MODERNISM.

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A short time ago a gentleman came to me with a letter of introduction from a friend of mine who entreated me to do my best to help his protege.

"Well, what can I do for you?" I asked.

"I have come to Florence to study Modernism; and I should be very much obliged if you would be so kind as to help me," he answered.

"And how long are you going to stay in Florence?"

"I must leave for home the day after to-morrow."

I was flabbergasted and advised my visitor to change his plans and to spend the short time he had at his disposal in sight-seeing.

Such is the idea a great many people have of Modernism. They think it is the simplest thing in the world, but I wonder if there has ever been a more complicated subject on earth.

The word "modernism" is quite familiar to us all. All talk of modernism; all discuss it; but . . . modernism, what is it? That is the question.

A short, exact, comprehensive definition of modernism is impossible, for modernism is a complex phenomenon; and a conglomeration of several different phenomena such as this, cannot be defined by a single formula. Nor can the term "modernism" itself lead us to a precise conception of this great movement. The term was not bestowed on the movement by the modernists. Just as the name "Christian," whether of Latin or Greek origin, was undoubtedly invented by the pagan inhabitants of Antioch to censure and despise the disciples of Christ, so the name "modernism" was invented by the enemies of the new movement, to disgrace and condemn it. This is why the name does not help us in the least to understand what the movement is.

"Modernism" is a word coined by the Jesuit fathers of Rome. Leo. XIII and Pius X got hold of it, and gave it a kind of theological and ecclesiastical consecration. The official Roman Catholic press received it from the hands of two Popes, and it began at once to be used and is still used to distinguish and condemn everybody and everything that is not in perfect communion of thought and ideals with the Vatican. Higher criticism, Christian democracy, loyalty to united Italy with Rome as capital, aspirations to a reformation within the Church, longings for a purer and more spiritual form of Christianity, all that, and more, is "modernism," for the Vatican. The Curia could not better define it than as "a huge cloak to hide a multitude of sins." In fact, the Vatican has defined it as "A satanic cry of rebellion against religion from the bosom of the Church." Such a definition is an exaggeration due to nothing else but fear. In reality "modernism" is a cry of rebellion not against religion, but against the tyranny of the Curia; it is an aspiration after a reform within the Church of Rome; it is a longing for a purer form of religion; for a return to the primitive simplicity of faith, for a wider, higher interpretation of Christianity, more compatible with modern conscience.

Let no one be deceived about the importance of the movement. The very fact that the Vatican is afraid of it, should be sufficient to prove that it is a serious, grave, and threatening fact. But much more than that may be said. In an article I wrote in January, 1911, for the *Hibbert Journal*, to show the importance of the movement, I said: "Modernism is not a system; it is the synthesis of several new directions taken by theological and ecclesiastical thought in the Roman Church;" and I traced it out five of these different directions: 1st: The direction followed by a group of noble souls who grieve to see popular piety attacked by the disease of an exaggerated and hysterical sentimentalism, and fossilised into a nerveless formalism; 2nd: The direction followed by a group of

still more daring modernists, by whom the question of the temporal power of the Pope has been disposed of entirely, and who say frankly: "In the Church of today, reform is necessary so as to lead the flock of Christ back to the spirit of the Gospel;" 3rd: The direction followed by the hypercritical modernists, whose spiritual mother was German rationalistic theology and whose intellectual father was Prof. Alfred Loisy; 4th: The direction followed by a group of modernists of the Christian democracy led by Romolo Murri, and, finally, 5th: The direction followed by the practical modernists who, determined to give the word of God back to the people, founded the "Pious Society of St. Jerome for the spread of the Holy Gospels."

Scarcely two years have elapsed since I wrote that article, and my division into five directions does not hold good any longer, for, whilst the first two still exist, I may safely say that there is no more question of the other three. The hypercritics have advanced so much, that they now consider Christianity as a form of religion already *passée*, and the Church as unworthy of their thought. Christian democracy, abandoned as it was by Romolo Murri, and left without a leader, has ceased to exist. The Pious Society of St. Jerome is dead and buried. So that one might feel inclined to believe that modernism also is dead; that it has been a dream, a beautiful dream, but nothing more than a dream. But, to think so, would simply be the grossest of errors. Modernism lives, it is stronger than ever, it has invaded the whole of the clergy, the whole of the Church, and has gained the sympathy of a large part of the better class of the laity, which only a few years ago smiled with compassion at the very mention of the term "modernism." Listen to what Leone Caetani, a member of the Italian Parliament and belonging to the great Roman family who gave Boniface VIII to the history of Papacy, says about it: "Modernism, the wood-worm, the deadly bacillus which will kill papal Catholicism, is the purest expres-

sion of the present religious conscience. Modernism is not a school, but a vague general tendency, an undefinable sentiment, without exact limits, without any settled goal, without discipline and without leaders. Whoever has only the shadow of a doubt about the most insignificant part of the religious edifice of Roman Catholicism, is already a modernist. These undefined characters constitute its greatest strength, inasmuch as they show the universality of its tendency and the impossibility of fighting it effectively. It is everywhere, but nowhere in particular; it is intangible, but is always more lively and evident than ever. The Church of Rome, in chasing modernism, is pursuing her own shadow; inseparable from her, and at the same time unseizable."

Leone Caetani is perfectly right in his statement; it only needs to be completed. He says that modernism is "a vague, general tendency, an undefinable sentiment, without exact limits, without any settled goal." And really modernism might have been so described up to the present time; now, however, the "general tendency" and the "undefinable sentiment" have at last taken distinctive shape in a precise and well-defined Programme.

First of all it states that the Church only has the right and duty to initiate religious reform; and that by the term 'Church' is understood not the ambitious and unscrupulous "ecclesiola" or sect gathered round the Pope, but the union of all believers in Christ who, through their works show the sincerity of their faith in Him. Then follows their statement about the reform they are aiming at: "We want the revision of dogma, the revision of all our confession of faith; we want to see that which in Christianity is substantial, separated from what has been added afterward in the interest of the sacerdotal caste. We want the authority of the Pope to be confined to reasonable limits, and the old authority of the episcopacy and laity, with their rights and freedom to be restored to them. We want for all believers the right of free research in all fields, recognised as legiti-

mate. We do not want the abolition of hierarchy, but we want all grades of the hierarchy, from the humblest to the highest, to be represented not by ambitious men, or by intrigues, but by men imbued with the apostolic spirit. We want to do away, once and for all, with the ridiculous fiction that the Pope is a prisoner of the Italian government, and we want to see the Pope himself go from diocese to diocese, in order to learn from observation about men and things, to get a personal knowledge of all ecclesiastical abuses, and to depose all unworthy priests and bishops. Among the rights to be given back to the clergy, we want celibacy to be voluntary, not compulsory. If it is true that marriage is a sacrament for the layman, we want it to be also for the priest; why should it be for the priest only a curse and a shame? As far as worship is concerned, we wish to have it brought back to its ancient simplicity and purity. We want the abolition of the Latin language in the Liturgy; the abolition of all those idols, which not only have no justification in any true and certain tradition, but very often are shown by sound criticism, to be historically non-existent. We want the veneration due to the great saints of the Church not to replace the worship due to God alone; and we do not want this worship to be material as it is now, but we want it to become again a worship 'in spirit and in truth.' We want to put a stop to the excessive right of guardianship which the priest has always exercised over the faithful; that kind of guardianship, which may, perhaps, have its use (although we seriously question even this) during spiritual infancy, but which becomes utterly disastrous and humiliating in the case of the spiritually grown-up. The adult must be able to do many things for himself; and, as far as his conscience is concerned, he must know that between his conscience and his God there is no room for human mediators. We want the abolition of all false devotional practices; and, as a substitute for all morbid, sentimental books of prayers and pious meditations, we desire the Gospel of Christ, the greatest book

which Christianity possesses, the only book able to educate the spirit to a true and manly piety.”

Such is the revolutionary Programme of 1908. Let us now ask: How has this revolutionary movement been brought about?

Two things have caused it: The condition into which Roman Catholicism has fallen. In order to judge rightly of Roman Catholicism one must not study it as it appears in Protestant lands or in the works of its great writers such as Newman, Manning or others gone over to Romanism from Protestantism. Romanism, in Protestant lands, is quite different from what it is in Latin countries; it cannot help being subjected to Protestant influence; and therefore moderates itself there, for it knows that no Anglo-Saxon mind would ever adapt itself to accept as Christian many religious exhibitions which are accepted as such in the Abruzzi, in the Neapolitan provinces and in Sicily. And as far as those great English writers whom Roman Catholicism rightly boasts of are concerned, everybody knows that they accepted Romanism not as it is, but an idealisation of it. What they describe is not real Romanism; it is a kind of ideal Romanism.

Nor is it enough, in order to judge rightly of Roman Catholicism, to run through Italy from Piedmont to Sicily in a “train de luxe,” only making a fleeting stay at the principal towns, entering the first church one comes across, and asking for some information from the first person one has met casually, or to whom one has been given a card of introduction. No, in order to judge rightly of Roman Catholicism, one must needs live in a Latin country, to study the inhabitants thoroughly, to examine all their religious practices, to search the very soul of the people, to win the confidence of the noblest part of the clergy, to enter into full communion of spirit and affection with those souls who suffer, who groan, and who long for redemption from a bondage that has become unbearable to them.

For, to such point as that, have we arrived.

The young are in a state of feverish unrest in their Seminaries; they feel that the teaching imparted them is no longer up to date; that the way in which they are prepared for practical life, is absurd. They issue energetic protests, in which they say: "What our School lacks is fearless trust in science and freedom. Such a fatal deficiency in our Schools and in our studies will last, as long as Seminaries are not converted into sacred places intended to sow, lovingly and disinterestedly, in the hearts of the young the first seeds of spirituality and of science, and as long as they remain what they are at present: namely, places where science is monopolized with a view of turning out useful and trustworthy ecclesiastical functionaries. In our Seminaries we are living in a world of extraordinary smallness, where strong virtues no longer grow, but only passive, resigned individualities, pale hot-house flowers, which fade away as soon as the first spring winds begin to blow." And the seminaries exhort each other to prepare themselves for the coming insurrection, crying: "Brethren, the salvation of the Church lies with us!"

Among the clergy, the pure, noble-minded men, who conscientiously keep their vows, are the exception; they are men who give themselves passionately to works of charity, to literature, and to science. The honest priests, the priests who in this respect also want to live in harmony with God and with their conscience, lift their voice full and loud, and appeal to the laity for their sympathy. Listen to what they say: "No, we do not want any longer a hidden and sinful love, the only one allowed to us by the cruel law of celibacy, a love full of intrigue and kept in the darkness, like contraband goods. We want the love that does not fear the full light of the sun; the love of one woman who will devote to us, without remorse, the whole treasure of her affection; the love which is a caress in the beautiful and calm moments of life, and a source of strength in the inevitable discouragements that assail

man; in a word, the love of a wife to refine our sentiments, to fortify our energy, and to better our character. And with the wife's love, the love of our children. Who can ignore the educating power that emanates from the sentiment of paternity? And why should we, from whom the duty of honesty and straightforwardness is more required than from the others, why should we be deprived of these most efficacious means of moral education?"

Outside the Church, there is no more religion; or, what there is of it, is, to a large extent, a form of religion, without the power of true Christian godliness.

In some places matters are still worse; and the forms which religion assumes there, are almost incredible, unless one has actually seen them. In the summer of 1911 two popular leaflets were widely circulated in Genoa when cholera was raging; the one was entitled: "A Prayer to St. Martha for protection from cholera." It began: "I am Martha, Christ's hostess. Whoever trusts in me shall be freed from the epidemic. The power to impart this grace I have received from Christ, the Lord." Then followed several other prayers, and at the end was the instruction: "To be carried about on one's person." The leaflet cost one cent. The other bore the inscription: "Wonderful effects of the water of St. Ignatius. It is a simple, natural water, called after St. Ignatius, because it has been blessed with one of his relics." Then followed an enumeration of the wonderful cures effected by this water in all epidemics from 1656 to the present time, followed by the instruction: "In using this water, the Lord's prayer or a prayer to the Saint may be repeated." At the end was the intimation: "The water of St. Ignatius is to be obtained in the vestry of the Church of 'The Five Wounds'" (a Church of the Jesuit fathers). A sadder and more miserable spectacle could hardly be witnessed than that presented by the numbers of people of all ranks of society, all provided with bottles or flasks, rushing to obtain the precious liquid, and who, after having made their voluntary offer-

ings to the Jesuit on duty at the vestry, obtained a liquid which was, after all, only water from a very ordinary source, into which a bone of the Saint had been immersed. But the awful monstrosity of it all lies in this: that the two leaflets bore the *Imprimatur* of the ecclesiastical authorities; which means that those authorities had seen the leaflets, had read them, had approved of them, and had authorized their distribution.

And what shall we say of the so-called snow-ball, a formula of prayer to be recited nine days, and then handed on to nine other devotees, who in their turn hand them on to nine more, and so on, of course, increasing the efficacy of the prayer? What of the South of Italy, where in several places penitents have to clean the church with their tongue, from the door to the high altar, or with their tongue to make crosses on the ground until it bleeds, or have to go on their knees from their homes to the church? Where in Cathedrals the preachers, sent to fight Protestant heresy, in order to show their rage pretend to wound themselves with all kinds of instruments invented for the purpose, and in their pulpits make saints and Madonnas say *yes* or *no*, laugh or weep, according to their pleasure? Where, just as once religion was intimately connected with brigandage, nowadays it is intimately connected with the *camorra* and the *mafia*?

Is it to be wondered at if the more intelligent and honest members of the clergy feel bound to take the matter in hand and to think of the future of the Church? Listen to what a large group of priests say in a letter addressed to Pius X. "Our society has now for many years held aloof from the Church, which is looked upon as an ancient and inexorable foe. The old cathedrals, which the piety of free, believing peoples in the Middle Ages raised to the Virgin and to Patron Saints, are utterly deserted; men no longer care to draw from religion the strength and light necessary to the soul agitated by daily struggles; respect and veneration for all that has been held most sacred from the cradle, have vanished. And not that

alone, but the Church is considered an obstacle to the happiness of nations; the priest is insulted in public as a common, ignorant parasite; the Gospel and Christianity are regarded as expressions of a decayed civilization, because they are entirely insufficient to respond to the ideals of freedom, justice and science which are shaking the masses." And after having pointed out the great evils that harass the Church in our days, they exclaim: "We are not rebels! We are sincere Catholics; and, as such, we desire to stand up for the salvation of Christianity." And think for a moment of the miserable condition which the modern papacy is reduced to, from the point of view of its authority, and compare it with the power and grandeur which it enjoyed in past centuries. Just take the following example, among a hundred which I might quote. Pius X will be recorded in the history of the Roman Church as the Pope who has been the least obeyed of them all. The papal utterances of the last Popes were, more or less, listened to in the Church; those of Pius X are not only not listened to, but, what is worse still, they raise protests, rebellion, insubordination, wherever they are enjoined. Nearly every papal *Motu proprio* is followed by a storm of disapproval, which ends in killing it. Seven of those utterances, issued within the last few years, will remain famous. That imposing the first communion on children of six years of age, which has proved to be in-applicable in every land; that concerning the centenary of St. Carlo Borromeo, which, for its virulent language against the Reformation, raised a storm among the Roman Catholics of all Protestant countries; that concerning the suppression of the feast days of Patron Saints; that against modernists, which has fostered the cause of Modernism in a way nothing else could have done; that with regard to the garb of the priests, which nobody took any notice of; that referring to the special language to be used in the mass and in other religious services in Austria and in the Orient, which was rejected by all the parish priests of those

countries; lastly, that by which a Roman Catholic was forbidden, under threat of excommunication, to cite a priest before any court without the previous regular permission of the ecclesiastical authority, against which Germany rebelled, and the papal *Motu proprio* became a dead letter.

Those are only seven examples of papal utterances come to naught; but how many similar private and personal ones, directed by the Pope, separately and confidentially, to bishops, heads of religious orders, societies, congregations, writers, etc., might be recorded, which have had the same fate as the seven already quoted!

Listen also to the grave words uttered only recently by Leone Caetani, whom I have already quoted: "The Roman Church has forgotten her old, popular traditions, and has ceased to exercise her beneficent reforming influence into which she stimulated progress and every moral improvement, and which was her principal "*raison d'être*" in the early centuries. She lives no longer, as she did once upon a time, for the protection of the poor and the humble against the rich and the powerful. She herself has become worldly, rich, powerful, and only tries to keep her present condition unchanged; she shrinks from all innovations; and to the poor and the humble ones she preaches.....resignation to their destiny. Deprived as she is of fresh and youthful vigor, or power to adapt and develop herself, benumbed after so many centuries of existence, and now threatened by a last and deadly blow, the Church does not know what to do except to repeat ecclesiastical and theological formulas, at least one thousand and six hundred years old, formulas that are in sharp contrast with the deepest moral needs of the present moment. The ignorant popular masses of the country and those in certain regions least touched by modern culture, are still faithfully attached to the Church, just as they were in past centuries; and their attachment to her is explained by the fact that their spirit is still what it used to be a thousand or more years ago.

And in that fact lies her intrinsic weakness, for it is in the cultivated classes that the elevating power is to be found of true religion, which must be the religion of all, and not only of the most ignorant and miserable."

Such being the condition of things, is it to be wondered at if the modernist movement has broken out?

But I have said that another reason of this revolutionary movement, is to be found in Protestant influence.

During the last sixty years, evangelical churches and evangelical educational institutions have been established from the Alps to the far end of Sicily; charity works have been founded, while the "Tract Society for Italy" has inundated the country with polemic, apologetic, ethical and doctrinal tracts and books, and the London and Scottish Bible Societies have sent their colporteurs throughout the peninsula, selling thousands and thousands of copies of the Holy Word every year. Now, is it credible that all this huge combined work should be found to exercise no influence whatever on the Roman Catholic Church in Italy? It would be possible to show that a larger and deeper influence might have been exercised, had our first missionaries in Italy understood each other better; but the fact is, that, in spite of all human weakness, a great influence has indeed been exercised by Protestantism on the Roman Church of Italy. The following are the proofs of this influence.

I have often thought that if all the presidents of various Protestant missions in Italy and all the ministers of the different churches were to collect all the correspondence they have had in the past and still have with Roman Catholic priests and friars, Christian literature would be enriched by many volumes of most interesting and important psychological studies. I have a huge pile of those letters myself, and I like to go over them again and again; their repeated perusal enables me to enter better into a deeper fellowship with a crowd of struggling souls, mourning over the present condition of the church they love, and longing for a purifying breath from on high and

for a general revival of her spiritual life. Some of them would like to leave their Church and join us in our missionary work; but by far the greater number of them want to remain where they are, so as to work for a renovation within the Church; if they come to us, it is only to get sympathy, comfort and advice. Besides this, the cultured Italian modernists find their spiritual nourishment in Protestant literature; our best books are to be found in their private libraries, either in their original tongue, or in translations; and in their writings, in their sermons, in their modernistic utterances, the influence of French Protestant literature especially is evident.

Sometime ago I was struck by the fact that there seemed to be a revival in the interest shown by the public in Christian preaching in the Roman Catholic Church of Italy. Some names were mentioned with great respect; in such churches, where a special course of sermons was being delivered, the attendance grew day by day; some preachers attracted not only old men and women, but young folk, thinking men, professors, officers in the army. All this filled my heart with joy, and I began to make inquiries. I went about myself, and engaged some friends, who I knew were as interested in the subject as I was, to make inquiries. We soon found out that nearly all the preachers who attracted people in great numbers, were either modernists or men with new and broad ideas, large hearts, and of wide sympathy, and that they attracted many hearers by their new style of preaching. They never assaulted Protestantism in the rabid, unjust, absurd way of the ordinary orthodox sermonizer; they had abandoned the old fables concerning the immorality of Luther, the heartlessness of Calvin and the conviviality of Zwingli, which had been the "*pièces de résistance*" of the old monks; they took a text from the Word of God, they quoted it in the language understood by the people, they applied it to the religious and moral needs of their hearers, and all this was in simple language, in a pure and unpretentious style; and the people, who had tired of

the conventional, high-flown, empty preaching of the ordinary friars, took a great fancy to this natural, spiritual, nourishing and conversational method of address. I went further in my inquiries. I wrote right and left to the preachers I knew, and asked them to help me in my researches; and here are some of the answers I received from different parts of Italy. One wrote: "My evangelical sermons have stirred up the old clerical circles, in an incredible way. They have tried in all ways to defame me, but have not succeeded. The most enlightened priests and friars and the most cultured men in town have defended me with all their might. I have done my best to be always theologically correct, avoiding dangerous pitfalls and limiting myself to affirming most energetically the fundamental truths of the Gospel." Another, from a distant town, ended his most interesting letter with these sympathetic words: "How I love your French evangelical preachers! I am their spiritual son. I am just now engaged in a very unpleasant piece of work. Two Protestant ladies wish to be instructed by me to enable them to enter the Church of Rome. Naturally, I cannot refuse to do it; but I feel sorry for them. What a folly to bid good-bye to one's holy freedom in order to accept the yoke of the Church of Rome—a yoke we ourselves are scarcely able to bear any longer. What I teach them is the Gospel of Christ, which, up to the present, they have, spiritually speaking, completely ignored. If, with the help of God, I succeed in putting them into personal contact with the Saviour, I think it matters very little what church they belong to." In a Lombard town I had heard a striking address, which strongly reminded me of some French sermon I must have heard or read, but which I had forgotten. As soon as I came back to Florence, I wrote to the preacher, who answered me thus: "Yes, I do not wonder that my sermon brought you, as you say, 'a breath of your native air.' I tell you frankly, the Roman Catholic models of preaching have had no influence whatever on me; the French and Swiss Protestant

preachers, such as Vinet, Adolphe, Horace and Wilfred Monod, Babut, Coquerel père et fils, Charles Wagner, and many others, have been and are my teachers, my models, my inspirers, and the makers of what I am."

Is all this not quite sufficient to show that Protestant influence has had a large part in the preparation of the modernist movement?

That is the actual psychological condition of the best men in the Roman Catholic clergy; in other words, of the men who study, think and reason, who live in contact not only with the dead but with the living, not only with ideas but with facts. It is the condition of those who have a modern soul, and live in close touch with the modern mind, and who are called every day and every hour to respond to the needs of the modern conscience. An abyss lies between the Vatican and this clergy; the words which come to them from the Vatican are the words of the Scribes and Pharisees; they are no longer the words of authority and power. These men are grieved to see the formalism, the paganism, the superstition into which the Church has fallen; they have no longer confidence in a Curia that has completely lost all sense of the things that are of God; this part of the clergy, I say, believe and live, spiritually speaking, because they love the gospel, and because hypercritical doubts have not destroyed in their hearts the hunger and thirst for that mystical union with the Christ of God, in which lies the secret of true piety and of every faithful endeavor. But this part of the clergy love the Church, the Church in which they were born, the Church to which they have consecrated the best years of their lives. That Church, with its episcopal ritual, its strong ecclesiastical organization, its glorious traditions, with its majestic Cathedrals erected to God by the piety of former generations, is the Church which seems to them best able to respond to the genius and temperament of the Latin races. These priests desire to supply the void now felt in that episcopal form, by filling it with something genuinely Christian; they desire to be re-

inspired with the Spirit of Christ; they desire to see God worshipped again "in spirit and in truth." From time to time some earnest soul, having lost faith in these ideals, and driven by an imperious impulse of conscience, crosses the border and comes over to us, under our standard; and we receive him with open arms. We hold such to be men of character, who do not trifle with their conscience. But for one who crosses the line, hundreds, thousands remain in the fold; and remaining, grieve, but believe and hope. One of them writes me: "If you could see what is happening in our midst, you would not believe the testimony of your own eyes." Are they wrong? Who would venture to say so?

I love this clergy, which finds itself in much the same position, with regard to the Vatican, as our Italian patriots did during the wretched time of our political slavery. Sometimes I think of its members as organizing themselves into secret circles, and forming a great and powerful spiritual *Carboneria*; dividing themselves, as Young Italy did, into so many Committees, depending upon a Central Committee, which would issue the secret journal that would feed the flame. I dream of this new *Carboneria* enclosing the whole peninsula within its net; spreading over mountains and seas; hastening with words and writings the hour of freedom. I seem to see the sacred fire attacking the laity, by means of conventicles, the secret Press and the Confessional, until God raises a modern Spartacus to summon them all to the harvest, to give the slaves the signal of revolt, to face the terrified Curia with the alternative: "Either become Christian, or die," and to lead the Church out of the land of the Pharaohs to the Canaan of freedom and life.

I know the objection to all this; it has been repeated so often, and in every key. It is: "You have no right to criticise the Curia; it is logical, consistent; the illogical and inconsistent are the others, the rebels. Pius X, in his Syllabus and in his Encyclicals and in all his allocutions, expresses faithfully, consistently with the past, and

in prevision of the future, the official views of the Church. The clergy, which has received Holy Orders in and for the Church, has a choice of only two ways: It must accept those views, or go; the third way selected by those who, while not accepting those views remain and conspire, is the way of rebellion, and the Pope is perfectly right in inflicting upon such all the disciplinary punishment which he possesses."

"He is right," they say. Then, in times of political or moral bondage, it is no longer true that there remains to man, as God has made him, the sacred right of rebellion? It is no longer true that right is not always on the side of the strong, but much more often on that of the weak? When majorities rule unjustly, there remains no longer to the minority who aspires to truth and justice, the right to hope and prepare for their emancipation?

Not long ago I had occasion to go to the Vatican for some special research. In the court of St. Damaso, through a curious combination of circumstances, I found myself in the midst of a crowd of pilgrims from Tuscany. I was carried along by the crowd, and found myself in the presence of Pius X, and I heard his address. It was divided into three parts. In the first, he recalled and applied to the various circumstances of life, the motto of his pontificate—"Instaurare omnia in Christo"—and recommended with great warmth the study not of the Gospel, but of the Catechism, as the only means of attaining to the "restoring of all things in Christ," as he always erroneously interprets St. Paul's passage. In the second, replying to an allusion to the Modernists made by Cardinal Maffi in his speech, he said: "I thank you for your sympathy; yes, I have suffered much on account of these * * * 'traitor sons,' as you, your Eminence, have called them. What shall I call them? Shall I say the word? They are sons of the devil!" In the third part he spoke exactly as follows: "And now I will impart to you my benediction, and with this benediction I intend to bless you, and any object of devotion that you may have on

your persons. You need not take them out. Keep them in your pockets; the efficacy of the benediction is the same. And this means that if a crucifix, for example, which you may be carrying to-day, is at any future time, even a very distant future, pressed to the lips of a dying man, that man will enjoy the benefit of all the indulgences and have the entrance into Paradise made easy for him."

The Cardinals who accompanied the Pope looked tired and bored; the Court was inattentive, and showed no interest whatever in what they heard and saw; the guards of honor gazed at the frescoes on the ceiling, and longed for the end of the proceedings. I left the Vatican thoughtful, disillusioned, sad; and recalling the words of the Pope, said to myself: "How symptomatic is that speech! In the first part, all of Christianity that has remained in the system; an idea great in itself, but sprung from a Scriptural passage erroneously interpreted, and founded not on the granite rock of the Gospel, but on the cardboard foundation of an antiquated Catechism. In the second, a negation of the spirit of Christian charity, and a protest against every human and elementary spirit of tolerance. In the third, an absolute denial of what is most clear and vitally Christian in the gospel. Now, this imperceptible residue of Christianity which remains, is too small and lifeless to keep Romanism alive. Even Romanism will have to bow before the unalterable law of the moral world, which is the law of the "survival of the fittest"; and, in the moral world, the "fittest" are not the most ancient, or the best organized, or the most numerous, but *the best*. The Colossus of the Vatican, whom many insistently consider to be eternal, will undoubtedly fall, as many other and most important Colossi have fallen before. And in the same way as St. Augustine said of Imperial Rome: *Suâ se magnitudine fregit* (it went to pieces on account of its greatness), the historian who is privileged to record the fact for future generations, will say of Papal Rome: *Se fregit suâ pervicaciâ* (it went to pieces on account of its stubbornness).