavens his mercy; hell alone reflected his justice; while the earth, placed between these two poles of creation, mirrored at the same time his justice and mercy. When, through

the angelical and human prevarication, all the perfections of God found an exterior manifestation, except that perfection which was to be manifested on Calvary, then order was restored.

The deeper we investigate these fearful dogmas, the more conspicuous we find the supreme agreement, the perfect connection, and the marvelous consonance existing between all the Christian mysteries. The science of mysteries, if we carefully reflect upon it, is simply the science by which all things are solved.

CHAPTER VIII.

Solutions of the liberal school relative to these problems.

BEFORE concluding this book, we shall examine the opinions of the liberal and socialist schools, with regard to good and evil, and respecting God and man—fearful questions, which greatly embarrass human reason when it undertakes to solve the great problems relating to religion, politics, and society.

As regards the liberal school, I shall simply say of it that in its arrogant ignorance it despises theology; not that this school is not theological in its own way, but because it is so without knowing it. This school has never been able to perceive, and probably never will perceive, the close tie that binds together things human and divine, the affinity that political questions bear to social and religious questions, and the dependence of all problems respecting the government of nations, upon

those other problems which relate to God as the supreme legislator of all human associations.

The liberal school is the only one which has no theologian among its doctors and masters. The absolutists have had their theologians, and have more than once elevated them to the dignity of rulers over the people, and under their government the people increased in consequence and power. France will never forget the administration of Cardinal Richelieu, whose name is one of the most famous and glorious among the illustrious of the French monarchy. The renown of the great cardinal surpasses that of many kings; nor was its splendor in the least diminished by the accession to the throne of that powerful and glorious monarch, whom France with enthusiasm, and Europe in admiration, called the Great. Ximenes, of Cisneros, and Alberoni, the two greatest ministers of the Spanish monarchy, were both cardinals and theologians. The name of Ximenes will forever be associated with that of the most illustrious queen and the most celebrated woman of Spain, so famous among nations for its remarkable women and illustrious queens. Alberoni is considered great in Europe, for the grandeur of his plans and for the penetration and sagacity of his prodigious genius. Ximenes, born in those happy days when the noble acts of this nation raised it above the dignity of history and elevated it to the majesty and grandeur of the epic, directed the great vessel of state with a firm hand, and silencing the turbulence of the crew, conducted it through stormy seas into more tranquil and serene waters, where both vessel and pilot found a peaceful repose and uninterrupted prosperity. Alberoni appeared in those unfortunate times when the greatness of the Spanish monarchy was already on the decline,

and yet he almost reinstated it in its former degree of dignity and power, causing it to have a considerable weight in the political balance of European nations.

The knowledge of God imparts to its possessor both sagacity and strength, since it not only quickens the mind but also expands it. What strikes me as most remarkable in the lives of the saints, and especially in the lives of the Fathers of the Desert, is something that has not yet been fully appreciated. I know of no man, who is in the habit of conversing with God, and accustomed to the contemplation of divine things, who, circumstances being equal, is not superior to other men, either by the extent of his genius, the solidity of his judgment, or the penetration and acumen of his intellect, and, above all, by that superior and practical prudence which men call good sense.

If mankind were not irremissibly condemned to take a distorted view of things, they would select theologians from among men as counselors, and among theologians they would select the mystics, and among the mystics those who have lived most remote from the affairs of the world. Among the persons whom I know, and I know very many, the only ones in whom I have recognized an imperturbable good sense, an eminent sagacity, and a wonderful aptitude for the practical and prudent solution of the most intricate problems, and for the discovery of the best manner of escaping from the most perplexing complications, are those men who have lived a retired and contemplative life; while, on the contrary, I have never met, and I never expect to meet, among those persons who are called business men, who hold in contempt all intellectual occupations, and especially disdain all attention to spiritual contemplations, those who are

capable of understanding any affair whatever. To this very numerous class belong those whose constant attempt is to deceive others, but who always finish by falling victims to their own snares. This is a fact, which strikingly displays the profoundness of the judgments of God, because if God had not condemned to incapacity those who disdain and ignore him; or if he had not placed a limit to the virtue of those who have a remarkable degree of sagacity, society could not have resisted either the sagacity of one class or the malice of the other. The virtue of contemplative men, and the stupidity of the clever, alone preserve the world in a state of perfect equilibrium. There is only one being in creation who unites in himself all the sagacity of spiritual and contemplative natures, and all the malice of those who ignore and despise God and spiritual contemplations—this being is the devil. The devil has the sagacity of the former without their virtue, and the malice of the latter without their stupidity, and his destructive force and immense power come precisely from this combination.

As to the liberal school, considered in general, it is not theological, except in the degree in which all schools are necessarily so. It makes no explicit declaration of faith, nor does it attempt to define its opinions respecting God and man, good and evil, or the order and disorder in which all creation is placed; but it boasts, on the contrary, that it holds these high speculations in contempt. We may nevertheless affirm of this school, that it believes in an abstract and indolent god, who is assisted by the philosopher in the direction of human affairs, and by certain laws which he instituted from the beginning for the universal government of things.

Although this school views God as the king of creation, yet it supposes him to remain perpetually and sublimely ignorant of the manner in which his kingdom is governed and conducted; and that when he appointed those who were to govern in his name, he gave them the plenitude of his sovereignty, and declared this gift to be perpetual and inviolable; therefore reverence is due to God from the people, but not obedience.

As to evil, the liberal school denies its existence in physical things, but concedes that it exists in human affairs. In this school, all questions relative to good or evil resolve themselves into questions of government, and all questions respecting government into questions of legitimacy; so that the existence of evil is impossible when a government is legitimate, and evil is inevitable when a government is illegitimate; therefore the question of good and evil is reduced to the inquiry, What governments are legitimate and what are illegitimate?

The liberal school calls those governments legitimate which are established by God, and those illegitimate which are not founded on a divinely delegated right. According to it, God has willed that material things should be subject to certain physical laws, which he established from the beginning, once for all; and that societies should be governed by reason, which is incarnated in a general manner in the upper classes, and in a special manner in the philosophers who instruct and direct them; so that it follows, as a necessary consequence, that there are only two legitimate governments, that of human reason, as embodied in a general manner in the middle classes, and in a special manner in the philosophers, and the government of divine reason, as

perpetually embodied in certain laws to which material things are from the beginning subject.

It will undoubtedly surprise my readers, and particularly those of the liberal school, that I should trace the liberal doctrine of legitimacy to the divine right, and yet nothing appears to me more evident. The liberal school is not atheistical in its dogmas, although, from its not being Catholic, it is led without knowing or even without wishing it, from consequence to consequence, up to the confines of atheism. Recognizing the existence of a God, the creator of every creature, it cannot deny to the God that it recognizes and affirms, the original plenitude of all rights; or, what in the language of the school is the same thing, the constituent sovereignty.

He is Catholic, who recognizes in God both a constituent and an actual sovereignty; and he is a deist, who denies that God has an actual sovereignty, and only recognizes that He possesses a constituent sovereignty; and he is an atheist, who denies to God all sovereignty, because he denies the existence of God. This being so, the liberal school, in so far as deistical, cannot proclaim the actual sovereignty of reason, without at the same time proclaiming the constituent sovereignty of God, from which the former, which is always delegated, has its principle and origin. The theory of the constituent sovereignty of the people is an atheistical theory, not taught by the liberal school, except as atheism is in deism, that is to say, as a remote but inevitable consequence. Hence proceed the two great divisions of the liberal school—the democratic, and the liberal, properly so called. The first is more consistent, and the second more timid. Democratic liberalism, forced by an inflexible logic, has, like the river flowing onward and lost in

the sea, become merged at the present day in those schools which are at the same time atheistical and socialistic. The liberal school, properly so called, struggles to be at rest on the eminence which it has attained, where it is placed between two seas, whose constantly advancing waves will finally overwhelm it, between socialism and Catholicism. We at present speak only of this division of the liberal school, and we assert of it that, as it cannot admit the constituent sovereignty of the people without becoming democratic, socialistic, and atheistic, nor admit the actual sovereignty of God without becoming monarchical and Catholic, it admits on the one side the original sovereignty of God, and on the other the actual sovereignty of human reason. It will therefore be perceived that we were right in affirming that the liberal school does not proclaim the human right, except as originally derived from the divine right.

This school admits no other evil than that which proceeds from the transferring of government from the place in which God established it from the beginning of time; and as material things always remain subject to the physical laws which were contemporaneous with the creation, the liberal school denies evil in the universality of things; but, as it happens that the government of societies is not something certain and fixed with the philosophic dynasties, which by divine appointment possess the exclusive right to govern human affairs, the liberal school admits evil in society, whenever the governing power passes out of the hands of the philosophers or the middle classes, and is exercised by kings or the lower classes.

Of all the schools this is the most unsatisfactory, be-

cause it is the least learned and the most egotistical. As we have seen, it knows nothing of the nature of good or evil; it has scarcely an idea of God, and none respecting man. Impotent for good, because it is destitute of all dogmatical affirmations, and for evil, because it detests all bold and absolute negations, it is condemned, without knowing it, eventually to take refuge either in the haven of Catholicism, or to be driven upon the hidden rocks of socialism. This school is only dominant when society is threatened with dissolution, and the moment of its authority is that transitory and fugitive one, in which the world stands doubting between Barabbas and Jesus, and hesitates between a dogmatical affirmation and a supreme negation. At such a time, society willingly allows itself to be governed by a school which never *affirms* nor *denies*, but is always making distinctions. It is essential to this school to repress alike all supreme affirmations and all radical negations, and thus, by means of discussion, it confounds all ideas and propagates skepticism; knowing well that a people who perpetually hear from the lips of its sophists the pro and con of everything, must finish by not knowing what to believe, and by asking themselves whether truth and error, justice and injustice, bad and good, are really antagonistic to each other, or if they are only the same thing, viewed under different aspects. Such periods of agonizing doubt can never last any great length of time, however prolonged their duration may appear. Man was born to act, and unceasing discussion is contradictory to human nature, inasmuch as it is incompatible with action. The repressed instincts of the people will soon reassert their sway, and they will resolutely declare either for Barabbas or Jesus, and overturn all that the sophists have attempted to establish.

The socialist schools, considered theoretically, as they appear in the writings of their doctors and masters, and apart from the vulgar who follow them, possess great advantages over the liberal school, precisely because they approach directly all great problems and questions, and always give a peremptory and decisive solution. The strength of socialism consists in its being a system of theology, and it is destructive only because it is a satanic theology.

The socialist schools, as they are theological, will prevail over the liberal, because the latter are antitheological and skeptical. But they themselves, on account of their satanic element, will be vanquished by the Catholic school, which is at the same time theological and divine. The instincts of socialism would seem to agree with our affirmations, since it hates Catholicism, while it simply despises liberalism.

Democratic socialism has reason to ask liberalism: "What manner of God is this that you propose to my adoration, who must assuredly be inferior to you, since he has neither will, nor even a personality? I deny the existence of a Catholic God; but while I deny it, I can conceive it. That which I cannot imagine, is a God without the divine attributes. Everything inclines me to believe that, if you admit the existence of God, it is in order that you may receive through him the legitimacy which you do not of yourself possess. Your legitimacy and your existence are a fiction based upon a fiction, and a shadow resting on a shadow. My mission is to dissipate all shadows, and to put an end to fictions. The distinction between the actual and the constituent authority has every appearance of being invented by those who, not daring to claim both, desire

at least to usurp one. The sovereign must be as God; either he is one, or he can have no existence. The sovereignty must be as the Divinity; either it does not exist, or it is indivisible and incommunicable. In the two words, the legitimacy of reason, the last designates the subject, and the first the attribute. I deny both the attribute and the subject. What is legitimacy, and what is reason? And if it is admitted that they mean anything, how do you know whether they are to be found in liberalism and not in socialism, in you and not in me, in the middle classes and not in the people? I deny your legitimacy and you deny mine; you deny my reason and I deny yours. When you provoke me to discussion, I pardon you, because you know not what you do. Discussion, the universal dissolvent, whose secret virtue you do not understand, has destroyed your adversaries, and will destroy yourself. As to me, I am resolved not to tolerate it, for if I do not suppress it, it will turn against me. Discussion is a spiritual sword, which turns the mind with bandaged eyes, and against its power neither dexterity nor an armor of steel avails. Death assumes the guise of discussion when it desires to remain concealed and unrecognized. Rome was too wise to be thus deceived, and when it entered her gates under the mask of a sophist, she saw the disguise, and hastened to dismiss it. According to Catholic doctrine, man fell only because he entered into an argument with the woman, and the woman fell because she listened to the devil; and later, in the midway of time, this same demon, it is said, appeared to Jesus in a desert, and attempted to provoke him to a spiritual contest, or, as we would express it, to a tribunal discussion. But here we find that the devil met a more prudent adversary,

whose reply was, 'Begone, Satan!' which put an end at once to the temptation and to the diabolical illusions. It must be confessed that the Catholics have a special gift of exhibiting great truths in a clear light, and presenting them under the form of ingenious fictions. All antiquity would have condemned the stupidity of any man who would publicly discuss at the same time things human and divine, religious and social institutions, the authorities and the gods. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle would have united in passing a sentence of condemnation against such a person, and the cynics and sophists would have been his only champions.

"As regards evil, it either exists throughout creation or not at all. Forms of government have little power to produce it. If society is sound and well constituted, it is capable of resisting all possible forms of government. If it cannot do this, it is because it is badly constituted and diseased. We cannot conceive evil, save as an organic vice of society, or as a radical vice of human nature, and in this case the remedy is not to change the government, but to alter the social organism or the constitution of man."

The fundamental error of liberalism is, that it considers questions of government as alone important, when they are in reality of no consequence whatever, compared to those of religious and social order. This helps to explain why liberalism is always and everywhere entirely eclipsed, from the moment that Catholics and socialists announce their tremendous problems and their contradictory solutions. When Catholicism affirms that evil comes from sin, that sin in the first man corrupted human nature, yet, nevertheless, good prevails over evil, and order over disorder, because the one is human and

the other divine—there is no doubt that this doctrine, even before investigation, is satisfactory to reason, because it proportions the grandeur of the causes to that of the effects, and proposes an explanation equal to the question that is to be explained. When socialism affirms that man's nature is perfect, and that society is sick; when it places the former in open conflict with the latter, in order that the good which is in man may extirpate the evil that is in society; when it calls upon humanity to rise in rebellion against all social institutions, there is undoubtedly in this mode of presenting and explaining a question, false as it is, much that in dignity and grandeur is worthy of the terrible majesty of the subject. But when liberalism explains good and evil, order and disorder, by the diversity of governmental forms, which are all ephemeral and transitory; when, setting aside all social and religious problems, it discusses its political problems as alone worthy the serious consideration of a statesman, truly words fail to express our sentiments of the profound incapacity and radical incompetency of this school, we will not say to solve, but even to present these formidable questions.

The liberal school, fearing at the same time both light and darkness, has chosen an uncertain twilight between the luminous and opaque regions, between eternal shade and heavenly light. Placed in this nameless region, it has undertaken to govern without a people and without God; an extravagant and impossible attempt. Its days are numbered, because we see God appearing at one point of the horizon, and at the other the people. On the terrible day of battle, when the entire field will be covered with Catholic and socialist combatants, no one will know where to find this school of liberalism.

CHAPTER IX.

Socialist solutions.

THE socialist schools are greatly superior to the liberal school, both as to the nature of the problems which they propose to solve and in their mode of presenting and explaining them. Their masters evince a familiarity, up to a certain point, with those bold speculations which refer to God and his nature, man and his constitution, society and its institutions, the universe and its laws. This propensity to generalize everything, to consider things in their *ensemble*, and to observe general dissonances and harmonies, gives them a greater aptitude to enter and to escape from the intricate labyrinth of the rationalistic logic without losing themselves. If, in the great contest which holds the world as it were in suspense, there were no other disputants than the socialists and liberalists, the battle would not last long, nor would the victory be doubtful.

All the socialist schools are, in a philosophical point of view, rationalistic; under a political aspect, republican; and under a religious aspect, atheistical. They resemble the liberal school in their elements of rationalism, and differ from this school in so far as they are atheistical and republican. The question, then, consists in investigating whether rationalism logically ends where the liberal school does, or proceeds as far as the socialist school. We shall defer the examination of this ques-

tion in its political aspect, and shall at present consider it especially under its religious aspect.

Considered in this aspect, it is clear that the system which concedes to reason a universal ability to solve of itself, and unaided by God, all questions respecting the political, religious, social, and human order, supposes reason to possess a complete sovereignty and an absolute independence. This system simultaneously involves three negations—namely, the negation of revelation, the negation of grace, and the negation of providence. It implies that of revelation, because revelation contradicts the universal adequacy of human reason; that of grace, because grace denies its absolute independence; that of providence, because providence likewise denies its independent sovereignty. But these three negations, attentively considered, form but one—the negation of every tie which binds God and man—because if man is not united to God by revelation, by providence, and by grace, he is not united to Him in any way whatever.

Now, to affirm this absolute separation between God and man, is to deny God. To dogmatically affirm the existence of God, after having dogmatically despoiled him of all his attributes, is an inconsistency reserved for the liberal school, which is the most contradictory of all the rationalistic schools. This inconsistency, however, far from being accidental, is essential in that school, which, in whatever light we regard it, is an extravagant assemblage of evident contradictions. Its contradictions in regard to God in the religious order, are also exhibited in the political order, in reference to the people and their rulers. The office of this school is to proclaim the existences which it annuls, and to annul the existences which it proclaims. Each one of its principles is asso-

ciated with another contradictory to it, which destroys it. Thus, for example, it proclaims a monarchy, and at the same time a ministerial responsibility; and, as a consequence, the omnipotence of the minister, who is made responsible, which is the negation of the monarchy. It proclaims ministerial omnipotence, and at the same time a supreme right of intervention on the part of deliberative assemblies in the affairs of government, which is incompatible with the omnipotence of the ministry. It proclaims that political assemblies have the right of supreme intervention in affairs of state, and at the same time it accords to electoral colleges the right of deciding matters, which is in contradiction with the supreme intervention of political assemblies. It invests the electors with a supreme right of arbitration, and at the same time it recognizes, more or less explicitly, the supreme right of revolution, which is subversive of that pacific and supreme right of arbitration. It asserts the right of revolution as belonging to the people, by which it affirms their sovereign omnipotence; and at the same time it asserts the law of the electoral census, which is virtually to ostracize the sovereignty of the people. And with all these principles, and their counter-principles, it has only one object in view, and that is to produce and maintain, by industry and artifice, an equilibrium which it never can attain, because this is opposed to the nature of society and the nature of man.

There is only one power against which the liberal school has not sought a counterpoise, and this is the power of corruption. Corruption is the god of this school, and like God, is everywhere at the same time. To such a degree is it the controlling element in the liberal school that, wherever this school prevails, all

must forcibly be either corrupters or corrupted; because, where every man can aspire to become Cesar, or by his vote to create Cesar, or by his approval to confirm the power of Cesar, there all men must either be Cesars or pretors. Therefore, every society which falls under the domination of this school dies the same death—they all die of gangrene. Kings corrupt their ministers, promising them a permanence of power; and the ministers corrupt the kings, promising to augment their prerogatives; and they also pervert the representatives of the people, by placing at their disposal all the state preferments, to gain which the assemblies give their votes to the ministers. The elected traffic with their power, the electors with their influence. All combine to bribe the people with their promises, and the people, in turn, intimidate every one by their clamors and threats.

To resume the thread of this argument—when the socialist schools deny the existence of God, which the liberal school affirms, they are more logical and consistent than the liberal school; yet they are far from being as consistent within their limits as the Catholic school is with itself. The Catholic school affirms the existence of God, and all his attributes, with a dogmatical and supreme affirmation. The socialists, on the contrary, although in reality they deny God, do not deny him in the same way, or for the same reasons, nor do they deny him boldly. The reason is this, that the most intrepid man is seized with terror when he seeks to affirm positively that there is no God. It would seem as if man feared that, if he made such an assertion, he would be deprived of the power ever to utter another word, and that such a blasphemy would cause the heavens to fall upon

and crush the blasphemer. Thus we hear some deny God by saying, all that exists is God, and God is all that exists; while others affirm that God and humanity are identical. Among these, some maintain that there is in humanity a dualism of contrary forces and energies, and that man is the representative of this dualism. Those who entertain this opinion distinguish in man the reflective forces and the spontaneous energies. According to them, true humanity resides in the first, and true divinity in the second. By this system, God is neither all that exists nor humanity; he is but the half of man. Others think differently, and deny that God is man or a part of man, that he is humanity, or that he is the universe; but they are disposed to believe that he is a being who is manifested in various and successive incarnations, and wherever there is a great influence or a magnificent domination, there God is incarnated. God was incarnated in Cesar, and in Charles the Great, and in Napoleon. He was successively incarnated in the great Asiatic empires, and also in the Macedonian and Roman. At first he was the Orient, and afterward he was the Occident. The world experienced a change in each of these divine incarnations, and advanced a step in the path of progress each time that it changed, in consequence of a new incarnation.

All these antagonistic and absurd systems are embodied in a man who has appeared in the world, in these latter days, as the personification of all the inconsistencies of rationalism. This man is Mr. Proudhon, whom we have already noticed, and to whom we shall frequently allude in the course of this work. Mr. Proudhon is esteemed the most learned and consistent of the modern socialists; and as regards erudition, he is cer-

tainly superior to almost all contemporary rationalists. As to his consistency, the reader will be enabled to form some idea of it from the passages which we are about to quote from his writings, in which he treats of the subjects discussed in this book.

In the *Confessions of a Revolutionist*, Mr. Proudhon thus defines God: "God is the universal force, and is penetrated with intelligence, which produces, through an infinite knowledge of itself, the beings of all kingdoms, from the imponderable fluid up to man, and which only in man acquires a knowledge of self, and says—*I am*. God, far from being our master, is the object of our study. How can the thaumaturgists have had the audacity to convert him into a personal being, who is at times an absolute king, like the God of the Jews and Christians; and at other times a constitutional sovereign, like the God of the deists, whose incomprehensible providence over us appears to be perpetually and solely exercised, both by his precepts and acts, in confounding our reason?" Here Mr. Proudhon has affirmed three things: first, the assertion of a universal, intelligent, and divine force, which is pantheism; second, a higher incarnation of God in humanity, which is humanitarianism; third, the negation of a personal God, and of his providence, which results in deism.

In the work which is entitled *The System of Economic Contradictions*, ch. viii., Mr. Proudhon says: "I shall set aside the pantheistic hypothesis, which has always appeared to me either hypocritical or cowardly. God is personal, or he does not exist." Here he affirms all that he denies, and denies all that he affirms in the preceding sentences. These affirm a pantheistical and

impersonal God; while here are denied, as equally absurd, both the impersonality of God and pantheism.

Further on in this chapter, he adds: "The true remedy against fanaticism is not, it appears to me, in identifying humanity with the Divinity, which is nothing else than affirming communism in political economy, and mysticism and the *statu quo* in philosophy. The true remedy is to prove to humanity that God, if he exists, is its enemy." We here see that, after having denied pantheism and an impersonal God, Mr. Proudhon also denies humanism, as contained in his definition. On the other hand, his theory of a rivalry between God and man, which we have already noticed in a former chapter of this book, begins here to assume a concrete form.

He asserts this theory, and also the condemnation of humanitarianism, still more clearly in the ninth chapter of the same book, where he says: "For my part, and I regret to confess it, for I feel that such a declaration separates me from the most intelligent among the socialists, the more I reflect upon it the more I find it impossible to believe in this deification of our species, which, attentively considered, is nothing else, among the atheists of our day, than the expiring echo of religious terrors, which, re-establishing and consecrating mysticism under the name of humanism, replaces the sciences under the sway of prejudice, subjects the moral world to the authority of custom, and the social economy to the rule of communism, or, what is the same thing, atony and misery; and finally, it even subjects logic to the domination of the absurd and the absolute; and, as I find myself compelled to repudiate . . . this new religion, together with those which have preceded it, I

must also receive as plausible the hypothesis of an infinite being . . . against which I must struggle even unto death ; for this is my destiny, even as it is that of Israel to contend against Jehovah.”

Nothing here remains of the previously given definition of God, except the negation of providence, and even this negation disappears with this contradictory affirmation : “ We are thus conducted by chance, when guided by Providence, which never warns save when it strikes us.”*

In the foregoing paragraphs, we perceive that Mr. Proudhon goes through all the gradations of rationalistic contradictions, and is successively pantheist, humanist, and manicheist. He professes to believe in an impersonal God, and then declares as monstrous and absurd the idea of a God, unless the God conceived is personal ; and finally, he affirms and denies Providence at the same time. Nor is this all. We have seen, in one of the preceding chapters, in what manner the manichean theory of a rivalry between God and man makes man, according to the system of Proudhon, the representative of good, and God the representative of evil. We shall now see in what way, according to Mr. Proudhon, this same system falls to the ground.

In the second chapter of the work already cited, he makes use of the following language : “ Either nature or the Deity has mistrusted our hearts, and has doubted the love of man for his fellow-creatures. All the discoveries of science respecting the designs of Providence in social progress, and I say it with shame for the human conscience, (but our hypocrisy must know it),

* System of Contradictions, chap. iii.

prove the profound hatred of God for mankind. God does not aid us through kindness, but because order constitutes his essence. If he seeks the welfare of mankind, it is not because he deems them worthy of benefits, but because he is compelled to do so by the religion of his supreme wisdom. While the vulgar give him the tender appellation of Father, neither the historian nor the political economist can discover any reason to believe in the possibility of our being the objects either of his esteem or of his love."

These words are a refutation of the manicheism of Proudhon. Man is not the rival, but the despised slave of God; he is neither good nor evil, but a creature governed by those gross and servile instincts which in slaves engender servitude. God is an indescribable combination of severe, inflexible, and mathematical laws. He does good without being good, and his misanthropy shows that he would be evil if his nature permitted it. The Proudhonian God in this bears an evident resemblance to the *Fatum* of the ancients. Fatalism is still more clearly manifested in the following words:—

"Having arrived at the second station of our Calvary, instead of occupying ourselves with sterile contemplations, it is best for us to attend more closely to the teachings of fate. The pledge of our liberty is altogether in the progress of our punishment."

After fatalism comes atheism. "What is God? Where is he? How many Gods are there? What does God desire? What is the extent of his power? What promises does he make us? If we undertake to investigate all these things by the light of analysis, all the divinities of earth, heaven, and hell are immediately reduced to I know not what; that is, incorporeal, impos-

sible, immovable, incomprehensible, indefinable; in a word, to a negation of all the attributes of existence. In fact, whether man invests every object with a special mind or spirit, or conceives the universe as governed by one only power, he simply asserts by either of these propositions an unconditional—that is to say, an impossible—entity, in order to give an explanation more or less satisfactory of phenomena which he deems to be otherwise incomprehensible. What a high and profound mystery! The believer, in order to make the object of his idolatry more rational, successively deprives it of every attribute which could constitute its reality; and then, after prodigious efforts of logic and talent, finally discovers that the attributes of the Supreme Being are identified with those of nothing. This result is inevitable: atheism is at the foundation of all theodicy.”*

The atheist, having once arrived at this extreme conclusion, and plunged into this dark abyss, seems as if possessed by furies. His heart is filled with blasphemies which oppress his utterance and burn upon his lips; and when he would impiously pile up these blasphemies like a pyramid, raising them one upon the other, even to the throne of God, he sees with terror that, overcome by their own specific weight, instead of soaring to heavenly heights, they fall flatly and heavily into the abyss which is their center. Every word and expression then becomes replete with sarcasm and contempt, with vulgarity and frenzied wrath. His style is at once forcible and heavy, eloquent, although cynically coarse. He exclaims: “Why adore this phantom of a Deity? And what does he require of us by that band of enthusiasts

* System of Contradictions—*Prologue.*

who, on all sides, persecute us with their sermons?"* And further on he makes these cynical remarks: "God! I do not acknowledge any God. God is, moreover, nothing but pure mysticism. If you wish us to listen to you, commence by banishing this word from your discourse; because the experience of three thousand years teaches me that he who speaks to me of God would rob me of my liberty or my purse. How much do you owe me? How much do I owe you? This is my religion and my God."† Then, in a paroxysm of rage, he breaks forth into these words: "This I say: the first duty of an intelligent and free man is immediately to discard the idea of God both from his soul and his conscience; because God, if he exists, is essentially hostile to our nature, and we are in nothing dependent upon him. . . . By what right, moreover, could God say to me, be thou holy even as I am holy? Lying spirit! I would say to him in reply, imbecile God, thy sovereignty is already at an end; seek other victims among the brute creation. I know that I am not, neither can I ever become holy; and how canst thou be so if thou and I resemble each other? Eternal Father, Jupiter or Jehovah, whatever thou wishest me to call thee, learn from me that we know thee. Thou art, thou wast, and thou wilt ever be the rival of Adam, the tyrant of Prometheus."‡ And further on, in the same chapter, he apostrophizes the divinity that he denies, and says to him: "Thou dost triumph, and none dared contradict thee, when, after tormenting the just Job in soul and body, who was the type of our humanity, thou didst insult

* System of Contradictions, chap. iii.

† Ibid. chap. vi.

‡ Chap. viii.

his sincere piety and his discreet and respectful ignorance. We were all as nothing in presence of thy invisible majesty, to whom we gave the heavens as a canopy and the earth as a footstool. The times are now changed, and we behold thee weakened and dethroned. Thy name, once the sum and substance of all wisdom, the only sanction of the judge, the sole authority of the priest, the hope of the poor, the refuge of the repenting sinner,—this incommunicable name has now become an object of execration and contempt, and will be henceforth despised by all men. For God is but folly and timidity; God is but hypocrisy and deceit; God is but tyranny and misery; God is evil. So long as humanity lies prostrate before an altar the slave of kings and priests, it will continue condemned. While one man receives, in the name of God, the homage of other men, society will continue to be founded on perjury, and peace and love will be banished from the earth. Withdraw from me, O Jehovah; for henceforth, freed from the fear of God, and having attained true wisdom, I swear, with uplifted hand to heaven, that thou art only the tormentor of my reason and the specter of my conscience.”

It is he who has said it: GOD IS THE SPECTER OF HIS CONSCIENCE. No one can deny God without condemning himself; no one can fly from God without flying from himself. This unhappy being, although yet on earth, is already in hell; those violent and impotent muscular contractions, that morose frenzy, that insensate wrath, that furious and tempestuous rage, are in truth the contractions, the frenzy, the wrath, and the rage of the reprobate. Without charity and without faith, he has lost even that last good of man—hope. And yet, when

he speaks of Catholicism, he sometimes feels in his soul, without knowing it, its serene and sanctifying influence. Then his martyrdom ceases, as if by enchantment; a gentle and refreshing breeze, sent from heaven, cools his fevered brow and calms the accesses of his epileptic convulsions. Then he blandly utters these words: "Ah, how much wiser has Catholicism showed itself, and what an advantage has it gained over all—over St. Simonians, republicans, universitarians, and economists—in the knowledge of society and of man! The priest knows that our life is only a pilgrimage, and that entire perfection is denied us in this world; and because he knows this he is satisfied to commence an education on earth which can be completed only in heaven. The man who has been trained by religion, satisfied with knowing, doing, and obtaining what is sufficient for this life, will never prove an obstacle to the powers of the earth; he would rather be a martyr. Oh, beloved religion, by what inconceivable caprice of reason does it happen, that those who need thee most are precisely those who most obstinately reject thee?"

We have already cursorily alluded to the reputation of Mr. Proudhon for consistency. It now seems not only proper, but likewise necessary, to say something further on this subject, which is of much greater consequence than would at first sight appear. The fact of his reputation is public and notorious, and for this very reason unquestionable. It is nevertheless altogether inexplicable, if we consider that Mr. Proudhon has successively adopted every system relating to the Divinity, and that there is no one among the socialists so given to contradictions as he is. We must admit, therefore, that his reputation for consistency is entirely unfounded.

By what subterraneous paths, by what concatenation of subtile and labored deductions has the world, in the face of the glaring inconsistency of Mr. Proudhon, agreed to call his contradictions by a term which is their very opposite, consistency? Here is a great problem to be solved and a great mystery to be unraveled.

The explanation of this problem, and the solving of this mystery, are found in the fact that the theories of Mr. Proudhon imply at the same time contradiction and consistency; the first being apparent and the second real. If we examine in succession the fragments that we have just quoted from his works, and consider them in themselves, and without taking a more general view, each one of them is the contradiction of that which precedes and follows it, and all are in opposition to each other. But if we consider the rationalist theory, from which all have their origin, it will be seen that rationalism is the sin that most resembles original sin, being, like it, an actual error, and the productive cause of all error. Consequently it embraces and comprehends in its vast unity all errors; and contradictions form no impediment to this union, for even these antagonisms are susceptible of a certain kind of harmony and union, where there exists a supreme contradiction which involves them all. In the case in question, rationalism is this contradiction, which comprises all the others in its supreme unity. In fact, rationalism is at once deism, pantheism, humanism, manicheism, fatalism, skepticism, and atheism; and, among the rationalists, he who is at the same time deist, pantheist, humanist, manicheist, fatalist, skeptic, and atheist, is regarded as the most consistent.

These considerations serve to explain the facts which

we have noticed in this chapter, and which are apparently incongruous. They likewise satisfactorily explain why, in place of investigating, one by one, the various systems of the socialist doctors respecting the Divinity, we have preferred to consider them all as set forth in the writings of Mr. Proudhon, where we find them both in their diversity and in their connection.

We have seen what the socialists think of God; we shall now examine what they think of man, and in what manner they interpret the fearful problem of good and evil, considered in general, which forms the subject of this book.

CHAPTER X.

Continuation of the same subject—Conclusion of this book.

No man has been so stupid as to dare deny the existence of good and evil, and their coexistence in history. Philosophers may dispute as to the mode and form under which good and evil exist, but all unanimously affirm their existence and their coexistence in history as an established fact. All equally agree that, in the contest which is waged between good and evil, the former must ultimately gain the victory over the latter. Apart from these well established and admitted points, everything else is a subject of diverse opinions, contradictory systems, and interminable disputes.

The liberal school holds it as certain, that there is no evil except that which results from the political institu-

tions which we have inherited from past ages, and that the supreme good consists in the overthrow of these institutions. The greater number of socialists consider it as established, that there is no other evil than that which exists in society, and that the great remedy is to be found in the complete subversion of social institutions. All agree that evil is transmitted to us from past ages. The liberals affirm that good may be realized even in the present day; and the socialists assert that this golden era cannot commence except in times yet to come.

Thus, both the one and the other, placing the realization of the supreme good in the entire destruction of the present order—the political order, according to the liberal school, and the social order, according to the socialist schools—they agree with regard to the real and intrinsic goodness of man, who, they contend, must necessarily be the intelligent and free agent in effecting this subversion. This conclusion has been explicitly announced by the socialist schools, and it is implicitly contained in the theory maintained by the liberals. The conclusion is so far maintained in this theory that, if you deny the conclusion, the theory itself must fall to the ground. In fact, the theory, according to which evil exists in man, and proceeds from man, contradicts that other theory, which supposes evil to exist in political and social institutions, and to proceed from them. If we adopt the first hypothesis, there would exist a logical necessity to commence by eradicating evil from the heart of man, in order to extirpate it from society and the state. If we adopt the second supposition, the logical consequence would be the necessity of commencing by eradicating evil directly from society or the state,

where it has its center and origin. From which we see that the Catholic and rationalist theories are not only utterly incompatible, but likewise antagonistic. All subversion, whether it be in the political or social order, is condemned by the Catholic theory as foolish and useless. The rationalist theories condemn all moral reform in man as stupid and of no avail. And thus, the ones as well as the others are consistent in their condemnation; because, if evil neither exists in the state nor in society, why and wherefore require the overthrow of society and of the state? And, on the contrary, if evil neither exists in individuals nor proceeds from them, why and for what cause desire the interior reformation of man?

The socialist schools accept, without difficulty, the question proposed in this manner; but the liberal school, not without grave reason, finds serious inconvenience in accepting it. In meeting the question as it presents itself naturally, the liberal school would be compelled to deny, with a radical negation, the Catholic theory, both in itself and in all its consequences; and this is what it resolutely refuses to do. Adopting, at the same time, all principles and all their counter-principles, it does not wish to renounce either the one or the other, but is forever occupied in the attempt to reconcile all contradictory theories and human inconsistencies. According to this school moral reforms are not bad, although it views political revolutions as most salutary, without perceiving that these two things are incompatible, because men who are interiorly purified cannot become the agents of subversion; and such agents, by the very act of their being such, declare that they are not interiorly purified. In this matter, as in all others, a middle ground between Catholicism and socialism is altogether

impossible, because, either man ought not to think of self-reformation, or revolutions ought not to take place; for, if unreformed men assume the office of revolutionists, then political ruin is only the prelude to social ruin; while if men, in place of undertaking to overthrow the state, would attempt to reform themselves, then neither social nor political ruin would be possible. Thus, in either case, the liberal school is compelled to yield to the conclusions of the socialist or to those of the Catholic schools.

Consequently, the socialist schools have logic and reason on their side, in maintaining against the liberal school that, if evil exists essentially in society or in the state, the only remedy is the overthrow of society or the state; and, according to this hypothesis, it is neither necessary nor proper, but, on the contrary, it is pernicious and absurd to attempt to reform man.

If we adopt the theory of the innate and absolute goodness of man, then he is the universal reformer, and in no need of being himself reformed. This view transforms man into God, and he ceases to have a human nature and becomes divine. Being in himself absolute goodness, the effect produced by the revolutions he creates must be absolute good; and as the chief good, and cause of all good, man must therefore be most excellent, most wise, and most powerful. Adoration is so imperative a necessity for man, that we find the socialists, who are atheists, and as such refusing to adore God, making gods of men, and in this way inventing a new form of adoration.

These being the dominant ideas of the socialist schools with regard to man, it is evident that socialism denies his antithetical nature as a pure invention of the Cath-

olic school. For this reason, St. Simonism and Fourierism do not admit that man is so constituted that the understanding and will are antagonistic; nor do they concede that there is any opposition whatever between the spirit and the flesh. The chief object of St. Simonism is to practically prove the reconciliation and unity of these two powerful energies. This perfect agreement was symbolized in the St. Simonian priesthood, whose office it was to satisfy the spirit by the gratification of the flesh, and the flesh by the gratification of the spirit.

The principle common to all the socialists, which consists in replacing the vicious construction of society with an organization similar to that of man, who is, according to them, properly constituted, leads the St. Simonians to deny every kind of political, scientific, and social dualism. And this is a necessary negation, if we suppose the denial of the antithetical nature of man. Having proclaimed the reconciliation between the flesh and the spirit, they then announce the universal agreement and reconciliation of all things; and as there can be no agreement and reconciliation except in unity, therefore universal unity becomes a consequence of human unity, from which results a political, social, and religious pantheism; and this constitutes the ideal despotism, which all the socialist schools ardently desire. The common father of the school of St. Simon, and the high priest of the school of Fourier, are its most august and glorious personifications.

Returning to the contemplation of the nature of man, which is our special study for the present, we find that the socialists, affirming man's unity on one side, and on the other his absolute goodness, proceed to proclaim man holy and divine; and this not only in his unity, but like-

wise in each and all of the elements which constitute it; and they thereby proclaim the sanctity and divinity of the passions. For this reason, all the socialist schools, some implicitly and others explicitly, declare the divinity and sanctity of the passions. From this admission must result the explicit condemnation of all repressive and penal systems, and above all the condemnation of virtue, whose function is to arrest the progress of the passions, to restrain their explosion, and repress their efforts. All these consequences of anterior principles, and which in their turn become principles leading to more remote consequences, are both taught and announced, with a greater or less degree of cynicism, by all the socialist schools, among which are conspicuous those of St. Simon and of Fourier, which shine with a greater brilliancy than the others, like two suns in a starry sky. This is what is meant by the St. Simonian theory respecting the restoration of woman and the pacification of the flesh. This is the signification of Fourier's doctrine of attraction. Fourier says: "Duty proceeds from man (understood to mean society) and attraction comes from God." Madam de Coeslin, as quoted by Mr. Louis Raybaud, in his *Reflections upon Cotemporaneous Reformers*, has expressed the same thought with greater precision, in these words: "The passions are of divine, the virtues of human institution;" which means, according to the assumed principles of the school, that the virtues are pernicious and the passions are salutary. For this reason the supreme end of socialism is to create a new social order, in which the passions will have free scope, and which is to be inaugurated by the destruction of the political, religious, and social institutions which restrain them. The golden era

announced by the poets, and expected by the world, will commence when this great event takes place, and when this magnificent aurora dawns upon the horizon. Then the earth will become a paradise, whose gates will stand ever open, and, not like the Catholic paradise, a prison guarded by an angel. Then evil will disappear from the earth, which, until that time, will be a valley of tears, but which is not condemned to be so forever.

Such are the socialist opinions concerning good and evil, God and man. I am sure that my readers will not require that I should follow the socialist schools, step by step, through all the intricacies of their disturbing speculations. This will be the less expected, as I have already virtually refuted them, by presenting the august simplicity of the Catholic doctrine on all these great questions. Nevertheless, I believe it to be a sacred and imperative duty to demolish this edifice of error, and for this purpose it will be sufficient, and more than sufficient, to advance one single argument.

Society may be considered under two different points of view—the Catholic and the pantheistic. Viewed under the Catholic aspect, it is only the reunion of a multitude of men, who all live in obedience to, and under the protection of, the same laws and institutions. According to the pantheistic view, it is an organism which has an individual, concrete, and necessary existence. According to the first supposition, it is evident that society, having no existence independent of the individuals who constitute it, there can be nothing in the society which did not previously exist in the individual members of it; therefore, all good and evil in society must come from man. Regarded in this aspect, it is absurd to attempt to extirpate evil from society

where it incidentally exists, without any reference to the individuals through whom it originally and essentially exists. According to the second supposition, society has a self-sustaining, concrete, individual, and necessary existence. Those who assert this must satisfactorily solve the same questions that the rationalists propose to the Catholics respecting man: that is, whether society is essentially or accidentally evil. If we assume the first, how is essential evil to be explained? If the second, how, in what way, under what circumstances, and upon what occasion has the social harmony been disturbed by these incidental perturbations? We have already seen how the Catholics unravel these complications, with what success they solve all these difficulties, and in what manner they answer all these questions respecting the existence of evil, considered as a consequence of the human prevarication. That which we have not yet seen, and which we shall never see, is the success of socialist rationalism in solving these same questions respecting the existence of evil, considered as existing only in social institutions.

This single reason would be sufficient to authorize the assertion, that the socialist theory is that of charlatans, and socialism only the social reason of a set of clowns. Not to exceed the strict limits within which I have proposed to confine myself, I will close this discussion by presenting this dilemma for a socialist solution. According to socialist doctrine, the evil which exists in society is either essential or accidental. If it is essential, it is not sufficient, in order to eradicate it, to overthrow social institutions; but it is likewise necessary to destroy society itself, since this is the essence which produces evil in its various forms. But, if social evil is

accidental, then you must do what you have not done, what you do not nor cannot do; you must explain when and how, in what manner, and under what form this accident has occurred; and then you must show through what series of deductions you can succeed in converting man into the redeemer of society, and in investing him with power to wash away its corruption and sin. With this view, it will be well to remind the incautious, who may be attracted by these declamatory assertions, that the rationalism which attacks with fury all the Catholic mysteries, afterwards proclaims these very mysteries in a different manner and with another design. Catholicism affirms two things—the existence of evil and the redemption. These affirmations are also equally included in the symbol of social rationalism. There is on this point only this difference between socialists and Catholics: the Catholics affirm that evil comes from man, and redemption from God; the socialists affirm that evil comes from society, and redemption from man. The two affirmations of Catholicism are sensible and natural, namely, that man is man, and performs human works, and that God is God, and performs divine acts. The two affirmations of socialism assert that man understands and executes the designs of God, and that society performs the works proper to man. What, then, does human reason gain when it rejects Catholicism for socialism? Does it not refuse to receive that which is evident and mysterious, in order to accept that which is at once mysterious and absurd?

Our refutation of socialist theories would not be complete if we did not allude to the attacks of Mr. Proudhon upon his opponents, which are alternately replete with argument, sarcasm, and eloquence.

Here is what Mr. Proudhon thinks of the harmonious nature of man, as announced by St. Simon and Fourier, and of the future transformation of the earth into a garden of delights, as announced by all the socialists: "Man, considered in the combination of his manifestations, and after all his antagonisms have been met, presents, nevertheless, one contradiction which cannot be referred to anything which exists on the earth, and must remain without any solution whatever, here below. For this reason, no matter how perfect the order of society may be, it can never be entirely exempt from all sorrow and weariness. Felicity in this world is a chimaera, which we are perpetually condemned to pursue, and which the invincible antagonism between the flesh and the spirit ever places beyond our reach."* Now mark the following sarcasm against the natural excellence of man: "The greatest obstacle that equality has to overcome is not in the aristocratic pride of the rich, but in the unconquerable egotism of the poor; and yet, in spite of this, you dare to depend upon the innate goodness of man, in order to reform both the spontaneity and the premeditation of his malice."† His sarcasm is still more pungent in the following words, taken from the same chapter of the same work: "Truly, the logic of socialism is astonishing; . . . they tell us that man is good, but that it is necessary that he should have no interest in doing evil, in order that he should abstain from evil; and we are told that man is good, but that it is necessary that it should be to his advantage to do good, in order that he should practice it. For, if it is the interest of his passions that he should do evil, he

* System of Contradictions, ch. x.

† Ibid. ch. viii.

will do evil; and if it is of no advantage to him to do good, he will not do good. This being the case, society has no right to condemn man if he listens to his passions, because it is the duty of society to lead man by means of his passions. How excellent was the nature of Nero, and how gifted! What an artist's soul had Heliogabalus, who reduced prostitution to a system! And as to Tiberius, how great and energetic was his character! But what a corrupt society which perverted these divine souls, and which, notwithstanding, produced a Tacitus and a Marcus Aurelius! And this is what is called the innate goodness of man and the sanctity of his passions. An old Sappho, in the decay of her beauty, and abandoned by her lovers, consents to receive the yoke of marriage. Being no longer interested in love, she resigns herself to matrimony, and then they call this woman holy! What a great misfortune that this word holy has not the twofold meaning in the French that it has in the Hebrew language—then every one would agree as to the sanctity of Sappho." Again, his sarcasm assumes that form of brutal eloquence, which might be called the Proudhonian style. In the same work, (chapter xii.,) Mr. Proudhon expresses himself in this manner: "Let us hastily pass over these systems of St. Simon and Fourier, and all others of a similar nature, whose authors proclaim aloud in the streets and public places that free love is united in felicitous bonds with the purest modesty, delicacy, and spirituality; sad illusion of a degraded socialism—last dream of the delirium of debauch! Let inconstancy give free license to passion, and then will the flesh tyrannize over the spirit; then will love become only the vile instrument

of pleasure, and the union of hearts is succeeded by sensual desires, and In order to form an opinion of such things, it is not necessary to have roamed, like St. Simon, through the haunts of infamy."

After having exposed and refuted the socialist theories in general, respecting the problems which form the subject of this book, it only remains to explain and refute the theory of Mr. Proudhon, in order to close this long and complicated discussion. Mr. Proudhon explains his doctrine briefly but fully in chapter viii. of the work we have just cited, in the following words: "The education of liberty, the subjection of our instincts, the freeing or redemption of our soul, this is the signification, as Lessing has shown, of the Christian mystery, rightly interpreted. This education will last as long as our life and that of mankind. Moses, Budha, Jesus Christ, and Zoroaster, were all apostles of expiation, and living symbols of penance. Man is by nature a sinner, which does not precisely mean that he is evil, but rather that he is imperfectly formed. His destiny is to be forever occupied in re-creating his ideal within himself."

In this profession of faith there is a portion of both the Catholic and socialist theories, and also something of what belongs to neither, and which constitutes the individuality of the Proudhonian theory.

The Catholic element consists in the recognition of the existence of evil and of sin, in the confession that sin is in man and not in society, and that evil does not come from society but from man, and lastly, in the explicit acknowledgment of the necessity of redemption and repentance.

The socialist element is found in the affirmation that man is the redeemer; while that which constitutes the

individuality of the Proudhonian theory consists, on the one hand, in this principle, (which contradicts the socialist theory,) that man the redeemer does not reform society except as he reforms himself; and on the other hand, in asserting (contrary to the Catholic theory) that man did not make himself evil, but that he was imperfectly created. Setting aside what this theory possesses in conformity with the Catholic, and also with the socialist view, I shall examine it in those points wherein it differs from both, and in virtue of which it is neither socialist nor Catholic, but exclusively Proudhonian.

The peculiarity of this theory consists in its assertion that man is a sinner only because he has been created imperfect. In accordance with this supposition, Mr. Proudhon has given a striking proof of good sense and sound logic, in seeking the Redeemer apart from the Creator, because it is evident that he who has imperfectly created us could not properly redeem us. Since God, then, could not be the Redeemer, and a redeemer being necessary, the redemption must necessarily come either from man or from angels. Being doubtful of the existence of the angel, and certain of the necessity of redemption, and not knowing whom to select for this office, Mr. Proudhon has assigned it to man, who is at the same time a sinner and the expiator of his sin.

There is a fitting connection and agreement between all these propositions, and their only weak point is in the fact upon which they rest, because man has either been created perfect or imperfect. If we admit the first supposition, the theory is erroneous; and if we admit the second, the following reasoning may be deduced: If man is imperfectly formed, and is nevertheless his own redeemer, there is a manifest contradiction between his

nature and the function ascribed to him ; because, however imperfect the constitution of man, if he is so formed that he can improve the work of his Creator to such a degree as to become his own saviour, far from being an imperfectly constituted creature, he is the most perfect of created beings ; for, how can we imagine a higher perfection than that which consists in the faculty of blotting out all our sins, of correcting all our imperfections, and, to express all in one word, of redeeming ourselves ? Now, if man, whatever his imperfections, is, by the very fact of his being his own redeemer, a perfect being, to affirm of him that he was created imperfect, and yet is his own redeemer, is equivalent to affirming what is denied, and to denying what is affirmed ; because it is affirming at the same time that he has been created both perfect and imperfect. And, let it not be said that man's imperfection comes from God, and his highest perfection of self-redemption comes from himself ; because to this we answer, that man could never become his own redeemer if he had not been created with the faculty of attaining so great an eminence, or at least with the power of acquiring this faculty in the course of time. It is necessary to admit one of these two things, and, in this matter, to yield a part is to concede all ; because if man, from the period of his creation, was potentially his own redeemer, before being so actually, this power, in spite of all his imperfections, constituted him a perfect being. The Proudhonian theory is, therefore, but a contradiction of terms.

The conclusion to be drawn from all that has been said is, that there is no school whatever which does not recognize the simultaneous existence of good and evil, and that Catholicism alone satisfactorily explains the

nature and origin of both, and also their various and complicated effects. Catholicism teaches us that there is no good whatever which does not come to us from God, and that all which comes from God is good. It teaches us in what manner evil commenced with the first aberration of the angelical and the human liberty; and how, from being obedient and submissive, they became rebellious and disloyal; and in what way and to what extent these two great prevarications change everything by their influence and ravages. Finally, it teaches us that good is in its nature eternal because it is essential, and that evil is transitory because it is accidental; from which it follows that good is neither subject to change nor decay, and that evil may be blotted out and the sinner redeemed. Reserving for future consideration the investigation of those great and supreme mysteries whose wonderful virtue has extirpated evil in its source, we have limited ourselves in this book to exhibiting the sovereign art and consummate skill which God has displayed, in converting the effects of original sin into constituent elements of a higher good and a more perfect order. With this view we have explained in what manner good proceeds from evil through the power of God, after having explained in what manner evil proceeds from good through the fault of man; and this without the human action and divine reaction implying any rivalry whatever between beings who are separated by an infinite distance.

In regard to the rationalist schools, the examination of their various systems only serves to prove their profound ignorance in all that relates to these high questions. As to the liberal school, its ignorance is pro-

verbial among those who are well informed. It is essentially antitheological in being laical; and because it is antitheological it is impotent to give any great impulsion to civilization; for every form of civilization is only the reflection of a theology. The proper office of the liberal school is to falsify all principles, by capriciously and absurdly combining them with others which contradict them. They imagine to attain, in this way, an equilibrium, while they simply arrive at confusion. They think to acquire peace, and they go to war. But as it is impossible to escape altogether the authority of theology, the liberal school is less laic than it imagines, and it is more theological than it appears to be at first sight. Thus the question of good and evil (which is of all others that can be imagined the most theological) is defined and solved by its doctors, though in a way which proves how ignorant they are of the art of defining and resolving this question. In the first place, they set aside the question respecting evil in itself—the evil that is the root of all other evil—in order to occupy themselves only with certain forms of evil, as if it were possible that he who is ignorant of what evil is should understand any particular forms of evil. In the second place, they specify the remedy as they have specified the evil, and discover it only in certain political forms, not knowing that these forms, as reason teaches and history proves, are altogether non-essential. Placing evil where it does not exist, and the remedy where it is not to be found, the liberal school has withdrawn the question from its true point of view, and has thereby introduced confusion and disorder in the intellectual world. Its ephemeral rule has been fatal to human society, and during its transitory reign the dissolving

principle of discussion has been ruinous to the good sense of the people. In this condition of society there is no convulsion that is not to be feared, no catastrophe that may not take place, no revolutions that are not inevitable.

As regards the socialist schools they show, in the manner of presenting questions, their superiority over the liberal school, which has not the slightest ability to resist them. Essentially theological, they are enabled to measure the utmost depths of the abysses; nor are they wanting in a certain grandeur in their mode of presenting problems and proposing their solution. But when we consider them more carefully, and enter into the intricate labyrinth of their contradictory solutions, we discover their radical weakness, however well disguised it may be by imposing appearances. The socialist sectaries resemble the pagan philosophers, whose systems of theology and cosmogony are a monstrous combination of disfigured and mutilated biblical traditions and untenable hypotheses. This apparent grandeur arises from the atmosphere which surrounds them, and which is impregnated with Catholic influences; while their contradictions and weakness proceed from their ignorance of dogmas, their forgetfulness of traditions, and their contempt of the Church, which is the universal depository of Catholic dogmas and Christian traditions. Like our dramatists of a former age, who, confounding everything, grotesquely but ingeniously placed in the mouth of Cesar discourses worthy of the Cid, and caused their Moorish chiefs to utter sentiments worthy of Christian knights, so the socialists of the present day are perpetually occupied in giving a rationalist meaning to Catholic formulas; thus exhibiting less genius than sim-

plicity, and often showing themselves less malicious than candid.

There is nothing less Catholic nor less rationalistic than to seize upon the rationalist and Catholic theories, taking from the former its ideas with all its contradictions, and from the latter its forms with all their magnificence. As to Catholicism, it will never consent to such scandalous proceedings, such shameful confusion, and such unworthy spoliation. Catholicism is capable of demonstrating, that it alone is based upon principles adequate to solve all political, social, and religious problems; that it alone possesses the secret of all great solutions; that it is useless to admit it in part and to deny it in part, or to make use of its expressions in order to cover the nakedness of other doctrines; that there is no other good and no other evil than that which it indicates; that things cannot be explained except as it explains them; that the God it affirms is the only true God; that man, as defined by it, is the only true man; that humanity is precisely what it proclaims it to be, and not otherwise; that when it affirms of men that they are brethren, equal and free, it at the same time explains how they are so, in what manner, and to what degree; that its words have been adapted to its ideas, and its ideas support its words; that it is necessary to proclaim Catholic liberty, equality, and fraternity, or to deny all these things as well as their names; that the dogma of redemption is exclusively a Catholic dogma; that it alone teaches us by whom and for whom redemption was effected, and the name of the Redeemer and of the redeemed; that to accept its dogmas, in order to mutilate them, is the act of a charlatan and a piece of low buffoonery; that he who is not with it is against it; that

it is the supreme affirmation, and that nothing but an absolute negation can be opposed to it.

In this way is the question defined between rationalists and Catholics. Man is sovereignly free, and being free he can accept either purely Catholic or purely rationalist solutions; he may affirm all or deny all; he may either save himself or lose himself; but what man cannot do is to change the immutable nature of things by his will. Nor can he find peace in eclecticism, either socialist or liberalist. To have the right of denying anything, socialists and liberals are obliged to deny all. Catholicism, humanly considered, is only great because it is the combination of all possible affirmations; and if liberalism and socialism are feeble, it is because they jumble together various Catholic affirmations and various rationalistic negations; and instead of being schools which contradict Catholicism, they are simply schools differing from it.

The socialists appear bold in their negations only when we compare them with the liberalists, who see in each affirmation a difficulty and in each negation a danger. But the timidity of the socialists strikes us at once if we compare them with the Catholic school. For then we perceive with what confidence the latter affirms, and with what timidity the former deny. What! you call yourselves the apostles of a new gospel, and speak to us about evil and sin, redemption and grace, things which are all found in the old gospel! You claim to be the depositaries of a new political, social, and religious science, and yet speak to us of liberty, equality, and fraternity, things all as old as Catholicism, which is as old as the world! He who has declared that he would exalt the lowly and humble the proud, has fulfilled his

word in your case; for he has condemned you to be only the blind expounders of his immortal gospel, by the very fact of your aspiring, with a wild and foolish ambition, to promulgate a new law from a new Sinai, but not from a new Calvary!

BOOK III.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS RESPECTING ORDER IN HUMANITY.

CHAPTER I.

Transmission of sin—Dogma of imputation.

THE sin of the first man sufficiently explains the great disorder and formidable confusion into which all things fell soon after their creation: a disorder and confusion which was changed, as we have seen, without things ceasing to be what they were, into elements of a higher order and harmony; through that secret and incommunicable virtue which is in God, and by which order is brought out of disorder, harmony out of confusion, good out of evil, by a pure act of God's sovereign will. But sin does not adequately explain the perpetuity and constancy of that primitive confusion which yet subsists in all things, and particularly in man.

In order to explain the continuance of effects, it is necessary to suppose the continuance of the cause; and in order to explain the duration of the cause, it is essential to suppose the perpetual transmission of the offense.

The dogma of the transmission of sin, with all its consequences, is one of the most fearful, incomprehensible, and obscure of the mysteries which have been taught by divine revelation. This sentence of condemnation passed in the person of Adam, against all the generations of

men, past, present, and future, even to the consummation of time, is not to the human understanding, at first sight, compatible with the justice of God, and much less with his inexhaustible mercy.

At first sight, and upon a slight examination, any one might pronounce this to be a dogma taken from those inexorable and gloomy religions of the East, whose idols delight in hearing lamentations, in the sight of blood, and whose voices breathe only anathemas and vengeance. The living God, in the act of revealing himself to us in this tremendous dogma, seems not to resemble the merciful and clement God of the Christians, but appears rather like the Moloch of idolatrous nations, whose insatiable cruelty is not appeased by offerings of the firstlings of the flock, but whose barbaric grandeur demands the immolation of the successive generations of mankind. Wherefore are we punished, ask all the nations converted to God, if we have not been guilty? —

When we examine this question fully and directly, it will not be difficult to demonstrate the entire congruity of this profound mystery. We ought previously to observe that the very persons who deny the transmission of sin as a revealed dogma, are compelled to acknowledge that even when this article is considered entirely distinct from what we hold as of faith, yet the same end is attained, however different the ways of treating the subject may be.

Even if we concede that sin and its penalty, being personal, are intransmissible, after making this concession we can still prove that what this dogma asserts remains.

In effect, in whatever way we may consider this subject, the result will always be, that we must admit that

sin produces, in those who commit it, ravages and changes so radical as to physically and morally alter their primitive nature. When this happens, man, transmitting necessarily all that he constitutionally has, therefore transmits to his children, through generation, his constitutional conditions. For example, when the unrestrained indulgence of anger becomes the cause of a malady in the person addicted to this passion, and this infirmity becomes constitutional and organic, it is evident and natural that this person will transmit to his children, by means of generation, the constitutional and organic evil from which he suffers. This constitutional and organic evil, if we view it under its physical aspect, is simply a malady; but considered under a moral aspect, it becomes a predisposition of the flesh to subjugate the spirit by means of the passion which caused the infirmity. Who can doubt that the prevarication of Adam, which exceeded all others, must have changed, and did change, in a radical manner, his moral and physical constitution? This being so, it is clear that Adam transmitted to us through his blood the organic vice produced by sin, and the predisposition to commit sin, as a consequence of this vice.

It follows from this, that it is in vain to deny the dogma of the transmission of sin, if those who make this denial do not at the same time deny what they cannot refuse to receive without being utterly devoid of sense, namely, that sin, when it is great, has a sensible effect upon the constitution and organism of man, and that this organic and constitutional impression is transmitted from generation to generation, imparting to all a depraved constitution and organism.

It is equally in vain, in denying the transmissibility

of sin, also to deny the dogma of imputation, or the transmission of the penalty. For what is thus rejected as a penalty must still be accepted, under another name, as a misfortune. Those who make this denial are unwilling to admit that the misfortunes which we suffer are a penalty, because the idea of punishment implies a voluntary infraction on the part of the person who receives it, and a voluntary determination on the part of the person who imposes it. But our sorrows and misfortunes are none the less certain and inevitable, and those who will not admit these misfortunes to be the legitimate consequence of sin, are nevertheless obliged to admit them as a natural consequence of the necessary relations between cause and effect. According to this system, the radical corruption of their nature was a penalty our first parents merited, because they voluntarily sinned. This voluntary disobedience merited the penalty of depravity which was imposed upon them by an incorruptible judge. This same corruption of our nature is in us only a misfortune, as it is not imposed upon us as a penalty, but is imputed to us as heirs of a nature radically corrupted. And this misfortune is so deplorable that even God could not decree our exemption from it, without altering by a miracle one of the laws which govern the world, and in virtue of which effects result from their causes. This miracle was performed in the fullness of time, in so excellent and exalted a manner, by means so hidden and supernatural, and by an act of wisdom so sublime that this ineffable work of God was to some a scandal, and to others a foolishness.

The transmission of the consequences of sin is thus explained according to this system. The first man was, at his creation, endowed with inestimable privileges.

His flesh was subject to his will, and his will to his understanding, which received its light from the divine mind. If our first parents had procreated before sinning, their children would have inherited their pure nature. To prevent this, it would have been necessary on the part of God to change that law in virtue of which each being transmits its own qualities, and to establish another law in its place by which each being could only transmit precisely that which it has not. Our first parents having been guilty of a grievous rebellion, they were justly despoiled of all their privileges. Their spiritual union with God ceased, and they were separated from him. Their wisdom was converted into ignorance, all their power into weakness. They were deprived of that original justice and grace in which they were born, and, being despoiled of all, remained entirely destitute. Their flesh rebelled against their will, their will against their understanding; their reason sought to control their will, and their will to subdue the flesh; and their flesh, will, and reason united in rebelling against that most high God who had so magnificently endowed them.

It is evident that in this condition the father could not avoid transmitting to his children, by way of generation, his own properties, and that the child was born ignorant of one ignorant, weak of one weak, depraved of one depraved, separated from God of one departed from God, infirm of one infirm, mortal of one mortal, rebellious of one rebellious. Had man been born wise of one ignorant, strong of one weak, united to God of one separated from God, healthy of one infirm, immortal of one mortal, and submissive of one rebellious, the law of nature must have been changed in virtue of which

like produces like, and replaced by another law in virtue of which contraries produce their contraries.

These are the views of those who assume to give a purely natural explanation of the transmission of evil: and we see that reason eventually attains the same conclusion as the dogma, although it does so by different means. There are speculative but not practical differences between the one and the other. In order to comprehend the immense distinction that exists between the natural and supernatural explanation of the fact that we are investigating, it is essential to look beyond this fact. We then perceive the inadequacy of the human explanation and the entire adequacy of the divine. This fullness of evidence will become more apparent as we continue our investigations. At present my design is only to explain and demonstrate the dogma of transmission; a dogma which, without weakening what is really true in the explication, according to a natural point of view, rectifies whatever it contains that is incomplete and false.

Natural reason designates as misfortune what is transmitted to us. Dogma gives three designations: sin, penalty, and misfortune—it being misfortune wherein it is inevitable, penalty wherein it is voluntary on the part of God, and sin wherein it is voluntary on the part of man. The wonder is that this misfortune, which is a real misfortune, is yet so in such a manner that it becomes a happiness; and that this penalty, which is a real penalty, is yet so in such a manner that it becomes a remedy; and that this sin, which is a real sin, is yet so in such a manner that it is converted into a blessing: *felix culpa*. In this great plan of God, more than in any other of his designs, that supreme wisdom is con-

spicuous by which he reconciles what would seem to be irreconcilable, and by means of which all contradictions and incompatibilities are combined in one magnificent synthesis.

✓ With regard to sin, the entire question lies in this difficult problem: How can we be sinners when we do not sin? How can we as infants sin?

✓ In order to explain this, we must consider that our first parent represented both an individual and a species, a man and the human species, diversity and unity joined in one. And as it is a fundamental and primitive law that diversity proceeds from the unity wherein it exists in order to form a separate existence, but returns in its ultimate evolution to the unity from which it originates, as a consequence of this law the species which Adam represented proceeded from Adam, through generation, so as to constitute for itself a separate existence. But as Adam was at the same time species and individual, it necessarily results from this, that Adam was in the species as he was in the individual. When the individual and the species were one and the same, Adam united these things in himself; when the individual and the species were separated in order to constitute unity and diversity, Adam was these two things separated, in the same way that he had previously been these two things united. There then existed an Adam as an individual, and another Adam as a species; and as sin existed before the separation, and as Adam sinned both with his individual nature and with his collective nature, it results from this, that both the one and the other Adam were sinners. The individual Adam died, but the collective Adam did not die, and with his life preserves his

sin. The collective Adam and human nature are identical, and human nature is therefore perpetually guilty, because it is forever sinful.

Let us now apply these principles to the present question. Every man has a human nature, and therefore Adam, who is this very nature, perpetually lives in each man, and lives in him with that which is become inherent with his life, that is to say, with his sin. This granted, we can understand more readily how sin can exist in the child at his birth. At my birth I am a sinner, although I am but an infant, because through the human nature which I have I am Adam. I am so not because I sin, but because I have sinned when I was Adam and an adult, and before I bore the name that I now bear, and before my birth. When God created Adam I was in Adam, and he was in me at my birth. Not being able to be separated from his person I cannot be separated from his sin. Notwithstanding, I am not Adam in such a way that I am confounded with him in an absolute manner. There is that peculiar to me which is not in him—that by which I am distinguished from him, namely, that inherent quality which constitutes my individual unity, and which distinguishes me from him whom I most closely resemble: and this which constitutes me as an individual, this diversity relatively to a common unity, is what I have received and hold from the father who begot me, and from the mother who bore me. They have not given me human nature, which I receive from God through Adam, but they have placed on this nature the seal of the family, and they have stamped it with their image. They have not given me being, but the manner of my existence; placing the less in the greater, that is to say, placing

that by which I am distinguished from others in that by which I resemble others; the particular in the common, the individual in the human. And as that which I have of human, and which assimilates me to others, is that which is essential in man, and that which I have as an individual and distinct from others, is only an accident, therefore what man receives from God through Adam is that which constitutes his essence, and what he receives from God through his father is that which constitutes his form; consequently there is no man whatever whose being, considered as a whole, does not more closely resemble Adam than his own father.

As to the question of penalty, it is solved from the moment that we accept as established the transmission of sin; as the one cannot be comprehended without the other, on account of their mutual dependence. If it is certain that I am guilty, it is just that I should be punished; and as in these matters what is just is necessary, it follows that what I suffer is, without ceasing to be a misfortune, necessarily a penalty. Penalty and misfortune differ in a human point of view, but are identical in a divine point of view. Man calls misfortune the evil produced as the inevitable effect of a second cause, and he designates as penalty the evil that a free being voluntarily imposes on another in punishment of a voluntary fault. But as all that takes place necessarily happens by the will of God, so all that takes place by his will necessarily happens. God is the supreme equation between the necessary and the voluntary, and these things which for a man are different are in God one and the same. Therefore it is manifest that under the divine point of view all misfortune is a penalty, and all penalty a misfortune.

From what we have just said may be perceived how great is the error of those who are not astonished at the mysterious analogies and secret affinities which God places between parents and their children, but who are yet surprised that God has placed these same affinities and analogies between the rebel Adam and his unhappy descendants. No understanding may measure, nor reason grasp, nor imagination conceive the strong and close tie which God has himself placed between all men and this only man, who is at the same time unity and collection, singular and plural, individual and species, who dies and who yet survives, who is real and symbolical, type and substance, body and shadow, in whom we all were and who is in us all. This is a fearful enigma which presents under each new aspect a new mystery. And as man cannot comprehend, either by his reason, or by his imagination, or by his understanding, that which is so strangely complex and mysteriously obscure in his nature, neither can he understand (even did he employ every faculty of his soul in the attempt to do so) the immense distance that exists between our sins and the sin of the first man; a sin which like him stands alone and unequalled by its profound malice and its unparalleled enormity. No one since Adam has sinned as Adam sinned, and no one will sin as he did throughout the duration of time. His sin, partaking of the nature of the sinner, was at the same time both one and multiple, because it was in act one sin and in effect all sins. By it Adam marred that which no other sinner could ever deface; for he thereby destroyed the spotless purity of his innocence. We who now sin, multiplying sin upon sin, only add stain upon stain; but Adam alone sullied the spotless whiteness

of the snow. The condition in which our nature is placed is a grave evil, and our sins are a still greater evil; but between the deformity peculiar to sin and that peculiar to the nature of man, there exists a secret connection and a certain proportion which did not exist between sin and the nature of the first man. Extreme beauty united in the same man to extreme ugliness is monstrous; and two forms of ugliness combined are, in comparison to it, beautiful. For then, in place of their ugliness being heightened by contrast, it is to some extent modified by the harmony which results from their resemblance. This is, doubtless, the reason why physical ugliness always seems to diminish with years. It appears to be better adapted to old age, and harmonizes with its wrinkles. On the contrary, nothing can be more sad, nor more repulsive, than the stamp of old age upon an angelic face, or than ugliness in the bloom of life. Those women who, having once been beautiful, preserve in the decline of life the vestiges of their former loveliness, have always appeared to me to be horrible—they always remind me of the magnitude of that first sin, in consequence of which we find united that which God designed should remain separated. No! God has not made beauty for old age, nor old age for beauty. Lucifer was the only angel, and Adam the only man who united in themselves all the horrors of decrepitude and ugliness joined to all the freshness of youth and the splendor of beauty.

CHAPTER II.

How God brought good out of the transmission of sin, and of penalty—The purifying effect of pain freely accepted.

REASON, which revolts against the transmission of sin or of penalty, yet receives what is transmitted to us without repugnance, notwithstanding the sorrow which accompanies it, if in place of being designated as sin and penalty it is called inevitable misfortune. It is not, however, difficult clearly to prove that this misfortune could not be changed into happiness, except with the condition of its being a penalty, from which we necessarily conclude that the rationalist solution in its definitive results is less acceptable than the Catholic solution.

If our actual depravity is only a physical and necessary effect of the primitive corruption, and the effect must last so long as the cause remains, it is evident that since there is no means whatever of removing the cause, neither can there be any by which the effect may be prevented. Original corruption, the cause of our actual corruption, is an accomplished fact; and our actual corruption is consequently an established fact, and places us in a state of irrevocable suffering and misfortune.

Moreover, when we reflect upon the radical antagonism between the corrupt and the incorruptible, we must acknowledge that according to the rationalist solution, any union of man with God is rendered altogether impossible not only in the present, but likewise in the future. In effect, since human corruption is indelible and perpetual, and since God is eternally incorruptible,

between the incorruptibility of God and the perpetual corruption of man there is an invincible repugnance, and an absolute contradiction, and man must therefore remain forever separated from God.

Nor can it be said in reply that man may be redeemed, because the logical consequence of this system is precisely the impossibility of the redemption of mankind. There can be no redemption for unhappiness, unless we conceive it as a penalty attached to sin. If we suppress the sin, we also suppress the penalty; and by the suppression of the sin and the penalty unhappiness becomes irremediable.

According to this system, free will in man becomes altogether inexplicable. For if man is born, lives, and dies separated from God through an invincible necessity, what does free will in man mean, and what is it?

If there can be no transmission of sin, and of punishment, then there can exist no reason for the dogma of redemption and of human liberty, and with these all the other dogmas are also subverted. Because if man is not free, then he has not dominion over the earth; and if he has no right to exercise this sovereignty, the earth is not united to God through man; and if it is not united to God through man, it is not united to Him in any manner whatever. If man, in place of being separated from God in one form in order to return to Him in another, is absolutely separated from Him so that neither the goodness, the justice, nor the mercy of God can reach him, then all the harmonies of creation disappear, every tie is broken, disorder universally prevails, and all things are in a chaotic state. God ceases to be the Catholic, the living God. God is on high in his majesty. His creatures, in their abjection, grovel below, and neither

do they desire God nor does he deign to occupy himself with them.

The divine beauty of Catholic dogmas is pre-eminent in the admirable connection which unites them all in such marvelous and profound harmony, that human reason cannot conceive of a more perfect agreement, and is placed in the fearful alternative of accepting or rejecting them altogether. Nor does this difficulty exist because each dogma expresses a different truth, but because they all contain the same truth; the various dogmas simply presenting and corresponding to a diversity of aspects.

Nor have we fully depicted the consequences of the system, which, while it admits the lamentable unhappiness of fallen man, makes an absolute abstraction of penalty. If this unhappiness is simply a misfortune, and not also a punishment—if it is only the inevitable effect of a necessary cause, there can be no way of explaining why Adam should have persevered, or why we should retain any remnant whatever of our primitive condition. For it is worthy of remark, and in opposition to what at first sight would appear, that it is not justice but mercy which is especially conspicuous in that solemn condemnation which immediately followed the commission of sin. If God had refrained from intervening with this condemnation when this tremendous catastrophe occurred, if when he saw man separated from him he had withdrawn himself from man, and entering into the tranquillity of his repose had no longer vouchsafed to think of man, or, to express all in one word, if God in place of condemning man had abandoned him to the inevitable consequences of his voluntary disunion and separation, then the fall of man

would have been hopeless, and his perdition certain. But in order that this disaster might be repaired, it became necessary for God to draw near to man in another way, uniting Himself to him anew, although imperfectly, by the ties of mercy. Punishment was the new bond of union between the Creator and the creature, and in it mercy and justice were mysteriously joined: mercy being the connecting link, and justice vindicated in the penalty assigned.

If we cease to view suffering and sorrow in the light of a penalty, we not only deprive them of their power to reunite the Creator and the creature, but we also destroy their expiatory and purifying effect on man. If grief is not a penalty, it is an unmitigated evil; if it is a penalty, it still remains an evil through its origin, sin; but it is also a great good, on account of its freeing from the defilement of sin. The universality of sin renders necessary the universality of purification, in order that all mankind may be cleansed in its mysterious waters. This is the reason why all who are born, suffer from their birth up to the time of their death. Sorrow is the inseparable companion of life in this dark valley filled with our sighs, tears and lamentations. Every man is a suffering being, and all that is not sorrow is foreign to man's condition. If he views the past, he feels regret that it is no more; if he regards the present, he is distressed because the past seems more happy; and if he thinks of the future, he is distressed because all is enshrouded in mystery and gloom. However slightly he may reflect, he is reminded that the past, the present and the future comprise all, and that this all is nothing. The past is already past, the present is

fugitive, and the future is not. The necessitous are overwhelmed with privations, the rich are satiated with abundance, the powerful are tortured with pride, the idle suffer weariness, the lowly envy, the great are disdainful. The conquerors who overwhelm nations are themselves overcome by their passions, and they only trample upon others in order to fly from themselves. Luxury consumes with its shameless ardors the life of the youth, who, when he becomes a man, is inspired by ambition, and devoured by the flames of this passion. When luxury and ambition are weary of their victim, avarice takes possession and gives an artificial life which is called wakefulness. Avaricious old men only live because they do not sleep; their life is simply watchfulness. Regard the earth throughout its length and breadth, consider all that surrounds you, annihilate space and time, and you will find among the abodes of men only what you here behold—a grief without intermission, and a lamentation which never ceases. But this grief freely accepted is the measure of all greatness; for there can be no greatness without sacrifice, and sacrifice is only grief voluntarily accepted. The world calls those persons heroic who, transpierced with a sword of grief, freely accept their suffering. The Church calls holy those who accept every grief, both of the spirit and of the flesh. Those persons are holy who, notwithstanding avaricious desires, renounce all the treasures of the world; those who, craving for the pleasures of the table, remain temperate; those who, inflamed with voluptuous desires, know how to control them and continue chaste; those who, tempted by impure thoughts, reject them and remain pure; those who attain such heights through humility that they conquer

pride; those who enviously long for the advantages which others enjoy, yet force themselves to change this sadness into a pious contentment; those who trample under foot the aspirations of ambition which lifted them to the clouds; those who, inclined to idleness, become diligent; those who, oppressed by melancholy, chase away all gloom and raise themselves to a spiritual joy; those who, enamored of themselves, immolate their egotism for the love of their neighbor, offering for them, with heroic zeal, the most perfect of sacrifices, their own life.

Mankind has unanimously recognized a sanctifying virtue in grief. This is why, through all ages, in every zone, and among all nations, man has rendered homage and worship to great misfortune. *Œdipus* is greater in the day of his calamity than in the days of his glory—the world would have forgotten his name if the thunderbolt of divine vengeance had not hurled him from his throne. The melancholy beauty which invests the countenance of *Germanicus* with so much attraction, is the reflection of the sorrow which blasted the spring-time of his life, and of his beautiful death, far from his beloved country and the sky of Rome. *Marius*, who in the arrogance of victory is only a cruel man, becomes sublime when he is precipitated from this eminence, and is a wanderer in the marshes of *Minturnæ*. *Mithridates* appears to us greater than *Pompey*, and *Hannibal* superior to *Scipio*. Man, without knowing wherefore, always inclines in favor of the conquered, and misfortune has greater charms for him than victory. *Socrates* is less great in life than in death; nor has he acquired immortality because he knew how to live, but on account of his heroic death. He is less indebted to philosophy than to the cup of hemlock. Mankind would have com-

plained had Rome permitted Cesar to die like other men. His glory was so great that he merited the crown of a great misfortune. Scarcely is it permitted to Cromwell to expire tranquilly on his bed, invested with the sovereign power. Napoleon was to have a different death; he was to die after being vanquished at Waterloo. Proscribed by Europe, he was to fill a grave destined by God, from the beginning of time, to receive him. A wide chasm must separate him from the rest of the world; one so vast and profound that in it the ocean falls.

Suffering establishes a kind of equality among those who suffer, which makes all men in a manner equal, since all are called upon to suffer. Prosperity separates us; misfortune unites us in a fraternal bond. Suffering rids us of that which we have to excess, and gives us that which we needed, so that it places man in a perfect equilibrium. The haughty do not suffer without a diminution of their pride; nor the ambitious without moderating their ambition; nor the choleric without becoming less inclined to anger; nor the luxurious without being less given to the gratification of their appetites. Pain has a sovereign power to appease the violence of the passions, and, while it takes from us what is debasing, at the same time it imparts to us what is ennobling. The cruel never suffer without being more inclined to compassion; nor the haughty without becoming more humble; nor the voluptuous without growing more chaste. The violent are subdued, the weak are strengthened. It is not in vain that we pass through this great furnace of pain. The greater number come out of this sharp ordeal with exalted virtues, which they never before possessed. The impious are converted to religion,

the avaricious to alms-giving, they who had never wept gain the gift of tears, and the hard-hearted become merciful. Pain has an undefined element of power, and of depth, which is the source of all heroism and grandeur. No one has felt this mysterious contact without being thereby animated: the child acquires the manliness of the youth, the youth the maturity and gravity of manhood, men the strength of heroes, and heroes the sanctity of saints.

On the contrary, he who turns aside from pain to court pleasure, commences to descend; and the career of his degradation is rapid and continuous. From the height of sanctity he falls into the abyss of sin; from glory he sinks to infamy; his heroism is changed into weakness, and through the habit of yielding, he loses even the remembrance of firmness, and by falling so often he loses the faculty of rising again. Indulgence in pleasure deprives him of all vitality, paralyzes the elasticity and vigor of all the muscles of his body, and all the energies of his soul. In sensual gratification there is a corrupting and enervating power, which slowly and silently kills its victim. Woe to those who respond to this syren but perfidious voice! Woe to those who, when pleasure allures with her perfumes and flowers, remain without fear, for they shall soon cease to be masters of themselves, and shall helplessly fall into that swoon of seeming death, in which she wraps the senses of those who are intoxicated with the aroma of her flowers and the vapors of her perfumes! Then, the unhappy victim either miserably succumbs to this infatuation or he is altogether transformed by it. The child never attains adolescence, the adult withers into

seeming old age, and the aged perish. Man is despoiled by pleasure of the strength of his will, of the vigor of his understanding, and loses the instinct of great things. He becomes cynically selfish, excessively cruel, and nameless passions violently agitate him. If he is of mean condition, he will fall from the hands of justice into the hands of the executioner. If he is of exalted rank, he will excite terror and indignation by the unrestrained indulgence of his rapacious and ferocious instincts. When God wishes to chastise a nation for its sins, he enslaves it under the dominion of voluptuous men, who, stupefied with the opium of sensual gratification, can only be aroused from their brutal insensibility by the fumes of blood. All those horrid monsters, whom the pretorians in the days of imperial Rome saluted as emperors, were voluptuous and effeminate men. Revolutionary France worshiped at the same time prostitution and death; while prostitution triumphed in her temples and at her altars, death was worshiped in her public places and on her scaffolds.

There is, then, something corrosive and malefic in pleasure, as there is in pain something purifying and divine. However, it must not be supposed that because these things are of a contrary nature, they do not in some sense agree; for, he who freely accepts grief has an innate consciousness of spiritual joy, which fortifies and elevates him; in the same manner that he who gives himself up to pleasure experiences a kind of grief which, in place of strengthening, enervates and depresses him. Suffering is the universal punishment that all must endure; wherever man looks around him, or in whatever direction he may go, he meets with grief, a mute and weeping statue, ever before him. Grief has this, in common with

the Divinity, that it is for us a circle, which includes us. Whether we are drawn toward the center or carried toward the circumference, we are equally attracted to it; and to gravitate toward it, is to gravitate toward God, who is the inevitable limit of all our movements—with this difference, that certain kinds of suffering draw us to a tender and compassionate God; others, to an irritated and just God; and others yet, to the God of pardon and mercy. Pleasure engenders suffering as a penalty; resignation and sacrifice produce suffering as a remedy. How great is the folly of the children of Adam! They cannot escape suffering, and they attempt to evade that form of it which is a remedy, only to endure it as a punishment!

How great is God in all his designs, and how admirable the divine skill with which he draws good out of evil, order out of disorder, and harmony out of discord! From human liberty results the dissonance of sin, from sin the degradation of the species; and suffering is at the same time a misfortune for corrupted nature and a punishment for sinful nature. As a misfortune it is inevitable, as a penalty it is redeemable, for redemption is grace, and grace is displayed in punishment. Thus, the most tremendous act of the justice of God becomes the greatest act of his mercy. Through it, man, aided by God, may redeem himself, by the free acceptance of suffering; and this sublime willingness instantly changes suffering into a remedy of incomparable efficacy. Every negation of this doctrine necessarily introduces disorder into humanity through sin, since it inevitably leads to the negation of several essential attributes of God, and to the radical negation of human liberty.

The question considered in this aspect is one of those

whose solution depends upon the universal order of creation, in the same way and for the same reasons as the question relating to the human and angelical prevarications. Considered under a more restricted point of view, it finds its solution in a direct and fundamental manner, in the special order which God has established in the various elements that compose human nature; for, if the voluntary acceptance of suffering produces those wonderful effects of which we have spoken, it is because it possesses the astounding virtue of radically changing all the economy of our being. Through it, the rebellion of the flesh is subdued, and it is compelled again to submit to the will; through it, the will is vanquished and made to yield to the power of the understanding; through it, the understanding is again subjected to the law of duty; and through the fulfillment of duty, man returns to the worship of and obedience to the laws of God, from which sin had separated him. These miraculous transformations take place when man heroically conquers himself, and with generous ardor seeks to subject his appetites to his will, his will to his understanding, and his understanding to the will of God; that henceforth united to God by the ties of duty, he may be enlightened in God, and through God.

We will not here explain upon what conditions and by what aids the human will is enabled to acquire such exalted and supernatural strength. What is here essential to remark is, the evident fact that, without this elevation on the part of the will, as manifested by its voluntary acceptance of suffering, the sovereign harmony and marvelous and perfect accord which God established in man and in all his faculties can never be restored.

CHAPTER III.

The dogma of solidarity—Contradictions of the liberal school.

EACH one of the Catholic dogmas is a marvel prolific of marvels. Human intelligence passes from the contemplation of one to that of another, as from one evident proposition to another evident proposition; as from a principle to its legitimate consequence, when they are united by the close tie of a rigorous deduction. And each new dogma discovers a new world to us, and in each world the view extends over a new and wider horizon, and the soul remains absorbed in the splendor of so much magnificence.

The Catholic dogmas explain by their universality all universal facts; and these facts, in their turn, explain the Catholic dogmas. In the same way what is multiple and diverse is explained by what is one, and what is one by what is multiple and diverse; the containing by the contained, and the contained by the containing. The dogma of the wisdom and the providence of God explains the wonderful harmony of created things; and this order and agreement explains this Catholic dogma. The dogma of human liberty explains the primitive prevarication, and this same prevarication, which all traditions attest, demonstrates this dogma. The Adamic prevarication is at the same time a divine dogma and a traditional fact, and fully explains the great disorders which disfigure the beauty and the har-

mony of things. These same disorders, in their evident manifestations, are a perpetual proof of the Adamic prevarication. Dogma teaches that evil is a negation, and good an affirmation; and reason tells us that every evil resolves itself into the negation of a divine affirmation. Dogma declares that evil is modal, and good is essential; and facts prove that every evil resolves itself into a certain vicious and disordered manner of being, and that there is no essence which is not relatively perfect. Dogma affirms that God brought universal good out of universal evil, and a perfect order out of absolute disorder; and we have already seen in what way all things return to God, although they do so by different ways, thus constituting by their union with God universal and supreme order.

If we pass from the universal order to human order, the connection and harmony both of the dogmas with each other, and of the dogmas with the facts, is no less evident. The dogma which teaches the simultaneous corruption of the individual and of the species in Adam explains to us the transmission, by way of generation, of sin, and of the effects of sin, and the antithetical, contradictory, and depraved nature of man, such as we all perceive it to be. This leads us, as by the hand, from induction to induction: first, to the dogma of a general corruption of all the human species; then, to the dogma of a corruption transmitted through the blood; and, finally, to the dogma of primitive prevarication; and this dogma, joined with that of the liberty given to man and with that of Providence which grants this liberty, becomes as the point of conjunction of those dogmas which explain the special order and agreement in which all things human were placed, with those other

sublime and more universal dogmas, by which we see how the Creator produced all creatures with weight, number, and measure. Following, then, the exposition of the dogmas respecting the human order, we shall see proceeding from them, as from a most copious source, those general laws of humanity which overwhelm us with astonishment by their wisdom, and surprise us by their grandeur.

From the dogma of the concentration of human nature in Adam, united to the dogma of the transmission of this same nature to all men, proceeds, as a consequence from its principle, the dogma of the substantial unity of mankind. The human race being one, ought at the same time to be multiple, in conformity with that law which is the most universal of all laws, and is at the same time physical and moral, human and divine, and in virtue of which all unity engenders plurality, and all plurality resolves itself into unity. Mankind is one by the substance which constitutes it, and it is multiple by the persons who compose it; therefore it is one and multiple at the same time. In the same manner, each one of the individuals who compose humanity, being distinct from the others by that which constitutes his individuality, and blended with others by that which constitutes him an individual of the species, that is to say, by substance, becomes in this way, at the same time one and multiple like the human species. The dogma of actual sin is correlative with the dogma of multiplicity in the species, and the dogmas of original sin and of imputation are correlative with the dogma which teaches the substantial unity of mankind; and, as a consequence of both, proceeds the dogma according to which man is subject to a double responsibility—that which is proper

to him alone, and also that which belongs to him in common with the rest of men.

This responsibility which man shares in common with others is what is called *solidarity*; and it is one of the most beautiful and sublime revelations of Catholic dogma. Through solidarity man rises to a higher dignity and more elevated sphere, and becomes something more than an atom in space and a moment in time. Through this law he already lives before he is born, and through it he outlives himself, and his life is prolonged throughout the duration of time, and expanded throughout the limits of space. It is this dogma which affirms, and which has up to a certain point created humanity. This word, which in the societies of antiquity had no meaning, expresses in a Christian era the substantial unity of the human race, and the close relationship which all men bear toward each other.

From which we see that the dogma of solidarity not only confers nobility upon man, but also dignity upon human nature. This is not the case with regard to the communist theory of solidarity, of which we shall presently speak. According to this theory, the solidarity of humanity does not mean the vast association of men who are united because they have but one and the same nature, but it means that humanity is a living and organic unity which absorbs all men, who in place of constituting it are only its instruments.

According to the Catholic dogma, the individuals are exalted to the same dignity as the species. Catholicism holds an equal and sublime level, without inclining to any undue elevation or depression. It does not ennoble human nature in order to humiliate man, but it desires that both man and humanity may be raised to divine

heights. When I examine myself, and reflect upon what I am, and when I behold myself in communion with the first man and with the last of men, and when I consider the actions I perform and see them survive me, and become the cause in the course of their perpetual prolongation of acts multiplied upon acts, which, in their turn, are perpetually multiplied, even to the end of time; when I think that all these actions combined have in my act their origin, and that they will testify in my regard not only for what I do, but for what I have caused others to do, and that I shall accordingly be judged worthy either of reward or condemnation; when I meditate upon all these things, I can only prostrate myself before God and acknowledge that it is not given to me to understand or to measure the immensity of the dignity with which God has invested me. Who but God could thus raise all things to so elevated and perfectly just a standard? When man wishes to exalt any object, he does so only by depressing what he does not elevate. In religious spheres, he does not know how to raise himself without lowering God, nor does he know how to exalt God without debasing himself. In the political world, man does not know how to render homage to liberty without depriving authority of the respect and obedience due to it. In social life, he alternately either sacrifices society to the individual or the individual to society, forever fluctuating, as we have seen, between the communist despotism and Proudhonian anarchy. If he at times attempts to maintain a just equipoise everywhere by establishing a certain accord and justice in things, then the balance with which he would adjust them falls from his hand and is broken,

as if there existed an irremediable disproportion between the weight of this balance and the weakness of man. It would seem as if God, when he gave to man dominion over the sciences, had withheld one alone which he destined to remain under his own sway and jurisdiction—the science of equilibrium.

This is the reason why all those who have attempted to hold the scales in equipoise have been absolutely impotent to effect their object, and are so condemned by history. This also explains why the great problem of the reconciliation of the rights of the state with those of individuals, and of order with liberty, after having been agitated from the commencement of the first associations, still rests without a solution. Man cannot maintain an equilibrium in things without preserving them in their existence; nor can he preserve their existence unless he abstains from touching them. God having established all things upon the foundations on which they firmly rest, any change of his mode of ordaining and placing them necessarily brings with it a loss of equilibrium. The only peoples who have been at the same time respectful and free, the only governments that have united moderation and strength, are those in whose formation the hand of man is not visible, and whose institutions are the result of that slow and progressive growth which characterizes everything that has stability in the domains of time and of history.

This great power, which has been denied to man, not without a deep design, resides in God in a special and exclusive manner. Through this power all that leaves the hand of God leaves it in a perfect state of equilibrium, and all that remains as established by God, maintains its perfect equipoise. Without seeking elsewhere for

illustrations of this truth, the very question we are discussing will suffice to place it beyond all doubt.

The law of solidarity is so universal, that it is manifested in all human associations, and men cannot unite to form a society without falling under the jurisdiction of this inexorable law. Through his ancestors, man is in a union of solidarity with past ages; through the successive duration of his own acts, and through his descendants, he enters into communion with future ages, and as an individual and a member of domestic society the solidarity of the family weighs upon him. As a priest or a magistrate he enters upon a communion of rights and duties, of merits and demerits in common with the magistracy or the priesthood. As a member of a political association he becomes amenable to the law of a national solidarity, and finally, in his character as man, the law of human solidarity reaches him. And notwithstanding that he is responsible in so many different ways, he preserves his personal responsibility whole and intact, which none other diminishes, restrains, or absorbs. He may be virtuous, although a member of an offending family; uncorrupted and incorruptible, although belonging to a depraved society; a prevaricator, although a member of an irreproachable magistracy; and a reprobate, although a member of a holy priesthood. Yet this high power which has been granted to man, of withdrawing from this solidarity by an exercise of his sovereign will, does not in anything alter the principle in virtue of which, in matters in general, and without diminution of his liberty, man is what the family is in which he is born, and what the society is where he lives and breathes.

Such has been, throughout the duration of historic

ages, the universal belief of the world; for even after having lost the traces of divine tradition, men have preserved the consciousness of this law of solidarity. If they did not intelligently contemplate this law in all its grandeur, and even when they remained completely ignorant of the depths to which it strikes its roots, and upon what vast foundations it is based, still they recognized it by instinct. The dogma of the unity of the human race being understood only by the people of God, other nations could not have a just idea of the unity and solidarity of humanity; but if they could not apply this law to mankind who were ignorant of it, they proclaimed and even exaggerated its importance in all their political and domestic associations.

The idea of the mysterious transmission by blood, not only of physical qualities, but likewise of other qualities which are exclusively in the soul, of itself suffices to explain almost all the institutions of antiquity—domestic as well as political and social. This idea is identical with that of solidarity; for whatever is transmitted in common to many, constitutes the unity of those to whom it is transmitted, so that to affirm of many that they are in communion with each other, is equivalent to affirming that there exists a solidarity of interests among them. Whenever the idea of the hereditary transmission of physical and moral qualities prevails among a people, their institutions are necessarily aristocratic. For this reason, among all the nations of antiquity in which this idea was exclusive, as applied to certain social groups, it was not modified by what it had that was general and democratic—that is to say, when we apply it to all men, they will constitute themselves aristocratically. The more powerful races subjugated and reduced to servitude

the inferior races, and among the families who composed the constitutive groups of the same race, those who could claim the most illustrious ancestry assumed power over the others. Heroes took pleasure, before they engaged in any contest, in extolling the glory of their blood. Even cities based their rights of domination upon their genealogical trees. Aristotle believed, in common with the rest of antiquity, that some men were born with the right to command, and were endowed with the necessary qualities for so doing; and that they received both that right and these qualities by hereditary transmission. Correlative with this general belief was the universal belief that there existed among nations cursed and disinherited races, who were incapable of transmitting through generation any quality or any right; and were forever condemned to legitimate and perpetual slavery. The democracy of Athens was nothing but an insolent and turbulent aristocracy, to whom an enslaved multitude were subjected. The *Iliad* of Homer, an encyclopedian monument of pagan wisdom, is the genealogical book of the gods and heroes, and, considered under this aspect, is only the most splendid of all the nobiliaries.

This idea of solidarity was disastrous among the ancients only because it was incomplete. The various social, political, and domestic solidarities not being hierarchically subordinate among themselves, through the human solidarity which has ordained them all and placed them within limits, because it includes them all, could only produce wars, confusion, conflagrations, and catastrophes. Mankind had, under the sway of pagan solidarity, fallen into a state of universal and permanent war; and antiquity presents no other spectacle than

that of nations destroyed by nations, kingdoms by kingdoms, races by races, families by families, and cities by cities. The gods combated with the gods, men with men, and not unfrequently the immortals, attracted by the disorder, descended from Olympus to take part in the quarrels of men. Among the diverse associations in the same city there is not one which does not attempt to exercise, first over its own members, and then over other associations, a domineering and absorbing action. In the domestic association the personality of the child is absorbed by the personality of the father, and that of the woman by that of the man; the child becomes a mere nonentity, the woman is reduced to an unending state of tutelage, and is condemned to a perpetual disgrace; while the father, who is master of the child and of the woman, converts his power into tyranny. Overruling the tyranny of the father is that of the state, which alike absorbs the woman, the child, and the father, and annihilates in effect the domestic association. Among the nations of antiquity, patriotism itself is merely a declaration of war made by a certain race, who have constituted themselves a nation, against the rest of mankind.

If we pass from the ages of antiquity to the present times, we shall see on the one hand the perpetuity of the idea contained in this dogma; and on the other, the continuance of the disorders we have depicted, which must inevitably occur in proportion to any departure from the Catholic dogma.

The rationalistic school both denies and concedes this dogma, and it is alike absurd, whether it denies or receives it. In the first place, it denies human solidarity, both in the religious and in the political order—in the

religious order, by denying the doctrine of the hereditary transmission of sin and penalty, which is the exclusive foundation of this dogma; and it denies it in the political order, by proclaiming maxims subversive of the doctrine of the solidarity of nations. Among these maxims that one requires a special notice which declares the principle of non-intervention, and also that other, which is its correlative, and according to which each person ought only to attend to his own affairs, and no one ought to concern himself about the affairs of his neighbor. These maxims are identical, and are only the pure expression of pagan egotism, without the animosity of its malevolence. A people formed by the enervating doctrines of this school will hold no sympathies in common with other nations; and if they do not consider all other nations as their enemies, it is because they have not the energy to do so.

The rationalist liberal schools deny the solidarity of the family; they proclaim the principle of the legitimate qualification of all men for all public offices and for all state preferments; and in doing this, they deny the action of ancestors upon their descendants, and the communication of the qualities of the first to the second by hereditary transmission. But while they deny this transmission, they at the same time recognize it in two different ways: first, by proclaiming the perpetual identity of nations; and secondly, by proclaiming the principle of an hereditary monarchy. The principle of national identity either signifies nothing, or it means that there is a community of merits and demerits, of glories and disasters, of talents and adaptations, between past and present generations, between the present and the future; and this same community is altogether inexplicable, un-

less we consider it as the result of an hereditary transmission. On the other hand, an hereditary monarchy, considered as a fundamental institution of state, is a contradictory and absurd institution, if we deny the virtue of transmission by blood, which is the constitutive principle of all the historic aristocracies.

Finally, the rationalist liberal school, in its repulsive materialism, attributes to riches, which are transferable, the virtue which it denies to blood, which is transmitted. The power of the rich appears more lawful to this school than the power of the noble.

After this ephemeral and contradictory school come the socialist schools, which, while they accept all the principles of the liberals, at the same time deny all the consequences they deduce from them. The socialist schools adopt from the rationalist liberal school the negation of the solidarity of humanity, in the political and in the religious order; and, after having denied with this school the transmission of sin and of penalty in the religious order, they also deny, in opposition to it, the existence of sin and of penalty. After having, in the political order, affirmed with this school the principle of the legitimate aptitude of all men to fill all the functions and dignities of the state, they go still further, and assert that this principle logically brings with it the suppression of an hereditary monarchy, and consequently involves the destruction of the monarchy itself, which, in ceasing to be hereditary, becomes a dangerous and useless institution. After this, it is not difficult for them to prove, the native equality of man once granted, that this equality brings with it the suppression of all aristocratic distinctions, and consequently the suppression of the electoral census, in which they cannot recog-

nize, without an evident contradiction, the mysterious virtue that they refuse to blood, of conferring sovereign attributes. The people, according to the socialists, have not thrown off the yoke of the Pharaohs, in order to submit to that of the tyrants of Babylon or of Assyria; nor are they so utterly destitute of power and right, that they will deliver themselves up to the rapacity of the rich, after having freed themselves from the tyranny of the insolent nobles. They consider that the liberal school is guilty of a manifest absurdity when it denies the solidarity of the family, (which the socialists likewise reject,) and afterward admits the solidarity of the nation. The socialists accept the first of these principles in common with the liberals, but they absolutely deny the second as contradictory of the first, and they assert both the perfect equality of all nations and of all men.

From these principles result the following consequences: All men being entirely and perfectly equal, it is absurd to distribute them in groups, since this mode of distribution can have no other foundation than the solidarity of these same groups; and the liberal schools reject this solidarity, as the perpetual source of inequality among men. If this is accepted, the logical deduction is the dissolution of the family; and this consequence is so unavoidably deduced from all the theories and principles of liberalism, that without it these principles cannot be realized in political associations. They will in vain proclaim the idea of equality. This idea will not take root so long as the family remains. The family is a tree of so superior a growth that its wonderful fecundity perpetually produces the idea of a nobility.

But the destruction of the family necessarily involves

the destruction of the right of property. Man cannot be a possessor, in his own right, of the soil, for a very good reason: we cannot conceive of the ownership of a thing without there existing a certain kind of proportion between the proprietor and the thing owned; and between the soil and the man none whatever can exist. In order fully to prove this, it is sufficient to observe that man is a transitory being, and land a thing which never dies or passes away. This being the case, it is contrary to human reason that the earth should become the property of man, considered individually. The institution of property is absurd if you suppress the institution of the family; for the reason of its existence must either rest in itself, or in other corporations which are similar to it, as are the religious orders. The earth, which never dies, cannot be possessed except by a religious or a family association, which, like it, never passes away. The liberal school implicitly suppresses the domestic association, the family; and it explicitly suppresses the religious association, or at least the monastic association, from which proceeds the destruction of the right of property in the soil, as a logical consequence of their principles. This destruction is so inevitably a consequence of the principles of the liberal school, that it has always signalized the period of its domination by the confiscation of the property of the Church, and by the suppression of religious institutions and the rights of primogeniture. Nor does it seem aware of the fact, that by these acts of confiscation and suppression it effects but little as regards the assertion of its principles; while, as regards its interests as a proprietor, it goes too far. The liberal school, which is far from being learned, has never understood

that the earth, in order to be susceptible of appropriation, must fall into hands which could perpetually preserve its ownership; and consequently, that the suppression of all rights of primogeniture and the expropriation of the property of the Church, and, added to this, the interdiction to the Church of the right of acquisition, is equivalent to the irrevocable condemnation of the right of property. Neither has this school ever comprehended that, rigorously and logically speaking, the earth cannot be the object of individual, but only of social appropriation, and that this last form of appropriation can only exist under the monastic form, or under the domestic form of primogeniture, which, considered in the light of perpetuity, are essentially the same thing, since both have an unending existence. The abolition of all civil and ecclesiastical mortmain, so vehemently insisted on by the liberals, will bring with it sooner or later, but at no distant day, a universal divestiture of property. Then the liberal school will learn what it now ignores, that no right of property can exist except what is found in mortmain, and it will then comprehend that the earth, which is of itself perpetual, cannot become the subject-matter of appropriation for the living, who pass away, but for the dead, who live always.

When the socialists, after denying that the family association is an implicit deduction from the axioms of the liberal school, and that the Church has a right to acquire property, a principle recognized by them and by the liberals; when, after denying this, they deny the right of property, they finish the work of the professedly candid doctors of liberalism; for communism, after having suppressed the right of individual ownership, proclaims the

state to be the universal and absolute proprietor of all property. Although, as respects true principles, this idea is monstrous, yet, if we admit the views of the liberal school, it is not absurd. To be convinced of this, it is only requisite to reflect, that if, in accordance with these principles, the dissolution of the family is once consummated, the question of the right of property rests solely between individuals and the state. If we consider the subject under this aspect, it is clear that the titles of the state are superior to those of individuals, inasmuch as those of the first are by their nature perpetual, and those of the second cannot last longer than the family association.

From the principle of the perfect equality of all nations, as a logical deduction from the principles of the liberal school, the socialists infer, or I infer for them, the following consequences: as from the entire equality of all the families who compose the state, the liberal school deduces, as a logical consequence, the non-existence of the solidarity of the domestic association; in the same way, and for the same reason, from the perfect equality in the bosom of humanity of all nations, results the negation of the doctrine of a political solidarity. But if the nation has no solidarity, we are compelled to deny of it what we logically deny of the family, in the supposition of its having no solidarity. In depriving the family of its solidarity, we destroy, in the first place, that secret and mysterious link which unites the present with past and future ages, and consequently we deprive it of that which it holds as its imprescriptible right, that of participating in the renown of its ancestors, and likewise the power to transmit to its descendants a reflection of its own glory. Pur-

suing this argument, we must deny to the nation deprived of solidarity, what we deny to the family deprived of solidarity; that is, we must despoil it of all connecting links of the present with past and future ages, so that nothing remains of its past glories, nor can it have any claims to fame in the future. A consequence of denying the solidarity of the family, is the destruction in man of that love of home which constitutes the happiness of domestic society; and this must logically be attended with a similar result for the nation, namely, the radical destruction of that love of country which elevates the citizen above himself, and impels him to undertake the most heroic actions.

Thus, the negation of the dogma of solidarity involves the following results, both in the domestic and the political association: The suppression of all love of family and of patriotism, which is love of country; the destruction of all continuity in time and of all continuity of glory; and lastly, the entire dissolution of domestic and of political society, which can neither exist nor be conceived without a connecting link between different eras, without a common inheritance of glory, and without a communion of these two great affections which control mankind.

The socialist schools are more logical than the liberal school, but they are not so much so as they would seem to be at first sight, and they do not pursue their principles, from consequence to consequence, up to an ultimate conclusion. This conclusion, however, if we admit their premises, not only proceeds from these premises, but is a logical necessity arising from their adoption. The proof of this is found in the universally received fact, that the socialists are in practice what they refuse

to acknowledge themselves to be in theory. Theoretically, they remain Frenchmen, Italians, and Germans; practically, they are citizens of the world, and, like the world, their country has no boundaries. In their fatuity, they ignore that, when all boundaries are removed, there is no longer a country; and where there is no country there are no men, except, indeed, they may happen to be socialists.

Among parties who combat for supremacy, the victory belongs, of right, to the most logical. This ought to be so in principle, and is so in fact, as is proved by a universal and constant experience. Humanly speaking, Catholicism owes its success to the soundness of its logic, and, if it were not led by the hand of God, its logic would suffice to make it triumph even to the remotest corners of the world. This will more clearly appear in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

Continuation of the same subject—Socialist contradictions.

THE liberal school, as we have demonstrated in the preceding chapter, has established the premises from which are drawn socialist deductions; and the socialist schools have only drawn the consequences that result from the premises of the liberal school. The two schools are not distinguished by their respective ideas, but by the greater or less degree of boldness with which they proclaim them. The question between them being thus

placed, it is evident that to the most fearless belongs the victory, and the most intrepid is undoubtedly the one which, without stopping half way, accepts principles with their consequences. To the socialists, then, must be awarded a definitive victory in this discussion.

The rigorous logic which they claim to make use of, and of which they have made an ostentatious display in their controversies with the liberal school, have acquired for them a considerable reputation for being logical and consistent, which, if it is up to a certain point justly due them, is far from being fully so. To be more logical than the most illogical and contradictory of all the schools, is but a slight distinction, and one of little importance. The socialists must establish their reputation upon higher grounds, if they would really merit it. They must not only demonstrate that they are relatively logical and consistent, but they must also be so absolutely. Then they must not only prove that their reasoning is absolutely logical and consistent, but that it is also founded on true premises; because, to be logical and consistent in error, is only a special manner of being illogical and inconsistent. There can be no true logic nor real consistency except in absolute truth.

Now socialism fails to meet either of these conditions. It is contradictory because it is not one, as is shown by the variety of its schools, which are symbolic of the diversity of its doctrines; and it is inconsistent, because, like the liberal school, it refuses to accept, though not to the same extent, all the consequences arising from its principles; and finally, it is untrue, for its premises are false, and the inferences deduced from them are absurd.

That socialism cannot accept all the consequences of

its own principles, we have already seen in the preceding chapter, where we have proved that it has not admitted, as a logical result of the negation of all solidarity, the dissolution of political society, but has only proposed the annihilation of the domestic association. It is generally supposed that socialism invokes its own destruction, by the extreme consequences it deduces from its principles; but I am of opinion that it will happen quite otherwise, and that the modesty of its demands will prove fatal to it. For example, with regard to the present question, good logic requires that it should demand that a nation should change its name with each successive generation. If we accept the doctrine of solidarity, I can readily understand that the national name should be one, since the nation remains a unit throughout the entire duration of its history. That the nation which was governed by Clovis should continue to bear the same name under Louis Philippe is readily understood, and not only conceivable, but very natural, and not only natural, but it becomes necessary from the moment that we admit the solidarity of the French nation, in which there exists a communion of glories and disasters, uniting the past with the present and future generations. But what is intelligible, natural, and necessary, according to the doctrine of solidarity, is unintelligible, absurd, and unnatural, if we admit the doctrine that every generation interrupts the continuity of national renown, and of the course of time. This system presents to us as many different families and nations as there are generations; and logic exacts in this case that the names, which are the expression of things, should be subjected to the same vicissitudes as the things themselves. Therefore, with each successive

generation there should be a corresponding change in the names of families and nations. That this deduction presents a conclusion which is both ludicrous and absurd no one can deny, but the grotesque and absurd are the logical consequences of the principle announced by the socialists; and this is precisely what we have undertaken to demonstrate. It only then remains for socialism to choose the manner of its death, as between the illogical and the absurd.

The socialist schools have had no difficulty in proving that if the liberal school rejects a domestic, political, and religious solidarity, it must also deny the solidarity of the nation and of the monarchy; and that they ought of necessity to suppress in the national common law the institution of the monarchy, and in the international common law the constitutive differences of nations. But the socialist schools, with an inconsistency beyond that of the liberal school, (absurd and contradictory as this school is,) afterward acknowledge the highest, most universal, and most inconceivable, humanly speaking, of all solidarities, that is to say, the solidarity of humanity. The motto of liberty, equality, and fraternity, as the common patrimony of all men, either signifies nothing, or it means that there is a solidarity in humanity. The recognition of this solidarity, separated from the others, and from the religious dogma which teaches and expounds it, is an act of faith so supernatural and entire, that I cannot even conceive of it, accustomed as I am, being a Catholic, to believe what I do not understand.

To believe in the equality of all men, when I see them all unequal; to believe in the existence of liberty, when I behold servitude everywhere established; to believe that all men are brothers, when history teaches me that

they are enemies; to believe that there is a common inheritance of misfortune and glory for all men, when I can discover only individual misfortune and glory; to believe that I only exist for humanity, when I have the inherent consciousness that I refer humanity to myself; to believe that this same humanity is the center toward which I refer all my actions, when I make myself my own center; and finally, to believe that I ought to believe all these things, when those who propose them to me as the objects of belief assert that I should only believe in my reason, which rejects them all,—there is in all this so great a disproportion, and so inconceivable an aberration, that I am overwhelmed, and as it were stupefied with amazement. And my astonishment increases when I perceive, that the very men who affirm the solidarity of humanity reject the solidarity of the family, which is equivalent to asserting that enemies are brothers, and that brothers ought not to be united in a fraternal bond. When the same men who affirm the solidarity of humanity deny a political solidarity, they affirm that we hold nothing in common with our fellow-citizens, and everything in common with strangers. When these men who affirm the solidarity of humanity deny the solidarity of religion, they affirm the effect and deny the cause. From all this results the logical deduction, that the socialist schools are both illogical and absurd. They are illogical because, after having demonstrated, in opposition to the liberal school, that one cannot reject certain solidarities and admit others, they yet fall into this very error when they accept one alone and reject all the others. They are absurd, because the very dogma which they admit is precisely one of those dogmas which surpasses reason, and which faith alone can im-

pose; and because this very proposition is made by those who reject faith, and proclaim the imprescriptible right of reason to an entire independence and a sovereign rule.

The socialist schools would, I think, be greatly embarrassed if their dogmas were subjected to a rigorous examination, and a categorical answer exacted from them, of the following direct question: From what do you infer that there exists a solidarity among men, and that they are brothers, equal and free? This same difficulty also arises for a Catholic solution, and receives one, for Catholicism admits the obligation of answering all questions propounded to it; but socialism, the most rationalistic of all the schools, does not acknowledge the same obligation, and it leaves the objection unanswered, although it is especially directed against its doctrine. These abstract formulas have certainly not found their solution in history. If history sustains any philosophical system, it is not, assuredly, that which proclaims the solidarity, liberty, equality, and fraternity of mankind, but rather that formula so forcibly expressed by Hobbes, which declares universal, incessant, and simultaneous war to be the natural and primitive state of man.

Man would seem to be, from his birth, under the mysterious power of some malefic influence, and destined to endure an inexorable condemnation; all that surrounds him appears to oppose him, and he is in antagonism with all things. The first breath of air which blows upon him, the first rays of the sun which strike him, are but the beginning of the war waged against him by exterior forces. All his vital energies rebel against their distressing pressure, and his whole existence is filled with

lamentations. The greater number do not survive this infancy of sorrow, but are cut off by death. Those who are able to resist the early trials of life, only do so to enter upon the path of their dolorous passion; and, after unceasing combats and many afflictions, they ultimately reach the final catastrophe, overcome with weariness and crushed by suffering. The earth is harsh and insatiable toward them; she exacts their efforts, that is to say, their life; and in exchange for the life she takes from them, she scarcely proffers a drop of water from her fountains to allay their thirst, or a single grain of wheat from her treasures, to appease their hunger. Nor does she even thus prolong their life that they may live, but that they may continue to give her their labor; like the tyrant, who only sustains his slaves in order that he may a longer time enjoy the fruit of their servitude. We everywhere behold the feeble, victims of the tyranny of the strong.

A woman who was distinguished by her talents, wishing to give a convincing proof of her genius, asked herself one day what would be the greatest and most remarkable of paradoxes; nor could she find one more surprising than to affirm, with a tone of authority, that slavery is of modern and liberty of ancient existence. Whether, by dint of repetition, she forced herself to believe this assertion, I cannot tell, but it is certain that the world received her affirmation, and, what is more, the world is quite capable of so foolish an act of faith. As to the idea of equality, I know not if it be possible, (but, what is impossible to a rationalist philosopher?) I know not if it be possible for this idea to have found its historic and philosophic origin in the division of mankind into castes, the ones invested, as by right, with the power to com-

mand, and the others condemned to obey, the latter constantly seeking occasions for revolutions and war, and the former making use of tyrannical means to assure their supremacy. The idea of fraternity undoubtedly arose during those lengthened periods of peace and prosperity which form the golden thread of history. As to the idea of solidarity, who does not see from whence it came? Every one knows that the Romans, who represent an abridgment of all antiquity, gave the same name to foreigners and enemies. This name was undoubtedly symbolical of the solidarity of humanity!

If these ideas cannot have had their origin in history, whose every page, blotted with tears and written in blood, condemns and refutes them, then we must look for them either in those primitive ages which precede the historic times, or we must seek them directly from pure reason. With regard to this latter origin, I will assert, without fear of contradiction, that pure reason can only find its exercise in things of pure reason. But, the question here is to establish what are the constitutive elements of human nature: it is not a subject for the investigations of unaided reason, but a fact, which is for us very obscure, and requires to be elucidated by careful observation, in order that a clearer light may be obtained. Respecting that primitive era, which was anterior to the ages of history, it is clear that we can have no knowledge of it, except through revelation. This granted, I am authorized to put my question in this manner: If what you affirm cannot originate either in the exercise of reason, which ignores it, nor in history, which contradicts it, nor in an era anterior to the ages of history, which is unknown to you, by what right, then, do you affirm that it has not

been revealed? Who has told you so? And if you can nowhere find an authority for your opinion, why do you make such an affirmation? Shakspeare has well described your theories, when he says: they are words, words, and nothing but words . . . and I add, words which alike destroy those who utter and those who listen to them.

The dogmas of Catholicism have a potent virtue not to be found in the affirmations of rationalism, which have in them no efficacy. In the declarations of Catholicism rests the power to give life and to take it away, to destroy the living and resuscitate the dead. These words are never uttered in vain, nor do they ever fail to inspire terror, because none can tell whether they bring life or death, although all acknowledge their sovereign power. Once, at the decline of day, when the shades of evening began to spread a veil over the transparent and tranquil waters, the Saviour entered a frail bark, accompanied by his disciples; and, while our Lord slept, overcome with weariness, there arose a frightful tempest, and the vessel being in danger of sinking, the disciples began to pray; when the Saviour, awakening, uttered some words, which appeased the wind and the sea. Then, turning to his disciples, he addressed other words to them, and they were suddenly seized with great fear and trembling: *et timuerunt timore magno*. The tempest had inspired them with less awe and terror than the words of the Saviour. At another time, two men, who were tormented by demons, presented themselves to our Saviour, and implored his mercy. And the Lord said to the demons, *Go*. The devils, obeying his voice, departed from the men, and took possession of some unclean animals, when these ran violently into the sea and perished in its waters.

Those who watched the herd were terrified at the effect of the divine word, and fled, communicating their terror to the people of the neighboring village, who assembled, and in a body besought the Saviour to depart from the country: *Pastores autem fugerunt, et venientes in civitatem, nuntiaverunt omnia, et de eis qui demonia habuerant: et ecce tota civitas exiit obviam Jesu: et viso eo rogaverunt ut transiret a finibus eorum.** The omnipotence of the divine word was more terrible to these people than the enchantments of the infernal spirits.

When I hear a divine, that is to say, a Catholic doctrine announced, I immediately pause, and consider what it portends, as I know that it most assuredly proclaims either a miracle of divine justice or a prodigy of divine mercy. If this word is pronounced by the Church, I feel that it announces salvation; if it comes from any other source, it threatens death. Ask the world why it is filled with fear and terror; why sad and distressing rumors everywhere prevail; why this anguish and disturbance in the heart of nations, which, like men in a troubled dream, feel themselves to be on the verge of an abyss, into which they must fall. To ask the world this, is the same as to ask why men are alarmed, when they behold a madman or a knave enter into a powder magazine with a lighted torch. The one does not know, the other knows too well, the qualities of powder and the effect produced upon it by fire. What has, up to the present day, saved the world is, that the Church was in ancient times sufficiently powerful to extirpate heresies. These heresies principally consisted in teaching a different doctrine from that of the Church, and

* St. Matthew, viii. 38, 34.

these doctrines were hidden under the very terms that she makes use of. They would long since have brought about the final catastrophe of the world, had the Church been unable to eradicate them. The real danger for human society commenced when the great heresy of the sixteenth century obtained a right of citizenship in Europe. Since then every revolution has endangered the life of society. The reason for this is that, all our revolutions having arisen from the Protestant heresy, they are substantially heretical. We see this by the attempt they all make to give a reason for their existence, and to render it legitimate by words and maxims taken from the Scriptures. The *sansculottism* of the first French revolution sought its historical antecedents and its titles of nobility in the humble poverty of the meek Lamb of God; and among its votaries were found those who recognized in Marat a messiah, and his apostle in Robespierre. The revolution of 1830 gave rise to the doctrine of St. Simon, whose mystical extravagance was the announcement of a kind of corrected and expurgated gospel. The doctrines of socialism, expressed in evangelical formulas, gushed forth, like an impetuous storm-swollen torrent, from the revolution of 1848. Previous to the sixteenth century, men had beheld nothing like it. I do not intend, in making this statement, to assert that the Catholic world had not suffered great tribulations, nor that the Christian societies of ancient times did not experience great vicissitudes and trials; but what I wish to say is, that these fluctuations were not powerful enough to overthrow society, and that these sufferings did not endanger its life. Now, it is quite otherwise. A battle is lost for society in the streets of Paris, and European society is suddenly overthrown, as if by a thunderbolt: *e cadde come corpo morto cade.*

The revolutions of modern times have, then, an unconquerable and destructive force which the revolutions of ancient times did not possess; and this destructive force is necessarily satanic, since it cannot be divine. Before quitting this subject, it appears to me opportune to make here an important observation, which I wish to suggest for the reflection of my readers. We have a precise account given us of two conversations of the angel of darkness: the one was held with Eve in the terrestrial paradise, and the other with the Saviour in the desert. In the first, Satan made use of the very words of God, perverting them to suit himself; in the second, he quoted Scripture, giving it his own interpretation. Is it rash to infer that as the word of God, rightly understood, has alone the power to give life, so that word, when perverted, has alone the power to cause death? If this is so, does it not fully explain why the revolutions of modern times, in which the word of God is more or less corrupted, have this destructive force?

Resuming, now, the investigation of the socialist contradictions, we contend that they cannot logically deny a religious, domestic, and political solidarity, if, as we have just proved, they do not at the same time deny the solidarity of humanity, and with it the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, which have in this solidarity alone their cause and origin. But, as the rejection of all these fundamental doctrines of socialism involves the destruction of the entire edifice, it logically follows that socialism cannot be consistent if, commencing by the negation of Catholicism, it does not conclude by its own negation. I know that, in professing the dogma of human solidarity, the socialists are far from embracing on this point the Catholic doctrine. I know

that between these two doctrines there is an essential difference, scarcely concealed by an identity of names. Humanity exists for the Catholic in the individuals who constitute it; while it exists for the socialist in both an individual and concrete manner; so that, when socialists and Catholics affirm the solidarity of humanity, although they appear to assert the same thing, they really affirm two different things. But this does not prevent the socialist contradiction from being so conspicuous that it is impossible to deny it. Although, according to the socialist hypothesis, humanity is the universal intelligence which is expressed by special groups designated as families and nations, yet logic exacts that all these groups should obey in themselves, and of themselves, its own law, and that there should be a solidarity between them, if its law is that of solidarity. Hence, the necessity of either denying the solidarity of humanity, or of affirming it also in individuals, families, and the state. There is nothing clearer than that socialism is alike incompatible with this radical negation and with this absolute affirmation. To deny the solidarity of humanity is to deny socialism, and to affirm the solidarity of the social groups is to deny it in another way. The world cannot submit to the law of socialism without first renouncing the laws of reason.

It may be seen from what we have just established, how little the socialist doctors, and especially the most celebrated among them, deserve the reputation for consistency which they have enjoyed. Mr. Proudhon, in his discussions with those partisans of the new gospel who advocate the system of the expropriation of all individual rights, and consequently the concentration in the

state of all domestic, civil, political, social, and religious rights, has not found it difficult to prove that communism, that is to say, governmentalism elevated to its highest power, is absurd and extravagant regarded in the point of view of these new sectaries. In effect, communism, considering the state as an absolute unity which concentrates in itself all rights and absorbs all individuals, must necessarily consider it as in the highest degree representing the principle of solidarity, as unity and solidarity are one and the same thing viewed under two different aspects. Catholicism, the depositary of the dogma of solidarity, always derives this dogma from unity, through which it is alone possible, and which renders it necessary. Now, as the starting-point of socialism is precisely the negation of this dogma, it is clear that communism contradicts itself, since it denies it in theory and recognizes it in practice, denies it in its principles and affirms it in its applications. If the negation of the solidarity of the family brings with it the negation of the family, so the negation of political solidarity involves the negation of all government. This last negation proceeds equally from the idea held by socialism, that equality and liberty are common to all men alike, since this equality and this liberty cannot be conceived as limited by a government, but only by the free action and the free reaction that individuals naturally exercise upon each other. Mr. Proudhon is then consistent when he says, in his *Confessions of a Revolutionist*: "All men are free and equal. Society is then, as well by its nature as through the function for which it is destined, autonomous, that is to say, having the right of self-government. The sphere of activity of each citizen being determined by the natural division of work, and

by the choice which he makes of a profession, and the social functions being combined so as to produce an harmonious effect, order results from the free action of all, from which must proceed the absolute negation of government. Therefore, he who attempts to govern me is a tyrant and usurper, and I declare him to be my enemy."

But if Mr. Proudhon is consistent when he rejects all government, he is only partially so when he designates this negation as the last of the negations contained in the socialist doctrines. He has denied the domestic solidarity, in the negation of the family; he has denied the political solidarity, in the negation of the government, while at the very time that he rejects these two solidarities, he affirms by an inconceivable contradiction the solidarity of humanity, which is the common foundation of both. We have already demonstrated that to affirm equality and liberty, is the same as to affirm human solidarity. Nor does the contradiction stop here, for at the same time that he declares the doctrine of equality and liberty in the *Confessions of a Revolutionist*, he denies the doctrine of fraternity in the sixth chapter of his book upon *Economick Contradictions*, in these words: "Do you speak to me of fraternity? Yes, I am willing to admit that we are brothers, with the understanding that I shall be the older brother and you the younger, and that society, our common mother, shall honor my right of primogeniture and my services by granting me a double portion. You say, you will provide for my wants according to my means; but I understand, on the contrary, that my wants will be provided for in proportion to my work, otherwise I cease to labor."

We here perceive a double contradiction, because there is not only a contradiction in affirming the solidarity of humanity, when we deny the solidarity of the family and of society, but there is also a still greater contradiction in the negation of fraternity, at the same time that the principle of liberty and equality among men is affirmed. Equality, liberty, and fraternity are principles which have a mutual dependence, and which resolve themselves into each other. To choose the one and to reject the other, is to take what is rejected, and reject what is taken; to deny what is affirmed, and at the same time to affirm what is denied.

Respecting the question of government, the negation of all government by Mr. Proudhon is only an apparent negation. If the idea of government is not antagonistic to the socialist idea, it is not necessary for the socialist to deny the first; and if there is an antagonism between these two ideas, it is a gross inconsistency to proclaim in another form that right of government which has just been denied. Now Mr. Proudhon, who denies the right of government, the symbol of unity and of political solidarity, acknowledges it in another manner, and under another form, when he recognizes and proclaims the principle of unity and social solidarity in the following words: "Only society, that is to say, the collective being, can follow its inclinations and abandon itself to its free will without fear of committing an absolute and immediate error. The superior reason which resides in it, and which it gradually eliminates through the manifestations of the multitude and the reflection of individuals, always leads it in the right direction. The philosopher is incapable of discovering truth by intuition, and if he happens to attempt to direct society he is in great danger

of substituting his own ideas, which are always inefficacious and insufficient, in place of the eternal laws of order, and he thus precipitates society into an abyss of disorder. He requires a guide, and what can this guide be but the law of progress, that logic inherent in humanity."*

In the preceding paragraph, Mr. Proudhon affirms unity, solidarity, and social infallibility—precisely the three things that communism affirms or supposes to exist in the state—and he denies the capacity and right of individuals to govern nations, which is exactly what is denied by communism. From which it follows that Proudhonism and communism arrive at the same conclusions by different means. They both assert the right of government, and with it the unity and solidarity of human societies. The government is infallible for both, that is to say, it is omnipotent; and being so, it excludes all idea of liberty in individuals, who, placed under the jurisdiction of an omnipotent and infallible government, can only be regarded as slaves. Whether we hold that the right of government resides in the state, the symbol of political unity, or in society considered as a collective being, in either case, according to socialist doctrine, all social rights are condensed in the state, and consequently the individual considered as such is condemned to the most complete servitude.

Mr. Proudhon, then, does precisely the contrary of what he asserts, and he is quite the contrary of what he appears to be. He proclaims liberty and equality, and yet establishes tyranny; he denies the doctrine of solidarity, and at the same time he supposes it; he calls

* Confessions of a Revolutionist.

himself an anarchist, and yet has a violent desire to govern. He seems bold, but he is timid; his boldness consists in mere words, and his ideas are timorous. He is thought dogmatic, but he is skeptical; his skepticism is in substance, and his dogmatism in form. He solemnly announces that he is about to proclaim new and strange truths, but he simply echoes old and exploded errors.

His apothegm, *property is theft*, has charmed the French by its air of originality and ingenuity; but it may be well to remind them that on this side of the Pyrenees this saying is very ancient. From the days of Viriato up to the present time, every highwayman who threatens the life of the traveler if he does not give up to him his purse, is said to commit a theft, and, like a thief, he takes what he can get. Mr. Proudhon has only stolen his apothegm from the Spanish banditti, as they steal the purse of the traveler. In the same way that he professes to be original when he is in fact a plagiarist, so he calls himself the prophet of the future, when he is only the apostle of the past. His principal artifice consists in expressing the idea that he affirms with the word which contradicts it. For example, every one calls despotism, despotism. Mr. Proudhon calls it anarchy; and when he has given the thing affirmed its contradictory name, with this name he combats its friends, and with the thing itself its adversaries. By his communist sentiments, which are at the bottom of his system, he terrifies capitalists, and by the word anarchy he frightens and puts to flight his friends the communists; then he looks around him to observe the effect produced, and seeing the first utterly dismayed, and the second silenced, he ridicules them all. Another artful device which he makes use of is to adopt a portion of each

system, taking care not to admit enough to confound him with the supporters of any particular doctrine, and yet sufficient to excite the opposition of its adversaries. There are pages of his writings to which all the friends of order could subscribe; then, other pages are intended for the partisans of revolution; while again, at other times, he expresses still other opinions in common with those entertained by the most fanatical democrats, and these sentiments are directed against the friends of order. Sometimes he ostentatiously displays the most shameless atheism, which he intends for the Catholics; and again he might be mistaken for a fervent Christian, when he wishes to provoke the materialists and atheists. The chief happiness of this man is to oblige every one to oppose him, and to resist every one. When he asserts that he regards all who attempt to control him as enemies, he has only revealed his secret in part; the rest consists in his being inimical to all who listen to and follow him. If the world should ever become converted to his doctrines, in order to oppose the world he would cease to profess them and would adopt others; and if the world should still continue to agree with him, he would assuredly hang himself upon the first tree. If there can be a greater misfortune than that of not being able to love—which is peculiarly the misfortune of Satan—it must be that of not wishing to be loved, which is the Proudhonian misfortune. And yet this man, frightful object of the divine wrath as he is, preserves somewhere, in the most hidden depths of his gloomy and darkened being, a ray of light and love, which, although it is nearly obscured by the rapidly increasing shades, still distinguishes him from the infernal spirits. He is not utterly abandoned to hatred and darkness. He is

the declared enemy of all literary, as of all moral excellence; and yet without either knowing or desiring it, he attains both a literary and moral beauty in the few pages which he consecrates to the modest graces of chastity, to artless and pure love, and to the harmony and magnificence of Catholicism. His style then rises to the dignity and majesty of his subject, or breathes the graceful delicacy of the most refreshing idyl.

If we consider Mr. Proudhon in himself, and separated from others, he is inexplicable and inconceivable. He is not a person, although he appears to be so, but he is a personification. Although he is in the highest degree contradictory and illogical, the world calls him logical because he is himself a consequence. He is the consequence of all the extravagant ideas, all the contradictory principles, all the absurd premises advanced during the past three centuries by modern rationalism. Thus, as the consequence supposes its premises, and the premises include their consequence, these three centuries ought necessarily to produce Mr. Proudhon, and Mr. Proudhon necessarily represents them. This is why the examination of either the ages or the man must give the same result. All the Proudhonian contradictions are found in the three last centuries, and Mr. Proudhon is the embodiment of all these antagonisms, and both are condensed in a book which, under this aspect, is the most remarkable work of the present age—the “*System of Economick Contradictions.*” There is an absolute identity between this book, its author, and the rationalist ages. The only difference that exists between them is in name and form. That which they all represent is alternately expressed under the form of a book, a man, or an age. This explains why Mr. Proudhon never is,

but always seems to be, original. He cannot be so, for the premises once given, there can be nothing less original than the consequence; and yet he always appears to be so, for what can seem more original than the concentration in one man of all the contradictions of three contradictory ages?

This does not mean that Mr. Proudhon is not in search of originality. Mr. Proudhon really seeks to be original when he undertakes to express by a formula the synthesis of all antinomies, and to find the supreme equation of all contradictions. But it is precisely here, that is, in the manifestation of his own individuality, that he discovers his incapacity. His equation is only the beginning of a new series of contradictions, and his synthesis that of a new succession of antinomies. For example, when placed between the right of property, which is the thesis, and communism, which is its antithesis, he seeks the synthesis in that right of property which is not hereditary; he does not perceive that property which is not hereditary is not property, and consequently that his synthesis is no synthesis, because it does not suppress the contradiction, and is only another way of rejecting the vanquished thesis, and affirming the victorious antithesis. Or, when again, in order to express by a formula the synthesis he wishes to establish, and which must, on the one hand, reconcile authority which is the thesis, and on the other, liberty, which is its antithesis; when in order to do this he denies the right of government and proclaims anarchy, if he intends that there should be no government whatever, his synthesis is in this case only the negation of the thesis, which is authority, and the affirmation of the antithesis, which is human liberty. If, on the con-

trary, he means that an absolute and dictatorial power should only exist in society, and not in the state, in this case he merely denies the antithesis and affirms the thesis by denying liberty and affirming the omnipotence of communism. In either case, where is the adjustment of things? where is the synthesis? Mr. Proudhon is only successful when he is satisfied with being the personification of modern rationalism, which is in its nature absurd and contradictory; and he is only impotent when, wishing to display his individuality, he ceases to be a personification to become a person.

I have carefully examined the theories of Mr. Proudhon under every aspect, and I am satisfied that the salient characteristic of his intellectual physiognomy is a contempt of God and man. Never has any man sinned more deeply against humanity and the Holy Ghost. Whenever this chord of his heart resounds, it is always in an eloquent and vigorous strain. He himself does not then speak, but another speaks for him, who possesses him, and who causes him to fall into epileptic convulsions. He is then under the power of another who is greater than he, and who constrains him to sustain a perpetual dialogue. What he says at times is so extraordinary, and expressed in so strange a manner, that the soul remains amazed, not knowing if he who speaks is man or demon, or if he is in earnest or in jest. So far as Mr. Proudhon is concerned, if it rested with him, he would rather be regarded as demon than man. Man or devil, it is equally certain that upon his shoulders three ages of reprobation rest with crushing weight.

CHAPTER V.

Continuation of the same subject.

ROBERT OWEN appears to me to be the most consistent of all modern socialists, regarding the question under the point of view in which we have just examined it. He openly and cynically rejects all religions, the depositaries of religious and moral dogmas, and he utterly denies the obligations of duty, not only denying the collective responsibility which constitutes the dogma of solidarity, but likewise the individual responsibility which rests upon the dogma of the free will of man. Robert Owen first denies free will, and then the transmission of sin, and finally sin itself. So far, he is undoubtedly logical and consistent in all his deductions; but when denying sin and free will he affirms the distinction between moral good and evil, and when recognizing these distinctions between moral good and evil, he yet denies the penalty which is its necessary consequence, then Owen becomes inconsistent and absurd.

Man, according to Robert Owen, acts in consequence of invincible convictions. These convictions are not only the result of his special organization, but also of the circumstances which surround him; and as he is neither the author of these circumstances nor of this organization, therefore they both act upon him fatally and necessarily. All this is logical and consistent, but it is the negation of free will; and when he makes this

negation, and at the same time affirms the existence of good and evil, he is illogical, contradictory, and absurd. This absurdity even becomes inconceivable and monstrous, when our author proposes to found a society and a government upon the juxtaposition of these irresponsible beings. The ideas of government and of society are correlative with that of human liberty. From the negation of one proceeds the negation of the others, and he who does not affirm or deny them altogether, only simultaneously affirms or denies the same thing. I am not aware that the annals of history present an example of a more complete blindness, inconsistency, and folly than that of Owen, when, after having denied individual responsibility and liberty, he not only affirms the necessity of society and of government, but goes farther, and is guilty of the wonderful contradiction of counseling the exercise of benevolence, justice, and love to those who according to him are neither responsible nor free, and are therefore deprived of the liberty either to love or to show themselves just or benevolent, if they wish to do so.

The limits within which I proposed to confine myself in undertaking this work, prevent me from a more extended investigation of the vast range of socialist contradictions. Those which we have already examined more than suffice to prove, beyond the possibility of doubt or controversy, the incontestable fact that socialism, under whatever aspect we may consider it, involves a complete contradiction, and that from the contradictory assertions of its schools, can only result an utter confusion. Its inconsistency is so palpable that it would not be difficult to exhibit it clearly, and, as it were, in relief, even in those points in which all these sectaries

are united, and of the same opinion. If any negation is common to them, it is certainly that of the negation of the solidarity of the family of the nobility. All the revolutionary and socialist doctors unanimously concur in the denial of that communion of glories and misfortunes, of merits and demerits between ancestors and their descendants, which mankind has recognized through all ages as an established fact. Nevertheless these same revolutionists and socialists affirm of themselves in practice, without knowing it, the very thing that they deny to others in theory. When the French revolution, bleeding and disheveled, trampled under foot all the national glories; when, inebriated with its triumphs, it considered a definitive victory as certain, it was seized with an undefinable aristocratic pride of race, which was in direct opposition to all its dogmas. One then beheld the more celebrated of the revolutionists with the pride of the ancient feudal barons, hesitating to grant to others the privilege of association with their illustrious families. My readers will remember the remarkable question which these doctors of the new law addressed to the immaculate aspirants to their favor: "What crime have you committed?" How unfortunate were those who were guilty of none, for never would be thrown open to them the gates of the capitol where the demi-gods of the revolution presided in terrible majesty. Mankind had established a nobility of virtue, the revolution instituted that of crime in its place.

When, after the revolution of February, we saw the socialists and republicans divided into classes, separated from each other by an impassable gulf, and the republicans of *yesterday* heaping contumely and insult upon the republicans of *to-day*; when others again more

fortunate, and consequently more arrogant than the rest, exclaimed, All the glory is ours, for with us the title of republican is a family inheritance, and has been transmitted to us by blood,—what was this but the entire adoption of aristocratic sentiments by republicanism?

If we examine in succession all the revolutionary schools, we shall find them all disputing with each other for a family predominance, and attempting to trace a noble ancestry. The chief of one group is the illustrious St. Simon; of another, the distinguished Fourier; of a third, the patriot Babeuf. All have a patrimony, a glory, and a mission in common, and all are united with each other by the tie of a close solidarity. They all seek in past ages some personality so noble, high, and exalted that they may find in him a yet closer bond and common center. Some among them have chosen Plato as the glorious personification of ancient wisdom. The greater number, carried away by their mad ambition to the height of blasphemy, have not feared thus to profane the holy name of the Redeemer of mankind. As one poor and abandoned, they would deny him; humble, they would despise him; but their insolent pride has not forgotten that in his poverty, isolation and humility, he was a king, and that the blood of kings flowed in his veins. As to Mr. Proudhon, he is the perfect type of socialist pride, which is, in its turn, the extreme concentration of human arrogance. His vanity carries him to the most remote ages in search of an ancestry, which he traces with presumption up to the times almost contemporaneous with the creation, when the Hebrews flourished under the Mosaic institutions. We shall embrace a more favorable opportunity to show clearly that the title of Mr. Proudhon to nobility

is still more ancient, and his race so illustrious, that in order to trace it to its source it is necessary to ascend still higher, and to arrive at an epoch not included in the narrow circle of history, and to beings who are infinitely superior to man by the elevation and perfection of their nature. At present it suffices to assert that the socialist schools are irrevocably condemned to contradictions and absurdity; that each one of their principles is in opposition to that which precedes and that which follows it; that their practice is the complete refutation of all their theories, and that their theories are the radical refutation of their conduct.

Let us attempt to form an approximate idea of what the socialist edifice would be without those defects of proportion which so disfigure it, and deprive it of all regularity of architecture. After having seen what it is in the present day, with its contradictory dogmas, it would seem not to be inappropriate to examine briefly what it will become in the future, when the latent virtue which is in every theory being developed by the action of time, will triumph over its contradictions and inconsistencies. The method of doing this is very simple. It suffices to take any proposition, no matter which one, that is unanimously accepted by the socialists of all the schools, and to draw from this proposition the inferences it comprises.

The fundamental negation of socialism is the negation of sin, which is the grand affirmation, and considered as the center of all Catholic affirmations.

From this negation a series of negations logically result, some respecting the divine being, others respecting the human being, and others still respecting the social being. It would be impossible to investigate this entire

series, besides being beyond the scope of our argument. It will answer the end we have in view to notice the most important of these negations.

The socialists deny both the existence and the possibility of sin. This double negation involves the negation of free will, which we cannot conceive of, unless human nature possesses the power of choosing between good and evil, of falling from a state of innocence into that of sin.

If we deny the power of free will, we must also deny the responsibility of man. From the negation of responsibility must proceed the negation of all penalty, and this denied, we reject both the divine government over man and the right of human government. Therefore, as regards the question of the right of government, the negation of sin leads to its destruction.

If we deny an individual responsibility, we must also deny a responsibility in common; for what is denied of the individual cannot be affirmed of the species, and thus human responsibility is destroyed. What is denied of each one in particular, and of all in general, cannot be affirmed of any; from which it follows, that if we once deny the responsibility of the individual and that of the species, we must also deny the responsibility of all associations. In other words, there no longer exists either a social, political, or a domestic responsibility. Therefore, as regards the question of responsibility, the negation of sin leads to its destruction.

From the denial of an individual, domestic, political, and human responsibility, proceeds the negation of solidarity in the individual, the family, the state, and the species, since solidarity means a responsibility in com-

mon. Therefore, as regards solidarity, the negation of sin leads to its destruction.

If we deny the solidarity of man, of the family, of the state, and of the species, we must also deny the unity of man, of the family, of the state, and of the species; because the identity between solidarity and unity is so complete, that what is one cannot even be conceived of except as possessed of solidarity, nor that which has solidarity, except as possessing unity. Therefore, as regards the question of unity, the negation of sin leads to its destruction.

The following negations proceed from the absolute negation of unity: that of humanity, society, the family, and man. In effect, nothing whatever exists, except under the condition of being one, and it is equivalent to the negation of the family, society, and humanity to deny the domestic, political, and human unity. From the negation of these three unities proceeds the negation of these three things. To affirm their existence and to deny their unity is a contradiction of terms. Each one of these things must either be one or have no existence whatever. Therefore, if they are not one, they do not exist, and even their name is an absurdity, since it is a name which neither represents nor expresses anything.

As regards the individual man, his negation as the result of the negation of unity, proceeds in a different manner. The individual man alone may, up to a certain point, exist without unity or solidarity. What is denied of him in denying his unity and solidarity is, that in the different moments of his life he remains the same person. If there is no link which unites the present with the past and future, it results from this, that man

only exists in the present. But, according to this supposition, his existence is rather phenomenal than real. If he does not exist in the past, because it is past, and there is no connection between the past and the present; if he does not live in the future because the future is not, and when the future shall exist, what now constitutes the present will have ceased to be: if man only lives in the present, and the present does not exist, because when we would affirm its existence it is already past, it results from this, that man's existence is rather theoretical than real, because if he does not really exist throughout all time, he does not exist in any portion of time whatever. I can only conceive of time as united under its three forms, and I cannot conceive of it if they are separated. What is the past, except that which no longer exists? What is the future, except that which does not yet exist? And who can arrest the present, the necessary time to affirm it, before it reaches the future and falls into the past? Therefore, to affirm the existence of man and to deny the unity of time, is to give to man only the speculative existence of the mathematical point. Therefore, the negation of sin ends in nihilism, either as regards the existence of individual man, of humanity, of the family, or of society; and it is proved that all the socialist doctrines, or to speak with more precision, all the rationalist doctrines, end in nothingness. There is nothing more natural or logical, if we carefully reflect upon it, than that those who separate themselves from God should end in nihilism, because out of God there is only nothingness.

This established, I can with justice accuse the socialism of the present day of timidity, and of being contradictory. It denies the triune and one God, and affirms

other gods; it denies humanity under one aspect, and affirms it under another; it denies society under certain forms, and affirms it under different forms; it, on the one hand, denies the family, and on the other affirms it; it denies man in one way, and affirms him in a different or contrary way. Is not all this inconsistent and cowardly? The socialism of the present day still remains a demi-Catholicism, and nothing more. If the limits of this work would permit, I could readily demonstrate that the socialist doctors who have progressed the farthest, advance a greater proportion of Catholic affirmations than of socialist negations, which produces an absurd Catholicism and a contradictory socialism. Every affirmation which supposes a God, is necessarily the affirmation of the God of the Catholics; every affirmation which supposes humanity, inevitably leads to the Christian dogma of the unity and solidarity of humanity; every affirmation which supposes the existence of society, ends sooner or later in the Catholic affirmation respecting the social institutions; every affirmation which supposes the family, is only the acceptance of conditions which in one way or another result in affirming all that Catholicism affirms and socialism denies with regard to it; finally, every affirmation, of whatever nature, respecting man, definitively resolves itself into the affirmation of Adam, the man of the Book of Genesis. Catholicism resembles those enormous cylinders, under which if anything pass in part, it must pass entirely. If socialism does not alter its course it will inevitably pass under this formidable cylinder, dragging with it all its pontiffs and doctors, and every vestige of its existence will be obliterated.

Mr. Proudhon is not ordinarily ridiculous, yet he be-

comes so when, proclaiming the negation of government as the ultimate negation, he claims the first rank among all the socialists on account of the extreme boldness of this proposition. When the socialists would vie with the Catholics, they are as the wise men of Greece compared with the priests of the East; they are as children who are mistaken for men. The negation of government, so far from being the last of all possible negations, is only a preliminary negation, which future nihilists will place in their list of prolegomena. If Mr. Proudhon does not change his position, he will be dragged like the rest under the Catholic cylinder. All must meet this fate, even the least. He must then either affirm nothingness, or be forced body and soul under this cylinder, with all his negations and affirmations. So long as Mr. Proudhon does not take a bolder position, he entitles me to represent him to the future rationalists as suspected of latent Catholicism and disguised *moderantism*. Those among the socialists who make no pretensions to an inheritance of Catholic sentiments, say of themselves that they are its antithesis. But Catholicism is not a thesis, and therefore cannot be opposed by an antithesis. It is a synthesis which includes all, which contains and explains all, which cannot be, I shall not say conquered, but even contested, except by a similar synthesis which, like it, includes, contains, and explains all things. Every human thesis and antithesis is comprised in the Catholic synthesis. It attracts and condenses everything to itself by the invincible force of an incommunicable virtue. Those who imagine that they are placed beyond Catholic limits, still remain within them, because within these limits is the atmosphere of intelligences. The

socialists, like the rest, after the most strenuous efforts to separate themselves from Catholicism, have only succeeded in becoming bad Catholics.

CHAPTER VI.

Dogmas correlative with the dogma of solidarity—Bloody sacrifices—Theories of the rationalist schools respecting the death penalty.

WE have shown that socialism is an incoherent combination of thesis and antithesis, which contradict and destroy each other. Catholicism, on the contrary, forms a great synthesis which includes all things in its unity, and infuses into them its sovereign harmony. It may be affirmed of Catholic dogmas, that although they are diverse yet they are one. So perfect is the connection between them that no particular one can be designated as the first or the last in the great divine circle. The virtue which is inherent in them all to transfuse their most hidden essence into each other, renders it impossible to accept or reject any one dogma when isolated from the others. All must be conjointly accepted or rejected; and as their dogmatical affirmations comprise all possible affirmations, it follows that no affirmation or negation, when restricted to a particular or relative sense, can be directed against Catholicism. Only an absolute negation can be opposed to this wonderful synthesis. Things have been so disposed by God, who manifests himself in the Catholic word, that this absolute negation, which is logically necessary in order to

combat the divine word, is entirely impossible; because, in order to deny all things we must commence by denying our own existence, and he who annihilates himself can go no farther, nor can he subsequently deny any other thing. The Catholic word is then invincible and eternal. From the first day of creation it has continued to increase throughout all space, and resound throughout all time, with an infinite power of expansion and resonance. Nothing can diminish its sovereign virtue, and when time shall have run its course, and space shall lie folded in the hand of God, this word will perpetually reverberate throughout the profound depths of eternity. Everything passes away in this lower world—men and their sciences, which are but ignorance; empires and their glories, which are but illusions; all is silent, and this word alone resounds. All that exists bears witness that its affirmation is like itself, immutable and eternal.

If we consider the dogma of solidarity in its connection with the dogma of unity, we see that they are blended, and that under two different manifestations they are essentially one and the same dogma. If we afterward consider the dogma of solidarity in itself, we see it resolved into two dogmas which, like that of solidarity and unity, are one in essence but two in their manifestations. The solidarity and unity of all men involves the idea of a responsibility of all in common, and this responsibility supposes, in its turn, that the merits of some can be imputed to others, and that shame and penalty, the result of crime, can reach those who are not guilty. When the evil effect of crime is what is thus communicated, the dogma preserves its generic name of solidarity, and when an advantage is thus imparted the name is changed to that of reversi-

bility. Thus it is said that we have all sinned in Adam, because we are all in a common bond of solidarity with him, and that we have all been redeemed by Jesus Christ, because his merits are reversible to us. The difference here, as may be seen, is only in name, and in nowise alters the identity of the thing signified. It is the same with the dogmas of imputation and substitution, which are only the two dogmas of solidarity and of reversibility considered in their applications. In virtue of the dogma of imputation, we all suffer the punishment inflicted upon Adam, and by that of substitution, our Saviour suffered for us all. But, as is here seen, we only consider a dogma as regards its substance. The principle in virtue of which we have all been saved in our Lord, is identical with that through which we have all been guilty and punished in Adam. This principle of solidarity which explains the two great mysteries of our redemption and of the transmission of sin, is in its turn explained by this very transmission, and by the redemption of mankind. Without solidarity we cannot even conceive of a corrupted and redeemed humanity; and, on the other hand, it is evident that if humanity could neither be redeemed by Jesus Christ nor corrupted in Adam, neither could it be conceived as one and possessing solidarity.

This dogma, united to that of the Adamic prevarication, reveals to us the true nature of man, and God has never permitted these dogmas to be entirely forgotten. This explains why all the nations of the world have confessed them, and why their testimony is engraved in luminous characters on the pages of history. The most civilized nations and the most savage tribes have alike believed these two things: that the sins of

some may draw down the anger of God upon the head of all, and that a deliverance from transmitted sin and its penalty may be obtained for all, by a pure victim offered as a perfect holocaust. God condemned mankind for the sin of Adam, and saved it through the merits of his well beloved son. Noah inspired by God, condemned, in the person of Canaan, all his race; God blessed in Abraham, and then in Isaac, and afterward in Jacob, all the Hebrew race. Sometimes he saves offending sons on account of the merits of their ancestors; then again he chastises them even to the last generation on account of the sins of guilty ancestors. None of these things, which are viewed by reason as incredible, have caused either surprise or repugnance to mankind, which has received them with the most pure and constant faith. The gods made Thebes the subject of divine wrath, on account of the guilt of Ædipus, and the merits of his expiation were likewise reversible to Thebes. On the greatest and most solemn day of creation, when the Man-God was about to ratify by his death the truth of all these dogmas, he wished them to be first proclaimed and confessed by this deicidal people. Then arose a turbulent outcry, a supernatural clamor among this people, who pronounced these frightful words: "May his blood be upon us, and upon our children." Does it not seem as if God permitted, in these awful moments, a concentration of time and of dogmas? The very day that this very people put him to death, they impute to *one alone*, and punish in him, the sins of all, and demand the application of the same law to themselves and their children, in declaring that their sons share a solidarity of sin in common with them. The same day that this dogma is thus unanimously proclaimed

by this people, God proclaims it himself in accepting a solidarity with man, and he also proclaims the dogma of reversibility in asking the Father to pardon his enemies as the price of his suffering, and he proclaims the dogma of substitution in dying for them, and finally, that of redemption as the consequence of all the others. For, if the sinner is redeemed, it is because the substitute who suffered death for him, in virtue of the dogma of solidarity, has been accepted, and applies to him His merits in virtue of the dogma of reversibility.

All these dogmas, which were in the same day proclaimed by a people and by a God, and afterward accomplished in the person of this God, and in the successive generations of this people, these same dogmas have all been constantly proclaimed and accomplished, although imperfectly, since the beginning of the world. They were symbolized in an institution before they were fulfilled in a person.

The institution which symbolized them is that of bloody sacrifices. The existence of this mysterious, and, humanly speaking, inconceivable institution is a fact so universal and constant that it has existed among all nations, and in every country; so that of all the social institutions, that which is most universal is the most inconceivable, and apparently the most absurd; and it is worthy of remark that this universality is an attribute common to the institution which is the symbol of these dogmas, to the person in whom they were accomplished, and even to the dogmas thus symbolized and fulfilled. The imagination seeks in vain to find dogmas, a person, or an institution more universal. These dogmas contain all the laws which govern human affairs; in the unity of this person the Divinity and humanity are found united,

and the institution is commemorative of the universality of the dogmas, and is symbolical of the only person in whom the perfection of universality exists; and, considered in itself, it fills the earth and extends beyond the limits of history.

Abel was the first man who, after the great tragedy of the terrestrial paradise, offered to God a bloody sacrifice, and this sacrifice, in that it was bloody, was agreeable in the eyes of God, who angrily rejected the offering of Cain, which consisted of the fruits of the earth. And what is here singular and mysterious is, that Abel, who offers blood as an expiatory sacrifice, holds its effusion in such horror that he prefers to die rather than shed the blood of him who would kill him; while Cain, who refuses to shed blood as a symbol of expiation, does not hesitate to take the life of his brother. Why is it that, according to the manner in which it is done, the effusion of blood is here regarded either as a means of purification or as a crime? Why do all shed blood in one manner or the other?

Since the day of the first effusion of blood, it has never ceased to flow, and it has never been shed in vain, always preserving intact either its condemnatory or its purifying virtue. All men who have lived since Abel the just, and Cain the fratricide, resemble, more or less, the one or the other. Abel and Cain are the types of those two kingdoms which are governed by contrary laws, and by different masters, and which are called the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. These kingdoms are not distinguished from each other because blood is shed in one and not in the other, but because in the one life is offered through love, and in the other it is taken in revenge. In the

one life is taken by man to assuage his passion, and in the other it is offered to God as an expiatory sacrifice.

Mankind has never lost the reminiscence of biblical traditions, but has always believed these three things with an unconquerable faith: that the effusion of blood is necessary, that there is a manner of shedding blood which is purificatory, and another mode which is condemnatory. History clearly attests these truths. It presents to us the narrative of cruel acts, of bloody conquests, of the overthrow and destruction of famous cities, of atrocious murders committed, of pure victims offered on blood-stained altars, of brothers warring against brothers, of the rich oppressing the poor, and of fathers tyrannizing over their children, until the earth appears to us like an immense sea of blood, which neither the piercing breath of the winds can dry up, nor the scorching rays of the sun can absorb. This general belief is no less clearly revealed by the bloody sacrifices offered to God upon every altar, and finally, by the legislation of all nations, whereby he who takes the life of another is always and everywhere condemned to lose his own life. In the tragedy of *Orestes*, Euripides makes Apollo utter these words: "Helen is not accountable for the Trojan war; her beauty was only the means which the gods made use of in order to enkindle a war between two nations, and by the shedding of blood to purify the earth, which was corrupted by a multitude of crimes." The poet, in this passage, is only the echo of the traditions of his own people, and of humanity, which proclaims that by the effect of a mysterious cause, there is a secret virtue of purification in the shedding of blood.

As sacrifice supposes the existence of this cause, and

of this virtue of purification, it is evident that blood acquired this virtue as a consequence of this cause, at an epoch anterior to that of bloody sacrifices; and as these sacrifices were instituted from the time of Abel, it is certain that both the cause and the virtue of which we speak were anterior to Abel, and contemporaneous with a great event in paradise, from which this virtue and its cause must have necessarily originated. This great event was the Adamic prevarication. The flesh being guilty in Adam, and in the flesh of Adam that of all the species, in order that the punishment should be proportioned to the fault, it was necessary that the penalty should affect the flesh, even as the sin had done, from whence the necessity of the perpetual effusion of human blood. But the promise of a Redeemer had followed the sin of Adam, and this promise substituted the Redeemer for the guilty, and suspended the execution of the sentence until the coming of the Saviour. This is why Abel, who was the depositary through Adam, both of the condemnatory sentence and of the promise which suspended its execution until the coming of the substitute who was to suffer for the guilty, instituted the only sacrifice which could then be acceptable to God, the commemorative and symbolical sacrifice.

The sacrifice of Abel was so perfect that it comprised in an extraordinary manner all the Catholic dogmas. As a sacrifice in general, it was an act of thanksgiving and adoration toward the omnipotent and sovereign God. As a bloody sacrifice it proclaimed the dogma of the Adamic prevarication, and that of the free will of the prevaricator, who could not have been guilty if deprived of the exercise of free will. It likewise proclaimed the

dogma of the transmission of sin and of penalty, without which Adam alone would have had to suffer punishment; and it also proclaimed the dogma of solidarity, without which Abel would not have inherited sin. This sacrifice was at the same time an acknowledgment of the justice of God, and of the care that Providence exercises over human affairs. If we consider it, as regards the victims offered to the Lord, it was a commemoration both of the promise made to the true criminal at the time that the penalty was inflicted, and also of the reversibility in virtue of which those who were punished for the fault of Adam were to be ransomed through the merits of the Saviour; and of that substitution in virtue of which He who was to come was to offer himself as a sacrifice for mankind; and finally, these victims being lambs without blemish, and the firstlings of the flock, the sacrifice of Abel typified the true sacrifice in which the most pure and meek Lamb, the only Son of the Father, offered himself as a holy and perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world. In this manner Catholicism, in its entirety, which explains and includes all things, is, by a miracle of condensation, itself explained and contained in the first bloody sacrifice offered by man to God. What a surprising virtue does the Catholic religion possess, which gives it so infinite a power of expansion and condensation! How wonderful is the immense variety of those doctrines which we behold comprised in this one symbol! And how perfect and comprehensive is this symbol which contains so many and so great things! Such sublime consonances and harmonies and perfections of so surpassing a beauty are beyond the comprehension of man, and they not only

exceed all that we can understand, but likewise all that we could desire or imagine.

In the course of successive generations, traditions gradually became changed and obscured in the memory and understanding of men. God, in his infinite wisdom, did not permit that all remembrance of these great biblical traditions should be effaced; but in the midst of the ceaseless agitation in which the nations were plunged who were always at war with each other, and who all lay prostrate at the feet of their idols, these reminiscences became more and more indistinct, until they were nothing more than uncertain and confused impressions. It was then that, from the vague idea of a primitive fault transmitted through the blood, men deduced the consequence that it was necessary to offer the blood of man as a sacrifice to God. Then sacrifice ceased to be symbolical and became real; but as in the divine design, the sacrifice of the Redeemer was alone efficacious, so these human sacrifices were of no avail. These sacrifices, however, imperfect and inefficacious as they were, virtually comprised, on the one hand, the dogmas of original sin and of its transmission, with the dogma of solidarity, and on the other hand, the dogma of reversibility and that of substitution—although their unworthiness prevented them from symbolizing either the true substitution or the true substitute.

When the ancients sought an innocent and spotless victim, and conducted it to the altar crowned with flowers, in order that by its death it might appease the divine wrath, and thus be offered in satisfaction for the sins of the people; when they did this, they expressed by such an act much more of truth than error. They confessed by these sacrifices that the divine justice re-

quired to be appeased, that it could not be so without the shedding of blood, that one victim could atone for the sins of all, and that the victim who was to effect the work of redemption must be innocent. They were right in all these points, for they simply implicitly affirmed the great Catholic dogmas. Their only mistake was that of supposing that there could exist a man so innocent and just, as to be an efficacious offering of expiation for the sins of the people as a Redeemer. This one error, this one act of forgetfulness of a Catholic dogma, converted the world into a sea of blood, and would of itself have been sufficient to prevent the advent of all true civilization. A ferocious and cruel barbarism is the legitimate and inevitable consequence of the forgetfulness of any Christian dogma, whatever it may be.

The error we have just indicated only consisted in one thing, and as regarded under a certain point of view. The blood of man cannot expiate original sin, which is the sin of the species, the supreme human sin: but it nevertheless may, and does, expiate certain individual crimes, from which follows not only the legitimacy, but also the necessity and propriety of the penalty of death.

The universality of this institution testifies to the universality of the belief of mankind in the purifying efficacy of blood, when shed under certain circumstances, and in its expiatory virtue when it is thus shed. *Sine sanguine non fit remissio*.* Mankind could never have extinguished the common debt which it contracted in Adam without the blood shed by the Redeemer. Wherever a people have attempted to abolish the death pen-

* Heb. ix. 22.

alty, society has distilled blood through every pore. The suppression of the penalty of blood in Saxe-Royal was followed by the great and bloody battle of May, which endangered the life of the state to such a degree that it could only be saved by foreign intervention. Merely its proclamation in Frankfort, in the name of the common country, placed the affairs of Germany in worse confusion and disorder than had existed during any other period of its turbulent history. The suppression of this penalty which was decreed by the provisional government of France, was succeeded by those frightful days of June which, with all their horrors, will live forever in the memories of men; and added to these, others would have followed in rapid succession if a pure victim, and one acceptable to God, had not offered itself in atonement for the sins of that guilty government and sinful country. How far the virtue of that innocent and august blood may extend no one knows, or can know: but, humanly speaking, it may be asserted without fear of being contradicted by facts, that blood will again flow abundantly if France does not again submit to the jurisdiction of that providential law which no people may safely neglect.

I shall not close this chapter without making a reflection which I consider as of the highest importance. If the abolition of the penalty of death for political crimes has been productive of such disastrous consequences, how terrible would be the effect if this suppression extended to crimes of the common order! For it is evident to me that the suppression of the first brings with it, in a given time, the suppression of the second; and it is capable of being demonstrated that from this double suppression proceeds the abolition of all human penalties.

To suppress the extreme penalty for crimes which endanger the security of the state, that is to say, the security of all, and to enforce it for crimes committed against simple individuals, appears to me to be a monstrous inconsistency, which must sooner or later produce the logical and inevitable consequences which always attend human events. On the other hand, to abolish in either case, as excessive, the death penalty for capital crimes, would be equivalent in its results to the abolition of every kind of penalty for lesser offenses; for if you once admit any other than the death penalty for capital crimes, you would violate the laws of a just proportion, and then whatever punishment may be applied to the lesser class of offenses must in equity be considered as oppressive and unjust.

If the abolition of the death penalty for political offenses is founded on the negation of political crimes, and if this negation is justified by the fallibility of the state in these matters, it is clear that every system of penalty should be suppressed; because fallibility in the political order supposes fallibility in the moral order, and this double fallibility supposes the radical incompetency of the state to designate any human action as a crime. Now, if this fallibility is a fact, all governments are incompetent to punish, because they are all fallible.

He alone can find another guilty of crime who may accuse him of sin; and he alone can inflict punishment for the one who may impose it for the other. Governments have only power to impose a penalty upon man in their quality of being so delegated by God, and the human law is only competent when it is the application of the divine law. When governments reject God and

his law, they deny their own existence. To deny the divine law and to affirm the human law, to affirm crime and to deny sin, to deny God and affirm any government whatever, is to deny what one affirms, and to affirm what one denies—it is to commit the most palpable contradictions. Then society is exposed to the storms of revolution, which soon restore the logical empire that governs human affairs, by suppressing human contradictions either with an absolute and inexorable affirmation or with an absolute and peremptory negation.

The atheism of the law and of the state, or, what amounts to the same thing expressed in a different manner, the complete secularization of the law of the state, is a theory which can never coincide with the theory of penalty. The first comes from man in his condition of voluntary separation from God, and the other comes from God when in a state of union with man.

Governments seem to be endowed with an unerring instinct which teaches them that they can only be just or strong in the name of God. Thus it happens that whenever they commence to secularize, that is to say, to separate themselves from God, they always begin to relax the severity of penalties, as if they were conscious that their right was weakened. The loose modern theories respecting criminal law are contemporaneous with the decadence of religion, and they have prevailed in the codes whenever the complete secularization of political power was established. When this takes place, the criminal becomes gradually transformed in the eyes of men, until finally what was regarded with horror by our ancestors only excites the commiseration of their children. He who was formerly called criminal, even loses this name, and is spoken of as eccentric or insane. The

modern rationalists designate crime as a misfortune. But the day will come when these objects of *misfortune* will gain the ascendancy, and will administer the government, and then innocence will alone be considered as a crime. The penal theories of absolute monarchies, in the days of their decadence, have given rise to the theories of the liberal schools, and these theories have reduced affairs to the extreme peril in which we now find them. After these schools come the socialists with their theories of holy insurrections and heroic crimes; nor will this be the last, for there dawns in the distant horizon a still more bloody future. The new gospel of the world is perhaps writing in a prison; nor will the world suffer more than it deserves when it is evangelized by these new apostles.

Those who have made the world believe that this earth may be converted into a paradise, have yet more readily made it believe that it ought to be a paradise where blood will never be shed. The evil is not in the illusion, but in the very day and hour that this fallacy is everywhere accepted; blood will then gush forth from the rocks, and the earth will become a hell. Man cannot aspire to an impossible felicity in this obscure valley of our dark pilgrimage, without losing the little happiness he already possesses.

CHAPTER VII.

Recapitulation—Inefficacy of all the solutions proposed—Necessity of a higher solution.

WE have now seen how the liberty granted to men and angels, with the faculty of choosing between good and evil which accompanies it, and constitutes its imperfection and its danger, is not only in accordance with the justice of God, but is likewise expedient. We have also seen how the exercise of this liberty, thus constituted, produced evil and sin, and how sin profoundly altered the order which God established in creation, and changed the perfect manner of being which all creatures received from God. Going still farther, after having given an account of the disorder into which the divine work was thus thrown, we proposed to demonstrate, and we believe that we have succeeded in so doing, that if angels and men were endowed with free will, and permitted to make use of this formidable faculty in order to draw evil out of good, and corrupt all things, the ones by their revolt and the others by their disobedience, and both by sin; that if God permitted them this disturbing faculty of liberty, he did so because he had reserved for himself the power to neutralize this disturbing influence, and to draw good out of evil, and order out of disorder. By this means, God fully restored things to a more perfect state of harmony and agreement than that destroyed by the revolted angels and the sins of men. In order to render the existence of evil impossible, it would have been necessary to suppress angelical and human liberty, which

are a great good. Therefore God, in his infinite wisdom, so ordered things that, without suppressing the cause which might lead to the existence of evil, he made this very evil the means of producing a still greater harmony and higher perfection.

The course of this argument has enabled me to prove that the ultimate end of things is to manifest, each in its own manner, the sublime perfections of God, so as to become as it were the effulgent rays of his beauty, and the magnificent reflection of his glory. Under this point of view, and as regards this universal finality, it has been easy to demonstrate that the disobedience of man and the angelical rebellion have produced the most excellent results. As a consequence of this double revolt, those creatures who had before only served as manifestations of the divine goodness and magnificence, from that time also reflected all the sublimity of his mercy and all the grandeur of his justice. Order only became universal and absolute when creation reflected all the divine splendors.

We have passed from the discussion of the problems respecting universal order, to the contemplation of those which relate to the general order of human events. In taking this extended view, we have beheld the spread of evil in humanity to be commensurate with that of sin; we have seen in what manner humanity existed in Adam, and how the species sinned in him, the individual. Thus, as sin had of itself the power to disturb the order of the universe, so it likewise possessed that power, and with greater reason, as regards man. In order that what we have already said, and what we have still to say on this subject may be entirely comprehended, it is best here to remark, that if the universal end of things is to mani-

fest the perfections of God, the particular end of man is to preserve his union with God, who is the object of his final felicity and repose. Sin destroyed the order of human things by severing this bond of union which constitutes our special end, and from that moment the problem, as regards humanity, consists in discovering the means through which evil can be overcome in its effects and in its cause: in its effects, that is to say, in the corruption of the individual and of the species, and in all the consequences of this corruption, and also in its cause, that is to say, in sin.

God, who is most simple in his works, because he is perfect in his essence, conquers evil in its cause and in its effects by the secret virtue of one single transformation. But this is so radical and wonderful in its nature, that through it all that was evil becomes good, and all imperfection is changed into sovereign perfection. So far we have attempted to prove, how God transforms the very effects of evil and sin into instruments of good. All these effects proceed from a primitive corruption of the individual and of the species; considered in themselves, they are, therefore, only a lamentable misfortune in the individual and in the species. Whoever speaks of misfortune, speaks of an evil produced by a cause independent of our will; and if this cause is among the number of those whose action is constant, then it is plain that this misfortune is in its nature inevitable. In imposing misfortune as a penalty, God has rendered its transformation possible by means of its voluntary acceptance by man. When man, aided by God, heroically accepts misfortune as a just penalty, this acceptance does not change the nature of the penalty, considered in itself—for this transformation would be in all

respects impossible—but it thereby acquires a new and extraordinary power, an expiatory and purifying virtue. This virtue always preserves its indestructible identity, and when it combines in a supernatural manner with a voluntary acceptance, it produces effects which naturally it is incapable of producing. This sublime and consoling doctrine is alike taught us by God, history, and reason, and it constitutes a dogmatical, historical, and rational truth.

The dogma of the transmission of sin and of penalty, and that of the purifying action of the latter when freely accepted, led us naturally to the examination of the organic laws of humanity, which completely explain all the revolutions and events of history. The assemblage of these laws constitutes human order, and constitutes it in such a way that it cannot even be otherwise imagined.

After having given the Catholic solutions respecting these profound and fearful problems, among which some relate to the universal order, and others to the human order, we have also presented the solutions invented by the liberal school, and by the socialists of modern times, showing on the one hand the sublime harmonies and consonances of the Catholic dogmas, and on the other the extravagant contradictions of the rationalist schools. The radical impotency of reason to find the true solution of these fundamental problems explains the incoherence and contradictions which are observable in the human solutions; and these incoherent contradictions demonstrate in their turn how absolutely impossible it is for man, when left to himself, to attain those serene and heavenly heights where God has established the secret laws of all things. The result of this investigation, which, as regards the restricted

limits of this book, has been somewhat prolix, has clearly proved the following truths: First, that the negation of any Catholic dogma brings with it the negation of all other Catholic dogmas, and that the affirmation of a single Catholic dogma involves the affirmation of all. This is an invincible demonstration that Catholicism is an immense synthesis placed beyond the laws of space and time; and, secondly, that no rationalist school denies all Catholic dogmas at once, for which reason all those schools are condemned to inconsistency and absurdity; and, thirdly, that it is impossible to escape this inconsistency and absurdity, without the absolute acceptance of every Catholic dogma, or without denying them all with so radical a negation as would result in nihilism.

Finally, after having separately examined each of those dogmas which refer to the universal order and the human order, we have considered their harmonious and magnificent combination in the institution of bloody sacrifices, whose origin is traced to that first era immediately succeeding the paradisiacal catastrophe. This mysterious institution was not only the commemoration of that great tragedy, and of the promise of a Redeemer made by God to our first parents, but it was also the incarnation of the dogmas of solidarity, of reversibility, of imputation, and of substitution. Finally, it was the perfect symbol of the future sacrifice, which was afterward realized in the fullness of time. When the nations forgot the biblical traditions, they lost the proper signification of the institution of bloody sacrifices. By the corruption of this dogma is explained the universal institution of human sacrifices, which universality attests both the truth of tradition and the fatal mistakes which men commit when they for-

get any portion of the teachings of a religious dogma. With this view we exposed the great error and the great truth which were combined in the institution of human sacrifices, which at first sight appears to be a profound mystery incapable of explanation. Its great error was to attribute to man the expiatory virtue which alone existed in Him who, according to the voice of ancient prophecies and traditions, was to come in the plenitude of time. Its great truth consisted in attributing to the shedding of blood, under certain conditions, the power of appeasing the divine wrath to a certain degree and up to a certain point. The concatenation and connection of these deductions led us to examine the question of the penalty of death. We have seen, in the universal institution of this penalty, a confession of the faith of mankind in all ages and in all countries in the expiatory virtue attributed to the effusion of blood. We have interrogated the rationalist schools upon this vexed question, and their responses and solutions have appeared to us contradictory and absurd. Forcing them from contradiction to contradiction, we finally compelled them to choose between the acceptance of the penalty of death for political crimes as well as for those of the common order, or that of the radical and absolute negation of crime and of all penalty.

It only remains for us, at this point of our discussion, in order to bring it to a successful termination, to recall, with that sentiment of veneration which holy fear and love inspire, the mystery of mysteries, the sacrifice of sacrifices, the dogma of dogmas. We have contemplated the marvels of the divine order, and the harmony of the universal order, and finally, the sublime adaptations of the human order. We must now rise still higher

and draw near to that majestic height which governs and commands all the elevated mysteries of Catholicism. There, we behold in all his grandeur, merciful and at the same time terrible, formidable and most gentle, Him who was to come, and who came, and who by his coming drew all things unto him, and united all things with him in strongest and most loving bonds. He is the solution of all problems, the object of all prophecies, the reality of all types, the end of all dogmas, the confluence of the divine, universal, and human orders, the key of all mysteries, the explanation of all enigmas, the promised one of God, the desired of the patriarchs, the expected of nations, the father of the afflicted, he whom the choirs of nations and of angels reverence, the alpha and omega of all things.

Universal order consists in all things being harmoniously ordained with regard to that supreme end which God assigns to the universality of things; and this supreme end consists in the exterior manifestation of the divine perfections. All creatures proclaim the goodness, and magnificence, and omnipotence of God. The saints magnify his mercy, and the reprobate his justice. What creature among all the created celebrates his love in so exalted a manner as the lost do His justice, and the saved His mercy. Such being the case, is it not clearly manifest that there should arise from this universe, formed to proclaim the divine perfections, a common voice forever testifying to this crowning proof of the divine love and the divine perfections?

Human order consists in the union of man with God, and this union cannot take place in our actual condition and in our actual state of separation, without a gigantic effort to raise ourselves to God. But who can exact

this effort of one who is deprived of strength? Who will command man to raise himself from the depths into which he has fallen, and the weight of sin under which he groans, to the heights of the heavenly mountain? I know that the voluntary and heroic acceptance of affliction, of my cross, will elevate me beyond myself; but how am I to love that which by nature I abhor, and how hate what I naturally love? how am I to do this by an act of my own free will? I am commanded to love God, and I feel through all my veins the corrosive love of myself. I am ordered to walk, and I am bound in chains. I cannot acquire any merits on account of my sins, and I cannot get rid of the sins which oppress me unless some one delivers me. But no one can redeem me unless he have for me an infinite love anterior to any merit of my own; and where can I find such a love? I am scorned of God, and the derision of the universe. In vain shall I drag myself throughout the earth; my disgrace everywhere follows me; and in vain shall I lift my eyes toward heaven, from whence no cheering ray of hope descends to console me.

If this were so, the Catholic edifice, which has been so carefully established, must fall, deprived of its crowning glory, and of that foundation stone upon which it rests. Like a new tower of Babel, raised through pride and founded upon the unstable sand, it would be utterly demolished by the fury of the tempest. Then human order and universal order are only sonorous words, and all those profound problems which perplex and sadden humanity remain involved in an invincible obscurity, in spite of the vain assemblage of Catholic solutions. Although they are more consistent than the solutions of the rationalist schools, yet their connection

is not so perfect as to be capable of resisting the efforts of human reason. If Catholicism neither says, teaches, nor contains anything more than has been declared, taught, and comprised by these solutions, then it is merely a philosophical system which is less imperfect than any that have preceded it, and, according to all probability, less perfect than others which are yet to come. In this case, it may be charged with a notorious incompetency to solve the great problems respecting God, the universe, and man. God is not perfect, if he does not love with an infinite love; order does not exist in the universe, if there is nothing in it which displays the love of God; and as to man, the disorder into which he has fallen through sin is so great that only infinite love can save him.

Nor let it be said that God being infinitely good and merciful, love is supposed, and as it were hidden in his infinite goodness and mercy; because love is in its nature so engrossing, that where it exists it necessarily governs and predominates over all other things. Love is not contained, but containing; it is not hidden, but it makes itself known; such is its nature, that wherever it is it subjects all things, and seems alone to exist. It is the great finality which subdues all things and arranges them with reference to itself. He who loves, if he love truly, would seem to be as one mad, so that when his love is infinite his folly appears to be infinite.

I hear a voice which cries aloud in my heart, and which is my heart itself—a voice that speaks within me, and which is even myself—and this voice says to me: If thou wishest to know the true God, consider who it is that loves thee so as to become as a fool for thee, and who it is that aids thee to love Him, even

so as to become as a fool for Him, and this one is the true God, because in God is happiness, and to be happy is to love; it is to be enraptured and transported with love, and forever to remain in this ecstasy of bliss. Unless love call me, I cannot answer; but if the voice I hear is that of love, I at once reply, "Behold me;" and I will follow my beloved whithersoever he goeth, without asking him to what place he goeth, or whither he leadeth me. For wherever he goeth or taketh me, there we shall still be with our love, and our love and ourselves is our heaven.

It is thus that I would love, but I know that I cannot thus love, and that I can find no object to love me in this manner, and this is why in anguish and torment I forever move in a circle without end. Who shall break this circle wherein I perish? and who shall give me the wings of a dove, that I may fly away to beatific heights where I shall be at rest?

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the incarnation of the Son of God and the redemption of mankind.

IN order to fully comprehend how universal order and human order are constituted, we have two problems to solve. God brought good out of the primitive prevarication, and in this way manifested two of his greatest perfections—his infinite justice and his infinite mercy. This however was not enough. That the order and harmony, which attest the presence of God in all his works, should reign in the works of creation, and especially in

human affairs, it was also necessary that the sin of prevarication should be entirely effaced; for whatever might be the good which God would draw from it, yet, if this sin had not been effaced, the supreme evil would have seemingly remained unvanquished, and existed as it were in defiance of the divine power. On the other hand, nothing was more worthy the infinite goodness of God than to extend a strong and merciful hand to support the invincible weakness of man, that he might raise himself above his miserable condition, and transform the consequences of his sin into the means of his own salvation. To efface sin, and so to strengthen the sinner that he can freely and meritoriously raise himself from the fallen state to which sin has reduced him—such is the great problem which Catholicism must solve, after the solution of all other problems, if it aspire to be anything more than one of those numberless systems, whose labored imperfections attest the profound and radical impotence of human reason.

Catholicism solves these two problems by the highest, the most ineffable, most incomprehensible, and most glorious of all its mysteries; and in this profound mystery all the divine perfections are united. In it is God, with his formidable omnipotence, his perfect wisdom, his marvelous goodness, his terrible justice, his immense mercy, and, above all, with that unutterable love which governs and predominates over all his other perfections. This love imperiously demands of his mercy to be merciful, of his justice to be just, of his goodness to be good, of his wisdom to be wise, and of his omnipotence to be omnipotent; because God is neither omnipotence, wisdom, goodness, justice, nor mercy—God is love, and

only love. But this love is in itself all-powerful, most wise, good, just, and merciful.

It was love which supplicated the mercy of God to give hope to corrupt and fallen man, through that divine promise of a future Redeemer, who should come into the world to take upon himself and conquer sin. It was love that promised this Redeemer in paradise, and which sent him upon earth; it was love that came. It was love that assumed human flesh, and lived the life of mortal man, and died the death of the cross, and rose again in his body and in his glory. It is in love and through love that we sinners are all saved.

The most glorious mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God is the only title of nobility which mankind can claim. I am not surprised at the contempt which modern rationalists show for man; on the contrary, if there is anything which I cannot understand or conceive, it is the circumspect prudence and timid reserve which they exhibit in this matter. When I consider man, despoiled by his own fault of that primal state of original justice and sanctifying grace in which God placed him; and when I reflect upon his very imperfect and contradictory organization; and when I consider the blindness of his understanding, the weakness of his will, the shameful desires of his flesh, the ardor of his concupiscence, and the perversity of his inclinations, I cannot imagine or comprehend the moderation of their expressions of disdain. If God had not assumed human nature, and in assuming it elevated it to himself, and imparted to it a luminous trace of the divine nobleness, it must be confessed that words could not express the extreme degradation of man. As to myself, I can say that if my God had not embraced human nature in the

womb of a woman, and if he had not died upon a cross for all mankind, the meanest reptile which I trample under my feet would seem less despicable to me than man. The point of faith which most oppresses and weighs upon my reason is that of the nobility and dignity of the human species; a dignity and nobility which I wish to grasp and understand, and cannot. It is in vain that I turn from the frightful contemplation of the annals of crime, and reflect upon the more elevated and serene aspects of human life; it is in vain that I recall the remembrance of the vaunted virtues of those whom the world calls heroic, and of whose actions history is full, because my conscience tells me that all these heroic virtues resolve themselves into heroic vices, which in their turn are but a blind pride and an insensate ambition. Mankind appears to me like an immense multitude, prostrated at the feet of its heroes, who are its idols; while these heroes, like idols, are adoring themselves. Before I can believe in the nobleness of this stupid multitude I must receive the fact as a revelation from God. He who denies such a revelation cannot affirm his own greatness, for how can man know that he is noble unless God has revealed it to him? What surpasses my comprehension and astonishes me is, that any one should suppose that it requires a weaker faith to believe in the incomprehensible mystery of the dignity of human nature, than to believe in the adorable mystery of God made man in the womb of a virgin, by the power of the Holy Ghost. It only proves that man always remains subject to faith, and that when he seems to reject its teachings in order to follow his own reason, he only abandons that faith which is divinely mysterious in order to embrace what is mysteriously absurd.

The incarnation of the Son of God was not only a most exalted manifestation of infinite love, a love which is the perfection, if I may so express it, of the divine perfections, but was also most excellent in virtue of other profound and sublime consequences. The supreme order of things cannot be conceived, if all things do not resolve themselves into absolute unity; now, without this prodigious mystery, creation would be twofold, and there would exist a dualism in the universe which would be the symbol of a perpetual antagonism destructive of order. On the one side was God, the universal thesis, and on the other his creatures, forming a universal antithesis. The supreme order required a synthesis, sufficiently vast and powerful to reconcile, by union, the thesis and the antithesis, the Creator and the creature. That this union of the thesis and antithesis in the synthesis is one of the fundamental laws of the universal order, is clearly seen when we consider that this same mystery is visible in man without exciting our surprise, which in God causes us so much astonishment. Man, considered under this point of view, is only a synthesis, composed of an incorporeal essence, which is the thesis, and of a corporeal substance, which is the antithesis. When we consider man as composed of matter and spirit, he is a synthesis, but when we regard him as a creature, he is only an antithesis, which must, by means of a superior synthesis, be reduced to unity conjointly with the thesis, which contradicts it. The law of the reduction of diversity into unity, or, what is the same, of every thesis with its antithesis into a supreme synthesis, is a visible and immutable law. The only difficulty in the present case is in finding this supreme synthesis. God being on one

side, and all created objects on the other, it is evident that here the adjusting synthesis cannot be found outside of these limits, beyond which we cannot conceive of anything as existing, since these limits, being universal and absolute, comprise all things. The synthesis, then, must either be found in the creature or in God, in the antithesis or in the thesis, or in both simultaneously or successively.

If man had remained in that excellent state and noble condition in which he was first placed by God, diversity would have been merged into unity, and the created antithesis would have united with the creating thesis in a supreme synthesis, by the deification of man. God had prepared man for this future deification when he adorned him with original justice and sanctifying grace. But man was created free, and he made use of his sovereign liberty to deprive himself of that grace and renounce that justice, and by these means he interposed an obstacle to the divine will, and voluntarily rejected his own deification. But while human liberty has sufficient power to impede the accomplishment of the divine will in so far as it is relative, yet it cannot prevent its realization, wherein this will is absolute. The reduction of diversity into unity is what is absolute in the divine will; but this reduction, by means of the deification of man, is only relative and contingent, or, in other words, God wished to establish this end with an absolute will, but the means by which to attain it he wished with a relative will; and in this, as in all things, the ineffable wisdom of God is conspicuous. In effect, if the divine will had been in nothing absolute, God would not have been sovereign; and if this will had been in nothing relative, human liberty would have been impossible. But on

account of this will being at the same time relative and absolute, contingent and necessary, the coexistence of the sovereign will of God and the liberty of man were rendered possible, and were realized. As a sovereign, God decreed what was to be, and man, as a free creature, determined that the particular manner of being should differ from what it would have been in virtue of the divine decree. The result was that the universal order, decreed by God with an absolute will, was realized by the immediate incarnation of God, since it could not be realized by the immediate deification of man; this deification being altogether impossible, first, with a relative impossibility on account of his free will, and then with an absolute impossibility on account of sin.

I have already fully demonstrated how great is the scope and the universality of the divine solutions, which do not, like the human solutions, overcome one obstacle and leave others of more importance unexplained; nor do they, after solving a difficulty, fall into some other and still greater perplexity; nor do they clear a problem in one point of view, and leave it more embarrassed under other aspects than it had previously been; but the divine solutions at once suppress all obstacles, solve all difficulties, and clear all problems, shedding upon their darkness a full light which dissipates all obscurity. This characteristic of the divine solutions is especially observable in the adorable mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, because this was at the same time the sovereign means of reducing all to unity, the divine condition of order in the universe; and it was likewise a supernatural means of restoring order to a fallen humanity. The radical impossibility of man to regain, unaided, the friendship and grace of God, after having

sinned, is confessed even by those who deny the greater number of Catholic dogmas. Mr. Proudhon, the most learned man of the socialist schools, does not hesitate to affirm that sin supposed, the redemption of mankind through the merits and sufferings of God was rendered absolutely necessary; because in no other way could sinful man be redeemed. The Catholics do not go so far as this, as they affirm that this mode of redemption, without being necessary or the only one possible, was nevertheless the most excellent and adorable.

By this it is seen that God wished by the same means to vanquish both the obstacle which opposed the accomplishment of universal order, and that which prevented human order. In becoming man without ceasing to be God, He united man synthetically with God; and as the spiritual essence and the corporeal substance were already united in man, God made man united in Himself in a sublime manner, on the one hand the corporeal substance and the spiritual essence, and on the other the Creator of all things with all his creatures. In the fullness of time, he voluntarily suffered and died for man, and thus took upon himself that primitive sin in consequence of which Adam and all his race had become corrupted, and were condemned to death.

In whatever light we consider this great mystery, it offers to the reflecting mind the same wonderful fitness. If all mankind were condemned in Adam, there is nothing more just or reasonable than that all should be saved through another and more perfect Adam. If we have been condemned in virtue of the law of solidarity, the law of justice, there could be nothing more just or reasonable than that we should be saved by the law

of reversibility, the law of mercy. It would not have been proper or equitable that we should suffer for the sins of one who was our representative, if it were not also permitted us to acquire merit through the merits of one who became our substitute. If the sins of the first are imputable to us, it is entirely conformable with the law of reason that the merits of the second should be reversible to us. This is a sufficient response to those who insolently reproach God for our common condemnation in the persons of our first parents; for, even if we take it for granted, for the sake of argument, that we have not all sinned in Adam, by what right can we complain of being condemned in the person of our representative, when we are saved by the merits of a substitute? To rebel against God on account of the law of imputable sins, without having regard to that other law which is its complement and explication, and by which the merits of others are reversible to us, is indeed extreme boldness, and supposes either bad faith or shameful ignorance. It is, under any hypothesis, a real folly.

Order being restored in the universe by the union of all things in God, and order in humanity, in so far as it was disturbed by sin, it only remained, in order fully to restore it in the latter, on the one hand to put man in a condition to rise above himself so as to accept tribulation freely, and on the other hand to give to this acceptance a meritorious virtue. God provided for both necessities by the divine mystery of the incarnation, so rich in its consequences, and so admirable in itself. The most precious blood shed upon Calvary not only effaced our fault and satisfied our debt, but by its inestimable value being applied to us enabled

us to gain merits. Through it we received two graces, that of accepting tribulation, and that other, which renders tribulation meritorious, when freely accepted in our Lord and through our Lord. In this consists the substance of the Catholic religion, to believe with a firm faith that we have no strength in ourselves, but that we can do all things in Him and through Him who fortifies us. If this is rejected, all other dogmas are pure abstractions divested of all virtue and efficacy. The Catholic God is not an abstract nor a lifeless God, but he is a personal and living God, who acts perpetually out of us and within us. He surrounds us and contains us, at the same time that he is contained in us. The mystery which has merited for us grace, and without which we are as lost and in darkness, is the mystery of mysteries. All others are adorable, elevated, and sublime, but this is the culmination of all, the highest, the most adorable, beyond which there can be no greater height nor elevation attained, nor anything above it worthy of adoration.

On that day, forever mournful but joyful, when the Son of God made man was crucified, all things were restored to order, and in this divine order the cross was elevated above all things created. Some things manifested the goodness of God, others his mercy, and others again his justice. The cross alone was the symbol of his love and the pledge of his grace. It is through the cross that confessors have suffered for the faith; through it that virgins have remained chaste; that the Fathers of the Desert have lived angelic lives; that the martyrs, those faithful witnesses, have courageously and cheerfully sacrificed their lives. From the sacrifice of the cross proceeded that wonderful energy

by which the weak conquered the strong, by which disarmed and proscribed men ascended to the capitol, and by which a few poor fishermen subdued the world. It is through the cross that all those who attain victory are victorious; that those who combat gain strength; that those who ask for mercy obtain pardon; that the needy are succored; that the sorrowing are comforted, and those who weep find consolation. Since the cross was raised on Calvary, there is no one who cannot through it live in heaven while yet on earth; for even if he still endure the trials of this world, yet he already dwells in heaven through hope.

CHAPTER IX.

Continuation of the same subject—Conclusion.

THE sacrifice of the cross is that only sacrifice of inestimable value, to which all others that are noticed either in history or among the legends of nations refer. It is the sacrifice which both the Gentile and Jewish people sought to represent in their bloody sacrifices, and which Abel fully prefigured in an acceptable manner when he offered to God the first born and most perfect of his lambs. The true altar was to be a cross, the true victim a God, and the true priest this same God, both God and man—august pontiff, eternal priest, perpetual and holy victim, who came to accomplish in the fullness of time what he had promised to Adam in the terrestrial paradise; and he executed his promise, and fulfilled his

word in the most faithful manner, for God neither threatens nor promises in vain. He had threatened to disinherit man if he abused his liberty and committed sin, and man having sinned God disinherited him. When God disinherited man He promised him a Redeemer, and at the appointed time He came in person to effect man's redemption.

The coming of the Saviour solves all mysteries, explains all dogmas, and accomplishes all laws. In order to fulfill the law of solidarity he takes upon himself all human sorrows, and in order to fulfill that of reversibility, he gives to the world the abundance of divine graces which he acquired for it by his passion and death. In Him God becomes man in so perfect a manner that upon him rests the full weight of divine wrath, and in him man is so perfect and divine that all the heavenly mercies fall upon him in refreshing and consoling showers. In order that pain might become holy, he sanctifies it by his sufferings, and in order that its acceptance might become meritorious he accepts it himself. Who would have the strength to offer his own will to God as a holocaust, if the Man-God had not made an entire abnegation of his own will, in order to accomplish that of his most holy Father? Who could elevate himself to the grandeur of humility, if the most humble and patient Lamb of God had not pointed out the way by which to attain a height so difficult to reach? And who, rising still higher, could overcome, one after the other, the many painful obstacles which obstruct the progress to perfection, until the sublime heights of divine love are gained, if the Saviour had not trodden that dolorous path, and crimsoned with his most pure blood every step of that sorrowful way? Who but Him

could have taught men that beyond those rugged and gigantic mountains, whose foundations are planted in the abyss, and whose summits penetrate the heavens, there extended immense and smiling plains, where the air is mildly tempered, the sky pure, the waters limpid and refreshing, the breezes gentle, the fields verdant, the harmonies ineffable, and the freshness perpetual? There life is a true existence which never ends, pleasure a real and unceasing delight, and love a holy and inextinguishable affection. There is found unending repose without weariness, rest without fatigue; and there all the joys of possession are mingled in an unutterable manner with the allurements of hope.

The Son of God made man, and crucified for man, is not only the realization of all perfect things as represented in the symbols, and prefigured in the types, but he is also the emblem and universal symbol of all perfections. The Son of God made man is both the ideal and the reality, as he is at the same time both God and man. Natural reason tells us, and the experience of each day teaches us, that in no art, whatever it may be, can man arrive at that relative perfection which he is permitted to attain, unless he have placed before him a finished model of a still higher perfection. The people of Athens could never have acquired that admirable instinct which enabled them to discern at a single glance, in the works of genius, whatever was beautiful in literature or perfect in art, and in human actions whatever was great and heroic, if they had not had their perceptions cultivated by the forms of beauty with which they were rendered familiar—such as the statues of their wonderful artists, the verses of their sublime poets, and the illustrious actions of their great captains.

The character of the Athenians, as presented to us by history, necessarily supposes their artists, poets and heroes, such as they were represented to be, and these, in their turn, would never have attained such excellence without the example of a still more transcendent greatness. The great captains of Greece modeled their actions upon the eminent qualities of Achilles, who was to them a type of true glory. Their illustrious artists and poets found their inspirations in the Iliad and Odyssey, those universal types of artistic and literary excellence. They both owe their existence to Homer, who was the magnificent personification of the arts, literature, and heroism of Greece.

This law, in virtue of which all that exists in the multitude is found in a more perfect manner in an aristocracy, and in a supereminent degree in a person; this law is so universal that it may be reasonably regarded as a law of history, and it is, in its turn, subjected to certain conditions which, like the law itself, are immutable and necessary. Thus, for example, it is an unalterable necessity for all these heroic personifications, that they should belong at the same time to the especial association which they personify, and to another association of a higher and larger scope. Achilles, Alexander, Cesar, Napoleon, as well as Homer, Virgil, and Dante, are at the same time citizens of two different cities—the one local and the other general, the one inferior and the other superior. In the superior city they live confounded in a sort of equality, while in the inferior city they each exercise an absolute sway; in the superior city they are citizens, in the inferior city they are emperors. This superior city, in which they are all equal, is

called humanity; and the inferior city where they command is here called Paris, and there Athens or Rome.

Now, as these inferior civic bodies are condensed, so to speak, in one person in whom their perfections and virtues reside in a special manner, it was also fitting that this universal law of typical personification should be accomplished with regard to that superior collective body whose name is humanity. The excellencies of that city surpassing all others, demanded a superior personification to all other personifications, because it was the highest, most excellent and perfect of all. Nor was this alone sufficient; it was requisite, for the entire accomplishment of the law, that the person in whom humanity was condensed should combine in the unity of his person two different natures: by the one he should be man, and by the other he should be God, for God alone is superior to man. Nor can it be said that the incarnation of an angel would have sufficed for the fulfillment of this law, because it must be considered that man being composed of a spiritual essence and a corporeal nature, participates of both the physical and angelic natures. Man represents the confluence of all created things. If we take this for granted, it is evident that the person who was thus to condense in himself human nature, must also condense in himself all creation; from which it follows, that being through humanity all that is created, he must, in order to become at the same time something more, be also God. Finally, it was necessary for the full accomplishment of the law that we have just explained, that the same person who exercised absolute command in the inferior city, should be as a citizen and nothing more in the more perfect city. This is why God made

man is the only one who rules over all things created, while in the tabernacle inhabited by the divine essence he is the person of the Son, in all things equal to the person of the Father and to the person of the Holy Ghost. I am far from supposing that this argument is unanswerable, or that these analogies are perfect. For any one to imagine that man can fully sound the depths of these profound mysteries, would be a remarkable proof of ignorance, and the mere attempt to raise the divine veil that covers them, appears to me to be a stupid arrogance, extravagance, and folly. No ray of light has the power to illuminate what God has hidden in the impenetrable tabernacle which guards the divine counsels. I only propose to prove by a rigorous demonstration, that what God has ordered us to believe, far from being absurd, is not only credible but likewise reasonable. I think that the demonstration can be carried even to the limits of evidence when it simply undertakes to elucidate the truth, that everything which departs from faith terminates in the absurd, and that the obscurity in which divine truths are involved is less profound than human darkness. There is no Catholic dogma nor mystery which does not combine the two conditions essential to a reasonable belief, first, to furnish to those who accept it a satisfactory explication of the whole, and second, to be in itself, to a certain degree, capable of explanation and comprehension. There is no man possessed of a sound reason and good intention who will not testify of himself—on the one hand, that he is radically impotent to discover revealed truths unaided, and on the other, that he is endowed with a surprising aptitude for explaining all these truths in a manner relatively satis-

factory. This is a proof that reason has not been given to man to enable him to discover the truth, but only that he might comprehend it when it is explained, and perceive it when it is pointed out to him. The misery of man is so great, and his intellectual indigence so lamentable, that he could not understand the first thing with certainty which he ought to comprehend, if the divine plan permitted that he should discover anything by himself. I would ask, if there exist any man who can exactly define what reason is; or who can tell why he is endowed with it; or in what way it is useful to him, and what are its limits. Nevertheless, this is but the letter A of this alphabet, and six thousand years have already elapsed since we have commenced to lisp it, and we cannot yet pronounce it. I think I am then right in affirming that this alphabet was not made for man's utterance, nor was man made to spell this alphabet.

To return to our subject, it was very useful and desirable for humanity to have a universal standard of universal and infinite perfection, even as the diverse political associations have always had a model from which they have received, as from their source, those special qualities and virtues by which, during the glorious epochs of their history, they have elevated themselves above others. If other reasons were wanting, this of itself would suffice to justify the great mystery of which we treat, since God alone could serve as a perfect exemplar and finished model to every race and nation. His presence among men, his marvelous doctrine, his holy life, his innumerable tribulations, his passion so full of humiliation and opprobrium, and his most cruel death, which was the crowning and final act of all,—these can alone explain the eminent height to which the standard of human vir-

tues has been raised. Those nations who do not confess the Saviour crucified have had their heroes, but the great Catholic society has its saints; and with all due regard as to the proportional difference between them, and all exceptions granted as to the propriety of such a comparison, we consider that the heroes of paganism are to the saints of Catholicism, what the various personifications of the people are to the absolute personification of humanity in the person of God made man for the love of men. Between these various personifications and this absolute personification there is an infinite distance, while between heroes and saints there is an incommensurable distance. It is natural that the first being infinite, the second should be incommensurable.

The heroes of paganism were men who, stimulated by a worldly passion carried to its utmost limit, performed extraordinary works. The saints of Catholicism are men who, having renounced all carnal passions, bear up with unshaken courage, without any mortal aid, against the impetuous torrent of human afflictions. The heroes, concentrating all their strength up to a feverish excitement, overcame all those who opposed them. The saints always commenced by an abnegation of their own strength, and thus unarmed and denuded they conquered themselves and all the powers of earth and hell. The heroes, desired to acquire glory and renown among men; the saints considered the vain applause of mankind as of no value, and, regardless of their name and glory, and despising the exercise of their own will, they forsook all things and placed themselves in the hands of God, convinced that the greatest honor to which man can aspire, is to be counted among the serv-

ants of God. Such were the heroes of paganism, and such the saints of Catholicism. They both gained the contrary of what they sought. The heroes who sought to fill the entire earth with the glory of their renown, have been utterly forgotten by the multitude, while the saints whose aspirations were only directed toward heaven are here below honored, revered, and invoked by the people, and by kings, emperors, and pontiffs. How great is God in his works, and how marvelous are his designs! Man imagines that it is he who acts, while it is God who conducts him. He fancies that he descends into a valley, and he finds himself, without knowing it, on a mountain. He thinks that he acquires glory, and even his name is obliterated; and when he seeks a refuge and rest in oblivion, he suddenly finds himself as one deafened by the vociferous outcries of the multitude who proclaim his renown. Some sacrifice everything for the glory of their name, and none survive them to bear it, so that their name becomes extinct with them. The first thing that others immolate on the altar of their sacrifices is the name they bear, which they even efface from their own recollection, and this name, forgotten and despised by them, passes from father to son, and is transmitted from generation to generation as a most glorious title and rich inheritance. Every Catholic bears the name of a saint. Thus, that divine word is every day accomplished which promises the abasement of the proud and the elevation of the humble.

And as there is an infinite distance between God made man and the most gifted of the earth, and an incommensurable distance between heroes and saints, so is there also an immense distinction between Catholic and infidel nations, and between the chiefs who govern them—for

the copies must bear the same relation to each other as their models do. The presence of the Divinity produces sanctity, and the sanctity of the most eminent incites the less advanced to a virtuous life, and to others still lower in the scale, it is at least productive of good sense. Such is the cause that explains this phenomenon, proved by experience, that all truly Catholic nations possess what infidel nations have never had, good sense; that is to say, that sound judgment which sees each thing at a single glance as it is in itself, and in the order which is suitable to it. This ought not to cause surprise if we consider that Catholicism is the order absolute, the infinite truth and perfection. So in it and through it alone are things beheld in their inmost essences, in the rank which they occupy, and with the degree of importance which belongs to them in the wonderful order according to which they are disposed.

Without Catholicism there can be neither good sense among the lower ranks, nor virtue among the middle classes, nor sanctity among the eminent; because the existence on earth of good sense, virtue, and sanctity, all suppose the existence of a God made man whose mission was to teach holiness to heroic souls, virtue to the courageous, and to rectify the judgment of the erring multitudes who wander in darkness and in the shadow of death. This divine master is the universal regulator, the center of all things; and this is why, wherever we look, or under whatever aspect we regard things, we always behold him as the center. Considered as both God and man, he is that central point in which are joined in one the creating essence and created substances. Considered simply as God, the Son of God, he is the

second person, that is to say, the center of the three divine persons. Considered solely as man, he is the focus in which human nature is condensed by a mysterious concentration. Considered as Redeemer, he is that central object upon whom all the graces of God and all the severity of his justice at the same time descend. The redemption is the great synthesis which reconciles and unites the divine justice and mercy. Considered as at the same time Lord of heaven and earth, and as born in a manger, leading a life of abnegation, and suffering death on the cross, he is that central point in which are united, in a superior synthesis, every thesis and antithesis, with their perpetual contradictions and their infinite diversity. He is the most indigent and the most opulent, the servant and the king, the slave and the master; he is naked and he is adorned with splendid vestments; he is obedient unto men, and he commands the stars; he has neither water to quench his thirst, nor bread to appease his hunger, and yet at his voice the waters gush forth from the rocks, and bread is multiplied in order to satisfy the wants of the people, and yields them an abundance. Men outrage him, and the seraphim adore him. He is at the same time most obedient and most powerful; he dies because he is condemned to die, but at his order the veil of the temple is rent, the graves open, the dead are resuscitated, the good thief is converted, the sun withdraws his rays, and all nature is in anguish. He appears in the midway of time, he walks in the midst of his disciples, he is born in the central point between two great seas and of three immense continents, he is a citizen of a nation which holds a middle rank between those nations which are entirely independent and those which

are completely subjected. He calls himself the way, and every way is a center; he calls himself the truth, and the truth occupies the mean in all things; he is the life, and life, which is the present, is the middle term between the past and the future; he passes his life alternately applauded and abused, and dies placed between two thieves.

And on this account he was an object of scandal for the Jews, and of contempt for the Gentiles. They both had some idea of the divine thesis and the human antithesis, but they imagined, and humanly speaking they were not mistaken, that this thesis and this antithesis were irreconcilable and altogether contradictory; human intelligence cannot of itself comprehend the supreme synthesis which reconciles them. The world had always seen the rich and the poor, but it could not conceive the possibility of uniting in one person the extremes of poverty and wealth. But even this, which appears absurd to reason, satisfies it completely when the person in whom these contradictions are united is a divine person, who must either have appeared in this way in the world or not at all. His coming was the signal of the universal conciliation of all things, and of universal peace among men. The poor and the rich, the humble and the powerful, the happy and the unhappy, were all united in him, and in him alone, because he alone was at the same time very rich and very poor, very powerful and very humble, most happy and most afflicted. Here is that pacific fraternity which he taught to all those who received the divine word. Here is that evangelical fraternity which all the Catholic doctors have taught in an uninterrupted succession, and without intermission. The moment our Lord Jesus Christ is denied,

that moment commence factions and parties, tumults and seditions, sinister outcries, insensate clamors, implacable rancors, unceasing wars, and bloody battles. The poor rise against the rich, the unhappy against the happy, the aristocracy against their king, the people against the aristocracy, and the enraged and barbarous multitudes, transported with passion, struggle against each other in one surging mass, like immense and swollen torrents, which meet and are precipitated into an abyss.

True humanity is in no man—it is in the Son of God; and there is revealed to us the secret of its contradictory nature, because it is on the one hand most elevated and excellent, and on the other, the depth of degradation. It is so excellent, that God has assumed it, and made it his own in uniting it with the Word; and it is so elevated, that it was from the beginning and before his coming promised by God, adored in silence by the patriarchs, announced from age to age by the prophets, even revealed to the world by its false oracles, and prefigured in all the sacrifices and by all the types. An angel announced it to a virgin, and it was conceived by the Holy Ghost in her sacred and virginal womb, and God entered into this humanity, and united himself forever with it. And thus perpetually united to God, this sacred humanity was chanted by angels at its birth, proclaimed by the stars, visited by shepherds, and adored by kings. And when the Man-God wished to be baptized, the heavens opened, and the Holy Ghost descended, in the form of a dove, upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” When he commenced to preach, he performed such mira-

cles, curing the sick, consoling the afflicted, restoring the dead to life, authoritatively commanding the winds and waves, unveiling secret things, and predicting things to come, that the heavens and the earth, angels and men, were terrified and amazed. Nor was this the end of these miracles, for this humanity was seen by all, to-day dead, and after three days resuscitated and glorified, victorious over time and death; and they beheld him silently rising in the air and ascending to the highest heavens, like a divine aurora.

And this same glorious humanity was at the same time an example of the deepest abjection, for it was predestined by God, on account of the substitution, to suffer, without being sinful, the penalty of sin. This is the reason why he whose divine countenance the angels love to gaze upon, endures such a weight of grief in this world. This is why he in whom the heavens rejoice, is so sorrowful and dejected; this is why he who in heaven is adorned with a star-gemmed vestment, is naked upon earth; this is why he who is the holiest of the holy, walks among sinners here below, as if he, too, were a sinner—conversing with blasphemers, adulterers, and the avaricious. This is why he gives the kiss of peace to Judas, and offers the joys of paradise to the thief; and why, when he converses with sinners, he does so with so much love that his eyes are filled with tears.

This man must have deeply penetrated into the mysteries of suffering, when he thus condole with the afflicted and compassionates their miseries. He must indeed comprehend sorrow, when he thus grieves with the sorrowing. Never was man so abandoned and condemned to such entire dereliction. An entire people overwhelm him with their maledictions; and among his

disciples, one sells him, another denies him, and the rest forsake him. He can neither obtain water to moisten his lips, nor bread to satisfy his hunger, nor a stone whereon to rest his weary head. Never did anguish equal his in the garden, where in agony the blood issued at every pore. His face was disfigured with blows, his body derisively clothed in purple, and a crown of thorns was placed upon his brow. He carried his own cross, repeatedly falling beneath its weight, and ascended Calvary, followed by an infuriated multitude, who filled the air with their frightful vociferations. When he was raised on the infamous cross, his dereliction became so bitter that even his Father would not look upon him, and the angels who served him, overcome with grief and terror, veiled their faces with their wings, in order not to see him. In this extremity of suffering, his humanity seemed to be forsaken by the superior part of his soul, which remained unshaken and serene; and the crowd tauntingly cried out to him, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross."

How can we, without the special grace of God, believe in the divinity of this object of scorn, of this man of sorrow? How can we believe his words to be aught but a scandal and foolishness? And, nevertheless, this man, who is thus utterly forsaken and who endures this mortal anguish, subjects the world to his law, taking it as by storm, by the efforts of some poor fishermen, who were, like himself, wanderers, miserable and destitute. For his sake these men changed their lives and left their homes, and through love of him accepted his cross, abandoned the cities, and inhabited the deserts. They rejected all pleasures, and, confessing the sanctifying efficacy of grief, they led pure and spiritual lives, and

inflicted severe penances upon themselves, keeping their appetites always in subjection. And more than this, after his death they firmly believed the most stupendous and incredible things. They believed that he who had been crucified was the only Son of God, and was God; that he had been conceived by the Holy Ghost in the womb of a virgin; that he who had been born in a manger, and wrapped in humble swaddling clothes, was Lord of heaven and earth; that after his death he descended into hell, from whence he released the pure and just souls of the ancient patriarchs; that he afterward resumed his own body, and glorified, rising with it from the grave, raised himself in the heavens, transfigured and resplendent; that the woman who had borne him in her womb was at the same time a loving mother and an immaculate virgin; that she was carried to heaven by the angels, where the angelical hosts proclaimed her to be, in virtue of a sovereign edict, Queen of Creation, the mother of the afflicted, the intercessor of the just, the advocate of sinners, mother of God, and spouse of the Holy Ghost. They believed that all things visible are of little value and only worthy of contempt, compared to those which are invisible; that the true good is to accept afflictions and tribulations with joy, and to suffer unceasingly; and that the only real evil is pleasure and sin. They believed that the waters of baptism purify; that the confession of sin obtains its remission; that bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ; that God is in us and everywhere surrounds us; that even the hairs of our head are numbered, so that not one hair can fall without the knowledge and permission of God; that if man thinks, it is because God grants him the power of thought; that if

his will is moved, it is God who gives the power to use his will; that when he makes an effort, it is because God strengthens him; so that without this continual sustaining aid man stumbles and falls; that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, and then final judgment; that there is a heaven and a hell, eternal punishment and everlasting felicity. They proclaimed all these wonderful dogmas, and then announced that the whole world would receive them, in spite of the opposition of princes, kings, and emperors. They proclaimed that on account of these doctrines an innumerable host of illustrious confessors, of celebrated doctors, of chaste and delicate virgins, and glorious martyrs, would suffer torments and death. And finally, that the folly of the cross would be so contagious that it would spread among all nations, to the utmost confines of the earth.

All these extraordinary things have been believed by men ever since the day when, amid the darkness which shrouded the trembling earth, the great tragedy, that lasted three hours, was enacted on Golgotha. There that declaration was accomplished, which God made through Osee, saying, *In funiculis Adam traham eos, in vinculis charitatis*;* and men have fallen into this snare of love, which was so tenderly spread for them by the Son of the living God. Man by nature revolts against omnipotence, rebels against justice, and resists mercy; but he lovingly yields to the imploring and sorrowful accents of one who dies for him and who loves him even in death. Why persecutest thou me? This is that voice, at once terrible and tender, which continually reproaches sinners, and these endearing, sweet, and

* Chapter xi. v. 4.

gentle accents penetrate the soul, transform it, change it, entirely convert it to God, and compel it everywhere to seek the beloved object, in deserts or in populous cities, on rugged mountains or in fertile plains, in parched fields or in blooming gardens, no matter where. This is that voice which enkindles the chaste love of the spouse in the soul, and attracts and inebriates it with the delicious odor of intoxicating perfumes, even as the panting deer seeks the fountains of fresh water. God came to cast fire on the earth, and the earth is enkindled and has commenced to burn, and the divine flames will spread from day to day, until finally the entire world will be wrapped in one general conflagration. Love explains the inexplicable, and man through love believes what appears incredible, and performs what seems impossible, because through love all things become possible and easy.

Those of the apostles who saw the Saviour when, previous to his passion, he was transfigured before them, when his face shone as the sun and his garments became whiter and more dazzling than the purest snow; those who saw this, exclaimed, in a transport of ecstasy, Let us remain here. But they had formed no true idea as yet of the divine love, nor of its ineffable delights. Afterward, the great Apostle, who was already master of the excellent science of divine love, says, I have only desired to know one thing, and that is Jesus Christ and him crucified; which was the same as to say, I desire to understand all things, and, in order to comprehend all, I only need to understand Jesus Christ, because in him alone are all sciences and all things united; and the Apostle adds, "and him crucified." He does not say Jesus Christ glorified and transfigured, because it avails

little to know him in his omnipotence, assisting in thought at the glorious work of the universal creation; nor is it enough to behold him in his glory, when his countenance is resplendent with an uncreated light, and when the powers of heaven are prostrated in ecstasy before the divine majesty; nor does it suffice to hear him pronounce the unappealable decrees of his justice, surrounded by angels and saints. Nor is the soul fully satisfied with the contemplation of the ineffable splendors of his infinite mercy. The Apostle, devoured by an unquenchable thirst, an unappeasable hunger, and an extinguishable desire, wishes more, asks more, and carries still higher his audacious thought, for he can only be content when he has found Jesus Christ crucified, that is to say, he wishes to know him, as Jesus Christ most wishes to be known, in the highest and most excellent manner which reason can conceive of, the imagination imagine, or desire long for in its most ardent aspirations; for this is to know him in the act of his incomprehensible and infinite love. This is what the Apostle means when he says, I only wish to know one thing, and that is Jesus Christ and him crucified.

It is Jesus Christ crucified, and he alone, whom those happy few wish to know, who, taking up their cross, lovingly follow the bleeding and glorious footsteps of his passion. It is he alone whom those fathers of the desert wished to know, whose virtue converted the most frightful deserts into gardens of paradise. It is to him alone that those chaste virgins, whose miraculous strength triumphed over all concupiscence, consecrated their pure and virginal thoughts, and whom they accepted as their spouse. It is he alone whom all those desired to know, whose generous hearts have received

tribulations with joy, and have courageously toiled onward in the thorny paths of penance.

Among all the wonders of creation the most admirable is the soul that lives in charity, not only because its condition is the most sublime and the most excellent that we can here below conceive, but likewise because it affords so striking a proof of the divine love. This love was not only of sufficient efficacy to blot out our sins, and with it disorder and the cause of all disorder, but it also has the power to cause us freely to desire that same deification which we before rejected, and to enable us to attain the object of our desire, by accepting the assistance of the grace which we merited in our Lord and through our Lord when he shed his blood for us on Calvary. All these things are declared to us in those memorable words, which Jesus Christ pronounced in expiring, when he said, *It is consummated*, that is to say, I accomplish by my love what I could not gain by my justice, nor by my mercy, nor my wisdom, nor my omnipotence, because I efface sin, which obscures the divine majesty and dishonors the beauty of humanity, and I retrieve humanity from its shameful captivity, and give to man the power, which he had lost through sin, of saving himself. Now my soul can stoop to fortify man, to embellish him, to deify him, because I have drawn him unto me, and I have united him to me by the all-powerful and endearing bond of love.

When this memorable word was pronounced by the Son of God expiring on the cross, all things became marvelously and perfectly established.

Each one of the dogmas explained in this and the preceding book is a law of the moral world, and each one of these laws is in itself unchangeable and per-

petual. All united form the code of laws constitutive of moral order in humanity and the universe; and these, joined to the physical laws to which matter is subject, form the supreme law of order, which regulates and governs creation.

It is so essential that all things should be in a perfect order that, although man has put all things in disorder, yet he cannot conceive of disorder. This is why all revolutions, in subverting ancient institutions, accuse them of exercising an absurd and disturbing influence; and, in order to replace them by those of individual invention, they affirm that these changes will produce a more excellent order. This is the meaning of that consecrated phrase among revolutionists of all ages, when they attempt to sanctify disorder, calling it *a new order of things*. Even Mr. Proudhon, the most audacious of all, only defends his anarchy, because he assumes that it is the rational expression of a perfect, that is to say of an absolute, order.

From the perpetual necessity of order results the perpetual necessity of the existence of the physical and moral laws which constitute it; and for this reason they have all been created and solemnly proclaimed by God from the beginning of time. When God formed the world out of nothing, when he made man of the dust of the earth, and when he took from the side of man a rib, out of which he made woman, when he constituted the first family, God then declared, once for all, the physical and moral laws which establish order in humanity and in the universe, and he removed them from out the jurisdiction of man, and placed them beyond the reach of his vain speculations and foolish fancies. Even the dogmas of the incarnation of the Son of God and the

redemption of mankind, which were only to be accomplished in the plenitude of time, were revealed by God in the terrestrial paradise, when he made that merciful promise to our first parents, with which he tempered the rigor of his justice.

The world has in vain rejected these laws. In seeking by their negation to throw off this yoke, they have only succeeded in making its weight more heavy, because a departure from these laws always produces catastrophes, which are more or less terrible in proportion to the extent of these negations; this law of proportion between error and the calamities caused by it being one of the constitutive laws of order.

God has permitted to human opinion a free and wide range; he has placed a vast empire under the control and unrestricted will of man, to whom he has given dominion over the sea and land, and the power to rebel against his Creator; to revolt against heaven; to form treaties and covenants with infernal spirits; to deafen the world with the din of battle; to excite discord and contention in societies, and terrify them by the fearful shock of revolutions; to close the understanding to the light of truth, and to accept error and delight in its obscurity; to establish empires and overthrow them; to erect and destroy republics; to grow alike weary of republics, empires, and monarchies; to abandon what was eagerly sought for, and return again to what has been forsaken; to affirm everything, even to the absurd; to deny everything, even to absolute proof; to say *there is no God*, and, *I am God*; to declare an independence of all authority, and to adore the star that shines upon us, the tyrant who oppresses us, the reptile that crawls along the ground, the tempest that fills the air with its

wild uproar, the thunderbolt that falls, and the fleeting clouds.

All this and much more was given to man; yet, notwithstanding all this power was granted to him, the stars pursue their appointed courses and forever continue in harmonious progression; and the seasons succeed each other in their prescribed order, and the earth has never ceased to yield her harvests and to be clothed with verdure since the first day on which she received from God the command to fructify; and all physical things fulfill to-day, even as they fulfilled yesterday and the day before, the divine commands: ever moving in perpetual peace and concord, without the slightest transgression of the laws of the all-powerful Creator, whose sovereign hand assigned to them their limits, restrained their impetuosity, and regulated all their movements.

All this and much more was given to man; yet, notwithstanding all these things were given to him, he could not set aside the punishment which follows sin, nor prevent the penalty of his crime, nor avoid death as a consequence of his first transgression, nor avoid condemnation for his impenitence, nor the decisions of justice according to his use of liberty, nor prevent the mercy which was granted to the penitent, nor shun the reparation due to scandals, nor the catastrophes incurred by disobedience.

Man has been allowed to crush society, agitated by the discord which he has fomented; to destroy the strongest means of defense; to plunder the most opulent cities; to overthrow the most extensive and populous empires; to bring utter ruin upon the highest forms of civilization, obscuring their splendors in the dense clouds of barbarism: but it has not been permitted him

to suspend for one single day, hour, or minute, the inflexible accomplishment of the fundamental laws which regulate the moral and physical world, the constitutive laws of order, in humanity and in the universe. The world has never seen, and will never see, the man who has departed through sin from the laws of order, and who has been able to escape a conformity with those laws, by means of punishment, that messenger of God, which all men must receive.

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