

Friedell Vol 1

THE MODERN AGE

FRIEDEL

CHARLES FRANCIS ATKINSON

COMPLETE WORK

I.

FROM THE

Rebirth and
the Black Death
to the World War

II. FROM THE

Baroque and Rococo:
the World War to
the World War

Enlightenment and
the Seven Years'
War of Vienna

III.

Enlightenment and
the Congress of
Vienna
Nationalism and
the Franco-
Prussian War

PUBLISHED BY

A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE MODERN AGE

THE CRISIS OF THE
EUROPEAN SOUL
FROM THE BLACK DEATH
TO THE WORLD WAR

BY

EGON FRIEDEL

Translated from the German by

CHARLES FRANCIS ATKINSON

With an introductory essay on Friedell

by ALFRED POLGAR

VOLUME I

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in these very inversions that his origins perhaps disclose themselves most surely. That is why only his historical conclusions are absolutely compelling, and not by any means his philosophical. When, for instance, we read on the last page of his work: "It is Time whose inexorable movement embeds the ephemeral incident of the Culture, on this planet, in the incident of Man — a form wherein the incident life flows on for a time," his assertions are true and yet not true: true, that is, as vital manifestations of a definite historical variety of man, that of today, of which Spengler himself is an example, and one of the most shining; and neither more nor less true than fetishism in primitive peoples, or the Ptolemaic world-system of the Classical age.

Fruitful new ideas never come from an individual, but from the age. It is the very touchstone of its value that such ideas occur simultaneously to many people. Spengler recognizes this too when he says in his preface: "An idea that is historically essential — that does not occur within an epoch, but itself makes that epoch — is only in a limited sense the property of him to whose lot it falls to patent it. It belongs to the time as a whole and influences all thinkers without their knowing it." And, in fact, there appeared almost on the same day as Spengler's first volume a remarkable book by the Swiss writer C. H. Meray, which started from the basis that every civilization was a self-contained whole, a living thing similar to the multicellular organisms. We even find there the proposition: "so many religions, so many civilizations." The religions are said to be, as it were, the nerve-centres of individual cultures, the vital activity of which they unify and regulate. Further, every civilization has its own style; this too has its parallel phenomenon in the world of cells, where the protoplasm has likewise a specific constitution — its chemical structure — by which the genus of each individual living organism can be instantly determined. In the case of all these civilizations, now, the observer will find that after a certain time — that is, after about two to three thousand years — they die. The Egyptian, the Sumerian, the Babylonian, the Mycenæan, and the recently discovered Minoan: all these high and very individual cultures failed to pass this span. Civilizations have, therefore, just like organisms, a definite length of life, which may doubtless be curtailed through violent attacks from outside, but can in no case be extended. In

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conservative in his whole outlook, an advocate, in fact, of the suppression of other men's individualities. Upon which Ibsen smiled into his interrogator's face and said: "But have you never noticed that every idea, when you have thought it out to the end, becomes its own opposite?"

The legiti-
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Finally, as to the question of plagiarism, crying out about intellectual borrowings is one of the most superfluous occupations in the world. Every plagiarism is in fact its own punishment. On it rests the curse which turns all stolen goods, whether of the mental or of the physical order, into joyless possessions. It fills the thief with an uncertainty and embarrassment which is visible fifty yards away. Nature countenances no dishonest dealings. It is only our own thoughts that we can really set in motion, because they alone are our *organs*. An idea which belongs, not to us, but to another, we cannot handle; it will throw us as surely as a horse a strange rider; it is like a casket with a puzzle-lock to which one has no clue, or like a passport which opens the door into foreign lands, but only for those whose portrait and signature it bears. Therefore, do not bother if people steal as much intellectual treasure as they can lay hands on, for no one will suffer more for it than they themselves, when they find that they have wasted their precious time on something hopelessly unprofitable to them.

But there are also, of course, unconscious plagiarisms, or, rather, plagiarisms committed with a good conscience, just as one might call any trader a thief with a good conscience. Whether Proudhon's *mot* "*La propriété c'est le vol*" is precisely correct in the field of economics is doubtful; in the domain of the intellect it undoubtedly is so. For, strictly speaking, the whole of the world's literature consists of plagiarisms. The tracing of sources, said Goethe to Eckermann, was "very absurd." "As well might one inquire of a well-nourished man as to the oxen, sheep, and pigs he had consumed and from which he had drawn his strength. We have our native talents, it is true, but our development we owe to the thousand outer influences of a great world, from which we appropriate what we can and what suits us. . . . The main thing is to have a soul which loves truth and absorbs it where it finds it. In any case the world is now so old, and for millennia so many important persons have lived and thought in it, that there is little that is new to discover or say. Even my colour theory is by no

means new. Plato, Leona discovered and thought t that I also discovered it strove to gain admittanc that is *my* merit." And t admission on Goethe's pa he was more proud of tha

The whole intellectu thefts. Alexander stole f Giotto from Cimabue, S from Kant. And when a is always that too little is were made only from the was not enough. In the literature were snapped revival which took hold of when it happens that a gr it is always because he c Socrates had the rare goo scrupulous thief who kne he would have remained i great interest in the case pocket lighters, but in the whatever. For, as we have good ideas which live and i individual, but are always of a whole epoch. The re most crisply, illumine the their possible applications all collective natures, pose have we, and are we, tha own! . . . I owe my wor alone, but to thousands of provide me with the mat circumscribed thinkers, chi came to me and told me w how they lived and worke had, so that all I had to d had sown for me."

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discovered and thought the same in detail before me. Yet the fact
that I also discovered it, that I said it over again, and that I
strove to gain admittance for truth to a world in confusion —
that is *my* merit." And this must have been a very considerable
admission on Goethe's part, for we know that there was nothing
he was more proud of than his theory of colour.

The whole intellectual history of mankind is a history of
thefts. Alexander stole from Philip, Augustine from St. Paul,
Giotto from Cimabue, Schiller from Shakspeare, Schopenhauer
from Kant. And when a period of stagnation sets in, the reason
is always that too little is being stolen. In the Middle Ages, thefts
were made only from the Christian Fathers and Aristotle: that
was not enough. In the Renaissance all the odds and ends of
literature were snapped up: hence the tremendous intellectual
revival which took hold of European humanity at that time. And
when it happens that a great artist or thinker fails in his mission,
it is always because he cannot find enough people to rob him.
Socrates had the rare good fortune to find in Plato a perfectly un-
scrupulous thief who knew his trade thoroughly: without Plato
he would have remained unknown. The question of priority is of
great interest in the case of vacuum cleaners, quick cookers and
pocket lighters, but in the sphere of intellect it is of no importance
whatever. For, as we have pointed out in the case of Spengler, the
good ideas which live and fructify are never hacked out by a single
individual, but are always the work of the collective consciousness
of a whole epoch. The real point is, who will formulate them
most crisply, illumine them most clearly, follow them up in all
their possible applications. "At bottom," said Goethe, "we are
all collective natures, pose individually as we may. For how little
have we, and are we, that we can in the purest sense call our
own! . . . I owe my works by no means to my own wisdom
alone, but to thousands of things and persons outside myself, who
provide me with the material. Fools and wise men, clear and
circumscribed thinkers, childhood, youth, and maturity: all these
came to me and told me what they were like, what they thought,
how they lived and worked, and what store of experience they
had, so that all I had to do was to turn to and reap what others
had sown for me."

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These have vitality, but are not productive; they include the big battalions of the "normal" people: the peasant, the bourgeois, the honest craftsman, the capable official, and the plain scholar. Thirdly, we have the man of genius with an extremely irritable peripheral system and a proportionately hypertrophied central system; he is both vital and productive. Genius is, on this showing, nothing more than an organized neurosis, an intelligent form of madness. And thus we begin to understand why genius not only regularly displays pathological traits, but is notable for extraordinary brain power and particularly strong and delicate sense of moral values: for this surplus is *essential*. The same relations may even occasionally be noticed in highly gifted people such as the Hellenes: the Dionysiac was the peripheral system, the Apollinian the central system, of the collective genius, "Greek genius."

The necessity of the Apollinian component in all creative genius is now generally admitted; it is less easy to convince people that the Dionysiac is of equal importance. A genius is not only a latent lunatic, but also a latent criminal, who only avoids conflict with the law because his genius enables him to take refuge in production. "I have never heard of a crime that I should be incapable of committing," said Goethe. For of such is the poet made. A crime that he could not commit would lie outside his powers of description. But he does not need to commit any crime: he can construct it artificially. Hebbel was making a deeper self-revelation than he knew, perhaps, when he wrote: "By creating murderers Shakspeare saved himself from the necessity of becoming one." Hebbel's dramas are full of bloodshed, and his diaries also show a surprising delight in murder stories of every description. Wherever he found one of these, he noted it down, studied it psychologically, and turned it about with an interest that was quite disproportionate to the actual case. It seems extremely probable too that Schiller was a really clever robber and Balzac an extortioner of the first water: only their literary talent was incomparably greater than their talent for robbery or extortion. All the creative artists — Dante and Michelangelo, Strindberg and Poe, Nietzsche and Dostoievski — what were they but cannibals rescued by art? Then, the "monsters" of world-history — Caligula and Tiberius, Danton and Robespierre, Cæsar Borgia and Torquemada — what were they but artists cast adrift in reality? And

Production
as a refuge

the primacy, and underlying every gesture was a deep symbolism that was felt far more strongly and deeply than symbolisms are by the men of later times. But side by side with this men had the honesty and forthrightness of children. They still stood in an elementary relation to nature, to field and forest, wind and cloud. And there is something strangely affecting, too, in their passionate love of animals, their wise, merry brothers, whom everywhere they honour — in sculpture and ornament, in satire and legend, at home and at court — who appear to them as like in kind to themselves, whom they regard even as full juridical persons liable to be brought up as witnesses and, for that matter, as criminals. One of the most charming stories handed down to us from the Middle Ages is that of a dog which gave its life for its master's child and was worshipped as martyr and saint by the people. In the presence of a world like this we have the sensation we so often experience in our dealings with children, the feeling that they know something which we do not know or no longer know, some magic secret or divine marvel wherein perhaps may lie the key to our whole existence.

No relation to money

Another infantile trait is the vague attitude of mediæval man to money. Sombart expresses this very wisely and kindly in saying that men stand in much the same spiritual relation to economic activities as the child to his lessons. The meaning of this is twofold: that work is purely a matter of ambition, and that it is only performed when it is absolutely imperative. The mediæval craftsman put good work and solidity above everything and had no conception of trashy goods or mass production. He stood behind his work in person and staked his honour on it like an artist. But he could afford to be much lazier as well as more conscientious than a present-day workman, and that for several reasons. In the first place, broadly speaking, needs were fewer; in the second, they were much more easily satisfied, even in a non-working existence, — which was not impossible, since almsgiving was much more widespread than now — and in the third, there would have been little point in exceeding the normal income, as the individual's standard of living was fairly well fixed, and such straining of incomes as is seen today in every small provincial town did not occur. To every class was allotted, so to say, its due measure of comfort and enjoyment, and to change one's class was practically impos-

sible in mediæval society. Condition were regarded, material world, as divinely or out of an agrarian society basis; but even in its later appeared in the organization and merchants' guilds), calculation of its members: we live in order to earn. It has the Middle Ages, in which there was always a more was a creature of the Devil. instance, always roused young world was permeated work was not a blessing, what a difference it must culture when money is not that commands the unprinciples of all!

But, granted that these theless clever, gifted, material and worked in dull subject so far as the high Middle thinkers then, bright mind poetic presentation of concrete with powers of construction possessed, in all the manifold style which has never since the theory that mankind is but types. Neither in the science was there any lack personalities. The confessions reveal an almost uncanny analysis, such as is unimaginable developed and nuanced in strikingly individual figures sculptors' talent in seizing early as the tenth century drama, that most individual

der Anschauung alter Zeiten: "It is not improbable that illnesses have a history of their own; so that each age has its particular illnesses, which had not occurred just so before and will never occur just so again." The only explanation for this, obviously, must be that every age *makes* its own illnesses, which are just as much a part of its physiognomy as everything else that it produces, just as much its specific creations as its art, its strategy, its religion, its physics, its economy, its erotic, and all its other manifestations. They are, so to say, its inventions and discoveries in the pathological domain. It is the spirit which builds itself a body: always the spirit is the prime mover, both in the individual and in the mass. If we are prepared to stand by this comparison — admittedly a lame one in more than one respect — with the individual, we shall have to say: the Black Death is no more the cause of modernity than pregnancy is the cause of a new organism; for in the one case as in the other the true cause lies in the entry of a new life-germ into the mother-body, and the result and expression of this fact constitutes pregnancy. The "new spirit" generated a sort of development-sickness in European humanity, a general psychosis; and one — the most prominent — of the forms of this sickness was the Black Death. But whence this new spirit came and why it arose just then and there, no one knows. The *Weltgeist* will not disclose that secret.

Neither has any one unravelled the immediate circumstances under which the Plague, known generally as the Black Death or the Great Death, suddenly gripped Europe. Some maintain that it slipped in in the train of the Crusades, but if so, it is strange that it should never have been even approximately so terrible among the Arabs as it was with us. Others have put its place of origin as far away as China. Contemporary opinion laid the responsibility on the constellations, the prevailing wickedness, the unchastity of the priests, and the Jews. There it was, anyhow — and suddenly, first in Italy, then slinking over the whole Continent. Part of its uncanniness lay precisely in this slow and steady progress from house to house and from land to land, which was so unlike the raging of most other epidemics. It took possession of Germany, France, England, Spain, and finally the northerly countries right up to Iceland. What made it still more horrible was its incalculable behaviour. At times it spared whole stretches

of country, as, for instance, the individual houses; or it appeared after years. Richard we read in the chronicles "Death on the Rhine," "Year of general Plague throughout Germany," "Greatly to have been a form of the lymphatic disease, headache, great weakness, delirium. According to the first or second, or a terrific everywhere. With deaths daily in Berne, of thirteen thousand Oxford died, and three Minorites counted these amounted to over total losses, according millions. The men of the than those who had per

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of country, as, for instance, eastern Franconia, and skipped individual houses; or it would disappear all of a sudden and reappear after years. Right into the middle of the fifteenth century we read in the chronicles: "Plague in Bohemia," "The Great Death on the Rhine," "Plague in Prussia," "Death in the country," "Year of general death," "Ten thousand die in Nuremberg," "Plague throughout Germany, strong men die, few women, more rarely children," "Great pestilence in the coast towns." It appears to have been a form of bubonic plague, manifesting itself in swelling of the lymphatic glands (the so-called plague-boils), violent headache, great weakness, and apathy, though also in some cases delirium. According to contemporary reports, death occurred on the first or second, or at latest the seventh, day. The mortality was terrific everywhere. While it was at its height, we hear of sixty deaths daily in Berne, a hundred in Cologne and in Mainz, a total of thirteen thousand at Elbing. Two-thirds of the students at Oxford died, and three-fifths of the Yorkshire clergy. When the Minorites counted their dead at the end of two years of plague, these amounted to over a hundred and twenty thousand. Europe's total losses, according to recent calculation, amounted to twenty millions. The men of the day found it easier to count the survivors than those who had perished.

With the Plague came another movement. The Flagellant monks, in exaltation, went about in great swarms from place to place, waving flags and singing mournful songs, dressed in black cloaks and repulsive caps, with a gleaming red cross before them. Their appearance in a town was the signal for all bells to ring, and all the people flocked to church. The Flagellants then flung themselves down, scourging, singing, and praying for hours together, reading out letters that were said to have fallen from heaven, which condemned the sinful ways of laity and clergy and exhorted them to repent. Their doctrine, if such it can be called, was undoubtedly heretical. They taught that flagellation was the true communion, in that their own blood became mingled with the Saviour's. Priests were unworthy and superfluous, and their presence was not tolerated at their devotional exercises. The effect on a terrified humanity that felt the Church and the world to be falling about its ears was immense. Gradually, however, the ranks of the Flagellants came to be reinforced by various unclean elements,

*The parallel
epidemic*

such as adventurers, social outcasts, beggars, Manichees, and pervers. What unspeakable emotions, compounded of hope and fear, disgust and awe, must have seized the people at the advance of one of these ghastly processions of fanatics, lunatics, and criminals, whose coming was heralded from afar by their ghastly and monotonous chanting: "Lift ye up your hands and pray, God may turn this pest away. Lift ye up your arms, implore Him to veil His face no more! Jesus, through Thy name of Three, From our sins oh set us free! Let us by Thy blood so red From the Death be rescued!"

These Flagellant bands were not, however, simply a phenomenon arising out of the Plague, a mere attempt at a sort of religious therapy. It is highly probable that what they represent is a parallel epidemic or further symptom of the general psychosis, the Plague being only an external point on which it seized. In support of this theory we have the fact that widespread mental disorders made their appearance at that time quite independently of the Plague. A whole year before, men and women were to be seen dancing hand in hand in circles by the hour, working themselves up to a pitch at which they foamed at the mouth and sank down half fainting. During the dance they had epileptic fits and visions. It was the now familiar St. Vitus's dance, which quickly spread to wider circles, taking on more and more of a sexual character as it developed and finally becoming a sort of fashion, so that vagabonds could make a living by imitating the symptoms.

In the same order of phenomena was the extraordinary Crusade of the Children of Schwäbisch-Hall in Germany, when as the result of a religious hypnosis a band of children set out to do homage to the archangel Michael at St. Michael's Mount in Normandy. The fixation of this idea was so strong that those among them who were forcibly kept back became seriously ill and in some cases died.

The contemporary persecutions of the Jews also had a pathological and epidemic character, though it cannot be said that this was a phenomenon which might not have taken place at any other time. The rumour, which sprang up suddenly in southern France, that the Jews had poisoned the wells, spread faster than the plague into the adjoining countries. It led to a horrible slaughter of the Jews, in which the Flagellants formed the shock-troops and the

Jews displayed that blinding whole history from the to the Russian pogrom. At Esslingen the whole gogue and deliberately: been baptized to escape with remorse and burn house. The Jewish pers acter, but there were, n of the world towards th biguous. Both the spirit Jews, and indeed exten In fact, they could not of their special talent fo a far greater asset than cation. The courts app culture and, still more, ful and tractable objec come allotted to the v. always figure in the list money, salt-mines, and it was the Jews who ki a gentle-minded preach to visit the guilt of this easy to reply with the tinned to deny the Go That the smallest, weal nations of the West sh aloof from the light of C — which, psychoanalyt over. Matters were mad tised by Jewish extortio religion permitted the t appear even meritoriou believing "Goy." In a them, for naturally n guilds. Thus it came : were less concerned wit

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Jews displayed that blind heroism which appears throughout their whole history from the days of Nebuchadnezzar and Titus down to the Russian *pogroms*. Mothers who saw their husbands burnt at the stake flung themselves with their children into the flames. At Esslingen the whole Jewish community assembled in the synagogue and deliberately set fire to it. At Constance a Jew, who had been baptized to escape death by burning, was afterwards seized with remorse and burnt himself and his whole family in his own house. The Jewish persecutions were primarily religious in character, but there were, no doubt, social causes as well. The attitude of the world towards the Jewish question in those days was ambiguous. Both the spiritual and the temporal powers tolerated the Jews, and indeed extended to them a certain amount of protection. In fact, they could not readily do without them, not only because of their special talent for economic affairs (which, be it noted, was a far greater asset then than now), but because of their higher education. The courts appreciated them as transmitters of Arabian culture and, still more, as physicians. Above all, they were fruitful and tractable objects of taxation. Among the sources of income allotted to the various feudal lords as privileges the Jews always figure in the list side by side with the right of coining, toll money, salt-mines, and the like. But the people never forgot that it was the Jews who killed the Saviour, and when here and there a gentle-minded preacher tried to point out that it was not right to visit the guilt of this upon the rest of the race for ever, it was easy to reply with the further argument that the Jews still continued to deny the Gospel and even fought it by secret means. That the smallest, weakest, and most scattered of all the civilized nations of the West should be the only one to hold obstinately aloof from the light of Christianity was a fact — a stupendous fact — which, psychoanalytically, the people of that time could not get over. Matters were made worse by the really hard oppression practised by Jewish extortioners. The Jews were the only people whose religion permitted the taking of interest, and in their eyes it might appear even meritorious to inflict the utmost damages on the unbelieving "Goy." In addition, all other callings were closed to them, for naturally none but Christians were admitted to the guilds. Thus it came about that not a few of these persecutors were less concerned with burning Jews than with burning bonds.

age
bells

"Their possessions," says a contemporary chronicler, "were the poison which killed them."

Cosmic disturbance

Not only humanity, but heaven and earth, too, were convulsed in those days. Ominous comets appeared. In England storms raged with a fury unknown before or since. Gigantic swarms of locusts descended on the fields. Earthquakes ravaged the country — Villach was destroyed along with thirty villages around it. The earth seemed to become barren, and blight and drought caused the crops to fail everywhere. These phenomena may not be just dismissed as "accidental freaks of nature" nor yet as "superstitious popular imaginings." If it be true that at that time humanity was shaken by a great jerk, a mysterious upheaval, a profound shudder of conception, then the earth must have had some similar experience; and not the earth only, but the neighbouring planets, nay, the whole solar system. The signs and wonders witnessed by that "limited and credulous" age were real signs, distinct manifestations of a wondrous concatenation of cosmic happening.

World-downfall

Man, at any rate, distraught by so many calamities and contradictions in his present and future, rushed about in terror, straining his eyes for something firm. Serious people took refuge entirely in their God or their Church, fasting, praying, and doing penance. The frivolous flung themselves into a life of unrestrained worldliness, opening all the valves to vice and greed and making of life the fattest hangman's breakfast possible. Many thought the Day of Judgment was at hand. And in all this — in the pessimistic and ascetic currents as in the unwholesome, bloated merrymaking, which was merely a sort of consumptive's sensuality or "tomorrow we die" recklessness — there was a general feeling of the world's end which, expressed or unexpressed, conscious or unconscious, permeated and dominated the whole era. And men's instinct was perfectly right; the world did really come to an end. The world that had been, that strange world of the Middle Ages, so limited and so luminous, pure and depraved, soaring and fettered, foundered in misery and thunder into the depths of time and eternity, never to return.

Dethronement of Universals

The fundamental principle on which the mediæval world-outlook rested was: the realities are the universals. What is real is, not the individual, but the estate to which he belongs. Not the particular priest was real, but the Catholic Church, whose gifts

of grace he distributed; bauchee, the sacredness of which he had no reality. Not that he wooed his lady with sonnets but the great ideal of the age exalted him. Not the art was real, but the lofty ideal many, created. Not even the soul evolves in solitary wrestling with truths of the faith, and to arrange, justify, and explain.

At the end of the Middle Ages the world began to waver and become fluid, opposites. The great Jol of his origin and *doctor* (splitting), the head of the four in 1308, was still a man must break down if universal scientific knowing, consistently explained, however, that to the general and the particular corporate both; and else individuality was not a fact the *ultima realitas*.] somewhat later and has ceptualist; he declared (*ceptus*), abstracted from essence in nature; the only *Socratitas*, not the *humanism* and the most famous Occam (the *doctor sing invincibilis*), who died in further. He too began by *conceptus mentis*, *significans* did not exist in things, but did not follow, merely cepts, that the universal proceeded to a complete phenomenon in concepts actual copies

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bauchee, the sacredness of his office was not affected thereby, since
he had no reality. Not the knight who tilted in the tournament,
wooded his lady with song, or fought in the Holy Land was real,
but the great ideal of the knightly order which embraced and
exalted him. Not the artist who made poems in stone and glass
was real, but the lofty cathedral which he, a nameless one of
many, created. Not even the thoughts which the human mind
evolves in solitary wrestling were real, but only the everlasting
truths of the faith, and the business of that mind was simply to
arrange, justify, and expound.

At the end of the Middle Ages all these conceptions began to
waver and become fluid, and finally they turned into their exact
opposites. The great John Duns (surnamed Scotus on account
of his origin and *doctor subtilis* on account of his powers of hair-
splitting), the head of the Scotists, who died at the age of thirty-
four in 1308, was still a moderate Realist. He held that all science
must break down if universals, which were the aim and end of all
scientific knowing, consisted of mere concepts of the reason. He
explained, however, that Reality was in the relation of indifference
to the general and the particular alike and could, therefore, in-
corporate both; and elsewhere he went so far as to admit that
individuality was not a defective but a more complete reality, in
fact the *ultima realitas*. The Franciscan Pierre Aureol, who wrote
somewhat later and has remained obscure, was clearly a con-
ceptualist; he declared universals to be mere conceptions (*con-
ceptus*), abstracted from individual things and having no exist-
ence in nature; the only part of Socrates that was real being the
Socratitas, not the *humanitas*. But the real founder of Nominal-
ism and the most famous of Duns Scotus's pupils, William of
Occam (the *doctor singularis*, *venerabilis inceptor*, and *doctor
invincibilis*), who died in the year of the Black Death, went much
further. He too began by arguing that the universal was a mere
conceptus mentis, *significans univoce plura singularia*, and that it
did not exist in things, but only in the reasoning mind; and that it
did not follow, merely because we know by the aid of universal con-
cepts, that the universal possesses reality. From this he then pro-
ceeded to a complete phenomenalism. Duns Scotus had still seen
in concepts actual copies of things, but with Occam they became

merely signs (*signa*) which were called forth in us by means of things, put by us in relation to things, and not necessarily even resembling those things, any more than smoke as a sign of fire resembles fire in any way, or sighs as a sign of pain resemble pain in any way. In the further course of his deductions Occam arrived at a peculiar type of indeterminism. God, he argued, is bound by no laws. Nothing happens of necessity, for otherwise the facts of chance and of evil in the world would be inexplicable. God was not obliged to create this particular world; He might have created a perfectly different one — or none at all. There are, therefore, no universally valid ethical forms: God might just as easily have declared unkind and selfish deeds to be meritorious. The Decalogue was not an absolute code of morals, it had only a qualified validity. It forbade murder, theft, and polygamy; but Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son, the Israelites carried off the golden vessels of the Egyptians, and the patriarchs allowed themselves a number of wives — and God approved. These arguments, originating in part from Occam and in part from Duns Scotus, could have but one meaning — that God is beyond good and evil. But the crown of Occamist philosophy is its profession of irrationalism and agnosticism. All knowing that goes beyond the immediate experience of the moment is a matter of faith. God is unknowable, His existence does not follow as a consequence of the conception of Him. The existence of a first cause cannot be proved, there might have been an infinite series of causes. Several worlds with different creators are conceivable; the Trinity, the Incarnation, or the soul's immortality can never form the subject of logical demonstration.

Christ
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donkey

It would be a serious mistake, however, to conclude from the foregoing that Occam was a free-thinker, a sort of forerunner of Voltaire or Nietzsche. He was undoubtedly an energetic supporter of the Modernists of that day, who fought against the exclusive power of the Pope and for the independence of emperor and bishops, but at the same time he was strictly orthodox. His sceptical-critical subtleties were simply the powerful expressions of his religiousness. The thought of the unlimited divine despotism was soothing rather than irritating to him. His submissiveness would not be satisfied if he imagined any limitations, even those of causality and moral, to God's omnipotence, and by emphasizing

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the impossibility of proving the Christian mysteries he put them out of reach of attack and doubt once and for all. Faith became a virtue only when the incomprehensibility, and, indeed, the senselessness, of ecclesiastical doctrine had been realized. It was through him that the principle "*Credo quia absurdum*" was endowed with the strength and spirituality to make its last and finest rally. He laid the emphasis entirely on the "*Credo*": it was just the fact that faith and knowledge were two separate things which made the preservation of faith possible. But how if, one fine day, it occurred to someone to lay the emphasis on "*absurdum*" and so arrive at the conclusion that this fact of faith and knowledge being two different things annihilates faith and saves knowledge? — A shallow notion, but an extremely dangerous one. To Occam this possibility of shifting the accent does not seem to have occurred. Instead, with tireless energy he dragged up all possible absurdities so that he might combine them with faith. One of his propositions, which strikes us as a fearful blasphemy, though it gave not the smallest offence at the time, was: If God had pleased, He might just as well have embodied Himself in a donkey as in a man.

This instance—one of many—shows clearly how with Occam the principle of absurdity overshot itself, rebounded, and finally turned against itself, and how entirely opposed it was to the naïvely credulous faith in miracles of the Middle Ages. Quite without Occam's knowledge or intention it changes the punctuation, so to say, and reappears all at once with the opposite sign. The principle, under Occam's excessive forcing, is strained to breaking. So sharp a point as he put on to it was bound to break. But there was nothing unconscious or unintended about his Nominalism. The work of five hundred years of Scholasticism issued in one sentence that killed it: Universals were not real; they were neither *ante rem* nor *in re*, but *post rem* and even *pro re*: mere representative signs and vague symbols of things, *vocalia, termini, flatus vocis*, nothing but artificial aids to easier comprehension and at bottom verbiage without content—*Universalia sunt nomina*.

The triumph of Nominalism is the most weighty fact in modern history—much more important than the Reformation, gunpowder, and printing. It turned the mediæval world-picture back to front and the existing system of the universe upside-down.

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ter speak of their parents in language which would be repellent even in our own day. And the process of emancipation and these loosening and underminings nowhere worked themselves out in quiet and slow evolution. On the contrary, the age is one immense battlefield, full of unceasing strife, inward and outward, open and underground — struggle of councils against popes, of popes against emperors, of emperors against princes, of princes against patricians, of patricians against guilds, of guilds against priests, and of everyone against everyone else.

In the face of such a catastrophic collapse of all values, such a radical loosening of all bonds, only two attitudes were possible: the totally uncritical, that of blind prostration before destiny — in a word, *fatalism*; or the hypercritical, which denies every sort of necessity and may be called *subjectivism*. The Scotists adopted the first of these. Turning on the Thomists, who had maintained that everything reasonable was willed by God, they asserted that everything God willed was reasonable. It was wrong to say that God did a thing because it was good; the fact was that the thing was good because God did it. The most subjective point of view was that held by the "Free-minded Brethren," the "itinerant Beghards," undisciplined hordes who carried on their mission in the Rhine lands and elsewhere, living by begging or, rather, by extortion and robbery — which they justified on the ground that private possessions were sinful. They spread the doctrine by sermons and writings and also by discussions, in which they developed great shrewdness and readiness of repartee. Their verbal arrows made them famed and feared. Their main tenets were: There is no God above the world. Man is God. Since man is like God, there is no need for intermediaries. A good man's blood was as venerable as the blood of Christ. The moral was that which the Brethren and Sisters declared to be moral. Freedom knows no rule and, therefore, no sin. For the "mind," there are no such things as theft or fornication. The kingdom of God and true blessedness are on earth, and therein consists true religion. In short the Ego, purely self-regarding and unburdened with scruples of any kind is the true Christ.

Both standpoints were nihilistic. Scotism laid such emphasis on the omnipotence and sole reality of God as to extinguish the individual; the intellectualist Beghard laid such emphasis on the

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Their organization was still wholly patriarchal. They were no mere association of economic interests, but an ethical union. The apprentice entered not only the business, but the family of his master, who was as responsible for his pupil's moral guidance as for his technical training. Similarly the individual member's relation to his guild was less that of a judicial subjection than of piety. It was a matter of honour rather than of economics to turn out good work. On the other hand, the guild regarded it as its most important duty pledged to find adequate markets for its members and to provide care and nourishment in case of illness or disablement. Social gatherings in special meeting-rooms, corporate festivities and processions, particular forms of salutation, and guild customs strengthened the bond. In time, however, this fine spirit of fellowship inevitably degenerated into a niggling guardship and rigid lifeless routine, so that even today this sort of thing is contemptuously called "guildish" (*zünftlerisch*). Everything was scrupulously regulated, from speech-making and drinking of healths to the number of apprentices and the size of the shops. No apprentice might go out for his glass of beer before the bells struck three. Not more than six guilders were to be lost at play in one evening. Only personally finished articles were to be sold, so as to prevent the development of wholesale businesses. The workshop must give on to the street so that the work should be always open to inspection. No new work might be taken on before earlier orders had been completed. Delicate work was to be done by daylight only. All well-meant and sensible rules, but intolerably cramping in the long run. Above all, there was no possibility of grasping the broader implications of things or of organically combining opposing factors. These are the invariable drawbacks of an outlook which concentrates on immediate realities. Life in those days moved in a heavy armour of form and formulæ, forced into that armour by a professional diletantism that set itself against brains. Everywhere one sees a dogged clinging to the solid material of existence, without creative freedom, productiveness, or genius. Yet in its own domain this materialism won great victories. It was an age of loyal, conscientious, and artistic handling of materials, of endowing material with dignity and beauty, of respect and veneration for the object that was being fashioned, such as we of today can hardly imagine, an age of

craftsmen who brought more inventive genius, affection, and originality to bear on a lock or a wardrobe than is devoted to one of our modern luxury buildings. It was the heroic age of Philistinism.

A growing sense of actuality usually tends to bring a certain rationalization and increased purposefulness into the business of living, and we can detect at this stage the first, though quite modest, attempts to master the problems of life scientifically. In the domain of nature-research confusion still reigned. Valuable discoveries of all sorts were made, but they were not co-ordinated, and even so thorough and many-sided a thinker as Regiomontanus impresses us as a learned collector of curiosities who stores his precious finds side by side as unsystematically as the veriest amateur. Konrad von Megenberg's *Buch der Natur*, again, a sort of zoological text-book, is remarkably good in point of systematic arrangement, but has not emancipated its pictures and text from fabulous creatures — dragons, winged horses, mermaids, sphinxes, centaurs, fire-breathing dogs, and the like. In fact, the only sphere in which a fertile and unbroken empirical tradition ruled was that of craftsmanship. By dint of experimenting and perfecting, there came into existence a whole army of exquisite trifles and playthings: highly original clocks and locks, artificial waterworks, delicate instruments for goldsmith's work, and magnificent organs. But there was no scientific intention behind them, only the idea of making existence more ornamental and comfortable. In finance, too, the feeling for numerical exactitude gained strength only slowly. In the main the methods used were primitive and summary. Errors in reckoning were so common that no one worried about them. The idea of checking one's calculations was entirely lacking, the use of zero as a positional number was unknown. Reckoning was done with the clumsy and unreliable abacus. Division was an art which practically no one had mastered. Arithmetical work was a process of trial and error — that is, various results were tried in turn until one that appeared fairly plausible was obtained. Memory for figures, which we regard today as a matter of course, was then quite undeveloped.

In the field of history considerable progress was made. The need of recording present and recapitulating past events was gen-

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that they were offered for selection like our still more various hors d'œuvres; one took a helping of one, and another of another, but only the real glutton sampled them all. It is from the standpoint of a modern gourmet that the combinations are so barbarous; in particular the little birds (presumably sparrows) in dripping with radishes must have tasted atrocious. Everyday meals were quite plain, even in well-to-do families. A guest from our epoch would probably miss sugar more than anything, for this was still a very costly article, used only on special occasions and as medicine. Then the fare included practically no vegetables, or, at the most, cabbage or millet. Green peas were considered a delicacy; rice was known, but did not often figure. Above all, there were lacking the two items without which we can hardly imagine a meal: soup and potatoes.

A good deal of drink — principally beer — was regularly consumed, especially in Germany. Wine was sour and badly kept, and honey and spices were added to improve it. The tasty Southern wines were drunk only as *apéritifs*, even by the rich. In general, wine was treated with respect and more in the light of a medicine: as a purgative, an opiate, an aid to digestion, and at the same time a gift of God.

We now come to one of the most important characteristics of the age, which we will call *diabolism* or *Satanism*. Human beings, or at least many of them, had at that time something diabolical about them. And there was something diabolical also in the external events which beat in on them. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that many of these deranged and frightened creatures became obsessed with the idea that Antichrist had obtained the mastery and that the reign of evil which preluded the Day of Judgment had already set in. The fundamental feeling which possessed them is perhaps best explained by the term "world-nightmare." Outward impressions and events affected them like a huge, monstrous nightmare, an evil ghostly dream. Tortured humanity moved in a perpetual fear-neurosis, which a fear-inspired chase after riches and pleasure could only deaden by spasms. In their very exterior the men and women of that time betrayed their devastated condition. They were, to our ideas, frankly ugly, being either lean and emaciated or spongy and bloated, sometimes grotesquely combining the two extremes; as when a ponderous belly was supported

*The world-
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mammoth buildings which are never finished; their political imagination, true to its period, suffered from elephantiasis.

The reign of the first Luxemburger, Charles IV, is brightened by a wise and beneficent encouragement of science and art, and above all by the dazzling apparition of Rienzi, the "last of the tribunes," a fiery fantast belonging to the family of picturesque adventurers who leave no permanent traces in history and yet impress themselves more deeply on the memory than their most productive contemporaries. Rienzi had something of the genius's uncompromising directness and breadth in his ideas, which imposed itself on all; on the other hand, he had an undisciplined, sweeping immoderateness which caused him only too soon to transgress the bounds of possibility and brought him to his downfall. But his grandiose dreams of the rebirth of Rome's former greatness, of the restoration of a European world-empire, did not die with him; he still lives in the long line of shining fabulous beings whose portraits, falsified by legend, fertilize our imagination better than a hundred "epoch-making" facts from real history.

The last of the Luxemburgs, Sigismund, also achieved legendary fame, though of a very different nature, through his betrayal of Huss, whom he is said to have lured to his death by a letter of safe-conduct. Actually his behaviour constituted no breach of the law according to the views of the time, and there is no record of a single important contemporary raising this accusation — and this though the Council was attacked right and left in judicial, political, and even theological circles. But here, too, is a case where we are bound to accept the unhistoric, people's view as the truer one. For, in a higher and deeper sense, he did act in bad faith when he set himself against the progressive forces of the heart of his own nuclear land and — be the legal rights of the matter what they may — permitted the fall of the man who embodied the will of the people. We can see him before us, the old hypocrite, leaning this way and that, seeking shallow compromises, now persuading Huss to give in, now flattering the princes of the Church; the voluptuous fop and corrupt rhetorician with his red forked beard, the connoisseur of brilliant witticisms, elegant courtesans, and delectable fish dishes; smooth, hollow, without aim or conviction, hatred or love, a totally *unreal* person, a glittering, polished cipher.

It is a remarkable fact that these two should have been two. These were Charles V (1378-1419). The latter was an alcoholic maniac. One day he roasted on the spit a prisoner and said he just about to be beheaded. I saw his eyes, knelt down, and said: "The man just touched me." Then he made him kneel and struck his head at one blow. Meeting his bow and shot him in the odd head of game that he gave someone to write on a parchment and wrote underneath it: "These two madmen are noted by Dyrnter, a man of common knowledge that he is the hero of the Czechs, and he would not betray to his wife — clearly one is a regular concomitant. The other was an extremely clever man with altogether excellent *folie raisonnée*. These two madmen then met in the land, who was notoriously not far removed from rule — overcame his apathy, childishly dreamt of Constantinople's fall reaching "The Kaiser sits at his footstool of poor creature!"

The histories of Europe should not be studied separately but termingled. They present treacherous murders, of political villainess. horrors with a mystify

painters, musicians, and mystics. Indeed, the Burgundian culture may be taken as the most thoroughgoing example of the "incubation period." It was a world of blood and colour, of red passions and a bright will to beauty; a world at once blooming and dim, childlike and perverse, dull and supersplendid — a big, swelled, barbaric fever-dream. The Dutch scholar Huizinga, in an excellent book recently published, has described it as the "autumn of the Middle Ages." To us it seems more of a mysterious prelude to spring, the subterranean awakening of a new life amid snow and hail and all the capricious spasms of expectant, agitated nature.

The only two positive credit-entries which European politics can show during this period are the expulsion of the Arabs from Spain and the destruction of Mongol rule in Russia.

The condition of the Church has already been frequently alluded to. A furious contempt for the clergy is the signature of the age. On every possible occasion we hear denunciation of their coarseness and ignorance, their self-indulgence and licence, their covetousness and idleness. They played, drank, hunted, thought only of their stomach, and ran after every petticoat. In Italy in particular the words "parson" and "*cicisbeo*" are almost synonyms. Innumerable public sayings, clichés, and proverbs reflect the prevailing attitude towards the clerical class. It was universally held that a bishop could not enter heaven. A specially plentiful and luscious feast was called a prelates' dinner. Of celibacy it was said that it differed from wedlock in that the layman had one wife, but the priest ten. "As long as the peasant has wives, the priest has no need to marry"; "I crucify my flesh," says the monk as he lays the ham and venison crosswise on his buttered bread." Concubines were a matter of course with most of the clergy; they were known as "soul-cows" because they were the constant entourage of the soul-pastor. Even a theological authority such as Chancellor Gerson declared the oath of chastity to mean simply the renunciation of marriage, and when it was desired to reproach anyone for particularly loose living, the phrase was: "lewd as a Carmelite." It was quite usual for priests to frequent taverns, play for dancing, and tell ribald stories; even in the Vatican reading aloud from pornographic literature was much enjoyed. The Council of Constance drew courtesans, jugglers,

Anti-clericalism

and procurers in crowds from all quarters, and Avignon was reputed to have become a city of brothels after the popes took it for their residence. Nay, we could go further and say that part of the clergy was caught in a current of atheism to which the people reacted in their turn.

Wyclif

Yet these were but scattered and separate symptoms, and opposition was as yet inert, lacking in conscious aim and in uniformity. The first massed attack against the Papal Church began with Wyclif, who with scientific orderliness and precision, temperament, sledge-hammer power of argument, and an almost poetical gift of representation, forestalled all the ideas on which the later Reformation was founded, and even, in some points, went far beyond the leaders of that movement. He started from the clear and simple principle that the Church was no longer the Church and the pope no longer the Pope. It was not for the Pope to be the imperious ruler, but the humble servant of Christ; the governance of souls was given him by God to hold as a fief, and if he were a bad vassal, failing to keep his Lord's laws and associating with His deadly enemies, worldly lust and worldly possessions, then it must be escheated. The Papacy was not demonstrably founded in the law of God, the Church had no outward and visible head. Wyclif desired, therefore, no more and no less than a popeless Church. But he made two more important points: laymen were to have the right to read the Bible (which he translated into English for the purpose), and most of the external apparatus of ecclesiastical practice was to go — pilgrimages and the use of relics, confession and extreme unction, celibacy and the hierarchy. And, lastly, he contested even the dogma of transubstantiation. Hussism added nothing to Wyclif's system and on certain points even narrowed it down. It is, indeed, no more than a weaker, emptier duplication of Wyclifism and contains no single original feature; but the figure of Huss himself acquired a terrific impressiveness by reason of his earnestness, strength of character, and unyielding determination to seek the truth, though with all this there was mingled a chaotic strain of bull-obstinacy and narrow-mindedness — characteristic of all Slav thinkers.

papa triumphans

On the program of the Council of Constance there stood three main points: the *causa unionis*, the *causa reformationis*, and the *causa fidei*. For none of these three problems was anything even

approaching a solution to a sort of republican reducing the Papacy to dom, so to speak, and p of the Council, the parli only the victory of C Absolutism.

Thus we have the phant than ever. It triu churches, over the her Only in one quarter dic important and alone d it sinks all at once into Outward victories and of history. The Kaiser-defeats; the Pope-idea forth overlay the world The pope ruled without seriously, men believed been all that really mat of Peter, the shepherd only the mighty prince with a crown, a treasure others.

What help did his Holy Father. Let every ruler of this world and, it was all useless: for he honestly tried, in so far to become likenesses of nesses of the good ol vacillating, but so divinely struggling to understand would all Europe be Cat

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and unrighteous challenge to the moral system of the universe, which proved their ruin.

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The simple always wins and this case was a simple one to sum up. Here is a man who holds his court in gold and purple, commands millions, condemns millions, tries to usurp the Kaiser's rights, and all on the authority of a claim to be the earthly representative of one who lived among men despised as a beggar, who neither could nor would command anyone, who accused none and gave to Cæsar what was Cæsar's due — *Caiaphas* posing as the vicar of *Christ*!

In all this, however, there is one point that must not be lost sight of: that apart from Wyclifism, which was practically exterminated after his death by the house of Lancaster, and Hussism, which became bogged in compromise, the whole movement was at first anti-clerical only and not anti-Catholic. This is an important difference. It was not the dogmas and rituals that men attacked, but false uses and degradation of them; the abuses, not the uses. To this extent the controversy was juridical rather than theological.

Demons and magicians
While men's faith was being thus shaken and disorientated and humanity had allowed itself to become confused by the servants of the Church without finding the courage to doubt the Church itself, there rose to the surface some strange currents which had always been at work underground, but now, in the general state of helplessness, became a new power in life. Since God no longer spoke through His priests, other announcers of His will were sought, and thus there arose a very thinly masked polytheism in the form of a dæmon-worship which was reckless, often formidable, and occasionally nasty. Everywhere fantastic intermediaries plied between God and man, and the spirits of hell aroused more fear and respect than the saints. The whole atmosphere was filled with little devils, coarse and fine, wise and foolish, harmless and malicious. They were "as numerous as the dust-particles in a shaft of sunlight." They sat at table, in the workshop, on the bed-edge; they rode on goats' backs or appeared in the guise of ravens, rats, and toads. And alongside of them all manner of nature-spirits led a mysterious existence in bush and forest, in wells and lakes, in fire and wind — pale memories of the ancient mythology. All the marvellous creatures which still people our fairy-tales con-

trolled in those days. There were eld night-mares. Even the ture-gods, heathen el the Mohammedans in and respectful awe; of the Host, black m ever, be seriously mis stition if we were to even intentionally m God-defying actions, devil-worship, a sort with the same astoni of those days, as we l conviction that the E that they should belie a Devil's congregatio

Side by side with spread an abstruse l prophecies, the inter consultation of the l routine of daily life. ing of horses and hov and in the form of th to ban or attract; c or loose. To meet a woman or — very signi sious legends, too, refle triumphant powers o of the wizard Virgil: God's commands, ob art, and sees all the l the forerunner, in fac a dark dome, a world dom in passive prostr in the stars.

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trolled in those days the whole of the grown-up population's doings. There were elves, nixies, fairies, witches, kobolds, and nightmares. Even the Church's saints were transformed into nature-gods, heathen elementals. No longer did Jews, heretics, and the Mohammedans inspire mere hatred and horror, but rather fear and respectful awe; for all the world believed in the desecration of the Host, black masses, and ritual murders. We should, however, be seriously misunderstanding the real source of this superstition if we were to allocate it to crazy religious fanaticism or even intentionally malicious slander. The people regarded these God-defying actions, not as a mere negation, but as a very real devil-worship, a sort of inverted Christianity and looked up to it with the same astonishment as to the figure of Antichrist. Men of those days, as we have pointed out, held the more or less clear conviction that the Devil ruled the world, and it was only logical that they should believe in the secret existence of a Devil's church, a Devil's congregation, and a Devil's ritual.

Side by side with the grosser superstitions, there grew up and spread an abstruse but systematic belief in magic. Spells and prophecies, the interpretation of dreams and the flights of birds, consultation of the hours and the planets, were all part of the routine of daily life. Omens were seen everywhere: in the neighing of horses and howling of wolves, in the direction of the wind, and in the form of the clouds. Curses and blessings had the power to ban or attract; certain signs and gestures were able to bind or loose. To meet a hunchback brought luck; to meet an old woman or — very significantly — a priest brought ill luck. Numerous legends, too, reflect this belief in these ever present and often triumphant powers of evil, chief among them the widespread saga of the wizard Virgil: a Lucifer-like figure that successfully defies God's commands, obtains gold and dominion through the black art, and sees all the knowledge of the world in a magic mirror — the forerunner, in fact, of Faust. And over it all is the vaulting of a dark dome, a world-wide fatalism which finds the supreme wisdom in passive prostration before a destiny long ago written down in the stars.

Then to make the cup of misery full, the murky yellow flood of gold poured into this religionless world. Wealth, especially sudden wealth, is always demoralizing, but here it was a case of a

*Money
economics
with a bad
conscience*

twelve to fourteen being admitted as visitors. Married women, too, were not unusually frequenters of these places. The "pretty ones (*Hübschlerinnen*)," it may be said, enjoyed a certain social standing. There was none of the modern "Tartufferie" that rewards these martyrs of society with contempt. At the official receptions of royalties they appeared corporatively, for (as we have seen) they were just as definitely organized as any other trade. They kept a strict control, too, over the unauthorized traffic of "*Bönhäsinnen*" — maidservants, barmaids, and middle-class girls — but their chief complaint was against the unfair competition of the convents — nun and whore being almost synonymous in the language of the day. On one occasion, when scandal concerning a Franconian convent waxed so high that the Pope ordered an investigation, the commissioner who was sent reported that he had found almost all the nuns in a state of pregnancy. The monasteries were also frequently the scene of orgies, and homosexuality was widespread among the members of the orders of both sexes.

One strange custom was that of the "trial-night," when the girl permitted her lover to take every sort of liberty without giving herself to him. By this means both parties were able to convince themselves of their partner's qualities, and the result was by no means always marriage, which was declined quite as often by the girl as by the man. There is a certain resemblance to this practice in the "*Fensterln*" or "*Gasseln*" that is to be found here and there on the country-side even today — but the point is that then it was an established custom, not amongst boors merely, but in every circle, even the highest. It was no rarity, indeed, for a husband to let a guest lie with his wife "on honour and faith." Frequently, married men not only had their official concubines, but brought up their bastards with their legitimate children.

In matters of sex, then, there was an utter absence of restraint. Indecent and licentious songs were common at public dances (as they still are amongst peasants), and kisses and embraces were the official form of gallantry. When a spa visitor wished to show his respect for a woman (whose acquaintance perhaps he had only just made), he simply thrust his hand into her bosom. Men and women undressed in front of one another in the calmest manner, not only at the baths, but on every occasion. When Louis XI en-

tered Paris, the prettiest of all kinds of pastorals had been mentioned that there were

We have, of course, over these things — which continued to be done. A very fact that such things were symptomatic of the times.

The whole spirit of the age was phatically on the style of the style was the clothing of the era of form and colour was the costume. Women had their breasts naked — so as to appear fuller, skin-tight nether garments as much as possible, and, of course, cod-pieces. In the grotesque of the face altogether, the diversity lay in the mode like pages, while men of egg, and even pig breasts. Where beard either forked or quite threads and twisted fumed, and were painted colour, which at other had become the favorite given a rakish upward knees perhaps and hair wore enormous trains to the ground; men slashed doublets, from long, scalloped stripes gold, pearls, precious clouds, triangles, snail were bright and arrest

P.T. The monkery of the gay borders.

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him equally indifferent. Even the conviction that a creed is worthy of being cursed is tantamount to a sort of creed in itself, but Frederick believed in nothing. "*Tout comprendre c'est tout mépriser*," as Nietzsche said — with a difference — and it was this *mépris* for positively everything which was the devastating root-emotion of Frederick's soul.

It is easy to see why this unfathomable personality roused as much horror as admiration in its time. Some called Frederick the Wonder of the World, *stupor mundi*; others saw in him the Antichrist. Gregory IX began an encyclical with the words: "Out of the sea there came forth a beast covered with names of offence, with the feet of a bear, the throat of a roaring lion, and in all other parts like to a panther. Examine well the head, body, and tail of this beast, which calls itself emperor." But the people made him a national saint, an imperishable saga-figure. It was said that he did not die, but would come again one day and overthrow the Papal throne, erect a kingdom of glittering splendour, and be a saviour to all the oppressed and heavy-laden. From time to time spurious Fredericks continued to appear, the last occasion being in 1546. Then again it was told that he was asleep in the Kyffhäuser cavern and it was not until the prosaic nineteenth century that this legend was transferred to his far less important grandfather Frederick I, whose red beard has been growing round the marble lake ever since, for the delight of all headmasters.

But in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Europe was simply peopled with little Rudolfs and Fredericks. Now, materialism and nihilism spring from much the same state of mind. Both of them deny the workings of higher powers of our existence: nihilism because it *no longer* believes in them; materialism because it does *not yet* believe in them. The one and the other are morbid phenomena, pathological aspects of life: nihilism because it stands *too far* from reality, seeing it in too distant a perspective, so that everything is blurred in shadowy mist and fog; materialism because it stands away *too little* from reality, seeing it in too close perspective, so that large and essential features become unrecognizable. Nihilism suffers from dilatation of the heart when it recognizes an equality of everything, which is as good as saying nothing; while materialism fails from constriction of the heart, taking account of nothing but things directly tangible and

*Coincidentia
oppositorum*

accessible to the coarsest senses — that is, the worthless and unimportant things. Both standpoints represent an un-serious view of existence; both are without foundation or root. The Philistine is just as much in the air as the free-thinker.

And it is this which constitutes the secret inward bond between these two tendencies. In their effect and outward appearance they are poles apart, two completely opposed outlooks on life; for of all the possible formulations of reality, these are the two which differ most. We ask, therefore, how it was that two such flat opposites could exist in the same age, and even in the same person; and, in asking, find the answer to lie in the *idea of the age*, the idea that filled and dominated this whole incubation period; and now we are in a far better position to discuss it, since for the fixation of representative personalities in that age we must have recourse to artificial expedients and makeshift constructions. The basic idea of the age was, in short, this: that life consisted in the union of two apparently quite irreconcilable opposites, and human beings were nothing but the meeting-point of two opposing influences.

Nicolaus
Cusanus

This basic idea was formulated with illuminating distinctness by the greatest, perhaps the only, philosopher of the age. Nicolaus, called Cusanus from his birthplace at Cues near Trier (d. 1464), was the son of a poor Moselle fisherman, became one of the most versatile scholars of his age, and rose to be an influential prince of the Church. He played a decisive part in the theological controversies of his century, championing the modern or Conciliar view, which he put before the Council of Basel in his great work: *De concordantia catholica*. (His principal opponent was John of Torquemada, who, in his treatise *Summa de ecclesia et eius auctoritate* laid down the lines that Papal doctrine followed for centuries afterwards.) Nicolaus Cusanus was also the first to dispute the genuineness of the Donation of Constantine, which was subsequently exposed as a forgery by Laurentius Valla. Amongst his works is a conversation on religion in which he argued in favour of the union of all confessions: Christian, Jewish, Turkish, Indian, and Persian. In his *De reparatione calendarii* he drew up a scheme of calendar reform which anticipated the Gregorian, and he taught that the earth was round and turned on its own axis. In his philosophy he was, as a former pupil of the Deventer fraternity, to some extent a mystic; but as his teaching system also found room

for certain trains of the philosophy, he was claim own product. In other stamp of Leibniz and F content of his time into

It was on his return had been as Papal ambassador philosophy dawned on him everything that is, live point of intersection of *oppositorum* is God, who He is all-embracing infinity contained in everything *oppositorum* is the Wholes in it forms an infinity unity. Every individual only is it contained in the *nibus partibus relucet* in a microcosm, a "parv imaginable contrasts — and immortality, body is, finally, Cusanus his natural science and the careful guardian of the the world and a seeker of the Schoolmen and the

But how this all- round this agreement of the outer which we cannot mental vision: by an again, as usual, couple *docta ignorantia*, commona of magnetism otherwise he would have important and speaking all in all, what he introduced of *creative paradox*, within domain of inward and the most telling fashion in

It was remarked at the close of the last chapter that mediæval man makes a contradictory impression upon us. But the contradictions that there concerned us and those of the men of the incubation period differ essentially. For at first these contrasts all arose out of one great unity, faith, and had besides an objective existence for the observer only — the people themselves were not aware of them. Now it is different: the contemporaries of Cusanus were well aware of their contradictions and suffered under them. Through all the phenomena that the age produced there runs a break, a split, a great seam, the feeling of a world-ruling dualism — the *man of two souls* makes his entry into history.

We have already said that it was not until this era that the dualism between town and country comes sharply to the surface. From now on we have two contrasted cultures, a knightly and a mercantile one. The first is concentrated in the *Burg*, the second in the *Bürger*. And it is about the same time that the doctrine of twofold truth appears in theology, the theory that one and the same proposition may be right in theology and wrong in philosophy. The Middle Ages had held grimly to their great unity: "I believe what I know, I know what I believe"; but now for the first time there was opened that chasm between the scientific and religious attitudes which yawns through the whole course of modern history. "Yawns," I may well say, for it is an uncomfortable and often extremely wearisome proceeding to follow the strainings of the priests, politicians, artists, philosophers, and scientists who deal with this question, and whose deductions are mostly sophistical, now artificially and superficially reconciling the two experienced forms of faith and knowledge, and now driving them into opposite extremes. But at the same time the view that that "twofold truth" is mere Jesuitry is just one of the many shallow misjudgments of Liberal history-writing; what we should see in it rather is a new determinant of the general outlook. Here too, as the Occamist doctrine of discrepancy shows us, we are dealing with one more of the many formulations of the *coincidentia oppositorum* idea. Regarded in the light of this idea, every basic theological problem — the Fall and the Day of Judgment, the Incarnation and Virgin Birth, the Last Supper and the Resurrection — should have two conflicting views, and the supreme truth could only be attained by uniting them. It was in this same

period, too, that dualism entered the sphere from that of the Under the newly-invented *partita doppia, loi digra*, two opposite pages *ma torum*. But the most striking is found in music, where way to polyphony, and (ment. The earliest class who died in London in 1 coincidence of opposite *macabres*, which in the subject of innumerable Here Death plays the first and children, peasants, saints, and every imagination and round. A more impressive of those days looked up dancing became brotherhood of life was at the It is thus that the whole dance of those marked life was the euphoria of

Our picture would show a third tendency, not the impressive of the whole for the two antagonistic but here it is a question hovered calmly and m This something was m

To all appearances men believed it to be the same feeling. But it was and never does rule than now, He lived as straying, seeking man burst from the depths men of the people had merchant, Rulman M

the universal priesthood of all Christian believers and declared the divinely favoured layman, the "Friend of God," to be the chosen imparter of heavenly grace. Taking this as their collective title, all those who took their Christianity seriously formed a union with no other bond than the purity of their mode of thought and the intensity of their yearning for salvation. One element above all now asserted itself in the religious movement — women, who up till then had remained almost entirely in the background and, only a short time before, had been declared by eminent religious teachers to be without souls. These women, awakened to religion, began to record their visions and trances and their mysterious experiences in contact with God, in letters, diaries, and memoirs; and in this way there grew up a wholly distinctive literature of ecstatic confession and self-revelation. Before long they too assembled in convents of their own and became known as Béguines or "praying sisters." Later on they were joined by the male Beghards, and great mystic collective experiences followed. Here we are in the presence of a weighty fact of cultural history we shall frequently meet again: the fact that great spiritual movements and emotional revivals very often originate among women. A woman possesses a natural flair for everything that may germinate, every kind of secret growth, everything, in fact, which is of the future rather than the present. This almost telepathic sense is usually more developed in her than in a man. She is also far less conservative and less one-sided than a man, who forms in himself a self-contained and definitely outlined unity. He is the born professional and expert, but a woman is a multiplicity of things; her soul is open to all possibilities, she has that gift of being everything, transforming herself into everything, which in men is the attribute of genius only; hence it has often, and rightly, been asserted that there is something feminine in every man of genius.

All the religious phenomena of that age arose out of one basic common will, the will to find the way back to God — not to the Church's God, hidden under a thousand outward ceremonies and obscured by a maze of intricate syllogisms, but to the deep, pure, serene source itself from which all life flows. Within the Church the main supporters of this movement were the monastic orders, above all the Dominicans and Franciscans. As has ever been the way, they began their reform of the Christian life and faith with a

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ciscans went all the way, teaching that no one could be saved
who did not abjure the world and seek to become an image of
the Apostles in his way of life, and this rule, they insisted, applied
above all to the earthly successors of Peter, the popes. Small
wonder that Pope John XXII declared their teaching to be he-
retical. In the matter of preaching, on the contrary, it was the
Franciscans who aimed at keeping in close touch with the world.
They wanted to work on the people and therefore relied on plastic
vividness and force, rejecting neither coarse realism nor harsh
satire as means to their end. The Dominicans, on the other hand,
became the classics of mystic philosophy. Their brightest light was
Meister Eckhart, one of the most profound and universal intel-
lects that Germany has ever produced.

Eckhart is a curious cross between the crystal-clear thinker,
the poet of incomparable power and plastic and original language,
and the religious genius. His teachings, banned by the Curia after
his death, constitute a *Summa* of all mystical speculation. Natu-
rally, he was an agnostic — he says of truth that were it compre-
hensible, it could not be truth. The godhead is enthroned in
impenetrable darkness, motionless, calm. We can only make
negative assertions about it, as, for instance, that it is infinite, un-
fathomable, uncreated; every positive predicate turns God into an
idol. God is not this or that. Anyone who imagines he has known
God or has formed for himself any figure whatever of God, may
indeed have known "something or other," but not God. "Thou
shouldst know Him without the help of any picturing, mediation,
or analogy." "If I ought to recognize God without mediation,
then surely I must actually become He, and He I!" "But that is
just what I mean! God must actually become I and I actually
become God." "The smallest creative picture formed within thee
is as big as God. Why? It takes from thee a whole God. For in the
moment when this picture enters into thee, God, with all His
godliness, must make way for it. But when this picture goes out,
God comes in. And is it going to do thee any harm, friend, that
you allow God to be God within thee?" "Never has man so longed
for anything as God has longed to persuade man to be one with

*The new
religion*

* God. God is ready at all times, but we are very unready; God is near to us, but we are far from him; God is inside, we are outside; God is at home with us, we are strangers with Him. To achieve pure contemplation of God, even union with him, to become "godded," all that is needed is to be still. Man must be silent that God may speak, man must suffer that God may take effect. All creatures are a sheer nothing: there is only God and not, as our unreason believes, God *and* the creature. Therefore we must strip off our creatureness. This we can do by "seclusion" — that is, by liberation from all sensuality — and by poverty. A poor man is he who knows nothing, wants nothing, and owns nothing. As long as man craves for any particular thing, he is not yet really poor — that is, not yet really perfect. Therefore, our prayers, too, must be concerned with God only, not ourselves — he who prays for something prays for a nothing. The truly pious can also well dispense with the Church's grace, for to him every dish is a sacrament. It is not confession, going to mass, or the like that matters, but the birth of Christ within us. Even Mary's holiness consists not in that she bore Jesus physically, but because she bore Him spiritually, and therein every human being can imitate her at any time. Virtue does not consist in a doing, but in a being. Works should not sanctify us, but we them. But only those works will be holy which are done on their own account. "I maintain definitely: as long as thou executest thy works for the sake of heaven, of God, or of thine own salvation, thou art certainly not on the right way. It will be possible to tolerate thee, but it is not the best thou canst do." Man can attain to any heights if only he has the will, for the will is all-powerful: "No one can hinder thee except thyself."

These scanty quotations will no doubt suffice to show that what Eckhart and his school achieved was nothing less than the birth of a new religion, a complete transcreation of the previous Christian faith, in comparison with which the Lutheran Reformation stands as an earthquake to a geological recasting, or as a purifying and fertilizing storm to a world-change of climate that calls a new flora and fauna into existence. Had this movement succeeded, a new world-age would have dawned for Europe; but it was suppressed by the Church, and with a measure of success which is less a reproach to the Church's quite logical protection of

its own interests than the humanity for a rebuild

Mysticism contains practical. These elements in J. Suso of Constance remain *Doctor sublimis* acuteness of speculation, the centre of gravity with rare force and unconditional following: must necessarily fly that he has been a right an effective life and a man set before him a picture — namely, Jesus shall be arranged, instead become as bitter as sweet." Suso, on the new wisdom that he of his lyrical rhapsody the bride of God, to me," he cried, "the depth for ink, the lead out my heart's passion studded with nails of Lord."

Another influence the abbey of Groenendaal marvel of divine illumination number of works character and a simple profound street, they used to say: *l'uom ch'è stato all' Hell*). Just so the profound thrill of combined the serenity with the far-sightedness the beyond. His work

* D.T. and man does ¹³⁸ reject God for good cause - Because he is a slunderer and a Damnhopf.

the most hidden things. The Church bestowed on him the title *Doctor ecstaticus*; his countrymen called him *l'admirable*, and when he died, in 1381, at the age of a hundred and seven, all the bells in the neighbourhood began to toll of themselves. One of his disciples was Gerhardt Groot, who founded the lay order of the "Brethren of the Communal life" at Deventer, a free union of believers whose sole aim it was to encourage a Christian way of life and the *moderna devotio*, the new devotion to God as taught by the mystics. Soon there sprang up similar brotherhoods in all parts of Germany and the Netherlands, and it was from their ranks that Thomas à Kempis came, whose *Imitation of Christ* is, after the Bible, the most widespread book on earth, is read eagerly by Catholics and Protestants alike, and has been translated into all European and numerous non-European languages. It popularizes the doctrines of the great mystics in a very noble, free, and powerful manner, and in it the Quietist element comes out with all impressiveness and clarity. "So far as thou mayest, hold thyself aloof from the confusions of men. Why do we so gladly chatter with others, since it is but rarely that we can return to silence without injured conscience. I would that I had oft been silent and oft not among men." Too much hair-splitting and argument does no good. "Rather would I find repentance and atonement within myself than be able to argue as to the nature of repentance. For all is mere nothingness and vanity, save loving God and serving Him alone." "He is truly great who is small unto himself and counts great honours as nothing. He is truly wise who regards all temporal things as mud, so he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned who loses his own will and learns to do and fulfil the will of God."

The
"Frank-
forter"

But the finest monument to the spirit of the age is found in the anonymous *Little Book of the Perfect Life* (*Büchlein vom vollkommenen Leben*). Luther, who republished it, says in his preface: "Above all, this little book warns those who wish to read and understand it that they should not judge it over-hastily, because some of the wording may appear wrong and out of the accustomed manner of preachers and teachers. And, verily, it does not float on the surface like foam on the waves, but is called from the bed of the Jordan by a true Israelite, whose name God knows." And again, two years later: "And, to commend my good old gossip once more, never have I met with a book, apart from the Bible

and St. Augustine, from to learn of the meaning. Please God this little we shall realize that the theologians." This short is in fact one that every learned or ignorant, fit universally read, but can preferably learnt word one of the most illustrious grandeur and humility difficulty to attempt to few words.

Man ought to become is makeshift? The perfection is that which has as a glow issues from something, as this or that only that the creature unchangeable good, and and imperfect and, ab assumes into itself anything falling away. "What falling away or his dove was something and wisdom was his own and his doing this? They say that it lost or 'fell'; but I say of his: this 'I' and 'π seven apples, he would The soul of man has two nity, the other that of and of distinguishing eternity is more pleasurable may achieve merely a will inquire no further everlasting life while a which Christ spoke,

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and St. Augustine, from which I have learnt more and still intend to learn of the meaning of God, Christ, and all things that be. Please God this little book may become better known, and then we shall realize that German theologians are undoubtedly the best theologians." This short work, covering little more than five sheets, is in fact one that everyone should read, high or low, wise or simple, learned or ignorant, for it appeals to all. It should be not only universally read, but carefully studied, inwardly experienced, and preferably learnt word for word by heart; for it is of all documents one of the most illuminating on human heights and depths, grandeur and humility. This being so, it is a task of quite peculiar difficulty to attempt to reproduce the basic ideas of the work in a few words.

Man ought to become perfect. But what is perfection and what is makeshift? The perfect is the one entity which embraces and holds in its being all entities; whereas the makeshift or imperfection is that which has issued from this perfection or *is becoming*, as a glow issues from the sun or from a candle, and appears as something, as this or that. And that is called a *creature*. Sin means only that the creature has turned aside from this perfection, this unchangeable good, and turned to the particular, the changeable and imperfect and, above all, to itself. Therefore, if the creature assumes into itself any God as being its own, this constitutes a falling away. "What else did the Devil do, in what else did his falling away or his downfall consist, but in assuming that he too was something and wished to be something, and that something was his own and his due? And what else did Adam do but just this? They say that it was because he ate the apple that he was lost or 'fell'; but I say that it was on account of this assumption of his: this 'I' and 'me' and 'mine' and the like. Had he eaten seven apples, he would not have fallen, but for his assumption." The soul of man has two eyes. One is the gift of looking into eternity, the other that of looking into time and into created beings, and of distinguishing among them. And one single glance into eternity is more pleasing to God than anything that His creatures may achieve merely as creatures. He who achieves that glance will inquire no further: he has found the kingdom of God and everlasting life while still on earth. He has the *inward* peace of which Christ spoke, which prevails over all opposition and

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perversity, against oppression, poverty, and shame. He has the quiet which enables him to be joyful in the manner of the Apostles, and indeed of all chosen friends of God and followers of Christ. The "old man," as we know, stands for Adam, for disobedience, egoism, somethingness, and other such things. He who lives in his egoism and according to the "old man," is called, and is, a child of Adam. Let him live in it long enough and essentially enough, and he becomes a child and brother of the Devil. "All of this may be summed up in this short sentence: See that you be thoroughly detached from yourself." The same applies to following after Christ. He who leads a Christian life with the object of achieving or earning anything will do so as if for hire and not for love; which is to say, he does not really lead the life. God would rather have a single genuine worker for love than a thousand hirelings. As long as men seek what is "best" for them, they will not find it. For then they only seek themselves and imagine that they themselves are the best. But as they are not the best, they are not seeking the best while they seek themselves. To those who have tasted perfection, all *created* things are of no account, themselves included. And so, for the first time, a genuine inner life arises. Then, as they make steady progress, they find God becoming man, until finally there is nothing that is not God or of God. "That we may escape from ourselves and die as to our own self-will, living only for God and His will, to this may He help us who gave up His will to His heavenly Father, Jesus Christ." "Here endeth the Frankforter."

The author, "whose name God knows," was in fact a member of the Teutonic Order of knighthood, and in his last years custodian of the German Herrenhaus at Frankfurt-am-Main. The book was written about a generation after the death of Eckhart and just about as long before that of Ruysbroeck. It was placed on the Index like all the other mystical writings; but the spirit which inspired it has appeared again and again for mankind, notwithstanding a hundred excommunications. When Luther in later life became a prince of the Church himself and reverted to many an ancient dogma and ceremony, the book found other adorers. It was resuscitated by Sebastian Franck, the greatest Protestant mystic of the Lutheran age, a heretic within heresy, so to say; it was cherished in circles of the Pietists; it became a

favourite book with Scher, "as he called him, be make many an appearance a book which, like the Bil

Now, there is a very mystical speculation and quently notice, and at a l that the arts of form, an first in the field with th dawning in the soul of th always, but nearly alway expression. The present individual thinkers visua of contemporary human pictures of the great Ge mysticism. Of course, th made a strong impressi wrinkle in the face, ever coat, is registered with It not infrequently hap alarmed by the positiv fiendish perversion and full of brutality and cov in pictures where the sul peasant life or martyrdo text. For instance, in the der Goes, the praying s taken to Sunday service portrayer of exciting, viv ity. In his panels of the ant-heaps of callous ruf of the anonymous "M: are a complete zoölogy of humanity left in his t vagabonds, and gaping vile and degraded pig o fied subjects the figures Eve in the Ghent "Ado ized; with her sloping sh

CHAPTER IV
LA RINASCITA

"Beauty is the revelation of law."

Leon Battista Alberti

*The two
poles*

"Problem" and "fact" are the names of the two great poles between which all human intellectual activity moves. What we do not yet feel to be a fact we call a problem; what we no longer feel as a problem we call a fact. But just as every problem tends towards melting into a fact, so every fact secretly tends to take refuge in becoming a problem again. In this endless but rising series of crystallization and sublimation, condensation and solution, consists the true inner history of the human race.

But out of this there arises, for the historian who surveys the marked-off culture-periods, a curious paradox. Each of these ages disposes of a certain store of problems and facts of its own creation, which are peculiar to itself alone, support and mould its whole existence, and are its life-destiny. But the facts which were established by the science and philosophy of those buried cultures, and were as a rule their greatest pride, appear to the eye of a later day as extremely problematical; while, on the contrary, the problems with which those earlier centuries wrestled represent for us even now perfectly positive cultural-historical facts.

A French thinker once said: "There is nothing more contemptible than a fact." We might add: or anything more uncertain and ephemeral. All the "exact" conclusions reached by former times have vanished again, securely as they seemed to be based on clean reasoning and keen observation. And it will be precisely so with our own. The only thing about our cells, nebulae, sediments, bacilli, ether-waves, and the rest of our science's basic concepts that will interest a future world will be the fact that we *believed* in them. Truths are not lasting. It is only the souls that stood behind them that will last. And while every human philosophy is destined one day to have "no more than a historical

Culture
consists
in wealth
of problems

interest," our interest in human history will never cease to be a philosophical one.

Therefore we measure the power and height of a Culture not in the least by its "truths," "positive achievements," and tidy parcels of knowledge. What we ask for, in weighing them, is the intensity of their spiritual metabolism, their supplies of living energies. And just as the physical capacity of man does not depend on his girth, but on the strength and rapidity of his movements, neither is the life-force of the soul of an age determined by any other factor than its mobility and elasticity, the inward adaptability of its parts, the lability of its equilibrium: in short, by its wealth of problems. There lies the real sphere of spiritual productivity, and this is also the reason why the religious and artistic cultures come over into the succeeding age, while the purely scientific eras possess only a passing vitality. Science improves the general economy of existence, discovers new laws which simplify a little the equation of life, makes our planet a rather more comfortable and less fatiguing place of abode; but we accept her gifts as if they were bread and apples, with a certain animal satisfaction, without thereby rising to a higher state of mind or receiving the impulse towards a richer spiritual activity. The actual results of the human intellect, its finds and its hits, contain no tonic, nothing which quickens the pulse of our personal existence. We "lay them to heart," we say, but our contact with them is a matter of simple addition, not of multiplication, still less of exponents. The creations of art or religion, on the contrary, for all that they have done nothing to perfect the machine of life — have indeed further complicated the already sufficiently ambiguous business of existence, and helped to upset the sureness of the life-feeling on which man instinctively relies — have nevertheless always had at their disposal a secret capital of spiritual vigour; they are like wine, which frees our molecules to fall into a more rapid vibration, sends fresh blood coursing to our head, and quickens the whole of our circulation.

Then there have been whole eras which have the insipid taste of chemically pure water; we feel them to be too distilled, too clarified, we take no pleasure in them. They are deficient in problems. If an era is to have anything to say to posterity, it must be a living *spring*, containing not only the general elements of water,

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The Italian Renaissance intellectual constitution not arrived at know those days must have

So far we have looked for Italy in the four itself. Many causes country developed. these were of far more politically split up a ern history, was always secured it very Europe: in the northern sea, while the Apennine surface like a broad together. Nature's the mild climate (a abundance of navigable plants — give the same time elevate it harmony was disturbed a divergency of nature form, unique, and the tion of good natural feeling and untidiness superficiality and the And nowhere does nowhere is musical are the people so wholly adjusted to such a past or such centuries at a time Roman Cæsars, the has so well-built and rous, varied and cadences — a language

Actually Italy v

but various saline, *insoluble* elements besides, from which alone they acquire body, aroma, and colour.

The Italian Renaissance was an era of anarchy as regards its intellectual constitution, an era which no longer believed and had not arrived at knowing. And yet we have the feeling that life in those days must have been beautiful, rich, and vigorous.

So far we have hardly mentioned Italy. This was intentional; for Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was a world to itself. Many causes contributed to the isolation in which this country developed. Pure geographical reasons first of all, and these were of far more importance then than now. The peninsula, politically split up as it has been during its whole middle and modern history, was always inwardly united because its natural boundaries secured it very markedly and definitely from the rest of Europe: in the north were the Alps, and on the other sides the sea, while the Apennine chain runs across the greater part of its surface like a broad backbone, binding its various regions firmly together. Nature's favours, too — the great fertility of the soil, the mild climate (a happy mean between North and South), the abundance of navigable rivers, the wealth of beautiful and useful plants — give the whole land a certain homogeneity and at the same time elevate it above most other European regions. And this harmony was disturbed neither by a mixture of languages nor by a divergency of nationalities. The Italian folk-character is uniform, unique, and uninterchangeable; so fascinating a combination of good nature and perfidy, liveliness and laziness, form-feeling and untidiness, frivolity and bigotry, naïveté and cunning, superficiality and talent, is to be found nowhere else in the world. And nowhere does art stand so naturally in the centre of life, nowhere is musicalness so obviously a national dowry, nowhere are the people such born actors, and nowhere is existence so wholly adjusted to eye, temperament, and fancy. No country has such a past or such a capital — a city that has twice been for centuries at a time the brain and heart of Europe: first with the Roman Cæsars, then with the Roman bishops. Lastly, no country has so well-built and beautiful a language: sparkling and sonorous, varied and clear in form, with soft liaisons and pleasing cadences — a language which can only be called a natural song.

Actually Italy was always an urban land. From Etruscan days

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maintained itself, despite the style-transformations over the rest of Europe, as the true French style — even in the height of the Baroque, of which Viollet-le-Duc, the leading art historian of France in the middle of the nineteenth century, could say that: "*Louis Quatorze clôt la renaissance*." But even this did not go far enough, for the Classical style persisted in France until the Congress of Vienna and even (as for instance in Ingres and Puvis de Chavannes) later still. Much the same might be said of French literature, which in its essential traits always remained Classical — for the Latin spirit lives just as much in the Romantics who fought it, as in the clear, cool architectonics of a Maupassant or a Zola. The German Classicism of the eighteenth century was something altogether different from this; it leaned more towards the Greek and should really be called German Hellenism, while, as for England and the Netherlands, there has never been a real Classicism in those countries at all. We must postpone a closer inquiry into these points until we meet them in the march of history and be content for the moment to observe that the ghost of the Classical has frequently visited our continent in the course of the centuries (having never really vanished from the European vista), but that the length of its stay has varied in the various countries, and the forms it has taken have always presented great differences. But that which is understood in Italy by the *rinascita* was and remained entirely limited to that country, so that from the point of view of cultural history we ought strictly to speak of an Italian Renaissance only. The Italians themselves felt this very definitely. They were conscious of embodying a floraison of culture and manners such as no other nation in the world possessed, and for that reason — just like the Greeks and from a similar instinct — called all foreigners, whether Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, Englishmen, or Moors, barbarians.

Here again it becomes essential to propound the question: When did the Renaissance begin?

In one of the most famous passages of his *Discourse on the Dignity of Man* Pico della Mirandola makes God say to the son of Adam: "I have set thee in the midst of the world so that thou mayst the more easily see what is therein. I have created thee neither a heavenly nor an earthly, neither a mortal nor an immortal

The
rebirth to
godlikeness

being, so that thou mayst be thine own sculptor and mayst chisel thy features thyself. Thou canst degenerate into an animal; but thou canst also by the free will of thy spirit *regenerate thyself* a godlike being." This, visibly, is the primary meaning of the Renaissance: the rebirth of man in the likeness of God. In this idea there lay a colossal "*hybris*" unknown to the Middle Ages, but also a tremendous spiritual impulse such as only modern times can show. At the moment when this idea appears on the horizon, the Renaissance begins. Now, this idea had already pervaded the Trecento, and almost all the Italian writers of the Renaissance, when they survey the Italian revival in retrospect, designate the age of Dante and Giotto as the epoch, the turning-point, or the great beginning. Particularly Vasari, the first historian of Italian art, groups the three centuries — Trecento, Quattrocento, and Cinquecento — as one unit of a grand national movement. Writing in 1550, he says that Cimabue made a start with his "*nuovo modo di disegnare e dipignere*," and he goes on to differentiate between three sections: *parti*, or spaces of time: *età*, which substantially correspond to the three centuries. The first to come after the "barbarism of the Goths" were the new Tuscan masters in whom art was rediscovered, resurrected, reborn. The significance of these expressions — "*ritrovare*," "*risorgere*," "*rinascita*" — in this context is manifest; only later tradition has made them the special labels of the high Renaissance. The word "*rinascimento*" came into use much later and was unknown to Vasari, as was the now stereotyped word "Renaissance," which dates back no farther than Voltaire and the Encyclopædists of 1750. And Burdach, in his recent close and exhaustive study, has arrived at the same conclusion as the oldest Renaissance historian: "The picture of new life, of rebirth," he writes, "dominated already the age of Bonaventura, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Rienzi. It was active throughout the fifteenth century, and in the sixteenth became an idea of fixed validity. . . . To exclude the fourteenth century in this connexion is arbitrarily to set aside the many statements and views of contemporary historical witnesses."

Taking all in all, we are forced to the conclusion that the "conception" of the new age occurred in Italy, as elsewhere, about the middle of the fourteenth century. It was then that

Rienzi produced his great work in Rome; that Petrarch and his contemporaries began their program of a literary and artistic revival. This came into being the "new age" — the main business to seek spiritual absorption in humanism, the Middle Ages in Italy so far as to see in Dante and Petrarch. This, however, is a view rather than a fact; rather that it was precisely the Middle Ages — with its dominating shadow over humanity. It is as if, at once more to gather up the thread, to say. Had nothing remained, we should still know the mysterious world. His old of the new age like eternal reminder of the surable was the power of thought but a comprehensive every newer picture in have provided the spirit concentrated all the known and lifted it into the sky in every verse, encyclopedia. This sublime unity of faith only have been achieved realized dream of all art a creation in our time with man, for the conditions of from the foundations up.

There are, of course, that the Italian Renaissance usually the case) the art history. It is in fact quite Giottesques in the Middle Ages their composition, the anecdotal, their stylistic

Rienzi produced his grand scheme for the political rebirth of Rome; that Petrarch and Boccaccio developed and carried out their program of a literary revival of the Classics; and that there came into being the "new style of painting," which made it its main business to seek spirituality by way of intimate and devout absorption in human emotions and destinies. With Dante's death the Middle Ages in Italy reached their end. Burdach indeed goes so far as to see in Dante the true originator of the Renaissance. This, however, is a view we are unable to take. It seems to us rather that it was precisely Dante that was the form in which the Middle Ages — with one last terrific gesture which threw its minatory shadow over the coming centuries — said *farewell* to humanity. It is as if, at the end of their earthly span, they sought once more to gather up in one tremendous throw all that they had to say. Had nothing remained of the Middle Ages but Dante's poem, we should still know everything we could ever know of that mysterious world. His unfathomable song stands at the threshold of the new age like a huge black monument in bronze, an eternal reminder of the silenced past. So magical and incommensurable was the power of this superhuman seer that his picture, though but a comprehensive symbol of the past, nevertheless puts every newer picture in the shade. Only the Middle Ages could have provided the spiritual premises for this miracle, which both concentrated all the knowledge of the age in a purely artistic form and lifted it into the sphere of faith. *The Divine Comedy* is, in every verse, encyclopædia, sermon, and dramatic epic in one. This sublime unity of faith, knowledge, and poetic creation could only have been achieved by a mediæval mind. It has been the unrealized dream of all artists ever since; but even to attempt such a creation in our time would only be the undertaking of a madman, for the conditions of our culture will first have to be changed from the foundations up.

There are, of course, many arguments against the assumption that the Italian Renaissance set in so early, especially when (as is usually the case) the arguments are based exclusively on its art history. It is in fact quite as easy to include Giotto and the Giottoesques in the Middle Ages. The deliberate decorativeness of their composition, the naïveté of their execution, their joy in the anecdotal, their stylistic treatment of the animal world and

Chronology
of the
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"E ufficio del mercante e d'ogni mestiere, il quale ha a contrattare con più persone, essere sollecito allo scrivere, scrivere ogni compra, ogni vendita, ogni contratto, ogni entrata, ogni uscita in bottega e fuori di bottega; sempre avere la penna in mano." The merchant with a pen in his hand — here was something quite new!

As early as the fourteenth century the great Florentine banking-house of the Peruzzi had sixteen European branches, stretching from London to Cyprus, and its commercial connexions penetrated into central Asia. The Florentine gold piece (*fiorino d'oro*) was the most valuable and esteemed coin in the whole of the West. Besides the Peruzzi there were the Capponi, the Bardi, the Pitti, the Rucellai, and the Strozzi — familiar names, some of these — from the splendid palaces that have immortalized them. The fabulous rise of the Medici did not begin until the fifteenth century, but it did not take them long to become the foremost financial power in Europe. Their only close rivals were the Pazzi, famous for the great conspiracy in 1478 in which Giuliano de' Medici fell. The attack took place within the cathedral during mass — and the Pope was one of those who had a hand in the game. One of the Pazzi threw himself on Giuliano and stabbed him so furiously with his dagger that he inflicted a considerable wound on himself. The insurrection was overcome in the course of the day, and the rule of the Medici more firmly established than ever. We see that plutocracy then differed essentially from the plutocracy of today; it was an affair of heroic passions and fanatical daring, and lives were risked for the hegemony of the firm. Our own great rival commercial houses, on the contrary, confine themselves to the tamer methods of bribing voters, buying journalists, and inspiring questions in parliament. In Rome the Chigi were the supreme banking-house. They financed a succession of popes, and their chief, Agostino Chigi, was a friend of Raphael and the builder of the Farnesina — "a merchant in earning," men said, "but a king in splendour" — and shared with Lorenzo de' Medici the surname *il magnifico*. The commercial rivalry between Venice and Genoa, which was fought out so bitterly and so brilliantly in this period, is familiar to all. But what makes the financial life of all these city republics unique in their own age is its far-seeing vigour and grandiose indifference to conscience. In the

centre of the business (missible) stood money-capable of forming a will-to-power. And economic life than the subordinate part in it. The talent was far greater even

All this hangs together of the urban life. Italian thing quite different: walled-in mediæval villas with Venice, Cologne with Paris of that day with France of passing from a dark avenue. We have seen in and artists made little effort of private houses, to public buildings, and markets — an obvious But in Italian towns it had made great progress villas, and private chap exquisite taste. The we precious paintings, and the erection of which lifetime. In the North then as before, the case Further, in Italy class We have only to look at class parvenus who ne tokens of nobility, but ereignty over the most the peninsula solely by handling of men, wit, parts of Italy also, the over the mediæval nob family of the Sforza Papal domain any man ness could become a

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* *passions and daring — that was more important than the form in which it took place; during the Renaissance in Italy when business men would risk their lives*

centre of the business moral (if this contradiction in terms is permissible) stood money-making as an aim in itself, as a passion capable of forming a life, as the strongest mode of expression of the will-to-power. And nothing is more characteristic of Italy's economic life than the fact that the Jews played only a very subordinate part in it. ~~They were not needed~~ — the native business talent was far greater even than theirs.

All this hangs together, as we have seen, with the development of the urban life. Italian cities were by that time real cities, something quite different from the Northern, which looked like walled-in mediæval villages by comparison. If we compare Bruges with Venice, Cologne with Milan, Lübeck with Genoa, or even the Paris of that day with Rome or Florence, we have the impression of passing from a dark and crooked side-street to a broad, airy avenue. We have seen in the previous chapter that the architects and artists made little effort to improve the decoration and comfort of private houses, but devoted themselves almost entirely to public buildings, such as churches, town halls, municipal markets — an obvious residue of the mediæval collectivist feeling. But in Italian towns it was quite otherwise. There, individualism had made great progress, and everywhere there arose palaces, villas, and private chapels which combined regal splendour and exquisite taste. The wealthy decorated their halls with the most precious paintings, and their tombs with magnificent monuments, the erection of which they superintended with care during their lifetime. In the Northern cities the characteristic building was, then as before, the cathedral, but in the Italian, the *palazzo*. Further, in Italy class prejudices were very considerably weaker. We have only to look at the rise of the Medici: a family of middle-class parvenus who never aspired to as much as the outward tokens of nobility, but for generations maintained their sovereignty over the most powerful, flourishing, and cultured city in the peninsula solely by means of their money, virtuosity in the handling of men, wit, and talent for brilliant display. In other parts of Italy also, the modern nobility of talent had triumphed over the mediæval nobility of birth. At Milan the *condottiere* family of the Sforza had risen to the highest dignity; in the Papal domain any man who possessed sufficient force and shrewdness could become a duke or a cardinal; and even in Venice,

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guest of honour had a fountain in the centre which sent up a fine spray of orange-water. Then came various meat dishes, including venison, veal, chicken, ham, pheasant, and partridge, and presented with these was a large silver dish of little birds, which flew out when the lid was lifted, and artificial peacocks, which spread their tails and burned fragrant incense in their beaks. For dessert there were various sweet dishes: tarts, marzipan, and dainty little cakes. There was Italian and Sicilian wine, and between every two guests lay a list of the fifteen vintages provided. At the end scented water was provided for the washing of hands, and a great pile of green branches was set up which, impregnated with costly essences, perfumed the whole room. On comparing this dinner with the meals described in the foregoing chapter, we feel that we have come from a peasant's wedding to a court banquet. At another feast, given in Rome by Lorenzo Strozzi, the guests were received in a darkened room hung with mourning; skulls adorned the walls, and skeletons shone with ghostly light from the four corners. In the centre was a black-covered table laid with two skulls and four large bones. The servants lifted the skulls and disclosed fresh roasted pheasant, and between the bones lay sausages. No one dared to eat except the Pope's court jester, Fra Mariano, a famous glutton whose appetite was proof against superstition. After the guests had recovered from their alarm, the folding doors opened and a brightly lighted room was seen decorated to represent the starry firmament. On taking their seats the guests had a fresh surprise. Dishes and bottles jumped up from under the table before each of them without any mechanism being visible. Agostino Chigi, the banker mentioned above, once gave a banquet in Rome at which he had all the gold and silver vessels thrown into the Tiber after use. This would suggest Russia, were it not that the whole thing was a farce, the banker having had nets placed along the shore to enable the vessels to be fished up again. At another feast, when the Pope was present, Chigi had a special fish served that had been brought alive from Constantinople. On leaving, the Pope said to him (with the witty and exquisite courtesy that is only possible in Renaissance Italy): "I always thought, Agostino, that we were on a more intimate footing." Agostino replied: "And the modesty of my hospitality has confirmed your Holiness's supposition afresh." All these accounts go to

certain breadth and dignity. We need only look at the portrait painted by his friend Titian — something both imperious and indicative of genuine intellectual force looks out of it.

*La grande
putana*

Something of this sense of personal power runs through all the men of that time. The words of Francesco Sforza, when the Milanese erected a triumphal arch in his honour, may stand as a motto for the Renaissance: "These are the superstitious trappings of kings; but I am the Sforza." But woman also awoke to an individual life. She was placed on an absolute equality with man, not only socially, but in point of education. And, as it usually happens in times of emancipation, the most emancipated of all, the grand cocotte, *la grande putana*, rose to a supreme position. One of these, characteristically named Imperia, kept house on a royal scale, read Latin and Greek, was painted by Raphael as Sappho, and became after her death an almost legendary figure. A poet sang of her: "Two gods have given great gifts to Rome: Mars the Imperium, Venus the Imperia."

*L'Uomo
universale*

A. 6
The universities naturally benefited by the general uplift of intellectual interest. Everyone now flocked to them. The jurists of Bologna and Padua and the doctors of Salerno in particular were famous all over Europe, and it became the fashion to study in Italy as it had formerly been the fashion to do in France — Germany's turn was not yet, for her young academies were then still in a very backward condition. But it was not upon this that Italy's fame principally rested. It was precisely the absence of any specializing tendencies, the fact that every leading man embodied a whole university and much more besides, that made her peculiar richness and splendour of intellectual atmosphere. For humanity was then sufficiently ripe to achieve the mastery in all things, and yet not old enough to have reached the sobering and paralysing belief that life is only long enough to achieve mastery in one thing. Far from this, the Renaissance ideal was the *uomo universale*. A prominent Humanist would be philologist and historian, theologian and jurist, astronomer and doctor all in one. And not only all the great artists, but many small artists as well, were at once painters, sculptors, and architects, and often highly gifted poets and musicians, acute scholars, and diplomats into the bargain. Human talent was not yet forced into special channels, but flowed beneficently as one free stream over all fields. We,

on the contrary, came holed, as it were. We c more than one thing. W are surprised, suspicio his label. This comes f nated by the savant (a confines himself to a spheres the helplessness But it is in the very na be open to all impressi possess in fact an encyclo pture we find, therefore, high versatility. They thing. In Greece a ma was obliged to stand (musician or an orator, the specialist was posi nausos); and in the R degree identical with cultures that the speci Another factor wa audience waiting for t and only once before aura of giftedness sur ously charged, tense a productive mind to its l ures — theatres, pictu ing addition to life, thi ennoble us, but are ir superfluities, things c pagne or imports. We in Athens or Florence pensable to his vitality processions, games, an entertainment or an a; vital occasion in every active part in them — The story of the art for himself alone, guid

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education. And, as it usu-
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on the contrary, came into the world with brains ready pigeon-
holed, as it were. We cannot imagine how a man can know or do
more than one thing. We paste a particular label on everyone and
are surprised, suspicious, and offended if he does not act up to
his label. This comes from our culture being so completely domi-
nated by the savant (and the mass-produced savant at that) who
confines himself to a single subject and displays in all other
spheres the helplessness and artlessness of a child or an illiterate.
But it is in the very nature of the true artist to know everything,
be open to all impressions, have access to all forms of existence,
possess in fact an *encyclopædic* soul. In any period of artistic cul-
ture we find, therefore, that its gifted men are all distinguished by
high versatility. They engage in everything and can do every-
thing. In Greece a man who wished to be considered prominent
was obliged to stand out in practically every department: as a
musician or an orator, and equally as a general and a boxer. And
the specialist was positively despised as a common fellow (*ba-
nausos*); and in the Renaissance, talent, *virtù*, was in the fullest
degree identical with many-sidedness. It is only in degenerate
cultures that the specialist appears.

Another factor was that these artists had an incomparable
audience waiting for them, such as has never been known since
and only once before — in Athens. There was an indefinable
aura of giftedness surrounding mankind of those days, a curi-
ously charged, tense atmosphere which must have spurred every
productive mind to its highest output of force. To us artistic pleas-
ures — theatres, picture palaces, novels, concerts — are a pleas-
ing addition to life, things which refresh and distract and perhaps
ennoble us, but are in the last resort only costly luxuries and
superfluities, things contributing to our well-being like cham-
pagne or imports. We could conceive of life without them. But
in Athens or Florence art was a function in man's life, as indis-
pensable to his vitality as flying for a bird. The Italian carnival
processions, games, and feasts were not, as now, a coarse popular
entertainment or an *apéritif* for jaded society, but an important,
vital occasion in everyone's life, and everyone wished to take an
active part in them — just as Americans today do in a meeting.

The story of the artist's creating solitude, out of himself alone,
for himself alone, guided solely by his inner genius and unmoved

The
Renaissance
public

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An intensified spiritual culture *can* go hand in hand with political "elevation," military "expansion," and national "up-rising," but this is anything but the rule. The true cause of every higher development, in any case, is some great idea, which takes so powerful a hold on the masses that it renders them creative — that is, spurs them to concerted action on a large scale — for there is no other way in which the masses may be creative. This idea may express itself in the form of politics; it may also simply take the form of an exceptionally artistic atmosphere created by the collective mind. We trace the flower of Greek culture back to the Persian wars. But what were the Persian wars? An idea! The idea that Hellas, this tiny peninsula of a peninsula, must not be simply eaten up and digested, comfortably assimilated, by that colossus of nearer Asia, which was big and nothing else; that the *spiritus* must necessarily be stronger than the *moles*, quality more deserving and more capable of life than quantity. The Greek citizen who fought and won on that occasion had thought more, felt more, observed more, and in general lived more inwardly and intensively than the Persian with his wagon-laagers, monster fleets, gorgeous tents and harems. At bottom, it was Homer and Heraclitus who won the victory. But the fact of their winning was only secondary to and consequent upon the far more important fact of their being there at all. And then, three centuries later, Greece was *conquered*, but this again proved to be a secondary matter: the Romans became intellectually dependent on the Greeks, because Homer and Heracles were still there.

In what, then, did the "idea" of the Renaissance consist? We have already hinted at it. Man realized — or rather *thought* that he realized — that a godlike creative nature, that he himself indeed, was a sort of God. It was the age-old Prometheus idea breaking out afresh with new vigour. And the formula by which it expressed itself was: Back to the Classical! Here, now, lies a problem. Inevitably we wonder how it was possible that a nation, at just the moment when a new vital current was running through its culture, arrived at the notion of imitating another, and a long-buried, culture.

First of all we should remember that such "rebirths" — the re-connexions with the Classical, "receptions" of Classical cultural material into the course of European history — are quite

The re-
turn to the
Classical

in its entirety) there set in a soullessness and coldness which of necessity choked the seeds that might have progressed to fruition.

An ugly destructive crack runs through all the higher spheres of cultural activity from this point. Art became a matter for connoisseurs, wisdom was confined to the learned, and custom-ethic to good society. Neither the painter, the sculptor, nor the poet now created for all humanity as a seer and herald of great sacred and inspiring truths; his efforts were designed for the intimate circle possessed of hypotheses, appreciative of fine shades and capable of grasping "implications." Architects no longer, as in the Middle Ages, built their churches and cathedrals with the consciousness of being the executors of the universal yearning for God, but as the employees of art-loving connoisseur-popes, splendour-loving princes, or fame-loving private patrons. Thinkers meditated for a select public of experts; poets polished their verses for a privileged class of epicures; artistic handicraft brightened the houses of the rich only, music became a lofty science, and war, law, politics, and commerce were all specialized and professionalized. The *palazzi* bore the stamp of the new spirit distinctly on their faces. They all have a cold, inhospitable, barring expression. It is difficult to believe that people live in them, that there are really houses belonging to the façades, for they look like nothing but stern, haughtily repellent ornamental screens and scene-painting. The portraits show us lordly men and great ladies. The Mother of God is no more a humble maiden (*donna umile*), but the proud *Madonna*, sovereignly receiving the three kings. Christ becomes the unapproachable Lord of hosts, the infant Jesus a stiff, well-behaved crown prince, conscious of his future rank; the Apostles are cool, self-conscious cavaliers. It was a world of upper-class people painted for upper-class people: for people with "nurseries," people to whom violent words, hasty movements, and unrestful lives are a horror; who have grown up in the atmosphere of wealth, comfort and *bon ton*; who never let themselves go, never become intimate, and know how to control themselves even in moments of terror and shock. Only that is painted which is in good taste. No emotions — emotions are vulgar; no story — stories are for the masses; no detail — detail smacks of the market stall; no uncleanness, ambiguity, or backgrounds — a gentleman is never ambiguous; no loud colours and harsh

of the Mother-of-God ideal for Philistines, and Manet declared that a Raphael made him literally seasick. So it will be seen that there was never any lack of connoisseurs ready to say with Velasquez: "To tell the truth, I don't like Raphael at all."

The
"darling of
the gods,"

The year 1517 is known to all as the birth-year of the Reformation, when Luther nailed his ninety-five articles on the door at Wittenberg. In that same year Raphael painted his Sistine Madonna, of which everyone thinks when his name is mentioned. And about the same time Count Balthasar Castiglione finished his *Courtier*, a work which might be called a sort of Renaissance Bible. It is the "Knigge" ¹ of those days, its hero is the Gentleman as the time conceived him: adroit, dignified, with a public manner and a tact that is equal to every occasion, the counterpart of the modern gentleman, but a gentleman full of elegance, serene and unworried. It was this perfect cavalier, radiating charm, beloved of princes and women and gods, whom Raphael painted and Raphael lived. And so the picture has gone marching on through four centuries.

But Raphael the darling of the gods had, for our ideas of life, one great fault. Darlings of the gods are, in fact, insipid. They are as tiresome as the "blue sea of the South," the "pure spring day," the "sweet baby in the cradle," and all perfectly pure, perfectly balanced, perfectly happy things. We desire something different in life and in art.

The basic
error of
Classicism

Raphael once said: "To paint a beauty I must have several before me, and as I have not enough models, I paint from memory, from an idea that I have in my head." What he means is that, as there is no female beauty alive in nature that is perfect in every part, he resorts to assembling an ideal beauty in his imagination from individual reminiscences. This view that it was the mission of art to represent perfection was Raphael's fundamental error and the fundamental error of the whole of Classicism. Great artists are always appearing from time to time who seem to prove to us for the moment that Classicism (that is, strict order, unity, straight lines, harmony, colourless transparency) is the flowering of art. But they prove it more or less *in usum delphini* — that is, for themselves alone. The fact is that there are

¹ Adolf Freiherr von Knigge's *Über den Umgang mit Menschen* (1788), a well-known book of manners. *Tr.*

here and there "Classical" beauty that our eyes find the summit of art: less successful groping. But it is a delusion. The incarnations of the rule (the most regular), but in *irregularity* that is the essence, it is an artificial distillation form produced by nature knows that the perfect approach to regularity, normally we meet such things radially symmetrical animals; but these are more Classical creations with glacier; but we should not if we would. We pick the lower mountains, on less water. We are, incur this is inevitable because things.

Raphael sets no problem against him. Hermann (C) says: "Raphael has no glance. He creates, like nature, no more and no less. No need to probe any deeper personal additions. With present absolutely no perception had been worked in to emerge." Let us accept confess that rose and night about them. They are a lovely. Involuntarily we all?" Raphael affects us with something we can deal with itself with lazy majesty but full." It must point beyond.

it has been said that all modern history is a "running commentary" on Machiavelli.

Machiavelli was as imaginative and passionate — and as corrupt and false — a reviver of the Classical as any of his contemporaries. In his mind he always saw the Polis, and in its Latinized form to boot. At the head of his theory of politics stands the proposition: "The State is power." He wished for a return to the armed nation, the Old Roman civic patriotism, the national kingship. He forgot that such a reconstruction was impossible in an age that had the revolutionary experience of Christianity behind it and pan-European and even world-politics imminent on its horizon. His ideal, as everyone knows, was Cæsar Borgia, who was not only a conscienceless rascal, but — what in a statesman was far more compromising — an adventurer without guiding principles.

"Immoral-
ism"

This brings us to the moral balance-sheet of the Renaissance. The mysterious atmosphere of beauty and vice, wit and violence, charm and rottenness in which the Renaissance is embedded has always stirred the imagination of posterity. It has evoked an expansive indignation in the bourgeois brain, which has not the power to conceive of a world other than its own well-lighted, policed, and paragraphed one; and equally it has fired the enthusiasm of every incurable adolescent brain, which all its life never gets beyond a certain perverted puberty-imagination. Obviously both are wide of the mark.

We have first to take into account that most of the Renaissance crimes were committed by official personages — that is, more or less in an official capacity — and that these same people were, outside this professional practice of robbery and murder, often quite charming and even of a noble disposition. It is even said of that most brilliant specimen of a Renaissance horror, Pope Alexander Borgia, that in private life he was good and gentle, without rancour, a friend and benefactor of the poor. Most people who were not concerned with politics led as peaceful and harmless an existence as the people of any other period. Among artists particularly, in whom, if anywhere, the characteristic features of the time were represented, there is practically none of the proverbial Renaissance immoralism to be found. There was never any lack, either, of great opponents of public immorality; the big non-

compromisers, gloomily above all, the "dæmonic vigour he embodied of the *soave aus* Christ's own sense, for forgiveness, and chari

Because we fail to talent and depravity, of lainy, this rivalry between the perfect, we are wardly these people must ought to say, on the contrary felt guiltless and happy these things. The naïveté vices. On reading those forced, in spite of our thoroughbred ease, the I say, with which these people murdering each other. economy of existence, just our party organization, things — all these are built lying, "getting away with" ception to this. If a politician of his party, poured cup of chocolate, the whole we take it quite as a matter of motives deceives, for Italians of the fifteenth state of mind which could ment in the social metaphor it as a part of the so considered an indispensable course. It is only a question

At the same time it is Renaissance "guilt." But

The men of the Renaissance life into one great dance. The saying of Lorenzo d

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compromisers, gloomily heroic supermen of moralism — Savonarola above all, the "conscience of Florence," although in his dæmonic vigour he embodied but the second half of the Florentine ideal of the *soave austero*. A great prophet, but no Christ in Christ's own sense, for he lacked proportion, humanity, the grand forgivingness, and charm.

Because we fail to understand this peaceful juxtaposition of talent and depravity, of superlative taste and refinements of villainy, this rivalry between the completest trained intellectuality and the perfect, we are apt to say: it cannot have been so; inwardly these people must have felt guilty and unhappy. What we ought to say, on the contrary, is: these people must positively have felt guiltless and happy, otherwise they could never have done these things. The naïveté of the Renaissance is at the root of its vices. On reading those descriptions of infamous deeds we are forced, in spite of our moral shudderings, to admire the grace and thoroughbred ease, the formal perfection, the rhythm, one might say, with which these people went about plotting, plundering, and murdering each other. Murder was then simply a part of the economy of existence, just as lying is now. Our press organization, our party organization, our political diplomacy, our business dealings — all these are built up on a comprehensive system of mutual lying, "getting away with it," and corruption. No one takes exception to this. If a politician, for reasons of State or in the interests of his party, poured cyanide of potassium into another man's cup of chocolate, the whole civilized world would be horrified; but we take it quite as a matter of course when a statesman from similar motives deceives, forges facts, dissembles, and intrigues. The Italians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries still lived in a state of mind which could regard an occasional murder as a ferment in the social metabolism — one might almost say, could accept it as a part of the social code; just as today "corruption" is considered an indispensable ingredient of public and private intercourse. It is only a question of grades.

At the same time it is permissible to speak of a certain kind of Renaissance "guilt." But it lies much deeper than all this.

The men of the Renaissance were bent on turning their whole life into one great dance festival, and they succeeded — brilliantly. The saying of Lorenzo de' Medici: "*Facciamo festa tuttavia!*"

A. H.
Conclusion
D.P. *

The
"guilt"
of the
Renaissance

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D.P.:
* The murder must be as complete, as
authoritative and as immune to retribution
as sound ~~and~~ currency is to counterfeit printing

floated above them like a blazing motto, and when Leo X became Pope he exclaimed: "*Godiamoci il papato, poichè Dio ce l'ha dato* (Let us have a merry Papacy, since God has given it to us)." This frivolity was not personal to him; he was only expressing the universal attitude towards a pope's rights and duties. A passionate greed for pleasure — though a pleasure ennobled by art and intellect — consumed the people of that age; an insatiable hunger for beauty, beauty in everything: beautiful sayings and writings, beautiful deeds and misdeeds, beautiful entries and exits, beautiful thoughts and passions, beautiful lies and scandals — for beauty as the material of life, making not only individual details, such as houses, statues, banquets, poems, but all existence a work of art. But — any wiser or more inward relation with the secrets of creation they neither desired nor attempted.

In his book *Shakespeare und der deutsche Geist*, which is full of new points of view, Friedrich Gundolf writes: "Here a worldly nobility takes all things, lightly or hardly, according to a worldly standard and does not ask: What does God say to it?" Whether this fully applies to Shakspeare or not is an open question; but it does apply exactly to Renaissance Italians. The question: "What does God say to it?" — the most profound and indeed the only problem of the Middle Ages — had never any interest for them. And yet were we really deposited in the world merely as clowns and jesters, upholsterers and amusement caterers?

We touch here upon a great rift, perhaps the greatest of all rifts in the existence of the earth's inhabitants. It consists in the terrifically solvent question: What is the meaning of life — beauty or goodness? It is in the nature of these two forces that they usually find themselves in conflict with each other. Beauty desires itself, always and only itself; goodness never desires itself and always has its aim in the non-ego. Beauty is form, and only form; goodness is content, and only content. Beauty appeals to the senses, goodness to the soul. Is it mankind's most blissful and noble task to make the world constantly richer, more desirable and precious, to fill it with an ever greater fascination of wit and brilliance? Or is it not rather best, most natural and God-pleasing simply to be a good creature, take others by the hand and serve them and be of use to them? What is the aim of this our earthly pilgrimage?

Is it the unlimited art? But that can only be saving of the soul en liberation from the earthly life in full. Who conqueror?

This conflict is dreamer and creator, for art and became a visible in Shakspeare's Ibsen as he grows old, gong, through the wheel and warmest brain *The Doctor's Dilemma* spoken comedies, and whelming plastic effect Dorian Gray is a masterpiece fulfilled. No wickedness the body is only the shell beautiful through pure nothing but a deceptive ruptible youth and chaotic records none the has taken towards ugliness.

The Renaissance and Reformation was his paradise. The Reform *ness of work*; the Reformation ends by worshipping with a good conscience glorification, are responsive the earth is gradually boredom is the "intense" a conception as unkind age.

Dante's divine poem entrance to the Renaissance were condemned to live describing the future

Beauty or
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Is it the unlimited affirmation of this world's power and beauty?
But that can only be done at the cost of our purity. Or is it the
saving of the soul entrusted to us by God, its purification and
liberation from the earthly? But then we should not perhaps have
lived life in full. Who, then, is right? Artist or saint? Creator or
conqueror?

This conflict is displayed in the life of Tolstoi, that mighty
dreamer and creator, who suddenly conceived an ardent hatred
for art and became a peasant and a hermit. Its dark traces are
visible in Shakspeare's last works; its anxious voice is heard in
Ibsen as he grows old, and rings stridently, like the beats of a brass
gong, through the whole of Strindberg. Bernard Shaw, the strong-
est and warmest brain of our own times, tries to formulate it in
The Doctor's Dilemma, one of his finest, richest, and most out-
spoken comedies, and Oscar Wilde puts it before us with over-
whelming plastic effect in his novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.
Dorian Gray is a man for whom the dream of eternal beauty is
fulfilled. No wickedness, no age, no filth can touch his body; but
the body is only the shadow of the soul, and the soul can only be
beautiful through purity and goodness, and so Dorian Gray is
nothing but a deceived deceiver: the world sees him in his incor-
ruptible youth and charm, but the invisible picture in the locked
attic records none the less, trait by trait, every step which his soul
has taken towards ugliness.

The Renaissance was the second and true Fall of man, as the
Reformation was his second and perhaps definitive exclusion from
paradise. The Reformation engendered the dogma of the *sacred-
ness of work*; the Renaissance produced the man *who enjoys*,
and ends by worshipping, *himself*. And the two together, working
with a good conscience and a narcissist self-regarding and self-
glorification, are responsible for the modern boredom under which
the earth is gradually congealing. And the correlative of this
boredom is the "interestingness" (or otherwise) of objects —
a conception as unknown to the Classical as to the mediæval
age.

Dante's divine poem hangs like a blazing danger-signal at the
entrance to the Renaissance. In describing the fate of those who
were condemned to live at the greatest distance from God, he was
describing the future of his own country. Held in the eternal ice,

A. H. v.
D. T. *

The second
Fall of man

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* However, A. H. - is haunted because
he has not lived life in full. (Celi Raulat)

CHAPTER V
REASON TAKES CHARGE

"Man is therefore nothing but a heap of errors, powerless without grace. Nothing shows him truth, everything deceives. The two chief supports of truth, the reason and the senses, each deceive the other."

Pascal

We will pause for a moment to cast a brief glance over what has been said, to indicate what is to come and elucidate somewhat the purpose and content of our method.

World-history is a *dramatic* problem: it is nothing but the destiny of the collective soul of humanity, pursuing a path that is varied and full of confusion and change, but yet runs on in accord with definite psychological laws. The individual stages — the epochs, as we call them — follow not merely after one another, but arise one out of the other, and their passage has a scenic continuity: each one is definitely marked off from the preceding and the following, but yet forms with them an organic continuity, for it fulfils the earlier and conditions the latter. The drama of human history is dominated by a clear and ineluctable necessity; but, not being a lifeless work of the study but a poem conceived by a hand of genius, this necessity is not a rigid, barren piece of logic, nor a calculated piece of psychological schematism. Only distance enables us to get an inkling of it, for its throne is in the background and it works only mediately through a luxuriant chaotic jungle of life, never actually entering the consciousness of the actors, but (only later) laid bare and described in feeble and disilluminated words by the historian, whose rôle is that of the dramatic critic.

What we are trying in these pages to investigate is the course of the development of the European soul during that period which we call the "modern age." So far we have tried to depict briefly the condition of "traumatic neurosis" which was the immediate consequence of the great trauma of the Black Death; the plague itself in its turn being only the external expression of an inner

World-history as a dramatic problem

The drama of the modern age

disturbance and psychological transformation — namely, the dethronement of the mediæval world-view by Nominalism, the definite, though generally unconscious, rejection of all earlier dominants of existence. There is a sudden collapse of all the standards and "truths" — religious, ethical, philosophical, economical, erotic, and artistic — which, till then firmly established and believed, had guaranteed, seemingly for ever, the orientation of man in past, present, and future. And amidst the ruins everyone, according to his peculiar characteristics, sought to carry off among his booty some last piece of still doubtful value, or in dull stupefaction renounced all the goods of this world, or, tossed between passion and pleasure, had eyes only for the enjoyment of the moment; but not one was able to find a way out. On the other hand, we have seen how in the fifteenth century in Italy there began to emerge what we have called the "psychomotor superstructure" — that is, the regulation, balancing, and organization of what had so far been just a neurosis. The labile becomes stable, the pathological condition becomes normally physiological, while the positive quality of the new spiritual condition gradually emerges, and indications of the directions become visible. Thus, what had had the appearance of a devastating and even fatal disease had, after all, been a healthful fever through which the organism was renewed, a pregnancy in which new germs were maturing in preparation for exposure to the light of day. This process of consolidation is already reaching its height in the early Cinquecento in Italy, and in the course of the century it affects the whole western half of Europe.

The new
look

And this new quality, which passed gradually into the European consciousness, consisted simply in the rise of an extreme, exclusive, and all-embracing *Rationalism* — Sensualism, if the term is preferred, for fundamentally both are the same. The sensualist has faith only in what his senses tell him, but the counselor of his faith is his reason. The rationalist builds only by the light of his reason, yet it is only sense-impressions which give him his basis. Each is a somewhat modified and differently orientated expression of the same position, the unconditional reliance of man on himself and his auxiliaries in nature.

This attitude to reality, however self-evident it appeared to a later age, was till then wholly unprecedented in the history of the

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The turn of the achievement, when r erent servitude to the opened his eyes and *upwards* to be lost in *downwards* to start b *inwards* to delve into more uncertain futur he knows to be his. Th for the first time since

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Christian group of nations; only the Greeks and Romans had had anything like it; indeed, this extreme sharpness of delineation was, so far as our knowledge of past history goes, something utterly new, for even the Classical attitude was only a rationalized mysticism, which never wholly transcended its oriental origin.

The turn of the fifteenth century, then, saw a remarkable achievement, when man, till then surrendered in unthinking reverent servitude to the secrets of God, eternity, and his own soul, opened his eyes and looked round. His glance no longer goes *upwards* to be lost in the sacred mysteries of Heaven; no longer *downwards* to start back before the fiery horrors of Hell; no longer *inwards* to delve into the questions of his uncertain origin and still more uncertain future; but *forwards*, traversing the earth, which he knows to be his. The earth is his and he finds pleasure therein—for the first time since the happy days of Greece. *

This outlook is queerly profound in its superficiality. It is the outlook of an untragic contentment, a Philistine complacency, practical shrewdness, unpuzzled common sense, a sort of mixture of the view of a Yankee and a ruminant: the world is fair and green and full of sap, smelling delicious and tasting better still. Drink in as much of it as you can, for God, the special patron of all ruminants, undoubtedly gave it to you for that purpose.

Still the world is more than a tasty plot of grass: it is a building-site for building everything conceivable that is useful, beneficial, and serviceable: laboratories of medicine, physics, and chemistry; institutes and devices for the refinement, raising, and relief of existence, for ~~Towers of Babel that rise to heaven and tear its secrets from it.~~ It is a field of operations, inconceivably wide and inexhaustibly rich, for the realization and intensification of the power of pure reason, the reason that takes its stand wholly upon itself, all-confident, unfrightened, undeluded. This is the *heroic* side of the new attitude as opposed to its animal side.

In short, man discovered for the first time for many ages that he had reason and that reason is all-powerful. He discovered himself as a thinking being, an "*ens rationale*," or rather, he regenerated these forces in himself; that, if we will, is the meaning of the "Renaissance." Reason, thus awakening, begins to penetrate everything: heaven and earth, water and light, the infinitely great and the infinitely small, the relations of men among

The curve
from 1500
to 1900

* P. T. New had a greater blow been
towards this idea than the Germans
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themselves and their relation to God and the hereafter, the sway of nature and the laws of art. What wonder, then, that it thinks itself alone upon the world? The whole history of the modern age is nothing more than the increasing intensification and super-intensification of this strict and unidirectional evolutionary rationalism. The occasional set-backs are only superficial.

From 1500 to 1900 the European spirit describes a magnificent curve, exhausting in systematic progression almost every intellectual possibility. In the sixteenth century, it attained in Italy that extreme rationalization of art which we have already dealt with, and in the North the rationalization of faith known by the name of the Reformation. In the Counter-Reformation and Baroque movements there seems at first sight a will to return to irrationalism and mysticism, but that is a mere optical delusion. For Jesuitism is a creation of supreme logic and intellectual vigour, and what does the Baroque signify if not the dominance of a systematizing, calculating, and analytical logic — since it is its very effort to deny this dominance that drives it to take refuge in a thousand grotesque masks and artificial disguises, rationalism in fact drinking itself into intoxication so as to escape the prosaic tediousness of a culture of undiluted common sense. The eighteenth century brings with it the undisputed triumph of pure reason in all departments, the century of Voltaire and Kant, of Racine and Winckelmann. This quality of extremism would, one would think, be unsurpassable, yet surpassed it was by the "young Germany" and associated movements in other countries, which successfully transmuted art, religion, science, and the whole of life into pure political theory, thereby robbing it of its last irrational features. Entwined with it is the counter-thread of Romanticism, which, like Baroque, though far more impotent, is only a revolt against intellectualism, undertaken with purely intellectual weapons; a literary *Putsch* against literature, completely academic, doctrinaire, programmatic, a clever *aperçu*, of which the origins lie in a taste for paradox, for polemics, and for novelty in fashions. And then the second half of the nineteenth century brings the victory of the "scientific outlook" of technology, and development in the sense of the Marxian "negation of negations" ends in suicide and the catastrophe — as inevitable as it was meaningless — of the World War.

In itself, however and the prelude to : regarded as one of the historical species. It crisis, or, more exactly European soul which beginning of a new write modern history period of development millennium man is because as to whether he possesses by which he is still distant today, as on the horizon, that outlook.

We have grown so logical functions the absurd or lower than assumption, for, on the world intellectually the unnatural. An in published in 1910, by *tions mentales dans* most comprehensive to give us a psychology peoples, it is maintained every tree, animal, invisible existence, dream experiences, more real than waking natural man more than souls, with the invisible round him on all sides consciousness a materials of his ideas. Acc dream a lower place : on the contrary, the cause in it the part of and therefore comm

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In itself, however, that war was both the finale of a closing age and the prelude to a new. As has been pointed out, it is to be regarded as one of those traumas which herald the birth of a new historical species. It signifies at once a world-downfall and a crisis, or, more exactly, the end of that long unbroken Crisis of the European soul which we call the modern age. We stand at the beginning of a new epoch, and for that reason it is possible to write modern history as a backward glance over a completed period of development. For the first time for nearly half a mill-ennium man is becoming displeased with the world, doubtful as to whether he possesses it, doubtful of the reason and the senses by which he has possessed it hitherto. These are signs, if still distant today, and possibilities, beginning to glimmer palely on the horizon, that prelude a complete reversal of our world-outlook.

We have grown so accustomed to the usurped supremacy of the logical functions that any other attitude of mind strikes us as absurd or lower than our own. But this is an entirely gratuitous assumption, for, on the contrary, it is *our* method of grasping the world intellectually that is the great exception, the abnormal, and the unnatural. An instructive instance in this respect is the work, published in 1910, by the French scientist Lévy-Bruhl: *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures*, which on the basis of most comprehensive and conscientious observations undertakes to give us a psychology of the so-called "primitive peoples." Such peoples, it is maintained, give to every thing and every being, to every tree, animal, man, picture, implement, a visible and an invisible existence, of which the latter is the more important; dream experiences, moreover, are regarded as real — indeed, as more real than waking. "What is for us perception is for the natural man more than anything a communion with spirits and souls, with the invisible and intangible secret forces which surround him on all sides, determining his fate and occupying in his consciousness a greater place than the tangible and visible materials of his ideas. Accordingly, there is no reason to ascribe to the dream a lower place as being a suspiciously subjective imagining; on the contrary, the dream is a privileged form of perception, because in it the part of material elements is reduced to a minimum, and therefore communion with the invisible powers is the most

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immediate and most complete." Hence also the respect and reverence given to visionaries, seers, prophets, sometimes even to lunatics, to whom are ascribed special capacities of communicating with the invisible reality." "For us the surest proof of objectivity of a perception is the fact that under given identical conditions all observers will receive it at the same time and in the same manner. But, for the primitive man, it is a constant experience that beings or objects manifest themselves to certain individuals to the exclusion of all others present. There is no cause for surprise, for it strikes everyone as natural." "Primitive man does not need experiential evidence to convince himself of the invisible qualities of things, and therefore he is wholly unmoved by the contradictions which experience offers to these ideas. For this experience restricted to the visible, tangible, concrete in reality leaves unobserved just the most important things; the secret powers and spirits evade it." In fact, primitive man lives in a world which is not perceptible, but is yet real; a *mystical* world. "When a doctor accomplishes a cure, it is the spirit of the remedy which works on the spirit of the illness, and the physical action is unintelligible without the mystical. Or, rather, there are in reality no physical actions, there are only mystical acts."

Pre-logical
or super-
logical?

The distinguished author of the work is unfortunately a modern savant who carries on his observations of primitive peoples from a superior height and sees in the mind-forms of these societies only immature forerunners of his own kind of thought; and so he calls the intellectual attitude (though, as he admits, for lack of a better name) "pre-logical," emphasizing at the same time that it is neither antilogical nor alogical. "By the term 'pre-logical' I only mean to imply that there is no compulsion as there is with us to avoid contradictions. This kind of thinking does not, indeed, take any pleasure in wilful contradictions — if it did, it would be to us simply absurd — but it makes no effort to eradicate them." Nevertheless the word is misleading, since it gives the impression that we have before us a sort of preliminary or experimental stage of logical thinking, which is destined to be overcome by the kind of thinking dominant among us. It would be far more justifiable to talk of a "super-logical" thought, for in fact this way of perceiving the world is not by any means limited to primitive peoples; they merely employ these ideas more easily and

naturally because there never has been a visionaries have not the Greeks, who can hardly in a double aspect: it is visible double, the psychics and the Greeks consider genuine validity. More hall-mark of all creative philosophy, even all truth. All nature is miraculous fact of experience is not. The philologist is occupied with the wonders of the world's course: succeeded in deciphering. continually finds himself deeper a science has penetrated domains of the miraculous no longer occur that we have lost some instinct are weakened, in a word, that we are because we live, not in degraded and God-forsaken

Rationalism, the west and validates only those "experience" and the impressions with a definite more than a temporary definite period of supremacy not the one and only humanity has to pass the assumption that it is a sensible one, or, still more an obsession of modern Europe

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naturally because they themselves are nearer to nature. Probably there never has been a culture-people among whom the seer and visionary have not held a similarly privileged position; even the Greeks, who can hardly be classed among the primitives, saw man in a double aspect: in his perceptible appearance and in his invisible double, the psyche, which was only liberated after death; and the Greeks considered dream-figures also as realities with genuine validity. Moreover, the pre-logical form of thinking is the hall-mark of all creative activity: all art, all religion, all true philosophy, even all true science; for life in itself is "pre-logical." All nature is miraculous, and every penetrating explanation of a fact of experience is nothing but the enunciation of some miracle. The philologist is occupied with the wonder of language, the botanist with the wonder of plants, the historian with the wonder of the world's course: all of them secrets which no one has yet succeeded in deciphering. Even the physicist, if he is a man of genius, continually finds himself face to face with some new wonder. The deeper a science has proved itself capable of penetrating into the domains of the miraculous, the more scientific it is. The fact that miracles no longer occur does not prove that we are cleverer, but that we have lost some vital quality, that our imagination and instinct are weakened, that we have become spiritually emptier — in a word, that we are stupider. Miracles have ceased to happen because we live, not in so advanced and enlightened, but in so degraded and God-forsaken an age.

Rationalism, the will-o'-the-wisp, which arbitrarily illumines and validates only those sections of reality which do not contradict "experience" and the "laws of thought" (that is, raw sense-impressions with a defective logic fitted on to them), is nothing more than a temporary *prejudice*, destined to disappear after a definite period of supremacy. It is undeniable that rationalism is not the one and only prejudice, but only one of the many which humanity has to pass through in the course of its history; but the assumption that it is a better prejudice than the rest, or the only sensible one, or, still more, that it is no prejudice at all, is a local obsession of modern Europe.

What I shall try to present, therefore, is the story of a brief interlude of the supremacy of reason between two irrationalisms of the Middle Ages and of the future, with no more significance in

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to what is taught in all of America. Actually it po often repeated that a h its new passion for ad-reawakened realism and pound, by the same com-discoveries and inventions, picture or a lyric poem n the academic mind by same with its technical

achievements. There are no "chance" inventions; for instance, it is not true that the late nineteenth century owed its extraordinarily accelerated tempo of life to the telephone, the telegraph, express trains, and the like — it was the new tempo that was primary, and the new feeling of space and time was an inborn attribute of the generation which made magnetism, electricity, and steam-power useful. It *had* to create these life-forms.

Moreover, the discovery of America was not even the most important of the events which introduced the new age — quite apart from the fact that that generation did not in any real sense discover America, for it merely landed, not to say stranded, there — and for the psychological constitution of an age only *conscious* achievements enter into account. The decisive metamorphosis was rather the result of three other facts: the generalized use of the gunpowder invented by Berthold Schwarz, the use of movable letter type for the mass production of books, and the passionate interest in the secrets of alchemy. These three "black" arts significantly heralded the modern age.

And besides these well-known phenomena the last third of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth produced a series of other remarkable advances of knowledge and technics. In 1471 the first astronomical observatory was built, in 1490 Martin Behaim constructed the first globe, in 1493 Hartman Schedels *Liber chronicarum* — an epoch-making work on geography and history — was published with more than two thousand woodcuts. The year 1505 saw the first postal service, 1506 the issue by Reuchlin of his Hebrew grammar; in 1510 Peter Hale conceived his spring-driven watch, the famous "Nürnberg egg," which could be carried in the pocket; in 1515 wheel-lock fire-arms came into use. There are indications, too, of the modern conception of time: public clocks began to strike the quarters. The later years of the century, too, breathed an energetic intellectual life, for Servetus discovered the pulmonary circulation in 1540, and three years later — the date of the publication of the Copernican system — the great anatomist Vesalius issued his fundamental work *De humani corporis fabrica*, Christopher Rudolf wrote the first algebraic treatise in German, Adam Riese the first text-books of practical arithmetic, George Agricola laid the foundations of mineralogy, and Konrad Gesner of scientific zoölogy, while

Gerhard Kremer, cosmographer and etcher (celebrated under his Latin name of Mercator), rediscovered Ptolemy's discovery of how to project the grid of meridians and parallels on to a conical envelope, and not only so, but improved it so much that "Mercator's projection" is in use to this day.

Paracelsus

But the fact that, when all is said and done, the period is still transitional between the Middle Ages and Rationalism is evident from the numerous mystics, cabalists, and thaumaturges who really set the tone of the intellectual aspirations of the age. All these have the aspect of a new zoological species which carries about with it the survival of an earlier form from which it sprung: in the same way, for instance, that creatures who have completed the transition from a water to a land existence may still have swimming-bladders, and the double breathing-mechanism of gills and lungs. The most popular of these figures were Agrippa von Nettesheim and Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus von Hohenheim. Von Nettesheim published in 1510 under the title *De occulta philosophia* a sort of text-book of magic, which he divided up into natural, heavenly, and religious: the first telling us how to gain mastery over the earth forces, the second how to penetrate the secrets of the heavens, the third how to obtain power over the dæmons. Paracelsus is one of the most original figures of the whole age, humanist and physicist, alchemist and astrologer, chiromancer and necromancer, chirurge and theurge, discoverer of hydrogen and rediscoverer of scientific medicine. In his incessant wanderings as doctor, teacher, and alchemist he was courted by the whole world and surrounded by a noisy following, in which genuine disciples of science mingled indiscriminately with adventurers and beggars who hunted for the Philosophers' Stone — indeed it is very difficult at that period to distinguish between vulgar thirst for gold and noble thirst for knowledge. On all sides he accomplished sensational cures, gathered and disseminated knowledge, and aroused such scandal and admiration that in the end he fell a victim to a villainous plot concocted by some of his graduate colleagues who saw in his genius a danger to their own business. Later generations have seen in him, on the one hand, a typical charlatan, the low and contemptible quack of the fairs, and, on the other, the typical seer, martyr of science, and benefactor of humanity; and both views are right.

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His own works themselves disclose this double character. Bombastic and artificial, portentous and prolix, obscure and overladen, they fully justify his name of Bombastus; yet he also honoured the name of Theophrastus, for he was a sincere messenger from heaven, an apostle of deep learning and pure wisdom. Again and again he emphasizes that it is not in books but in the Book of Nature that wisdom is to be found: that what we may find in the works of Galen is like some fungoid growth on a tree and that only a fool could confuse the fungus and the tree. Briefly, he taught a *pantheistic medicine* — everything is interdependent, and the duty of the doctor is to unravel this interdependence, for the world, too, is one great organism, with life and disturbances of life, with its own look and its own disease, respiration, pulse, fever, and convalescence.

The Philosophers' Stone was an article of faith with him; for he knew nothing, poor man, of the law of the conservation of the elements, and yet — has not this very law been lately upset by radium, which, as everyone knows, can turn itself into another element, helium? Thus does what was once a pillar of science become "unscientific"; thus does what was crude superstition become "scientific." Such is the history of the so-called sciences, and the consideration of it should lessen the conceit of learned pedants, if they were at all capable of allowing healthy human reason to operate without bias.

Furthermore, alchemy was by no means only concerned with the making of gold, for the secret substance, the arcanum which was the object of its search, was to be a panacea for all ills, like the theriaca of antiquity. In fact, the general view of the time was that there must be some universal formula which would at a single stroke reveal the secret of the world, a master-key which was to open the door of all riddles: that is the real significance of the Philosophers' Stone.

The two other "tendencies of the period," gunpowder and printing, undoubtedly had a far more pernicious influence than alchemy. The use of fire-arms brought into warfare an influence hitherto unknown which made of it something vulgar, barbarous, and mechanical, and gunpowder took from courage its select, aristocratic, and individual quality. Knightly mounted combat, man against man, with specialized defensive and offensive

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equipment, which required a particular aptitude, or at least a training and practice lasting for years and even generations, produced a definite class, even a race, to whom courage was a sort of calling. The definitive introduction of fire- and infantry-tactics put an end to war as the business of a particular kind of individual, temperament, and capacity; and courage, in becoming common, vanished as a characteristic. Weapons were no longer an organic part of the man, like the limbs of his body, but man was an impersonal function of his weapons, a cog in the great military machine. Hence a twofold result: first, an enormously increased unscrupulousness and brutality in warfare, since each man had become an easily replaceable particle of the whole, a mass-production piece, as it were; and second, the extension of military duty to far larger sections of the population and finally to the whole. The idea of "man-power" was only created by the invention of gun-powder, and so, too, universal compulsory service; for we cannot make a thing a duty unless it is within the possibilities of everyone. Thus the history of the modern age is the history of the progressive disruption of the conception of war in its original meaning and significance. The last step, World War, exhibits the last phase of this dissolution — the war fought for business reasons.

The printing-press — which, incidentally, would never have had so universal an importance if it had not synchronized with the invention of cheap and good paper — has a similar levelling and mechanizing effect. Gutenberg, or whoever it may have been, broke up the wood-blocks through which first pictures, then signatures, and finally even books had been produced, into the constituent letters. Here, indeed, one's first thought is, we have an achievement of individualism, a liberation from the restrictions, the associate and corporate life, of the Middle Ages. The elements — cells, as it were — which build up the organism of the word, the sentence, and the thought, become independent and free, each a life in itself capable of infinite combinations. Everything had hitherto been a rigid datum, static and conventional; henceforward all is fluid, variable, dynamic, and individual. Movable type is the symbol of Humanism. But the reverse of the picture is that everything is mechanized, becoming mechanized, controllable, uniform, and of equated value. Every letter is a unit with equal rights in the organism of the book, but it is at the same

time something in among atoms. Their departments. We 1 knight had been a anonymous unit. I: subject, the artisan soldier, subject, wo that they are equ added, shifted, and much on their persc same, too, as regar conduct of life. Th furniture, quicker t nation, more comf than had mediæval less other) means c existence. But thes the like completely tory as in nature. individuality and l

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departments. We have just spoken of warfare, in which each
knight had been a battle in himself, but the soldier is merely an
anonymous unit. In the same way the citizen is replaced by the
subject, the artisan by the *workman*, goods by *gold*; and all four,
soldier, subject, workman, and money, have the common quality
that they are equal magnitudes, mere quantities which can be
added, shifted, and exchanged at will; their value depends not so
much on their personal properties as on their number. We see the
same, too, as regards personal comfort and the whole outward
conduct of life. The man of the modern age has more practical
furniture, quicker transport, better methods of heating and illum-
ination, more comfortable houses, better centres of education,
than had mediæval man, and we are assured by these (and count-
less other) means of a freer, less burdened, and more individual
existence. But these furnishings, these methods of transport, and
the like completely equate one another. The truth is that in his-
tory as in nature we have to pay for everything: we acquire
individuality and lose personality.

Such were the decisive transformations in the world-view, and
to them was now added the astronomical reinterpretation which
began with Copernicus. The treatise *De revolutionibus orbium*
cælestium, libri VI, which contained his new analysis of the
cosmic system, was only published in the year of his death; and,
even so, it contained an introduction by the Protestant theologian
Osiander, who arbitrarily declared the whole thing to be merely
a hypothesis—obviously because Luther and Melanchthon had
expressed themselves adversely: “The fool is trying to overthrow
the whole art of astronomy,” said Luther; “but the Bible tells us
that Joshua made the sun and not the earth stand still.” In fact
the work had been written far earlier—as Copernicus himself
said, in his dedication (which, paradoxically, was addressed to
Pope Paul III), it had been lying four times nine years in his study
—and it must have long been available to the public through
secret channels. As soon as a piece of knowledge is actually *there*,
it is irrepressible; it infects the whole atmosphere and spreads
like a bacillus.

The discovery, for that matter, was not wholly new. Two

hundred and fifty years before Christ a similar system had been worked out by Aristarchus of Samos — the sun and stars unmov- ing, the earth rotating round itself and round the sun — and Plutarch says even of Plato that he had “not left the earth in the centre of the cosmos, but had assigned this place to a better star.” The Greek, however, wanted to regard the world as a limited, closed circle, with himself as observer in the centre; he wanted a “cosmos,” a beautiful, artistically organized whole, easy to im- agine and comfortably synoptic, like a temple, a statue, or a city- state: the heliocentric idea failed to correspond to his view of the world and was, therefore, *false*. In the time of Copernicus man was beginning to feel the passion for distances, at the same time as the passion for order, similarity, and regularity, and thus wanted a universe that could be expressed in formulæ, one that spoke, as it were, the language of mathematics. The new astronomy, that seemed to reduce man to nothingness, made him in reality the unveiler, the seer, and even the legislator of the cosmos. A world — however terrible in its infinity, however vast in relation to an earth that swam in it like a faintly lighted bubble — that he could *calcu- late* and subject to his intellect, he preferred to one which was well rounded, but veiled in darkness and secrecy and subject to an impenetrable destiny. It is one of the greatest falsifications of history to harp again and again on the idea that the heliocentric system made man more modest and humble, for the contrary is the truth.

In any case, what Copernicus taught was a universe that was heliocentric indeed and, therefore, immeasurably vaster than Ptolemy's, but was certainly not infinite; for it had not only a fixed sun enthroned at its centre, but a fixed outermost shell (the “eighth sphere”) beyond which nothing else existed. His world was thus still essentially different from ours, not only smaller, but simpler, more stable, more solid, more synoptic, than our universe of countless solar systems that, disparate by infinite dis- tances, rush with colossal speed through an abyss of which all we can say is that it never comes to an end.

The really symbolic instrument, however, of the rising age was not the astronomical chart, not even the printing-press or the retort or the cannon, but the *compass*. Discovered long ago, it was only now that it began to be trusted. As we have stressed

many times, the es- unprecedented im- veil, to pierce, and “the Age of the Di themselves the ess- discover, the noble emotion which ins- had hitherto been preme pleasure. Ev- ment of students, ; preachers; in fact, the Humanist or t- the move. A man's els, and in almost qualification, the r- age experienced lif- through it, and it w- of mobility should :

At the head of t- Infante Henry of voyage, himself ear- backed all maritime lips never touched . the opening up of t- limit passable for s- beyond which furth- cause the sea was so it — hence its nam- the view, first expre- that in the tropics the sun's rays falli- in spite of all, Henry 1445 one of his sul- more southerly coa- palm: “All this,” hu- sion of his grace M- concerning the divis- mistaken. Countless tor, and vast the he

The con- quest of “Cape Non”

The culture of Mexico is to be imagined as being more or less in the same stage as that of the Empire in Rome. It is evident that it had already reached the phase which Spengler calls "Civilization" and which is characterized by a life of huge cities, of refined comforts, of autocratic forms of government and expansionist imperialism, of massiveness in architecture and extravagance in ornament, of ethical fatalism and barbarized religion. The capital, Tenochtitlan, built on platforms in a wondrous lake, displayed huge temples and obelisks, extensive arsenals, hospitals, barracks, zoölogical and botanical gardens, barbers' shops, vapour-baths, and fountains, tapestries and paintings of gorgeous feather-mosaic, costly goldsmith's work and finely tooled plates of tortoise-shell, splendid woollen cloaks and leather gear, ceilings of fragrant carved wood, hot-plates, scent-sprayers, and hot-water systems. In the weekly markets, attended by hundreds of thousands, wares of every conceivable kind were exposed for sale. A wonderfully organized postal service, of fast couriers, plying on the network of well-built highways and ramps which traversed the land, carried every item of news with amazing speed and precision; police and fiscal arrangements worked with the greatest accuracy and reliability. The kitchens of the wealthy were fragrant with the most select foods and drinks, game, fish, waffles, preserves, delicate soups, spiced dishes; and withal a number of things unknown to the Old World, turkey, *chocolatl* — the favourite dish of the Mexicans, to them no drink, but a fine *crème*, eaten cold with vanilla and other spices — *pulque*, an intoxicating drink made from aloes (which also yielded a tasty artichoke-like vegetable and first-class sugar), and *yettl*, tobacco, smoked either mixed with liquidambar in gilded wooden pipes, or like a cigar in fine silver holders. The streets were so clean, a Spanish text tells us, that in passing along them one soiled one's feet no more than one's hands. The population was as honest as it was clean: all houses were left open, and when a dwelling was unoccupied, its owner merely set up a reed on the door-mat to indicate his absence, without fear of theft; in fact, the courts were almost never called upon to deal with cases of violating property. Writing was by means of a very elaborate picture-writing, and there were also lightning painters who could fix all occurrences with amazing rapidity in almost speaking designs. The mathematical

sense of the Aztecs arithmetical system ing to a power, the b next 20⁸ or 8000, an have invented, indeq fertile and complicat rope slowly, viâ the .

The American cu of cultures which ei are for us prehistori Asia over India and including the two pr the Ægean. Under th belt of cultures has e port, and as a matt similarity to the Bal writing, and their st series of things whi type of government, potism, the bureauc pedantic guardiansh and ceremonious eti animal forms of the traiture, combined w the higher forms, the ness of their building

Most remarkable Mexican and Christi was at the same tim with the papal tiara. the serpent, the Flc altered form they k and communion, ar in vigil, fasting, and they had even a dir Their ethical comm identity with the Bit with all men, endur all, will avenge the

that some even of his own bandits protested. Such was the achievement of Christians in the year 1533, exactly fifteen hundred years after the crucifixion of their Saviour.

Pizarro ended his career like most murderers, being killed by one of his own boon companions. And all Spain had loss and not profit by his deeds of shame, for it fell more and more a victim to the enervating and stupefying habit of living on stolen goods, so that within a bare hundred years it lay as it has lain ever since, a soulless, mortifying corpse, gloomy, sullen, self-consuming, a victim of its own dullness of intellect, its own appalling barrenness of heart, its own fierce brutality. The rest of Europe, too, has fallen to the divine nemesis, for from the New World it imported not only maize and tobacco, tomatoes and bananas, cocoa and potatoes, vanilla and cochineal, but—*gold* and *syphilis*.

The penalty of lust, the "venerie," rapidly became the fashionable disease. Almost all the outstanding figures of the age, according to contemporary evidence, were syphilitics — Alexander and Cæsar Borgia, Julius II and Leo X, Celtes and Hutten, Charles V and Francis I, the last of whom, indeed, acquired the disease quite romantically, for, according to Mézeray, author of the famous *Histoire de France*, the husband of the beautiful Ferronière, with whom the King was carrying on an intrigue, intentionally infected himself so that he might destroy the King: and the disease did actually hasten his death. So widespread was it that no one was ashamed to confess to the fact; it was a common topic in society talk and became a theme for poets. It is undoubtedly one of the chief causes of the darkening of Europe which begins with the close of the Middle Ages, and it introduced into the highest and the lowest, the most physical and the most metaphysical activity of man, an element of suspicion that doubled the poison.

American gold became perhaps an even worse curse than syphilis. The sudden colossal influx of the valuable metals, of which there had been a great dearth during the Middle Ages, was an immediate cause in the extension of money-economy. Indeed, it made a real capitalistic organization for the first time possible, enormously increasing the gulf between rich and poor and bringing about a universal rise of prices with which the rise of wages could not keep pace. The first half of the sixteenth century saw

prices rising a hundred and a hundred and fifty, in some cases even two hundred or two hundred and fifty per cent. The gift and vengeance of America for Europe were plague and poverty; or rather two plagues, syphilis and gold-fever. Everyone wanted to get rich as quickly and with as little effort as possible; even the soil of their native land was greedily searched for treasure, and actually new sources of the noble metals were discovered here and brought under exploitation by improved mining technique.

We see, then, that the period of incubation is over, the poison begins to work and grips the European organism, head, heart, and marrow.

Faust

All the tendencies of the dawning era were effectively concentrated by popular imagination in the figure of Faust. Faust is an *alchemist* and a black magician; what he aims at by means of his science and his magic is wealth and worldly power; he is a *Protestant* and a theologian, a fellow-countryman of Melancthon, contemporary of Luther and for a time resident in Wittenberg. He is also a *Humanist* and a lover of the classics, offers to recover the lost comedies of Plautus and Terence, summons the shades of the Homeric heroes from Hades, unites himself, secretly rejuvenated, with Helena and so symbolically fulfils the intent of the Renaissance, the regeneration of the Gothic spirit by its union with the Classical. For centuries Faust was even reputed to be the real inventor of book-printing, for according to one tradition he made the matrices for the casting of movable types while Gutenberg was still printing with whole wood-blocks. This claim is disputed nowadays, but it was a sound popular instinct, nevertheless, that made him the creator of that invention by which, more than by any one other, men's autocratic impulse to intellectual expansion was nourished and satisfied. Faust, in contracting himself to the Devil, demands a written bond from him to answer all questions and to answer always truly; in this he is, therefore, the very personification of the deepest and most fundamental element of the time, an unbounded lust for knowledge, coupled with the belief that there are secret formulæ which can answer every riddle. And in another way, too, the legend proves its sureness of insight, in displaying Faust as the ally and bondsman of the Devil and so giving profound expression to the fact that all "pure reason" is of the Devil, and all striving for it a

sort of blind hope serpent Satan, the "*eritis sicut Deus*" presses the basic idea that what concerns good fortune consists

The extraordinary genius with which a compendium of the begins in mysticism whole temptation of sand forms and desires yearnings; and winning himself in the unity beneath tragedy of Faustism, scepticism, and Mephisto is not a materialistic, and, cold, barren intelligence the completely logical The intellectual, dominant in modernism of intellectualism, the wrestling genius at his feet, but Faust this world only seen his reason, which is the world was narrated by the vision, for it as well as the head were no realities men lived through was men did still live in superficial observers; the contrary, in one dreams, their hallucinations everything that has successful attempt to gr

D. T. But the truth is so many roads from A to B and so many mistakes en route that only a very few men can listen all the way to the end.

Even so, make it

many roads
my Heritor
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to the end

The extraordinary quality in Goethe's Faust-poem is the genius with which (perhaps even unconsciously) he has made it a compendium of the whole cultural history of the new age. Faust begins in mysticism and ends in *Realpolitik*. He stands for the whole temptation of modern man, which seduces him in a thousand forms and disguises, alcohol, sex, *Weltschmerz*, superman yearnings; and withal he is the type of man unsatisfied, recognizing himself in every individual being, straining in agony after the unity beneath the appearances, but always in vain. The tragedy of Faust is the tragedy of modern man, of rationalism, scepticism, and realism. At Faust's side is the Devil, but Mephisto is not at all evil; he is merely frivolous, cynical, materialistic, and, above all, clever; the embodiment of pure, cold, barren intelligence, a highly differentiated brain-being and the completely logical representative of self-regarding genius. The intellectual, the purely intellectual, is the destructive demon in modern man, and Mephisto has the fatal keenness of intellectualism, sensualism, and nihilism. He displays to the wrestling genius of Faust the whole world and lays it at his feet, but Faust has to confess that he has been deceived, that this world only seemingly belongs to him, that in fact it belongs to his reason, which is itself unreal. Mediæval man, whose idea of the world was narrow and in some ways distorted, was possessed by the vision, for it was to him concrete and grasped by the heart as well as the head; but since the close of the Middle Ages there were no realities more. The last great reality which Europe had lived through was the madness of the incubation period. Then men did still live in a world that was real, for the mad do not, as superficial observers imagine, live in a world of phantoms, but, on the contrary, in one where everything is vivid and real, even their dreams, their hallucinations, their obsessions. But since that time everything that has happened has been but a desperate and unsuccessful attempt to grasp reality.

Even so, the ~~two~~ ²²⁵ ~~parties~~ ⁴ ~~made~~ ^{the} ~~agreement~~ ^{agreement} again

and deceitful men, called them gods, and through these gods found their ruin. The Indians, once deeply sure of the meaningless unreality of this world, henceforth had faith only in Nothingness; and their faith became their truth — unaffected by the passage of history, their glorious land became and remains a vast nothingness.

Christianity, we are accustomed to be told, brought all the peoples of western Europe into a common faith. But is it really so? Superficially, indeed, yes. But a deeper insight will show that there are national gods, national destinies, as there were of old. This is the real dividing line between peoples and not race or custom or outward custom, not politics or social structure. It is these, precisely these things, that are common to the civilized world. Top hats and boas, music and street-scavenging are alike in Greece and Ireland, in Portugal and Sweden, and ideas of agriculture and etiquette and parliamentary government too. But the god is everywhere another god.

True, they are all Christians; and therein lies the enormous power and vitality of Christianity, that it has a message for every time, that it has a form which can find a place within it for all thoughts and all feelings. Had it been something that could live itself out in a trifle of nineteen hundred years, Christianity could never have been a world religion at all. What common basis is there for Tertullian's "*Credo quia absurdum*" and the almost mathematical rationalism of Calvin? For the doctrine of the Satanists and the almost familiar terms on which the Quakers live with their God? Was it only a matter of chance — related perhaps to the dictatorial temper of Louis XIV and Cromwell — that France was restored to Papistry while England held to the Reformation? The God for France, of France, was absolutist; the God for England, of England, Puritan.

In an earlier chapter it was stated that, fundamentally, the only Renaissance was the Italian, and that the Renaissance in other countries justified the name only in an unreal and impure sense. It is equally justifiable to say that the Reformation was in its essence and being a *German* phenomenon, and all other Reformations — English, French, Scandinavian, Hungarian, Polish — were but duplicates or caricatures. "The German," Moritz Heimann acutely observes in one of his essays, "does

The four
components
of the
Reformation

not regard the world. He takes it several times on the same token, more psychological attitude during the whole Reformation which it received from that developed into the universals of the original in translating these a remissness that a Reformation too serious to its own great harm the other great movement of historical influence — a extraordinary energy revolution of economic Jesuitism, with and rigour of spirit at birth. The German, mature enough for a and, therefore, historical with the future, the power to give a voice to the fruit. All the stirrings its stamp were born on other lands.

So far from being tion was the result often enough regarded was linked from the was *national*. Rome was to be, not "*welsch*," but political significance that no longer to receive it appears the third worldwide extension, for it which sought to bring culture on the model of the fourth influence, the f

* D. T. Anderson
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not regard the world of ideas, as other nations do, as a banner. He takes it several degrees more literally, and the real world, by the same token, more casually." This gives with precision the psychological attitude which distinguished the German people during the whole Reformation period; it absorbed the war-cries which it received from its religious leaders with a literalness that developed into obstinacy and misunderstanding, even to reversals of the original tendency; at the same time, paradoxically, in translating these new norms into political reality it displayed a remissness that astounds us. In short, it took the spiritual Reformation too seriously, the practical too lightly, and the result, to its own great harm, was that it fell between the two stools of the other great movements of the time which had the greatest historical influence — namely, Anglo-Saxon Calvinism, whose extraordinary energy and logical quality brought about a vast revolution of economic, political, and social practice, and Romanic Jesuitism, which with an equally wonderful force of soul and rigour of spirit called into being a moral and intellectual rebirth. The German, at that stage of his development, was not mature enough for *action* which would be practically successful and, therefore, historically effective. Dreamer of dreams, pregnant with the future, but incoherent and irresolute, he only had the power to give a vast new stimulus of which others have reaped the fruit. All the stirring thoughts which give the Reformation age its stamp were born on German soil, all worked themselves out in other lands.

So far from being a unitary movement, the German Reformation was the resultant of at least four components. The first — often enough regarded as the only one — was religious, but this was linked from the outset with a second of equal vigour, which was national. Rome was no longer to control, and the Church was to be, not "*welsch*," but German. A foreign sovereign — for in his political significance the ruler of the Papal States was such — was no longer to receive a great part of German tax-revenues. And so appears the third component, the economic, which had a very wide extension, for it was the common stream of all the tendencies which sought to bring about trenchant changes in the social structure on the model of the primitive Church. Finally, there was the fourth influence, the ferment in scientific circles, Humanism and

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* D. T. And never gave it; never forgot
the other nations.

the birth of scholarship — this last the weakest component, but all the same not to be underestimated, since it was this which provided the method, the material, the intellectual weapons for the whole struggle. There was, however, a common focus and crucible of all these different elements in the appeal to the Gospel. There was nothing in the Bible about monasteries and monks, bishops and prelates, masses and pilgrimages, confession and absolution — here the religious aspect found foothold. Nothing about a supreme shepherd in Rome — here the national movement stood to fight. Nothing about fish- and game-preserves, tithes and feudal service — here the social reform found its justification. And nothing at all of the dogmas which the Church during the thousand years of its activity had created — here the philologists and historians drove their mines.

*The Night-
ingale of
Wittenberg*

The presentiment, whether obscure or clear, conscious or unconscious, of a great revolution and transvaluation of values roused in almost all parts of the nation a vast, and predominantly a joyous, enthusiasm. Numerous writings of the time express the feeling of "the dawn," best of all Hans Sachs's famous poem "The Wittenberg Nightingale":

Awake, awake! The day is near,
And in the woods a song I hear.
It is the glorious nightingale,
Her music rings on hill and dale.
The night falls in to Occident,
The day springs up in Orient.
The dawn comes on and sets alight
The gloomy clouds of parting night,
And soon thereout the sun will shine
And moon depart in pale decline.

In a drama of the same name Strindberg completes the famous words of Ulrich von Hutten: "The spirits wake, there is a joy of living," with the cry: "Ah! something new draws near."

^ This something new was Martin Luther.

There is probably no personality in history of whom such conflicting opinions have been and still are held, as the Antipope of Wittenberg. There are Catholics who have rendered enthusiastic praise and there are Protestants who have regarded him with a

fierce abhorrence; the pious have called "the German Cati factors. Goethe saw a peasant bounded warrior in the bat. Great a raving monster made to prove him phemer, a syphilitic have painted him w

Many hostile creative originality had been put forth many "reformers" than he. And indeed Reformation flower drawn attention in anti-clerical feeling could it be otherwise burst forth around before it could disclose the end of the century gathered power. In 1494, we find, among

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fierce abhorrence; atheists have called him a spiritual saviour, and
the pious have called him a corrupter of religion. To some he is
"the German Catiline," to others the greatest of humanity's bene-
factors. Goethe saw in him a highly significant genius, Nietzsche
a peasant bounded by the limits of his clogs. Schiller called him a
warrior in the battle for the freedom of thought. Frederick the
Great a raving monk and literary barbarian. Attempts have been
made to prove him a glutton, a drunkard, a liar, a forger, a blas-
phemer, a syphilitic, a paranoiac, a suicide; and German artists
have painted him with a halo.

Many hostile critics have been at pains to deny him even all
creative originality and to show that all the ideas he supported
had been put forward before his time, and that there had been
many "reformers before the Reformation," more important far
than he. And indeed it is obvious that the currents from which the
Reformation flowed were far older than Luther. We have already
drawn attention in chapter iii to some of the many expressions of
anti-clerical feeling with which the fifteenth century teems; nor
could it be otherwise, since so huge an eruption as that which
burst forth around Luther must have been brooding long and deep
before it could discharge with such elemental violence. Towards
the end of the century the anti-priestly feeling more and more
gathered power. In Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*, published in
1494, we find, amongst countless others, the following lines:

For priests there's little reverence;
Their worth is reckoned but in pence.
Many a fine young clerk today
Knows no more than a donkey may,
And shepherds of men's souls one sees
That tend the flock but for the fleece.

And in the almost contemporary satirical poem, written in collo-
quial German, *Reinke de Vos*, already mentioned, occur these
remarks about Rome:

Of law in Rome they boast and cant,
But money's what they really want.
No case so crooked, so obscure,
That gold a verdict can't secure.

Reformers
before the
Reformation

He wins who bribes — so much the worse
For the poor fool with empty purse.

And the whole thing is summed up in the famous doggerel:

So blind lead other blind today
And both from God must surely stray.

Furthermore, we have already heard how "Enlightenment," the habit of satirizing the Catholic Church, propagated and raised to the height of fashion by the Humanists, set the general tone of all cultured circles in Italy and even of the Pope's own immediate entourage. In the year before the Theses of Wittenberg Pietro Pomponazzi, a famous philosopher, produced a small work on the immortality of the soul wherein it was taught that the founders of religions had invented immortality for the benefit of the masses, who would only practise virtue if there were rewards or punishments of some sort — as a nurse invents a tale to induce good behaviour in a child, or a doctor deceives his patients for their own benefit. In another work Pomponazzi declares the efficiency of relics to be imaginary and says the same results would follow if the bones were a dog's; and the argument that belief in immortality is necessary because otherwise religion would be a deception he answers with the remark that such is actually the case: for, there being three codes (Mosaic, Christian, and Mohammedan), either all three are false, in which case the whole world is deceived; or two are false, and then the majority are. These and suchlike views were tolerated by the Curia, for anything might be spoken or written if only it was "*salva fide*" — that is, without affecting external subjection to the Church.

Wyclif too, as we have already remarked, anticipated the whole of the Reformation, and in some material points even went beyond it: for among his doctrines are the following: images should not be adored nor relics held holy; the pope is not the successor of Peter, and not he, but God alone, is the forgiver of sins; the blessing of bishops is worthless; priests should be allowed to marry; the bread and wine at the Holy Communion do not change into the real body of Christ, for true Christians receive the body of Christ daily by their faith; prayer should not be offered to the Virgin; prayer may be offered elsewhere besides churches. Johann

Wessel (1419-89) depended on the heavenly supreme ruler; on earth and even Councils of session, absolution works, and pictures of spiritual kind, upon the pope could decide the vicar of Christ, of Christ would dependant words, he The Erfurt theologian even further, object of union, and mainly more than that in v perfluous, and a de better sale for his fi ape." Erasmus of R the adoration of saint entire dogmatics obtained, would be un sacraments, in his Bible in many places telligible; nor could proved from it. "But the popes, for by the

But the case of enormous difference merely taught the uniqueness and origin all these doctrines. esque, the broader universal, and even a thinker. It never a single one of his ideas and reforming temple appeared in person as fully denied it on

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Wessel (1419-89) maintained that the unity of the Church de-
pended on the community of the faithful with Christ, their
heavenly supreme Head, and not on their subordination to a vis-
ible ruler; on earth most Popes had been caught in the net of error,
and even Councils were not infallible. He rejected auricular con-
fession, absolution, and “*satisfactio operis*,” or justification by
works, and pictured purgatory as a purificatory process of a wholly
spiritual kind, upon which the pope could have no influence. “If
the pope could decide according to his own will, he would not be
the vicar of Christ, but Christ would be his vicar, for the judgment
of Christ would depend on his will.” In fact, as he says himself in
pregnant words, he believes *with* the Church, not *in* the Church.
The Erfurt theological professor Johann von Wesel (d. 1480) went
even further, objecting even to the Communion and to the extreme
unction, and maintaining that the consecrated oil was worth no
more than that in which cakes were baked; fasting he thought su-
perfluous, and a device introduced by Peter that he might have a
better sale for his fish; finally, he called the pope an “empurpled
ape.” Erasmus of Rotterdam, too, the glory of the century, scorned
the adoration of saints, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the
entire dogmatics of the Schoolmen, whose subtleties, he main-
tained, would be unintelligible to Christ and all His disciples. The
sacraments, in his view, were ceremonies of neutral value, the
Bible in many places forged and in parts contradictory and unin-
telligible; nor could the divinity of Christ and the Trinity be
proved from it. “But the Church has no more deadly enemies than
the popes, for by their evil life they slay Christ a second time.”

But the case of Erasmus, more than any other, discloses the
enormous difference between Luther and his predecessors, who
merely *taught* the Reformation, whereas Luther *lived* it. His
uniqueness and originality lay in the boiling blood he infused into
all these doctrines. Erasmus was beyond doubt the more pictur-
esque, the broader and keener mind, the most logical, the more
universal, and even the bolder thinker; but he was no more than
a thinker. It never entered his head to give practical evidence of
a single one of his ideas, and though he was of a far more radical
and reforming temper than most of the reformers, he never ap-
peared in person as the defender of the new movement, but fear-
fully denied it on every occasion. He repeated, over and over

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driving force was the *unconscious*; without having willed it, he found himself the hero of his time; without having sought for it, he spoke the word which found a home on every lip; he moved with the certainty of a sleep-walker on the way which had brought so many others to ruin. In the midst of an age that was disintegrated, fumbling, and fermenting, he was a whole man, a fragment of unfissured mediæval force and self-sufficiency. His gaze looked into the far future, while his feet were planted firmly on a well-worn path. And this is what made him the leader that he was, and enabled him to stand like a second Moses at the parting of the ages, dividing with his staff the waters of the old and the new. He was, in a word, the *last great monk* of Europe, just as Winckelmann in the age of a dying Classicism was the last of the Humanists, or Bismarck in the years of victorious Liberalism the last great Junker.

On the other hand, Luther's consciousness perceived spiritual relationships which were only to be fully developed and realized in the course of centuries. The modernness of Luther's thought came from three main influences. The first is his individualism. By making religion a matter of inner experience he accomplished in the highest sphere of the human soul what Italian artists had done in the sphere of fantasy. Luther's belief that each soul must create its own God afresh out of its innermost being involves the final and deepest emancipation of personality.

The second, connected with this, was a *democratic* motive; by his declaration that every one of the faithful was truly of clerical status, and every member of the Church a priest, Luther destroyed the representative system of the Middle Ages, which allowed the laity access to Christ only through the special mediation of the deputies of Christ and the hierarchy of his servants; and he thus introduced into Church life the same equalitarian principle which the French Revolution afterwards brought into political life.

Thirdly, by his declaration that the whole of our ordinary life was a divine service, he introduced into religion a new worldly principle. Once admit that it was possible, everywhere and at all times, in every class and every craft, every profession or station, to find favour with God, and we have a sort of consecration of work: an achievement in its immeasurable effects, which we shall have to discuss later in fuller detail.

* D.T. and what they never take into account is that each soul must also create his own devil

Jung
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Marcionites, the most lucid and incisive thinkers among the early Christians, maintained quite logically that there were two Gods, the Demiurge, who had created the world — by the world they understood the Jews and therefore pictured the Creator as evil — and the “Highest God,” who had sent His Son to redeem the world. They felt, quite rightly, that if they could not bring themselves to deny the god of the Jews as completely as any other national God, the only logical alternative was the acceptance of a dual divinity, after the Persian fashion, in which the Jewish God naturally became the spirit of darkness; but, as such a solution was nothing but a veiled relapse into paganism, the Church naturally found it unacceptable. The Marcionites, as well as others, had, moreover, suggested the total rejection of the Old Testament — and they were not alone in this — yet there also they failed, for Jehovah, a true Jew as ever, refused to be thrown out. Hence, even up to the present day, the purest doctrine that has ever been or ever will be put before the world was corrupted and confused by the spectre of a fierce and jealous Bedouin chieftain.

Luther's
Damascus

Luther, too, had his Damascus; but the Saviour's words were not now: “Why persecutest thou Me?” but “Why thinkest thou I persecute thee? My Father is not Jehovah.” He saw that the Christian God was not a “just” God, but a God of mercy, and that the meaning of the evangel was not the Law, but Grace.

It shakes us to the core to see how Luther at the time of this inner struggle was actually filled by a sort of *hatred* against God: there were moments in his life when his will strained to banish God from the world. The fact is that what we would love with our whole heart we must some time have hated passionately, or at least have striven for both eagerly and hopelessly, and piety is certainly among the first things of which we can say that it must be conquered before it can be possessed. Fundamentally Luther's battle of faith was against the comfortable, cheap, cud-chewing complacency of *God-saturated* people, against the deep immorality that lies at the core of the unreflecting self-satisfaction and the taken-for-granted inertia of average religiousness.

Luther's
heroic
period

The youth of Luther is truly dramatic in character; his taking of the vow amid lightning and thunder, his nailing-up of the Theses, his disputation at Leipzig, his burning of the papal ban, his defence at the Diet of Worms. These are scenes of a cosmic

vastness and impiety in brush-strokes. Another's unerring instinct for the Church which was but the most obvious. In the course of time sins had developed rape, murder, false piety was rated in legions robbery at at four. It was even, to pay in advance deposit-account or farmed out to big business with the most monopoly; in a lottery prizes” to be won commercialization this, and even the had nothing to do official and cynical

The climax of what he published there *the Christian Nobility* *Captivity of the Church* all of which have a lucidity and originality propounds with reason *Christianity is a true priestly world* (for had not of this world instituted by Christ *Holy Communion* claims to universal rejection to a foreign Babylon; that a second through his

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vastness and impressiveness, each of which sums up its own circumstances in powerful strokes, pregnant and unforgettable brush-strokes. And how dramatic, too, in its own way was Luther's unerring instinct in attacking just that abuse of the Catholic Church which was not merely the most irritating and absurd, but the most obvious and startling—the traffic in absolutions! In the course of time a regular stock-exchange for remission of sins had developed, in which everything had its price: perjury, rape, murder, false witness, fornication practised in church; sodomy was rated in Tetzel's instructions at twelve ducats, sacrilegious robbery at nine, witchcraft at six, parricide (a bargain!) at four. It was even possible, if not in theory, certainly in practice, to pay in advance for certain sins and hold, as it were, a deposit-account of absolutions; and the whole business was farmed out to big banking-houses and merchant firms who worked with the most modern methods of advertisement and salesmanship; in a lottery at Bergen-op-Zoom, for instance, the "valuable prizes" to be won included absolutions. The degradation and commercialization of religion could not possibly go further than this, and even the meanest intelligence could see that these usages had nothing to do with Christianity, or rather that they were an official and cynical denial and contempt of it.

The climax of Luther's work as a publicist came in 1520, when he published three small but decisively significant works: *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*, *Of the Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, and *Of the Freedom of the Christian*, all of which have a force and depth, a compactness and richness, a lucidity and orderliness, such as he never achieved again. He propounds with resistless oratory his doctrines that every Christian is a true priest; that the pope is not at all the ruler of the world (for had not Christ said before Pilate: "My kingdom is not of this world"?); that the only valid sacraments are those instituted by Christ himself—namely, baptism, repentance, and Holy Communion; that the other added sacraments and the papal claims to universal dominion had brought the Church into subjection to a foreign and hostile power like that over the Jews in Babylon; that a Christian is a wholly free, serviceable labourer in all things and servant of all, the first through his faith, the second through his humility. A true Christian life is to be found

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marked, like some useless vestigial organ which belongs to an earlier stage of development and whose function has long been lost. Moreover, he interpreted the "Word" by his own often mistaken and limited explanation. This narrow literalness of his finds a classic example in the famous debate about the Last Supper at the religious discussion at Marburg. When the discussion came to the words of institution: "τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ δῶμά μου, τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ αἶμά μου," Zwingli explained them as being symbolical, the ἐστι not expressing any identity, but being translatable as "*significat*." During the discussion Luther incessantly tapped on the table in his indignation and repeatedly muttered: "*est, est*." It was the outer grammatical form which was alone decisive for him.

And yet even in this rigid superstition of words we may detect the modern stamp that equally characterizes Luther. For the hitherto highest authority, the pope, who was a living authority of flesh and blood, he substitutes the dead authority of the writing, which consists of printer's ink and paper. In place of the false infallibility of a fallible human being we have false dogma in a *scientific* and utterly inhuman form. Theology gives way to philology — in the end to micrology — and for the Holy Church we have of all things the unholyest, the school. In the unconsciously maturing fact that the centre of faith was no longer the life and suffering of the Saviour, but the record thereof contained in a book, is signalized the victory of the new type of man, who writes, prints, reads — and is scientific. It is the herald of a literary age. In the same way, according to Protestant interpretation, the sacraments do not work by some secret magic, but only by the word. And so Gutenberg humanity triumphs over Gothic. Thenceforward it is a straight line to the civilization and religion of pure reason, to the age of Enlightenment. Luther was neither an incarnation of, nor even a prophet of, these inevitable consequences, but the Church he established fulfilled them. His own activity and work are unintelligible without the printing-press. He is the first great publicist of Germany, and his ninety-five Theses are the first "late extra" of the history of the world.

Harnack says somewhere in his *History of Dogma* that Luther behaved in the Church like a young child in his home; and this remark almost completely covers both the strength and the weakness of the reformer. His work displays the inco-ordination and

Triumph of
Gutenberg
man over
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clumsiness of a child, its limitations and manner of thought, but at the same time its purity and intuitiveness, its enthusiasm and its irresistibility. Because he was a child he was enabled to give his people a religion, but because he was a child he was unable to build a religious structure. Because the driving force in him was a childlike impulsiveness and elasticity and wilfulness, his work lacked all continuity and logic. Later he relapsed in many points, becoming unfaithful to himself and to true Protestantism. Protestantism is clear and courageous protest against every forced belief, formula, and lip-service, a return to the purity of the early gospel doctrine and the essential facts of Christianity; it is the rejection of all mediators that would interpose between God and the believer, it is the piety and discipleship of Christ, constituting the true and only priesthood. But even in his own lifetime, and not without his own co-operation, a great deal of what it had been his historical mission to fight had come back again: a new system of clerical lust for power and of dull numbing by empty forms began to spread abroad, a new façade-Christianity received homage, a new dialectic, far surpassing the Catholic in hairsplitting and absurdity, came in for the second time and — with far more ignoble apparatus — made the Gospel dark. For the second time humanity was divided into first- and second-class Christians: but while the Catholic priest derived his superiority from a transcendent source, the hegemony of the Protestant pastor and theologian was based on the far weaker and more fragile claim that he was superior to the laity in true scientific understanding of the Bible.

And what understanding could Luther or his followers have of the real meaning of the phenomenon of the Saviour? The appearance of Christ in his environment is wholly strange to, and almost incomprehensible by, the modern (and especially to the European) feeling. It is a magic radiance, having the enchanted glow of opal, in which endless brown wastes, *fata morgana*, and the quivering stillness of noon are reflected. It is a life-form to the echo of which our imagination is almost insensitive. More, it is the undoing of that form itself. All the glittering yet almost voiceless variety, the vast, dignified simplicity and unambiguousness of the East are in early Christendom; and with it an almost hysterical sympathy with the heart-beat of every creature, a de-

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nial of individualness of such unqualified clarity as could become
the ruling passion only in the soul of a very late humanity. An
extremely primitive and yet immemorially old Culture speaks to
us out of the Gospels — the simplicity of natural man combined
with the wisdom of the ages. A Luther may be able to clear the
Christian faith of the surface-coating produced by centuries of bar-
baric misunderstandings, concentrate it, simplify it, so that it is
easier to survey and grasp by the reason; but the infinite tenderness
and delicacy, the supersensitiveness, of such a spiritual condition
is inaccessible to a healthy German peasant. An honest Saxon the-
ologian could not react to the sparkling colour and exotic variety
of this world of imagination; nor could the child of a dawning
newspaper age recapture the fathomless prime-wisdom of a world
of belief for which this life is a sojourn, and the infinite is self-
evidently home.

So, too, with Luther's translation of the Bible, an achievement
which may be regarded, according to the standpoint from which
we approach it, as a failure or as a masterpiece. Very little of the
scent and local colour and setting of the Biblical world, or even
of the feelings and thoughts of the authors, has been salvaged in
it, but on the other hand Luther did succeed with his very de-
cidedly Germanized Bible in writing the most German book in
German literature. Hence the exaggerated claim has often been
set up that he was the creator of modern German, and no less an au-
thority than Jacob Grimm agrees with that judgment: "Luther's
language, by reason of its wonderful purity and its enormous
influence, may be regarded as the kernel and foundation of the
New High German idiom." Now, we should certainly not forget
that Luther, as he himself admitted, employed the "language of
the Saxon Chancellery," a sort of common idiom meant to hold
a balance between the language of central and south Germany,
which originated in the court of the Luxemburg kings in Prague
about 1350, and thence spread to the other German courts. Two
points should, however, be noted: firstly, that in the time of
Luther there really was no common tongue among the people,
but only innumerable dialects, and that it was only because of
the amazing circulation and influence of his works, above all of
his Bible, that this common language gradually penetrated into all
circles and was adopted as the universal written German; and,

Luther as
creator of a
language

secondly, that this pooled Saxon was a dry, heavy-footed, and jejune office-language, and that Luther moulded it into an instrument for the expression of the highest, deepest, most powerful and delicate feelings and forced it into use for every conceivable experience. Out of the material at his disposal he created the very reverse of a protocol-language. He tells us in his *Table-talk* how he questioned the mother in her home, the children in the street, and the common man in the market-place, and noted how they answered him; and by such means, thanks to his sensibility and an imitative power nearly related to the actor's, he brought off the *tour de force* of expressing both the most subtle and learned ideas and also the simplest and most ordinary things in a language that is thoroughly natural, vivid, intelligible, and effective. We meet here yet another indication of that peculiar dramatic gift that dwelt in Luther. It finds utterance also in his polemic and doctrinal works, which, assuming a fictitious opponent, have an underlying character of dialogue that reminds us of Lessing. Thus it is no exaggeration to say that but for Luther Germany would today be a bilingual nation, half Low and half High German.

Luther and
the arts

His musical ability, too, which was considerable, echoes in his style, and he excels especially in working up to the *furioso* climax. He composed the tunes for several of his own hymns, played the lute and the flute, understood and appreciated polyphony, and intensely admired the Dutch contrapuntalists. He made the German hymn into a basic element of the Protestant service, and his wish was that the schools should assiduously practise it. On every occasion he praised "*Musica*," "the glorious, beautiful gift of God, sister of theology," with an enthusiastic gratitude.

But immediately we turn to the other arts, we are struck by the great limitations of this great man. Even to poetry his attitude was unsure. Of all the kinds of poetry he gave first place to the didactic fable because it was the most useful for the understanding of ordinary life — a banausic attitude, which, however, was of the time. His views on the drama were no less utilitarian: Terences' comedies, he said, are an instructive mirror of the real world, Latin school plays a good training in language, religious plays an efficient means for the propagation of evangelical truth. The arts of form simply had no existence for him: in 1511 he travelled through northern Italy to Rome, at the height of the

Renaissance, but he Italy's works of art. cleanliness of the ho so much German mo ings. Even in the ca he was only intereste divine service. For tl little understanding. friend Melanchthon, the historical sense. ' but praised Cicero as ~~he used his powers in~~ contrast was a "lazy these — concerning t Rome, and the most the mind that gather sical knowledge and merely labelling them only be the result of.

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Renaissance, but he has not one single word for the beauty of Italy's works of art. In Florence he was most impressed by the cleanliness of the hospitals, and in Rome he only complains that so much German money flowed thither to pay for the great buildings. Even in the cathedral of Cologne and the Minster of Ulm he was only interested in the bad acoustics, which interfered with divine service. For the historical significance of Rome he had as little understanding as for the artistic; in fact, in contrast to his friend Melanchthon, he seems to have been completely lacking in the historical sense. Thus he called Julius Cæsar "a mere ape," but praised Cicero as a philosopher far above Aristotle, because he used his powers in the service of the State, while Aristotle in contrast was a "lazy ass." To explain away such judgments as these — concerning the greatest strategic and political genius of Rome, and the most universal and active mind of ancient Greece, the mind that gathered, ordered, and set down the sum of Classical knowledge and founded half a dozen new sciences — by merely labelling them as "subjective" is insufficient. They could only be the result of a complete blindness to historical relations.

This crucial defect of historical understanding shows itself in the crudest form in his attitude to the revolted peasants, which has left an ugly blemish on his whole life. The Peasants' War was the supreme attempt towards a social revolution that Germany has ever experienced, and it was only rawness of discipline among the peasants and the dark jealousy among their leaders which prevented its reaching its goal. Its source, as we have said before, lay in the ideas of primitive Christianity. Primarily it was directed against the wealthy clerical hierarchy, much less against the temporal princes, and not at all against the aristocracy; and it was even hoped that the Emperor himself might head the movement. Luther also, who had always preached the return to the Gospels, was assumed to be the obvious leader. The most dangerous feature of the rising was the fact that from the first it was not limited to the open country-side, but spread to the towns, where there had long been a violent ferment going on among the proletariat and with them the poorest of the clergy; in a word, the whole Fourth Estate was concerned in a movement of extraordinary extension and depth.

The demands of the famous Twelve Articles of 1525 were

*Luther and
the Peasants' War*

moderate enough: each parish was to choose its own pastor, tithes were to be maintained, but other dues were to be removed, serfdom to be abolished, the rights of hunting, fishing, and collecting wood to be unrestricted. As the movement proceeded, further perfectly reasonable demands were put forward — for example, unity of standards of coinage and of measures throughout Germany, removal of all tolls, the reform of the judicial system. The nobility were to be indemnified for their losses under these heads out of the property of the Church, the complete secularization of which was one of the most important points in the program. The opposition, however, refused any concession, war burst forth, and, like bees when they swarm, the peasants poured in from all sides. There was no real resistance in the towns, all the princes in Franconia and on the Rhine submitted within a few weeks, and a vast peasants' Parliament was called at Heilbronn to discuss the reform of the Empire in detail. But at the same time a far more radical group, with communistic tendencies, the "Anabaptists" under the leadership of Thomas Münzer, was making victorious progress. If Thuringia and Franconia had united for a final stroke, the collapse of the "Whites" would have been almost inevitable, but, squandering and dissipating their strength in sieges and plunderings, they were defeated — chiefly by the cavalry, in which they were themselves wholly lacking — in seven battles that followed in rapid succession; and by September the revolt was practically at an end. The narrowness, selfishness, and cruelty with which the whole question of the peasants had been handled in the war left their traces through all the following centuries and are not unconnected even with the confusion of the present day.

At this decisive moment in German history Luther failed completely. He quoted Jesus Sirach: "give the ass food, a load, and the whip," and applied these words to the peasants; he thought of the countryman, not as the feeder, but as the beast of burden of human society. Atrocities were committed by both sides during the war — though certainly more by the opposition — and such things were quite in keeping with the character of the age. Luther's attitude of extreme hostility to the peasants may be explained to some extent by the fact that he received very one-sided accounts of their activities; and, moreover, must have felt a justifi-

able resentment at his position of ill-will even reply to the Twelve claims. Thus, to the q be used in the first pla port the poor of the pa plunder and highway selves the tithe, which with what they will. I your own goods." (A) vided the tithes, that often reached as much by any chance employ service he maintained as usual being drawn had bondservants, and in that calling to whi when there had come kindest that we can sa In his pamphlet *Again* wrote: "It were high t dogs" and "Now she murder, openly or secr a prince can deserve h prayer." In this there of tyrant that lived, of Luther's soul, and w that in this God-forsa the great age of Christi tically extinct.

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se its own pastor, tithes were to be removed, mining, fishing, and colliery movement proceeded, but forward — for example measures throughout of the judicial system. Their losses under these the complete secularization points in the protestant concession, war burst peasants poured in from the towns, all the princes within a few weeks, and Heilbronn to discuss at the same time a far tendencies, the "Anabaptists" Münster, was making Silesia had united for a would have been almost their strength in sieges chiefly by the cavalry, in fighting — in seven battles by September the revolt of selfishness, and the peasants had been through all the following with the confusion of the

story Luther failed to see the peasants as the beast of burden used by both sides during opposition — and such character of the age. Luther the peasants may be expected to have received very one-sided, must have felt a justifi-

able resentment at his purely religious work being side-tracked into politics. But it is utterly inexcusable in him that he took up this position of ill-will even before the outbreak of hostilities. In his reply to the Twelve Articles he flatly rejected almost all their claims. Thus, to the quite legitimate claim that the tithe should be used in the first place to pay the minister and secondly to support the poor of the parish, his answer was: "This article is mere plunder and highway robbery; for they want to seize for themselves the tithe, which is not theirs, but the masters', and do therewith what they will. If you wish to give and do good, do it from your own goods." (And whose goods, if not the peasants', provided the tithes, that iniquitous and oppressive burden, which often reached as much as a third of the harvest and was never by any chance employed for purposes of common weal?) Bond-service he maintained was a God-pleasing institution — the Bible as usual being drawn on for the arguments, since Abraham had had bondservants, and Paul taught that every man should remain in that calling to which God has called him. But later on, too, when there had come to be some reason for disapproval, the kindest that we can say about his tone was that it was mistaken. In his pamphlet *Against the Peasant Robbers and Murderers* he wrote: "It were high time that they should be strangled like mad dogs" and "Now should every man that can, smite, strangle, murder, openly or secretly. . . . So wondrous are the times that a prince can deserve heaven better by bloodshed than others by prayer." In this there bursts out the raw heathen, the barbarian and tyrant that lived, subdued only with difficulty, in the depths of Luther's soul, and we are brought up against the appalling fact that in this God-forsaken sixteenth century — which counts as the great age of Christianity's renewal — Christians became practically extinct.

The worst side of the whole business, however, was that in his astonishing violence and unwisdom Luther was to a large extent influenced by mere opportunism. Now opportunism is, of course, a quality which should not be judged too harshly, it is too human to be rebuked too strictly, and it is often the defect of the strongest characters, whom the very fact of living so fully in their own sphere makes over-anxious for its security and only too often inclined to compromise with the claims of the external world so as to

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Luther's
slackening

tant theology, of which an example can be seen already in his views on the nature of Communion.

The conception of Transubstantiation presented no difficulty to the mediæval world-view, since for it, as we have explained at length, only universals had real existence. Therefore, not the individual Host, but the highest universal of the omnipresent God that appears in it possessed, and alone possessed, reality. There were, of course, free-thinkers even in early days who opposed the doctrine of real change of substance, but they had no success. Most famous was the Berengarian struggle in the middle of the eleventh century led by Berenger of Tours, who taught that the words of institution were to be understood as ennobling the elements through the spiritual presence of Christ. His doctrine was condemned and he himself forced to a recantation in which he declared that the body of Christ was bitten in pieces in Communion by the teeth of the faithful. On the other hand the Swiss Zwingli, Calvin, and their followers declared that the Communion was only a symbolical act, a memorial ceremony, so that the Host merely *represented* the body of Christ. Both views are clear in themselves, and a clear decision between the two is possible. Even today anyone can make really his own the idea of an actual transubstantiation, and, equally, anyone can conceive Communion as a purely spiritual act. Luther, with the mediæval bent of his mind, was undoubtedly inclined to the former view, which indeed he stubbornly maintained at the Marburg conference. But he would not allow that the Catholics might be right in a single point; yet the Calvinistic view, again, was for him too modern. Thus he chose a middle interpretation, and this was such that no man can imagine anything whatever by it. The body of Christ was in the consecrated material in the sense that fire is in a heated iron, and as heat and iron subsist together, so too do the Host and the body of Christ. Thus — as Voltaire put it jestingly, but expressively — the Papists enjoy God, the Calvinists bread, the Lutherans bread and God. A more hopeless confusion than Luther's it is impossible to conceive. He eliminated the mystery — through pure anti-papalism — and rejected the philosophical explanation; he taught a transubstantiation in which the elements undergo and do not undergo change.

But the central problem of the whole reform movement and the key to all its later development was the question of the essence of justification. Catholic doctrine bases repentance on three stages, the "*contritio cordis*," the "*confessio oris*," and the "*satisfactio operis*." Luther admitted only the first of these, repentance of the heart, and fanatically — and what was worse, unintelligibly — opposed the other two, confession and works. But this involved a still deeper complication. The point on which, obviously, every solution depends is the decision between free-will and the rule of predestination. This is the primary problem, for before we can approach the question of the form and manner of justification, we must make the preliminary decision whether the human will is free at all. Here Luther, as he often and gladly admitted, was influenced deeply and enduringly by two of the greatest teachers of the Church, Paul and Augustine.

Paul

Paul is the first figure in the world of the New Testament whom we can concretely grasp. The Gospels display to us figures in a flickering, uncertain, one is almost tempted to say impressionistic light, at one time in misty veiling, at another in dazzling over-brightness; but the letters of Paul are like a voice that we can hear close by, his is a dramatic figure that we see striving, stumbling, victorious; a mortal who personifies that most fundamental quality of all life, paradox; a man, like all earthly creatures, now harsh, now gentle, here boundless, there narrow, fool and yet saint. And it is just because he is the most human of all figures whom we know in the history of early Christianity that he became at all later turning-points the leader and the type. All the great renewers of Christianity have linked themselves on to Paul, and among them, inevitably, Luther.

There are two diametrically opposite views of the rôle that Paul played in the development of Christianity. One, which maintains that without Paul the teachings of the Gospels would never have conquered the world, and that Paul is, therefore, the real founder of Christianity, is so absurd and so contemptible that it is not worth our while to refute it. The other view derives from Nietzsche, the most intellectually powerful of all the opponents of ecclesiastical Christianity, who, with an unfailing instinct, made this greatest of all the Fathers the target of his main offensive. In his posthumous fragment *The Antichrist* he paints the de-

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velopment of early Christianity, as it presents itself to him, with the brush of a Dante. "This glad messenger lived as he taught, *not* to 'redeem' mankind, but to show how man ought to live. . . . He does not resist, he does not assert his rights, he takes no single step to ward off his final destiny; rather, he challenges it. . . . And he prays, suffers, loves *with* those and *in* those who do him evil. . . . *Not* to defend oneself, *not* to show anger, *not* to condemn . . . but yet *not* to resist those that are evil, but to *love* them. . . . At bottom there has been only one Christian, and he died on the cross. The 'glad tidings' *died* on the cross, and what since that day has been called so was the very opposite of what he lived, an 'ill tidings,' a *dysangelium*. . . . Manifestly, it was just the essential that the primitive community missed: how to die after this fashion, in freedom from and sublimation above all resentment. . . . But his disciples were far from *forgiving* his death—that would have been evangelical in the highest sense." (We might remark, parenthetically, that an antichristian who can write words like this may be far nearer the understanding of the Saviour than those Christian ministers who seek to prove their Christianity by babbling the phrases of the Gospels so long that they have lost all feeling for them. God grant us many more such atheists as Nietzsche! If they possess so noble a soul, so pure a passion for the truth, and if they live so exemplary a life of saintliness and patience, they deserve God better thereby than they would do by confessing Him.)

May we, then, say with Nietzsche that Paulinism is nothing more than a single great act of vengeance of the "Chandala-soul"—a barbarization and complete dechristianization of Christianity? Such a view would certainly be wrong. For that which in the story of Jesus gave most profoundly to think was his death. In this lay the supremely new, the inconceivably terrible and wonderful fact, that the greatest whom God had ever sent into the world had not been elevated above all men as their guide, their teacher, and their king, but brutally executed, put to the shameful death of a slave—and that of his own will and seeking. The question then arose how all this was to be explained; and the answer, the only answer, was that it was for our sakes that the grand reversal of the world-order had been allowed, that for us who are unjust the justest had suffered injustice, that the

innocent had suffered so that we might find atonement and blessedness. There was no other way in which Paul could make the thing intelligible, and all the creeds right up to the present day, true or false, have found no other explanation.

If we would sum up Paul's historical significance in a single phrase, we might say that he was the first Christian theologian. He took the religious ideas which were spread about in early Christian communities and brought them into a sort of system, into a logical sequence of ideas which could be easily impressed, retained, and propagated. But in so defining this achievement of Paul we must not commit the error of belittling it. Every genius uses his own language, a private idiom which is naturally intelligible to only a few beyond himself. He therefore needs an *interpreter*, an intellectual power that will try to speak forth the ineffable, to express the inexpressible, to put into earthly, comprehensible forms the eternal, infinite idea. A good formula is not to be despised, for it also is spirit — the spirit which preserves for later times what would otherwise have vanished. This is the sort of service which Aristotle rendered to Greek thought. The formula of the crucified Son of God, who has washed away the sin of the world, gave to thousands who were not ripe for the purer doctrine of Christ a symbol that was not an empty fancy, but something by which they could benefit both in practice and in theory.

*The Judaic
apostle*

But there is one word in Paul's doctrine which will not readily fit into the spirit of the Gospels — the notion of sin. The God of Jesus is grace, infinitely deep and infinitely wide, reigning beyond good and evil — grace not as reward or recompense, but simply grace as itself. God is not the judge who acquits, but the Father who forgives. But for Paul, God and man are somehow engaged in a mysterious balancing of accounts; he could not endure the thought that God was, not just, but *above justice*; and indeed to most men this idea would have meant no liberation, but a tormenting riddle. It was an idea too wide, too great, too difficult, and too deep. Jews could not grasp it because for thousands of years God and law had been the same thing — and in Paul himself it was the Pharisee that responded so willingly to the doctrine of the sacrifice of Christ. The Romans, for their part, were far too well broken in to legalism for it to be possible for them to give up the idea of a satisfaction, and the Greeks, with their

concrete corporeal formalism, would have found it prehensible.

Therefore it is with an apparently paradoxical : of all the Apostles. The : original sin except by the Old Testament God of the still works on the plan : tooth ; it makes the Atonement it is only this fundamer be bought save by the debt bought at all — which was of salvation Paul compared mudic standpoint and even not justified by works but Epistle to the Romans : ' sinned and come short of by His grace through the Therefore we conclude that deeds of the law " ; and in through faith, and that : not of works, lest any man a negation of the freedom of James we have the de working together of faith little favour with Luther though a man say he hath if it hath not works is : faith wrought with (δυνάμει, made perfect? " Thus the flict of opinion on the do

Augustine, the second absolute definiteness the tion. For him man is a " : *perditionis*," of which, the *numerus electorum* " is dom not to sin (" *posse* sin mankind is in the co

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significance in a single great Christian theologian. spread about in early times into a sort of system, could be easily impressed, giving this achievement of belittling it. Every genius which is naturally inclined. He therefore needs an effort to try to speak forth the truth put into earthly, common. A good formula is not the spirit which preserves for itself. This is the sort of Greek thought. The formula washed away the sin of the time for the purer doctrine of fancy, but something of grace and in theory.

one which will not readily admit of sin. The God of mercy wide, reigning beyond recompense, but simply acquits, but the Father are somehow engaged in could not endure the justice; and indeed to no liberation, but a torture too great, too difficult, because for thousands of things — and in Paul himself so willingly to the doctors, for their part, were to be possible for them and the Greeks, with their

concrete corporeal form of thinking and their all-defining rationalism, would have found a God of boundless grace incomprehensible.

Therefore it is with some justification that Lagarde made his apparently paradoxical statement that Paul is the most Jewish of all the Apostles. The assumption that God could not wipe out original sin except by the sacrifice of His Son goes back to the Old Testament God of Jewry, who is above all a just God, who still works on the plan of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth; it makes the Atonement something of a business deal. Yet it is only this fundamental premiss that God's grace could not be bought save by the death of the innocent — that it had to be bought at all — which was repellent; *within* the actual doctrine of salvation Paul completely abandoned the juristic and Talmudic standpoint and emphasized again and again that man is not justified by works but only by grace and by faith. Thus in the Epistle to the Romans: "For there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . . Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law"; and in Ephesians: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast"; here there is already a negation of the freedom of the will. But already in the Epistle of James we have the doctrine of what is called *synergism*, the working together of faith and grace: a combination which found little favour with Luther. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? . . . Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone. . . . Seest thou how faith wrought with (*συνήργει*) his works, and by works was faith made perfect?" Thus the New Testament itself contains a conflict of opinion on the doctrine of satisfaction.

Augustine, the second great teacher of Luther, asserted with absolute definiteness the unfreedom of the will and predestination. For him man is a "*massa peccati*," and, therefore, a "*massa perditionis*," of which, through the "*gratia gratis data*," a "*certus numerus electorum*" is saved. Adam alone possessed the freedom not to sin ("*posse non peccare*"), and because of original sin mankind is in the condition of unfreedom ("*non posse non*

Augustine

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tainly — that it should bring forth fruit. The reproach that Catho-
lic doctrine demands sanctification by works and thus encourages
self-righteousness has been handsomely answered by Adam
Möhler in his "*Symbolik*" with the thesis that the destination of
the doctrine is precisely to call forth *holy* works, and to bring it
about that we *ourselves* become just.

If, now, we attempt to review the meaning and content of all
this in an unprejudiced spirit, a strange conclusion emerges.
Protestantism denies justification by works and puts repentance
in the heart, in mere faith, and yet at the same time it demands a
practical, active Christianity and thus again comes back to a sort
of sanctity of works; more, as we shall soon see, it sanctifies even
profane works, thus achieving the last degree of sanctimonious-
ness. Catholicism accepts justification by works, but means by
the latter only performances of a minor sort, and thus it arrives
at apotheosizing the unworldly and other-worldly life, which is
concentrated on inner penitence and meditation, and which
knows nothing of profane works in the ordinary sense. Thus,
starting from opposite standpoints, each ends in the contrary view
from that with which it began: Protestantism, opposed to works,
ends in a glorification of the most worldly tasks, the State, the
magistrates, the family, manual work, science, even war; the
more worldly Catholicism rises to complete contempt for all these
things: emperor, wife, learning, property, and the active life are
things from which it flees to its heights. In addition we have the
further paradox that reactionary Catholicism was often more
tolerant, conciliatory, and accommodating than freedom-loving
Protestantism. Even so unprejudiced a judge as Zinzendorf em-
phasized that "Catholics carry upon their lips and their banner
an anathema against their opponents, but in practice are often
very complaisant towards them; we Protestants have liberty upon
our lips and as our watchword, and yet in practice, though I say
it with regret, there are amongst us many conscience-hangmen."

Actually in this question of justification the issue is really only
theological; no Catholic who was a true Christian ever believed
that works only suffice, and no Protestant if he was a true Chris-
tian believed that faith alone was enough; for faith in Christ and
imitation of Christ are completely identical. If we believe in Him,
we must live His life, or at least try to live it, and whoever does

this is Christian and has proved his faith in the surest fashion. To assert one-sidedly the value either of works or of faith is to fail in the understanding of Christ, to whom doctrine and works were inseparable. It was precisely because He lived out His teaching to its uttermost consequences that He became the Saviour, and it was precisely because His life was such that it was elevated to a doctrine.

But if we balance Protestantism and Catholicism against each other in this way, the former still suffers a serious defect in its fundamental rejection of monasticism. In a world of cheating, murder, and lust the possibility must be given for a certain class to live only for God, both for their own sakes and for the sake of their example to others. Obviously, not all Catholic monks have been true monks. Doubtless only a fraction of them have been urged to the cloister by a passion to live for God. But it is the fact that Protestantism has provided no room for such people that is so serious. The suspicion is unavoidable that bare utilitarian tendencies played their part here, and that the beginning of a mercantile age was unwilling to allow any justification for the existence of "idlers."

Calvinism

In the religiousness of the Reformation period we may trace, broadly, three stages. The lowest stage was the current Catholicism, which, if not in theory, at any rate in practice, was nothing but the crudest worship of external forms and ceremonies, mechanical repentances and services. Opposed to this was the doctrine of the reformers, in whom we may see the second stage, and who emphasized the unique power of faith, although to a considerable degree (especially in the interpretation later given to it) their teaching remained narrowly and rigidly doctrinaire, compressed dogmatism. The highest stage was seen in the so-called radicals, who were deadly serious in their desire to return to primitive Christianity; they included in various shades and tones the whole spectrum of unqualified religiousness, from the extreme revolutionary fantasies of the Anabaptists to the purest speculation of Protestant mysticism. If the reformers were heretics to Catholicism, the radicals were heretics in the second degree, heretics of the Reformation; the former aimed at a Church without a pope, the latter at a Christianity without any Church at all.

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Catholicism, but one that was far more square-toed, far more local, sectarian, and petty.

Though there were plenty of men, certainly, who like Melanchthon would have preferred the vision of the secrets of the Divinity to their intellectual research of them and started from the principle that "to know Christ is to know His deeds, not to reflect on His natures and the manner of His incarnation," yet, taken all in all, the Reformation did not mean the outburst of a purer, deeper, more fundamental relation to the Godhead, but, on the contrary, the victory of knowledge about faith over Faith itself. *Theology* triumphed at the last over religion.

In practice, too, it was *party* that triumphed. Faith became more and more a matter of community and co-membership. Now, it may be possible to break stones or visit a music-hall in common, or to eat and drink in common, even to murder and take part in politics in common, but one cannot have mass-worship of God any more than one can have mass-love. The characteristic but senseless prejudice of modern man, that all human activities can, nay, must be carried out in common, the ambition of the modern age to make of all humanity a factory, a barrack, a vast hotel, a trust, a reformatory, began to infest religion too. The consequence of this massive mass-religiousness was the Thirty Years' War.

The Reformation was not a creative religious movement. There have been some who quite seriously wished to include Luther among those who have inaugurated new religions, but such men were possible only in the East and in the Classical age—though perhaps again possible in Russia today. The atmosphere of the sixteenth century was not a religious one, it was far too dry, too cool and sharp; it was a world of merchants, diplomats, antiquaries, scribblers, far removed from all craving for eternity, devoted wholly to this world; and even a Luther could not remain uninfluenced by the spirit of the age.

The men of that age almost make us believe the sad words of Goethe: "Men exist only to trouble and kill each other; so was it, so is it, and so shall it ever be." Yet post-Christian humanity has one vast superiority over the man of antiquity—it has a bad conscience. Human beings have not altered; they live for the senses, act for their own advantage, are selfish, use force,

deceit, and injustice in good faith, but half possess the humour of achievement of Christ.

Here we touch upon an immense question: Is not Christianity a deniably an evil creature? Why does it do evil? Why does it do good? What are its possibilities? He is not a moral scruple, all that an angel possesses a creature neither one thing nor another natural. Thus, it is a grotesquely unique and whole. He is a huge good, why does he do evil? The destiny of every creature is anew.

J. V. Jensen, in his brilliant and illuminating *Reformation period* reminds us that the Chinese might quit the Reformation period but inwardly full of vigour and its covetous traits of the time were preserved for us right in vain to give my thought we know for able to see and hear them is possible, for the thing of the mask Middle Ages, for dawdling wilfully even today and, all time was peasant educated classes, understand that a sure sense of nuance

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deceit, and injustice; but they no longer do so thoughtlessly and in good faith, but haltingly, secretly, and fearfully. They no longer possess the humour of the beast of prey. That is perhaps the one achievement of Christianity, so far.

Here we touch upon the nuclear problem of Christianity, the immense question: How is it that, on the one hand, man is undeniably an evil creature, and yet, on the other, does not *will* to be evil? Why does not he make a clear decision between his two possibilities? He is neither beast nor angel; the beast does, without moral scruple, all that is of service to itself and its posterity; the angel possesses a conscience and acts accordingly. Mankind does neither one thing nor the other, he lives a life neither God-pleasing nor natural. Thus, through this portentous dilemma, he is a grotesquely unique and contradictory absurdity in creation as a whole. He is a huge abortion, a walking question-mark. If he is good, why does he do evil? If he is evil, why does he love the good? The destiny of every one of us puts these two terrifying questions anew.

J. V. Jensen, in his description of Peking, makes the striking and illuminating remark that the present-day Chinese of the upper classes remind us of the men of that time. "Many a crafty old Chinese might quite well have been one of the great men of the Reformation period, as we see them in their portraits — reserved, but inwardly full of the religious ambitions of the time, of its vigour and its covetousness. . . . In spite of the splendid portraits of the time which we possess, in spite of all that history has preserved for us right down to the smallest particulars, I have tried in vain to give myself a picture of these men as they lived, although we know for certain that they did live. I have never been able to see and hear them convincingly. Some sort of contact with them is possible, perhaps, through the peasant of today — something of the mask — but only in China can one really relive the Middle Ages, for thus it was that they lived, queerly hesitant, dawdling wilfully and from a sense of their style, as peasants will even today and, above all, slow." Indeed, the whole culture of the time was peasant-like; even the rulers, even the artists and the educated classes, were only better-class peasants, and we can well understand that a subtler and more complicated individual, with a sure sense of nuances and an inkling of the deeper irony of things,

Grobianism

such as Erasmus had, must have felt the world to be an intolerable place. Further, there was in the men of that age something of the wily shrewdness of the Mongol — which strikes us as a natural product needing no explanation and therefore is in no wise unmoral — though certainly they had none of the psychological flair and adaptability which Jensen so praises in the Chinese. The period had an extreme coarseness, and the nascent rationalism, which is its mark, gives to its products an impression of something primitively artificial, childishly mechanical. The Humanists, who gave the science and the poetry its special quality, seem like poorish copies of the Italian Humanism, which they reproduce in cheaper colours. There were, of course, extraordinary talents among them, and one of the most interesting of these — if for no other reason, for his amazing many-sidedness — was Konrad Celtes, the German arch-Humanist. He was the first German poet to be crowned as poet laureate, the first German professor who lectured on general world-history and on German imperial history; he was the discoverer of the *Tabula Peutingeriana*, a Roman map of the third century after Christ. He reformed the Nürnberg woodcut craft, inspired a new musical form, the so-called ode style; and published (indeed for a time was believed to have composed) the Latin dramas of the nun Hroswitha.

Among the most outstanding traits of the time is the so-called "Grobianism," a term popularized, though not invented, by Sebastian Brant: "We have now a new saint, Grobian, whom everyone likes to parade." Almost all the writers of the age hurled pig's language at each other. Luther's polemical language was rarely anything but immoderate (for instance, he says of Erasmus: "Anyone who suppresses Erasmus stamps out a bug, and then it stinks worse dead than alive"); Fischart attacks the fashion of coarseness, but so coarsely that he belies his own efforts; and even so refined a scholar as Reuchlin called his opponents dogs, horses, mules, pigs, foxes, ravening wolves. With this desire to be popular and this wish to hit the object as telling a blow as possible, satire attained to a veritable hegemony and let itself go in a way that has never been paralleled in Germany before or since. The favourite reproach is that of folly: "fool" is perhaps the commonest word in printed and everyday language alike. Brant's chief work bears the title *The Ship of Fools*, Thomas Murner's best-known product is

The Conspiracy of Praise of Folly by pilloried as folly, uncouthness, but Church, the State.

The satirical gsciously or unconsciously many, but in France style is unpalatable; for the power of the French call "*la naïveté*" a logical pleasure and into all his natural moral standpoint, it may be said to be "*à-tout-prix*," or the thing is forceful and unappetizing. Quixotic complexity, however, with which he deals the badness of taste, as went so far that even words — he put on "*Beati, qui mori*" all he writes has the courage, and gluttony apply to him the petite for life and death, and his only error is over vitality and anti-scholasticism with anything a sort of satirical hypocritical priest "*esprit gaulois*," and elemental our as arguing with the French, since he elegant sureness of

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Antichrist, every Papist a son of Satan, while Catholics for their part saw in Luther and his adherents the servants of hell. In addition Protestantism had increased the consciousness of sin; no one could know if he was justified. Works were of no value; yet faith was rather an unending task imposed on the human soul than a pillar of certainty. In Calvinism, with its rigid dogma of predestination, no one could say whether he was among the fore-chosen or among those eternally fore-doomed. Luther used to declare about Doctor Eck, and many more of his opponents, that they had signed a pact with the Devil, and the Breslau Doctor John Cochläus asserted in his biography of Luther — appearing only three years after his death — that he was the son of the adulterous union of the Devil with Margaret Luther. It is the fashion now to doubt whether Luther ever hurled his ink-bottle at the Devil on the Wartburg, but it is quite obvious from innumerable remarks of his that he pictured the world as full of devils, and in the same way he believed in the Devil's harlots, the witches, whom he cursed and threatened from his pulpit. But in that as in everything else he was only the true son of his times. For just then, when faith in Christian doctrine was riven asunder and began to crumble, there was a recrudescence in the depth of men's souls of an obscure and terrifying undercurrent of paganism.

Belief in witches is to be found among the Persians, in the Old Testament, in Greek and Roman mythology, and in some form perhaps in every religion. In the Middle Ages, however, the burning of witches had been rare: it was then still regarded as human sacrifice, and Charlemagne forbade it. In Italy during the Renaissance there was a special witches' tract at Norcia, which proved attractive to foreigners, and the witch, the *strega*, with her art of *stregheria*, received almost official recognition and was persecuted only in exceptional cases. It was only towards the end of the fifteenth century that this witch-mania, beginning in the Northern lands, became a scourge of humanity. The decisive date is 1487, the year of publication by the two papal inquisitors Henry Institor and Jacob Sprenger of the notorious *Malleus maleficarum*; a work in which witchery, if one may say so, is handled in a spirit of technology and scientific system. In the first part of the work various questions are put, answered, and elaborately

discussed, as, for instance: Is there a black art? Does the Devil cooperate with witches? Can men be procreated by incubi (that is, devils who "lie upon" women in the form of men) and succubi (that is, devils who lie under men in the form of women)? Can black magic drive men to love or hate? Can the black art obstruct the marriage act? Can witches treat the *membrum virile* by magic so as to separate it from the body? Can witches turn men into animals? The second part treats more of details; for instance, how witches raise thunder-storms and hail-storms, how they rob cows of their milk, how they make fowls egg-bound, how they produce abortion, how they cause illness in cattle, how they produce frenzy, how they maim limbs by "witches' darts," why they especially love to kill unbaptized children (the answer to this last being that such cannot enter into heaven, and as the kingdom of God and the overthrow of the Devil can only be fulfilled when a definite number of the blessed is in heaven, the murder of newly born children postpones that time).

Witch-
mania and
psycho-
analysis

Witches were assumed to meet on special dates, above all on the eve of May 1, Walpurgis Night, when they flew on broomsticks or he-goats to certain infamous hills, to worship their master by dances and kisses on his genitals or hind quarters (the Devil repaying this court by breaking wind upon them) and then to take their pleasure with devil-lovers in extravagant feasting and wild orgies. The ordeal of witches consisted usually in laying the accused, tightly bound, on the surface of some water and condemning any who remained afloat. Any outstanding quality — good and bad eminence, physical defects and rare beauty, alike — might lead to suspicion of witchcraft. Gradually men became habituated to torturing for a confession, and the vicious circle enclosed them, for, of course, these methods produced numerous proofs of witchcraft, and then increasing fear led to further accusations and trials. Even if avarice and revenge occasionally played some part, there can be no doubt that most of the judges acted in entire honesty, just as a lawyer of today feels himself to be a guardian of law and morality in obtaining the conviction of prisoners for crimes, the punishing of which will seem quite unintelligible to future ages. Protestantism became quite as fanatical as Catholicism (though German historians of a liberal and nationalist tendency like to gloss over the fact), the most blatant

instance being probably Hoensbroech, *Das Papst-samkeit* (*The Papacy and its misdeeds*) of the Roman and in the sternest spirit about the Protestant pe was a universal disease of lower classes, to papists, cursers and inquisitors, many of the victims believe the quality of Kepler, who of scientific thought, made witchcraft, and it was a of his relatives was burned times in danger of the sex-craft is probably the rest sexuality, manifesting in psychoanalysis, which scientific trivialities, might do well foundations, for it would *Hammer*. The question among women than men in other than the ruin of families necessary disaster, a family domestic peril, a desirable ours?" What emerges here mysterious companion, the sinfulness and unseen consequences intercourse, the dark fear gathers into itself all the passions, of erring human information period it is a horror Strindberg. It is clear from which we have given that sexual one under religious subterranean fantasy, come its religious veneer of sex riasis or perversity. This ful and grotesque forms

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 Hoensbroech, *Das Papsttum in seiner sozial-kulturellen Wirk-
 samkeit* (*The Papacy in its Sociological Aspect*), in which the
 misdeeds of the Roman Inquisition are treated at great length
 and in the sternest spirit of description; while there is not a word
 about the Protestant persecution of witches. The fact is that it
 was a universal disease of the time, common to the learned and the
 lower classes, to papists and reformers, princes and subjects, ac-
 cusers and inquisitors, not to mention the witches themselves, for
 many of the victims believed themselves guilty. Even a genius of
 the quality of Kepler, who can hardly be said to have lacked the gift
 of scientific thought, maintained that it was impossible to deny
 witchcraft, and it was a serious enough matter for him, for one
 of his relatives was burnt as a witch, and his mother was many
 times in danger of the same fate. The whole question of witch-
 craft is probably the result of a mass-psychosis due to repressed
 sexuality, manifesting itself in the form of gynophobia; and
 psychoanalysis, which so often occupies itself with unprofitable
 trivialities, might do well to investigate the whole problem to its
 foundations, for it would find valuable hints in the *Witches'*
Hammer. The question why the black art is more widespread
 among women than men is answered as follows: "What is woman
 other than the ruin of friendship, an inescapable punishment, a
 necessary disaster, a fascinating evil, a natural temptation, a
 domestic peril, a desirable danger, a universal evil in fine col-
 ours?" What emerges here is that deep fear of man in face of his
 mysterious companion, the appalling sensation of the unavoidable
 sinfulness and unseen corruption that lies at the back of sexual
 intercourse, the dark fearful maelstrom which blindly and eagerly
 gathers into itself all the many deeds and miseries, dreams and
 passions, of erring humanity. From the witch-madness of the Ref-
 ormation period it is a long line, but a straight line, that leads to
 Strindberg. It is clear from the few quotations from the *Malleus*
 which we have given that the problem was not a religious, but a
 sexual one under religious disguise; in most of them we see a
 subterranean fantasy, completely unrestrained and emphasized by
 its religious veneer of sexual unsatisfaction or impotence, saty-
 riasis or perversity. This effusion of sex-hatred in such dread-
 ful and grotesque forms was one of the consequences of the

much-lauded "liberation of the individual" by the Renaissance and Reformation.

In conclusion we must answer the question as a whole: What, then, taking all in all, must we conclude was the importance of the Reformation for European civilization? It signifies no more, no less, than the attempted secularization of all the life, thought, and faith of mankind. It introduces into all spheres a superficial practicality, a dull utilitarianism, material, gloomy, insipid, ordinary; in its futile, short-sighted rationalism it denied, deliberately and intentionally, a whole set of higher activities which had hitherto flowed from religion and which from the mere standpoint of practical efficiency may be hard to justify — for instance, "barren" asceticism, not merely the asceticism that flees from the world and hates it, but its highest form, the *franchise of the universe*; "unnatural" celibacy, "meaningless" pilgrimages, "superfluous" splendour of ceremonial, "useless" monasteries, "ridiculous" carnivals, "waste of time" in feast-days, "superstitious" adoration of the saints, who had accompanied man through the daily round, shedding light about him and helping him as God's friendly staff of assistants; "unjustifiable" charity to the poor, which gives for the sake of giving, without inquiring too much about worthiness and need. All childlike qualities vanish from life, which becomes logical, systematic, just, and efficient, or, in other words, unendurable.

It must be repeated that to many, though not to all, of these things Luther's attitude was still mediæval. His greatness, in fact, lay precisely in this, that he always felt the Reformation as something religious, never political, social, or "organizational." It must be admitted, all the same, that partly through pressure of popular opinion, partly through his stubborn opposition on principle to anything Catholic, he approved or at least admitted all these changes.

The Reformation in the first place sanctifies work; in the second, a man's profession and thus indirectly the money which proceeds therefrom; thirdly, marriage and the family; lastly, the State. Superficially, it put the last of these lower than the Middle Ages had done, by splitting State from Church, but this actually made it more important, because the State gained thereby a basis of its own for its sovereignty. *Exemption* — that is, *emancipation*

of State from Church-age, the supreme Stat citizen's property, an liberty, and a militari doubt that the clear di which Luther aimed at the opposite resulted, : the dominion of the p of the churches in thei their subjects, in exactl stead of one vicar of C to God, there were now by reason of their mor sible. That was the wt sition to the tendency almost all the countrie system of the stiffest ir erential treatment acc — from its very natur can be.

As for marriage, Lut flesh and obviously did married, not from any liberal example and to a he chose a nun for his w ing, emphatically, noth his real view of wome: the household economy simply fall to pieces." (of his fight for the faith of crassly material cult reads these chronicles v the whole story of the paralleled, in every way been in the whole worl ing never so common a: so splendid that it ca ever seen such trading up the whole world? "

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as a whole: What, the importance of the signifies no more, no the life, thought, and is a superficial practice, insipid, ordinary; deliberately and in which had hitherto standpoint of practice, "barren" from the world and the universe; "un- ges, "superfluous" eries, "ridiculous" perstitious" adora- n through the daily m as God's friendly the poor, which gives much about worthi- from life, which be- or, in other words,

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of State from Church — thus created that scourge of the modern age, the supreme State, which has a fiscal system to claim the citizen's property, an omnipresent police system to restrict his liberty, and a militarism to demand his life. There can be no doubt that the clear distinction between temporals and spirituals which Luther aimed at was intended to emancipate religion; but the opposite resulted, for while Protestant rulers got away from the dominion of the pope, they regarded themselves as masters of the churches in their own land and behaved, as guardians of their subjects, in exactly the same way as Rome had done. But instead of one vicar of Christ who prescribes to men their relation to God, there were now several such vicars, far less competent and, by reason of their more limited sphere of action, far less responsible. That was the whole difference. In the most flagrant opposition to the tendency that had begotten it Protestantism, in almost all the countries in which it was victorious, developed a system of the stiffest intolerance, which grew up out of the preferential treatment accorded to the State's Church; for the State — from its very nature — is the most intolerant creation there can be.

As for marriage, Luther regarded it as a mere concession to the flesh and obviously did not set any high value on it. He himself married, not from any real internal compulsion, but to set a liberal example and to annoy the Catholics; it is illuminating that he chose a nun for his wife. But in the simple Kate he was marrying, emphatically, nothing but a housekeeper; indeed, this was his real view of women: "If we had not this race of women, the household economy and everything concerned with it would simply fall to pieces." On the other hand, in 1521, in the middle of his fight for the faith, he writes enthusiastically about the rise of crassly material culture which marked the period: "Whoever reads these chronicles will find that from the birth of Christ on, the whole story of the world in these hundreds of years is unparalleled, in every way. Such building and planting have never been in the whole world, such fine and varied eating and drinking never so common as they are now. Clothing, too, has become so splendid that it cannot become finer. Who, moreover, has ever seen such trading as now journeys round and swallows up the whole world?" There is, in fact, *a priori*, a subterranean

and the Capitalist attitudes to the surface in English union of Bourse and Bible canonical veto of usury; standing on this point that

ated out, is responsible for "Beruf" (profession, vocation) a "calling"; it is in his present-day meaning of he saw in the practice of the Middle Ages as profane and un-Christian. His day work had been revealed evil; but henceforward it was a direct line to Capitalism. The darkeners of Europe, each of them, has the same ethical

formation, which professed itself, was in all these points. At the very beginning of the New Testament: "Because thou hast not eaten of the tree of life, thou shalt not eat of it, nor shalt thou eat of it all the day of thy face shalt thou eat of it; of work there is not a word, the worst punishment of hell, could conceive for the man who teaches in almost every thing nothing. Christ Himself and companions; Peter and his work — in fact, their work: "Behold the fowls of the field, how they

grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

This explains with perfect clearness the attitude which Jesus took to the "social question." It is true that He preferred the poor to the rich and said that a rich man could not enter the kingdom of Heaven; but this saying has no socialistic application. The poor are more likely to enter the kingdom of Heaven than the rich because the conditions for a godly life, turned away from Mammon, are more favourable in them. A rich man, whether he means it or not, must occupy himself with his earthly goods, while the poor man is in the fortunate position of not owning things which might turn him from God. Socialism, on the contrary, aims at gradually putting the poor into the advantageous place at present occupied by the rich and insists that every man, rich or poor, should work. But Jesus sets before man the example of the lilies in the field and the sparrows on the housetop, for He knows that in the blessing of work a secret curse lies hidden, the greed of gold, of power and materialism. Socialism aims at making the poor rich, Jesus aims to make the rich poor. Socialism envies the rich, Jesus pities them. Socialism aims at the largest number of workers and possessors possible, Jesus looks to an ideal state when no one works or owns anything. Thus Jesus' attitude to the social question is that He simply disregards it: to Him things like the distribution of wealth, property, the just ordering of industrial conditions, are what the Stoics called an "*adiaphoron*" and the mathematicians a "*quantité négligeable*": they do not concern Him. His mission as He sees it is to lead man to the divine, while the mind of a social reformer is ever set on this world. Hence it is the greatest blasphemy against Christ that is possible, to put Him on a level with those dwarf-souls that want to redeem man by *economic* means; He differs from them all, not in degree, but in kind. His good deeds were spiritual, not material, and it is as little reasonable to compare Him with such people as to compare, say, the creations of Plato or Dante with those of Marconi or Edison. Jesus never strove against the powers which are the target in modern social polemics, such as the bourgeoisie,

Jesus and
the "social
question"

reforming anything: there was no room in it for so shallow an idea. The Reformation is nothing but a deeply irreligious attempt to renew religion — though it is fair to add that in this it only followed the trend of the times — and therefore could do nothing else but move away from real religion. Even the Counter-Reformation is only an attempt to re-Catholicize the world by the same instruments as those which Protestantism employed. The “pagan” Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Counter-Reformation have all the same basic meaning: they lead away from God.

Holy
idleness

The consecration of earthly life which was accomplished by the Reformation was, in its way, undeniably an act of liberation, but it was to an equal degree a desecration, futilization, and emptying. The sanctification of everyday life, lock, stock, and barrel, leaves no room for the noble, sublime, even heroic dualism which was the essential idea of the Middle Ages. Such a religious attitude, if we disregard the great personal piety of its founder, is in obvious danger of ending in Philistinism, of becoming the favourite creed of the bourgeoisie, which in the name of God and to the honour of God mines coal, begets children, and draws up balance-sheets. The greater truth that State, economics, profession, industry, society, and family are unholy things is likely to vanish from sight. And it did so vanish in fact.

There is an old Jewish story, not included in the Bible, according to which not only Cain, but his brother Abel also roused the ill-will of God, “for he beheld the glory of God more than was lawful” in idle contemplation. The God of the Jews, quite naturally, was jealous, but at bottom Abel was the first poet and also the first “*homo religiosus*.” The Christian answer, at any rate, to the question of which is better, action or contemplation, work or idleness, is answered clearly in the story of Martha and Mary. Mary sat at the feet of the Lord and listened to His words, but Martha was dragged away by many occupations. And she said to the Lord: “Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath let me serve alone? Bid her, therefore, to help me.” But the Lord said: “Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

All work has the great drawback that it diverts man, divides him, separates him from himself. Therefore all saints, founders of

religion, all men who into the solitude. What nothing contained far doings of others. The mirror — no trembling clean, quiet one which Blessed are the idle, for are the hours of idleness.

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a means for their protection which was unfortunately only a cause of further brutality. They proposed the import of Negro slaves from Africa, with the result that even in the first half of the sixteenth century that odious trade, in which almost all European nations partook, flourished exceedingly. It goes without saying that the Spaniards behaved no less heedlessly and madly with regard to the dumb natives of America; everywhere their track was marked by wanton annihilation of the natural fauna, vandal deforestation, and planless exhaustion of the forces of the earth.

The behaviour of the Spaniards in the Netherlands, which was the richest, most vital and cultured area of the North, was as bad as if they were dealing with some subject dominion of Negroes. It took a long time before their perverse folly, their blind avarice and inhuman brutality, could rouse to a passionate revolt that peace-loving and slowly moving people, these merchants with their account-books and pedagogues with their school-books. But once roused, there was no suppressing them. Alba's tactics, adopted at the express instructions of his king, were not merely despicable, but incomprehensible. The Council of Unrest, or the Bloody Council, as the people justly nicknamed it, was to deal with the punishment of traitors, and the term "traitor" included all who had signed a petition for the relaxation of the Inquisition or had failed to prevent such a petition, or who even under compulsion had listened to an evangelical sermon, or had said that the King had not the right to take from the provinces their liberty, or had disputed whether the Council of Unrest was above the law, or had asserted that one must obey God more than man, or any who had listened to such remarks in silence. Obviously it was almost impossible not to commit at least one of such crimes, and it was only the logical conclusion of these frenzied premisses when all inhabitants of the Netherlands were condemned to death on February 16, 1568 as heretics: an action which is probably unique in history. After thousands had been hanged, burned, imprisoned, exiled, or had had their property confiscated, a royal amnesty was issued promising immunity to all who could prove that they had never committed the slightest offence, on condition that they repented and asked for pardon within a definite period: such an amnesty also is probably without its match in history.

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the Netherlands were not driven to revolt by any of these measures, but only by an administrative edict of the governor of a financial nature, which may have equalled the rest in folly and shamelessness, but which one would have imagined to be at least more tolerable. Alba had promised Philip he would send a stream of gold a fathom deep from the Netherlands to Spain, and he published a decree that taxes should be raised, of one per cent as a non-recurring income-tax on all movable and immovable property, of a "twentieth penny" or five per cent on all property that was sold, and of a "tenth penny" or ten per cent on every sale of movable goods. This last clause, more even than the others, would have meant the complete ruin of Netherlands commerce if it had been rigidly enforced. And then at last the country declared its independence, and the great Revolt of the Netherlands began with the cry: "Rather Turk than Papist." It was a victorious and heroic fight of a small nation of shopkeepers against the greatest military power of Europe. All this is very remarkable, but man is built so. Freedom, faith, even life may be taken from him sooner than income, wealth, and business. In the same way the Jacobins, whose administrative methods remind us by their stupidity and cruelty of the Spanish régime (though this was the outcome of a wholly different sort of attitude), made themselves intolerable, not by their suppression of public opinion, their scorn for religion, or their mass-executions, but by their attacks on property and their destructive effects on trade, industry, and finance: it was, in fact, the assignats and not the guillotine that ruined them.

The revolt of the Netherlands marked the beginning of Philip's decline; after it, all went awry. His imperialistic program was briefly this: encircling France as he did with the Netherlands possessions on the north, with Franche-Comté on the east and with Spain on the south side, to keep it in a disrupted state internally by backing the power of the papist and anti-dynastic Ligue, and thus in the end to put one of his own kindred, or a member of some French house dependent on him, on the throne. In this way the only continental power that might be dangerous was to become a sort of Spanish protectorate. England he hoped to make his own either by such personal union as had previously existed during his marriage to "Bloody Mary" or by the superiority of his fleet. He already possessed a great part of Italy, and

*Collapse of
Philip's
system*

developing upwards, even if its inhabitants do not always wear the appearance of a professor of astronomy.

Francis
Bacon

It is quite natural that Bruno, who is in advance even of our own times, should have been regarded by his contemporaries either as a diabolical seducer or a mad fantastic. The philosopher who gave clear and definite expression to what all the world was thinking was Francis Bacon: no fathomless volcano like Bruno, no God-seeker, struggling in the darkness, like Böhme, no sensitive psychological atom like Montaigne, no fiery world-eye like Shakspeare, but a deliberate and impressive speaker who had the gift of comprehending and brilliantly formulating the effort of his own age. It was of his essence that he was English, for such a philosophy as his could only come out of England.

The rise
of England

During the sixteenth century England developed from a mediæval city-state into a modern European great power, not as patriotic legend pretends, thanks to its rulers, but in spite of them, for they were generally mediocre, often contemptible. Henry VIII we have come across several times already. Not even Shakspeare's court poetry with all its retouching could depict him except as a coarse and treacherous despot. Holbein's portrait is enough to give a complete idea of this bejewelled butcher, this overpowering incarnation of bestial energy and insatiable vitality. His son, Edward VI, who gave promise of talents, died in youth; he was succeeded by "Bloody Mary," an embittered old maid and intense bigot, who, completely under the influence of her husband, Philip II (for whom she had a lifelong and ill-requited passion), strove by the most brutal means to bring about a Catholic restoration and — what her subjects resented far more even than her cruel attempts at reaction — lost Calais in the war with France which she carried on as an ally of Spain. If she had lived a few years longer, revolution would have followed. Her successor was Elizabeth, a prudent and clear-sighted but immoderately vain and egoistic woman, with the brutal unscrupulousness, cool deceit, and self-righteous prudery which England's enemies regard as her national characteristics. Certainly "cant" was developed in her, even so soon, to sheer artistry. It is a quality for which no other language has a word, because no other people has the characteristic. Cant is neither lying nor hypocrisy: it is something far more complicated. It is a talent — namely, that of feeling everything

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The two most infamous executions of Essex an sions she was, as queen. a traitor, and Mary II What does bring disgrace justice to its bloody end womanly gentleness at Nor can any reasonable but only for the cool throughout her reign permitted Walter Raleigh to call the first English respect she fell far low ably committed as macoldblooded deliberation and more frankly. When band Darnley into the nation, but when Elizabeth public opinion was silenced cleverly; still, cleverly tenuous circumstance

On Elizabeth's death succeeded by James I, son Margaret Tudor; he at the same time the evil quality of neering obstinacy and and moral irresponsibility Mary's secretary, murdered by Darnley. Thick, and his beard thick and unmusical; men said

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that of feeling everything

to be true and good which brings immediate practical advantage. When an Englishman feels anything for any reason to be unpleasant, he concludes — in his subconsciousness — to call it wrong or untrue. Thus he has the singular faculty of being perfidious not only to others, but to himself, and he exerts his talent with the clearest conscience, which is perfectly natural since it is an instinct that he is satisfying. Cant is something that may be described as honest deceit or the gift of cheating oneself.

The two most infamous blots on the reign of Elizabeth are the executions of Essex and of Mary Queen of Scots. On both occasions she was, as queen and as politician, in the right, for Essex was a traitor, and Mary the head of many dangerous conspiracies. What does bring discredit on her is that she not merely pursued justice to its bloody end, but that she sought to get a reputation for womanly gentleness and Christian mercy out of it all as well. Nor can any reasonable man reproach her for her many lovers, but only for the cool *tartufferie* with which she allowed herself throughout her reign to be celebrated as the Virgin Queen and permitted Walter Raleigh (who must himself have known better) to call the first English colony Virginia in her honour. In this respect she fell far lower than her deadly rival Mary, who probably committed as many crimes in her life, but none with such coldblooded deliberation, and certainly "strayed" both less often and more frankly. When Mary's lover Bothwell blew her husband Darnley into the air, the whole of Scotland rose in insurrection, but when Elizabeth's favourite Leicester poisoned his wife, public opinion was silent, for things had been managed far more cleverly; still, cleverness has never yet been regarded as an extenuating circumstance in a murder case.

On Elizabeth's death, after fifty-five years' reign, she was succeeded by James I, son of Mary Stuart and great-grandson of Margaret Tudor; he united both crowns, uniting, however, at the same time the evil qualities of both the rival houses — the domineering obstinacy and arrogance of the Tudors and the inertia and moral irresponsibility of the Stuarts. His father was probably Mary's secretary, the ugly David Rizzio, who was bestially murdered by Darnley. His figure was fat and ungainly, his head thick, and his beard thin, his eyes bulging, his speech stammering and unmusical; men said that he spat out rather than articulated

his words. He was unusually timid and distrustful, could not look on a naked sword, and spent his life in fear of conspiracy and assassination. He was as childishly vain as his predecessor, but far less intelligent, for he tolerated only views that agreed with his own. He was particularly proud of his theological education, and frequently used it to the horror of his court in the most hair-splitting debates. His second passion was for handsome young men, and such could get anything from him, however insignificant or common they might be. Despite the nervous movements, his clumsy gait and boorish manners that made him the reverse of royal, no ruler was ever so convinced of his divine right as he. He regarded himself as the unlimited dictator over the life, property, and thoughts of his subjects, and that at a time anything but propitious, and among a people anything but amenable, to such views. As, further, he lacked all political insight and ability, he was continuously at loggerheads with his Parliament, though open revolt was postponed till his successor's time. At the end of his reign the saying was that Great Britain is smaller than Britain.

Nevertheless these hundred years form the first great age of England's glory. Trade, industry, seamanship, science, art, and literature developed even to over-ripeness. London in Elizabeth's time was a city of three hundred thousand souls, with countless shops, an important Exchange, a permanent market, and almost twenty permanent theatres. The streets were carefully laid out, the water-supply regulated through wooden pipes, lighting and fire-police much improved. There were many well-ordered schools, apothecaries' shops, printing establishments, and even something like newspapers. The Thames was packed with gaily decorated boats; an unbroken stream of pedestrians, horsemen, and litters enlivened the city; the upper classes already used coaches, and their new country-houses, of the Tudor style, were effective, practical, inviting, and (in contrast to the continental villas) built primarily to be lived in: already the Englishman's taste for prosperous and pleasant domesticity was displaying itself. Clothes were brave, rich, well looked after, and not lacking in taste. Ordinary comforts, however, were not much in advance of the Middle Ages; sleeping-arrangements were still primitive, table-forks were not used, and meals were chiefly remarkable for the quantity consumed; for ordinary use wooden utensils were

preferred. Tobacco mended by Jean Nicotiana by Drake's century it was in the hands of Indians in cigarette opposed smoking, theological ground: revenue. The tobacco pipes, and Raleigh smoke even at Essex.

The average education high level: every philosopher, sang astronomy. Conveyed artificial wit plenty of crudity: greatest dramatists low — were mere an absolute clown people cried to her: would use vulgar expression or, whate with Essex is crooked as your car gave him a box on the

The men of the its height under Elizabeth elemental humanity tough, shrewd men Their attitude is adventurous" — mercantile the sea, roaming (a support of royal privilege also founding trade was, indeed, piracy State; in time of war circumnavigators, (Hawkins, Essex, and

A. H.
Somerset

The
Elizabethan
man

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CHRONOLOGY

- 1348 Black Death (*Death of William of Occam*)
- c. 1350 *Büchlein vom vollkommenen Leben*
- 1351 Konrad von Megenberg: *Buch der Natur*
- 1354 Death of Rienzi
- 1356 Golden Bull
- 1358 French Jacquerie
- 1361 Death of Tauler. Fall of Adrianople
- 1365 Death of Suso
- c. 1370 *Piers Plowman*
- 1372 Death of Meister Wilhelm
- 1374 Death of Petrarch
- 1375 Death of Boccaccio
- 1377 End of the Babylonish Captivity
- 1378 Death of Charles IV: Wenceslas. Beginning of the
Great Schism
- 1381 Death of Ruysbroeck
- 1384 Death of Wyclif
- 1386 Battle of Sempach. Poland-Lithuania
- 1389 Battle of Kosovo
- 1396 Battle of Nicopolis
- 1397 Union of Kalmar
- 1399 House of Lancaster in England
- 1400 Wenceslas deposed: Rupert of the Palatinate. The
Medici in Florence. Death of Chaucer
- 1405 Death of Froissart
- 1409 Council of Pisa: three popes
- 1410 Death of Rupert: Sigismund. Battle of Tannenberg
- 1414 Beginning of the Council of Constance
- 1415 Burning of Huss. The Hohenzollerns in Brandenburg
Battle of Agincourt
- 1417 End of the Great Schism
- 1420 Beginning of the Hussite wars

- 1426 Death of Hubert van Eyck
 1428 Death of Masaccio
 1429 Joan of Arc
 1440 Frederick III, German Emperor. Nicolaus Cusanus:
De docta ignorantia. Death of Jan van Eyck. Platonic
 Academy of Florence
 1441 Imitatio Christi finished
 1445 Cape Verde
 1446 Death of Brunelleschi
 1450 Francesco Sforza. Duke of Milan
 c. 1450 Gutenberg: book-printing
 1452 Birth of Leonardo da Vinci
 1453 Fall of Constantinople. Death of John Dunstaple
 1455 Death of Fra Angelico. Death of Ghiberti
 1458 Aeneas Sylvius, Pope
 1459 Beginning of the Wars of the Roses
 1461 Louis XI of France. House of York in England
 1464 Death of Cosimo de' Medici. Death of Nicolaus Cu-
sanus. Death of Rogier van der Weyden
 1466 Cession of West Prussia to Poland; East Prussia a
 Polish fief. Death of Donatello
 1471 First observatory. Birth of Dürer
 1472 Death of Alberti
 1475 Birth of Michelangelo
 1477 Fall of Charles the Bold; the Netherlands become
 Habsburg by marriage. Birth of Titian
 1478 Introduction of the Inquisition
 1479 Castile-Aragon
 1480 Overthrow of the Mongol domination in Russia
 1483 Death of Louis XI: Charles VIII. Birth of Rabelais.
Birth of Raphael. Birth of Luther
 1485 House of Tudor in England: end of the Wars of the
 Roses
 1487 Cape of Good Hope
 1488 Death of Verrocchio
 1489 The Witches' Hammer
 1490 Martin Behaim: globe
 1492 Discovery of America. Conquest of Granada. Rodrigo
 Borgia Pope. Death of Lorenzo de' Medici

- 1494 Sebastian
 Mirandola
 1495 Death of M
 1498 Sea route
Reinke de
 1499 Independence
 c. 1500 Spinetti: t
 1500 Discovery
 1505 First postal
 1506 Reuchlin:
 1509 Accession
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 1513 Leo X, Pop
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 1515 Francis I, J
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 1516 House of H.
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 1517 Luther nail
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 1519 Death of M
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 1520 Death of R:
 1521 Conquest o
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 1522 End of the f
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 1523 House of V.
 Hutten
 1524 Death of Pe
 1525 German Pe
 1526 Battle of M
 1527 Death of M.
 1528 Death of Di
 1529 Death of Gr
 1530 Diet of Aug
 1531 Fall of Zwin
 1532 Conquest of

Birth
of
Luther

- 1494 Sebastian Brant: *Narrenschiff*. Death of Pico della
Mirandola
- 1495 Death of Memling
- 1498 Sea route to the East Indies. Burning of Savonarola.
Reinke de Vos
- 1499 Independence of Switzerland
- c. 1500 Spinetti: the spinet
- 1500 Discovery of Brazil
- 1505 First postal service
- 1506 Reuchlin: Hebrew grammar. Death of Mantegna
- 1509 Accession of Henry VIII of England. Erasmus: *En-
comium moria*
- 1510 Pocket-watches. Death of Botticelli
- 1513 Leo X, Pope
- 1514 Death of Bramante. Machiavelli: *Il Principe*
- 1515 Francis I, King of France. Battle of Marignan. *Epis-
tolæ obscurorum virorum*
- 1516 House of Habsburg in Spain. Ariosto: *Orlando Furioso*.
More: *Utopia*.
- 1517 Luther nails the theses to the church-door at Witten-
berg. Egypt conquered by the Turks
- 1519 Death of Maximilian I: Charles V. Death of Leonardo
da Vinci
- 1520 Death of Raphael. Blood-bath of Stockholm
- 1521 Conquest of Mexico. Diet of Worms. Capture of Bel-
grade
- 1522 End of the first circumnavigation of the globe. Luther's
Bible
- 1523 House of Vasa in Sweden. Fall of Sickingen. Death of
Hutten
- 1524 Death of Perugino
- 1525 German Peasants' War. Battle of Pavia
- 1526 Battle of Mohacs
- 1527 Death of Machiavelli. Sack of Rome
- 1528 Death of Dürer
- 1529 Death of Grünewald. The Turks before Vienna
- 1530 Diet of Augsburg: *Confessio Augustana*
- 1531 Fall of Zwingli. Church of England
- 1532 Conquest of Peru. Religious Peace of Nürnberg

1533 Death of Ariosto
 1534 Death of Correggio
 1535 The Anabaptists of Münster
 1537 Wullenweber beheaded
 1540 Foundation of the Jesuit Order. Servetus: pulmonary circulation
 1541 Death of Paracelsus. Calvin at Geneva: Knox in Scotland
 1543 Death of the younger Holbein. Copernicus: *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*. Vesalius: *De humani corporis fabrica*
 1545 Death of Sebastian Franck. Beginning of the Council of Trent
 1546 *604ms* Death of Luther
 1547 Battle of Mühlberg. Death of Francis I. Death of Henry VIII
 1553 Death of Rabelais. Burning of Servetus
 1555 Religious Peace of Augsburg
 1556 Abdication of Charles V: Ferdinand I becomes Emperor, and Philip II King of Spain. Death of Loyola
 1557 Battle of Saint-Quentin
 1558 Accession of Elizabeth in England. Battle of Gravelines
 1560 Death of Melanchthon. Nicot: tobacco
 1561 Birth of Francis Bacon
 1564 *894ms* Death of Ferdinand I: Maximilian II. Death of Calvin. Death of Michelangelo. Birth of Shakspeare
 1568 Execution of Egmont
 1569 Mercator's map of the world
 1571 Battle of Lepanto. London Stock Exchange
 1572 Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Death of Knox
 1576 Death of Maximilian II: Rudolf II. Death of Hans Sachs. Death of Titian
 1577 Birth of Rubens
 1579 Union of Utrecht
 1580 Death of Palladio. Portugal becomes Spanish. Montaigne: *Essais*
 1581 Tasso: *Gerusalemme liberata*
 1582 Gregorian calendar
 1584 William of Orange murdered

1586 Stevinus: the paradox; co
 1587 Execution of
 1588 The Spanish
 1589 Henry IV: I
 1591 Death of Fis
 1592 Death of M
 1593 Death of Mi
 1594 Death of O
 of Tintoretto
 1595 Death of Ta
 1596 Birth of Des
 1597 Galileo: the
 1598 Edict of Nar
 1600 Burning of
 netism. Engl
 1601 Death of Ty
 1602 Dutch East
 1603 Death of El
 Scotland, Sh
 1606 Birth of Ren
 1608 Lippershey: i
 1609 Cervantes: I
 1610 Murder of H
 1611 Kepler's astr
 becomes King
 1612 Death of Ruc
 1613 House of Bor
 1614 Napier's loga
 1616 Death of Cerv
 1618 Outbreak of t

Servetus: pulmonary	1586	Stevinus: theory of the inclined plane; the hydrostatic paradox; communicating tubes
eneva: Knox in Scot-	1587	<u>Execution of Mary Queen of Scots</u>
pernicus: <i>De revolu-</i>	1588	<u>The Spanish Armada</u>
lius: <i>De humani cor-</i>	1589	Henry IV: House of Bourbon in France
ning of the Council	1591	Death of Fischart
Francis I. Death of	1592	Death of Montaigne
rvetus	1593	<u>Death of Marlowe</u>
and I becomes Em-	1594	Death of Orlando Lasso. Death of Palestrina. Death of Tintoretto. Birth of opera
n. <u>Death of Loyola</u>	1595	Death of Tasso
I. Battle of Gravelines	1596	<u>Birth of Descartes</u>
bacco	1597	<u>Galileo: the thermometer</u>
n II. <u>Death of Calvin</u>	1598	Edict of Nantes. <u>Birth of Bernini</u>
Shakspeare	1600	<u>Burning of Giordano Bruno</u> . Gilbert: terrestrial magnetism. English East India Company
Exchange	1601	Death of Tycho de Brahe
ath of Knox	1602	Dutch East India Company
f II. Death of Hans	1603	<u>Death of Elizabeth: personal union of England and Scotland</u> . Shakspeare: <u>Hamlet</u>
omes Spanish. Mon-	1606	<u>Birth of Rembrandt</u>
	1608	Lippershey: the telescope. Protestant Union
	1609	Cervantes: <i>Don Quixote</i> . Catholic League
	1610	Murder of Henry IV
	1611	Kepler's astronomical telescope. Gustavus Adolphus becomes King of Sweden
	1612	Death of Rudolph II: Matthias
	1613	<u>House of Romanov in Russia</u>
	1614	Napier's logarithms
	1616	<u>Death of Cervantes</u> . <u>Death of Shakspeare</u>
	1618	<u>Outbreak of the Thirty Years' War</u>