ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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Title of Thesis: JAIME BALMES AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC REVIVAL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The purpose of the investigation is to determine the contribution of Jaime Balmes (1810-1848) to Roman Catholic thought during the first half of the nineteenth century, and his particular contribution to Spanish Catholicism. Balmes must be seen in the light of the revival of Roman Catholicism which took place throughout Europe during the Napoleonic and Restoration periods, manifested in the nostalgic return to religion, the restoration of worship, and the growth of the influence of the papacy. During this same period, however, anticlericalism and religious conflict continued throughout Europe, particularly in Spain, where there were few signs of a religious restoration until 1839. New schools of Roman Catholic apologetics arose, which were characterized by a realistic approach to the problems of religious knowledge, Church and State, and religion and society. The new apologetics were popular in Spain in the early nineteenth century. After 1840, chiefly through Balmes, Spain played a more creative role in the revival of apologetics.

Balmes' political thought contains elements of French and Spanish traditionalism, scholasticism, and moderate Liberal Catholicism. His political ideal was a strongly Catholic, paternalistic monarchy; but he accepted inevitable political and social change, advocating the use of democratic liberties in the defense of the Church. He achieved no synthesis of conservative and liberal political ideals, but adopted a conciliatory attitude toward the Spanish factions. He gave Spaniards a broad historical and philosophical understanding of their religious struggles, and awakened them to the social implications of religion. Balmes' chief contribution to apologetics was a popular work devoted to the social importance of religion in European history. This work, known throughout Europe, was written in imitation of the French social apologetics, sharing their theological superficiality, but surpassing them in orthodoxy and thoroughness of development.

Balmes' philosophical works were likewise read throughout Europe, for they provided a sounder basis for Roman Catholic apologetics than most Roman Catholic philosophies of the period, which tended toward heterodoxy. Balmes failed in his attempt to build a broader foundation for philosophical certitude than that of the eighteenth century rationalists; but his criterion of "common sense" provided a useful philosophical basis for religious dogmatism. He combatted the scepticism inherent in extreme sensationalism and subjective idealism, upholding the scholastic balance between sense-perception and intellectual activity as factors in cognition. He combatted the Kantian tendency toward subjectivism, and upheld the objective validity of our knowledge of the real world. His philosophy was eclectic. Its chief weakness was a lack of unity and integration. Balmes revised and popularized many elements of scholastic philosophy, and may be regarded as the earliest precursor of the neo-scholastic movement of the late nineteenth century.

In many respects, Balmes' thought typifies that of the Roman Catholic Revival. It had a broad general scope and effectively demonstrated the wider social and philosophical implications of religion; but it lacked a strong religious emphasis. Balmes did
much to accommodate modern thought to the doctrine of the Roman Church; but like virtually all orthodox Roman Catholic apologists of his time, he achieved little in the way of creative synthesis, whether in politics or philosophy. Nevertheless, he made a unique contribution to Spanish Catholicism. He was the soul of the Catholic resistance to the anti-religious spirit of the age. He awoke Spain to its need for coming to terms with European civilization; and without abandoning the Spanish scholastic tradition, he enriched Spanish apologetics through contact with European thought.
JAIME BALMES
AND THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC REVIVAL
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A Thesis
by
Alvin Schutmaat

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1957
The present study grew out of an interest in the religious problems of modern Spain. In the English-speaking world, there has been no lack of interest in Spanish religion. The Spanish Reformation, the Spanish Inquisition, and Spanish mysticism have been dealt with extensively both in England and America by such scholars as Thomas McCrie, Henry Charles Lea, and E. Allison Peers. But with the exception of George Borrow's popular and romantic work, The Bible in Spain (1842), little has been written in English on the religious struggles in Spain during the chaotic years of the early nineteenth century. These were crucial years for Spanish Catholicism. During the revolutionary age, when "the ghost of Felipe II wrestled with the spirit of Napoleon," as a modern writer said, ancient Spain came face to face with modern Europe. By mid-century, when the first revolutionary period came to a close, Spanish Catholicism had awakened to the need for coming to terms with modern civilization.

Just as the spirit of secularism had entered Spain by way of France, so the inspiration for a new and more enlightened defense of Catholicism came from France. Although Spanish religion is in many respects unique, it cannot be understood apart from the religious, philosophical, and political movements of modern Europe. French rationalism, the Revolution, and the Napoleonic invasion made a strong impact on the religious life of Spain. The revival and
expansion of European Catholicism which followed the Revolution also had its effect upon the religion of the Peninsula. The outstanding apologists of the Catholic resistance and restoration in Spain—Jaime Balmes (1810-1848) and Juan Donoso Cortés (1809-1853)—were both deeply influenced by the thought of the Roman Catholic Revival.

For an understanding of Spanish Catholicism, the Catalan apologist, Balmes, is the more important of the two. Donoso Cortés wrote mainly on the political and social aspects of religion, whereas Balmes attempted to touch upon every important aspect of the religious thought of his time. Moreover, Donoso Cortés was so thoroughly French in his outlook that one may often doubt his relevance for the Spanish situation. But in Balmes the two worlds of Spanish tradition and European culture are brought together in a most revealing way. His attempt to reconcile these two worlds throws much light on the problems of nineteenth century Spanish Catholicism.

Indeed, throughout the nineteenth century there was no Spanish apologist who showed so clearly as Balmes the religious tensions of modern Spain. At the same time, the work of Balmes has a universal scope, for it reflects the preoccupations of European Catholicism during the age in which he lived. Thus, the purpose of the present study is to determine what was Balmes' contribution to the Roman Catholic Revival in Europe, and in particular, his contribution to the Catholic restoration in Spain at the close of
the revolutionary period.

Except for occasional articles, little has been written on Balmes in England or the United States, although standard histories and reference works in both countries assign Balmes a place of honor among Spanish philosophers and apologists. French and German critics have given some attention to his writings. In Spain, the literature on Balmes has been prodigious, particularly on the anniversaries of his birth and death in 1910 and 1948. Unfortunately, many of the Spanish studies have contributed but little to a better understanding of Balmes and his times. Some are filled with strong political and religious prejudices and tend to obscure Balmes' thought rather than to clarify it. Others are brilliant and stimulating, but contain far more of the authors' personal reflections than clear exposition of Balmes' thought. Moreover, in the Spanish studies there is no detailed analysis of the sources of Balmes' thought, and there are few attempts to relate his thought clearly to that of nineteenth century European Catholicism. The great majority of the Spanish critics attempt to point out the contemporary relevance of Balmes' thought, but do not always realize that the first step in such an attempt should be a clear and simple presentation of Balmes' ideas.

There are many exceptions to these general criticisms of the Spanish literature on Balmes. There are valuable studies of particular aspects of Balmes' thought. Many of these have been consulted in the preparation of this thesis.
I believe that no outstanding critical contribution has been overlooked. There are, however, only two significant books which take a comprehensive view of Balmes and his work. Sr. Narciso Roure's biography, written in 1910, contains many valuable insights, but in presenting Balmes' ideas, the author is inclined to generalize without adhering strictly to the text of Balmes' writings. While he has a fine appreciation of the literary aspects of Balmes' work, he does not always see the full significance of the religious issues which Balmes raises. Father Ignacio Casanovas' definitive biography (1932) is a rich mine of information on Balmes and his times, but is largely uncritical. Rigid doctrinal orthodoxy, as well as personal and regional loyalty, blind this excellent Catalan scholar to Balmes' deficiencies, and incline him to exaggerate the significance of much of Balmes' thought. Nevertheless, without Casanovas' biography and definitive edition of Balmes' complete works, the present study would perhaps not have been possible.

One of the greatest needs with respect to a better understanding of Balmes is that of relating him clearly to the main currents of Roman Catholic thought in Spain and Europe in general during the nineteenth century. For that reason, in the first three chapters of this study I have tried to define the situation of European Catholicism in the first half of the nineteenth century, both in its historical and doctrinal aspects. I have also attempted to point out the relation of Spanish Catholicism to European Catholicism during
that period. I apologize for the excessive length of these chapters. But in addition to providing the background of a period whose religious history is none too familiar, especially with regard to Spain, I have tried to reach certain conclusions which are basic to an appraisal of Balmes' work.

My use of the term "Roman Catholic Revival" requires some explanation. In writing of the "Catholic revival" on the Continent, historians generally refer to the Roman Church's gradual recovery from the devastating effects of the French Revolution during the Napoleonic and Restoration periods. No definite limit can be set for the conclusion of the revival, for the entire nineteenth century was one of expansion and intellectual awakening for Roman Catholicism. In the present study, the revival is traced to the middle of the nineteenth century, mainly because Balmes died in 1848, and also because certain events—the European Revolution of 1848, Pope Pius IX's return to conservatism, and the Spanish Concordat of 1851—make this a convenient stopping-point. Most historians consider French Catholicism and the papacy to be the focal points of the revival. This same emphasis is given in the present study. France and the papacy had considerable influence on Spanish Catholicism, but Germany, almost none. The Catholic revival in England is not discussed, for it had no repercussions in Spain, either in its Anglican or Roman aspects.

The first three chapters are based largely on secondary works; only direct quotations and highly controversial points
are documented. In these chapters, I am particularly indebted to Jean Leflon and Edgar Hocedez, whose recent studies of early nineteenth century Catholicism and Catholic thought are among the best general works available. With regard to Spanish Catholicism, I have relied mainly on Menéndez y Pelayo's classical work, *Historia de los Heterodoxos Españoles* (1880-82). Despite the prejudices of the author, this is still the best general history of Spanish religion in its doctrinal aspects. Needless to say, on important points, the opinions of more recent and more liberal writers have been taken into account.

In translating the technical terminology of *Filosofía Fundamental*, I have often used Brownson's translation, from which I have occasionally quoted, though with revisions. Translations from other works of Balmes and other Spanish writers which appear in the text are my own, unless it is otherwise indicated.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PREFACE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC REVIVAL: ITS NATURE AND SCOPE</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The background of the revival</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Napoleon and the Church</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Restoration</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberalism and the papacy</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary: the strength and weakness of the revival</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. THE CHURCH IN REVOLUTIONARY SPAIN</strong></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence of French rationalism on Spanish society, and the growth of Jansenism</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Church's role in the War of Independence (1808-1814)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolution and Reaction from 1810 to 1851</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. THE REVIVAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND APOLOGETICS</strong></td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The decadence of Roman Catholic theology</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The romantic awakening</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem of Faith and Reason</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The problem of Church and State</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. BALMES' EARLY LIFE AND LITERARY CAREER</strong></td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. BALMES' POLITICAL THOUGHT.</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmes' analysis of the Spanish crisis.</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative elements in Balmes' thought: French and Spanish tradition</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholasticism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balmes and Liberal Catholicism.</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An evaluation of Balmes' political thought.</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. APOLOGETICS.</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The background of El Protestantismo.</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and society.</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The effects of religion on politics and philosophy.</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The influence of El Protestantismo.</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. BALMES’ PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT: THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE.</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteriology</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKS CITED</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC REVIVAL:
ITS NATURE AND SCOPE

In 1841, Thomas Macaulay wrote in the Edinburgh Review of the remarkable progress that had been made by the Roman Catholic Church during the four preceding decades. "Some future historian," he wrote, "will, we hope, trace the progress of the Catholic revival of the 19th century."¹ Since that time, no historian has attempted to treat in a single work every aspect of this vast and complex subject. Nevertheless, a large number of historians have dealt with various aspects of the Roman Catholic Revival. The purpose of the present chapter is to give the background of that revival, to describe its progress, and to determine briefly its nature and scope.

I. THE BACKGROUND OF THE REVIVAL

The situation of European Catholicism at the close of the eighteenth century was more critical than it had been at any time since the Reformation. After a century of moral and spiritual decline, the Catholic Church of France was totally unprepared for the revolutionary

crisis of 1789. The loss of property and ancient privileges was a staggering blow for the aristocratic bishops. The Civil Constitution of the clergy, which the Assembly tried to impose upon them in December of 1790, they considered an outrageous affront to their episcopal dignity, and the virtual downfall of the French Church. Their refusal to take the constitutional oath is frequently looked upon as a heroic act—"one of the most glorious pages in all of their history." It was, however, the only choice for most of the horrified, bewildered bishops, whose material and spiritual values were completely identified with those of the ancien régime, and who saw nothing but the darkest evil in the crude Erastianism of the Assembly. "Religion is annihilated," said the Bishop of Trégouër. "Its ministers are reduced to the sad condition of civil clerks appointed by brigands."2

Indeed, it did appear at many times during the revolutionary era that the Catholic religion in France was in danger of being annihilated. For those few bishops and priests who remained in France were divided into two hostile bands—the jurors and the non-jurors. The division led to great confusion among the devout, who were mostly provincial people and had no understanding of the

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political issues involved. Moral conditions were notoriously bad. The license and debauchery which had formerly been the privilege of the aristocracy had become common among the middle and lower classes, where, in the opinion of one observer, vice became more vicious by its appalling lack of elegance.\(^1\)

Violence and wholesale slaughter had brutalized the masses of people. The decline in morality was so serious that many of the revolutionary statesmen became alarmed. Catholic worship was fast disappearing and there was nothing to take its place. The cult of the Goddess Reason, shocking in its blasphemy even to a great many of the Convention, was short-lived. In 1794 Robespierre inaugurated the more positive and constructive Cult of the Supreme Being. It seems at first to have won the sympathy of the people; but it did not take root, and was powerless to stem the torrent of violence and immorality which swept through the land. "La morale populaire cherche encore un point d' appui plus solide," Chenier said in the tribune of the Convention.\(^2\)

The religious crisis in the rest of Europe was far less dramatic than that of France, but just as real. In every country of Europe, rationalism had made deep inroads into the life of the Church. Everywhere the Church

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 385.

inveighed against *philosophisme*; yet everywhere there were churchmen who had succumbed to its influence. In many countries, such as Germany and England, the new thought had produced no violent social upheavals; in other countries, such as Spain, Italy, and Belgium, the upheaval, with its violent anticlericalism, was postponed.

Moreover, the tendency towards religious autonomy, which had its roots in Jansenism, Gallicanism, and Febronianism, had spread to all parts of Europe.\(^1\) For over a decade before the Revolution, Joseph II of Austria had been defiant towards Rome in temporal and spiritual matters alike, and Italy, under the influence of Austria, suffered the contagion of Josephism. Carlos III permitted little papal intervention in the ecclesiastical affairs of Spain; and in Portugal the king's minister, Pombal, showed considerable hostility towards the Pope. In Germany, the bishops were so infected with Febronianism that on more than one occasion a break with Rome seemed possible. As the Revolution gained momentum, these movements towards religious independence became more intense. The authority of the Pope declined steadily. When the French army invaded Rome in 1798 and carried off the aging, decrepit Pius VI, and took him to Valence to die, the greater part of Catholic Europe was already quite alienated from the Holy See. The late Pope was commonly referred to as "the last pope."

\(^1\)The doctrinal significance of these terms will be explained more fully in chapter III.
Such was the condition of the papacy and the Roman Church on the death of Pius VI. Catholicism seemed to be in its last throes, and on every hand there were those who pronounced its funeral oration "with joyous and blasphemous irony." Nevertheless, the outlook was not wholly black, for there were occasional signs of religious revival. Indeed, religious fervor had never been completely extinguished in the provinces, and whenever the persecution of the clergy abated, if only for a time, popular devotion expressed itself in a revival of worship. As early as 1895, the constitutional bishop Grégoire had protested: "Liberty of worship exists in Turkey; it does not exist in France; here the people are deprived of a right that is enjoyed even in despotic states..." As he pled for religious liberty, the members of the Assembly experienced "all the contortions of rage." They were scarcely dissuaded from their opinion that Catholicism was inseparably bound up with the old order, and that its revival could lead only to a restoration of monarchical despotism. Nevertheless, Grégoire's speech was quoted throughout France.

II. NAPOLEON AND THE CHURCH

The election of Pius VII at the Venetian Conclave of

1Leflon, p. 157.
2Leflon, p. 130.
3Pressensé, p. 339.
1800 ushered in a period of recovery for the Roman Church. For the next fifteen years, the most important actor on the European stage, next to Napoleon, was Pius VII. It is true that he was often more of a tragic figure than a heroic one, and at times something less than tragic. On many occasions he was nothing more than the helpless and pathetic victim of Napoleon's diabolical diplomacy. Moreover, throughout these years of gradual recovery, the opposition to the traditional faith gained greater strength. In many lands the powerful influence of Jacobinism was just beginning to be felt, when in France a new kind of liberalism was beginning to develop. Nevertheless, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Roman Church had begun to take a militant part in the struggle.

Napoleon was destined to play an important, though often ambiguous, role in the restoration of French Catholicism. He was neither by temperament nor by choice a restorer of religion. His personal religion was little more than a vague awareness of the existence of a Creator. Nevertheless, he made use of religion for his own purposes. When he was dreaming of an eastern empire, he said to the people of Egypt: "We also are true Mussulmans. Is it not true that we crushed the Pope, who said that war ought to be waged against the Mohammedans?"¹ In 1800 he said to the Council of State:

¹Nielsen, I, 224.
"By becoming a Catholic, I won the war of Vendée; by becoming a Mussulman, I established myself in Egypt; and by becoming an Ultramontanist, I won the sympathy of Italy. If I governed a Jewish people, I would reestablish the temple of Solomon."¹ If Paris was worth a Mass to Henry IV, an empire was worth even more to Napoleon.

The reestablishing of Catholic worship in France was not an easy task. Pius VII was deeply suspicious of Napoleon after his religious opportunism in Egypt. Government officials were still unalterably opposed to Catholicism. Fouché continued to denounce the priests, and Talleyrand, while openly sympathetic to the idea of a concordat, worked against it secretly. Indeed, there was considerable justification for their fear of the Church, for the majority of the exiled bishops were fervent supporters of the monarchical cause, and in the popular mind, Catholicism continued to be identified with the old regime.

Napoleon soon realized that a solution of the religious problem was urgent. "The people must have a religion," was his constant warning to the Jacobins. Religion was necessary for social stability, and he was for that reason partial to Christianity, for it teaches obedience to civil authority. Therefore, his government must officially sponsor it, for "open rebellion against the Sov-

¹Leflon, p. 176.
ereign of Heaven would be a bad example to the people. Moreover, Catholic worship was already being revived throughout the country. He must either oppose it or bring it under his control; for every free activity of the people was a potential threat to his absolute authority.

A decision was likewise urgent concerning the problem of the two clergies. He must decide whether to favor the constitutional clergy or that which had remained loyal to Rome. The idea of an independent Gallican Church was popular among his collaborators; but Napoleon was aware that the constitutional clergy had lost the respect of the people because of their servility to the Republic, while persecution and exile had revived the popularity of the "legitimate" clergy. Meanwhile, Louis XVIII, the Pretender to the French throne, continued to incite the exiled bishops and the Pope to support his cause. Napoleon decided that he must win the support of the bishops, and this he could not do without the support of the Pope, who, he was sure, would become his most powerful ally as soon as he was dominated.

There are historians who see deeper longings on the part of Napoleon when he opened negotiations with the Holy See: the fascination of the Eternal City, and the hope of one day being anointed by the Pope as Charlemagne's

1Pressensé, p. 426.
successor. Yet Madelin's observation is substantially true that "the concordat was not inspired by sentiment, nor even by preconceived opinions, but by the necessity of the hour and the force of circumstance."2

The Pope, who did not entertain the possibility of a concordat with France, was overjoyed at the news of Napoleon's speech in Milan promising to uphold the Catholic religion. Soon after, by way of Cardinal Martiniani, Napoleon informed the Pope that he would like to "make him a present (lui faire cadeau) of thirty millions of Catholics."3 He also gave his conditions for a possible concordat: the elimination of the intruded bishops and priests; a fresh priesthood, to be obtained by the general resignation of bishops, both "legitimate" and constitutional; the Pope would retain the power of giving canonical institution to bishops, but they would be nominated by Napoleon; reduction in the number of dioceses; papal renunciation of Church lands sold by the nation; and guaranteed support of the clergy by the Government.

The Pope could scarcely disguise his joy and astonishment upon receiving the news. Yet he replied cautiously to Martiniani that he considered the matter extremely

1Cf. Nielsen, I, 229.
2Leflon, p. 177.
3Nielsen, I, 220.
difficult. But shortly thereafter he accepted Napoleon's invitation to send an envoy to Paris. The Roman Court considered the invitation an ill omen and perhaps foresaw the clever tactics of Napoleon in inviting the Pope to deal with him on foreign soil. But the well-intentioned Pope gave in.

The papal envoy, Spina, went to Paris "con ordine de sentire e di riferire,"¹ but to sign no documents. Napoleon's representative, Bernier, negotiated with considerable skill. Mgr. Spina, "un peu lent... un peu gauche,"² refused at first to accept Napoleon's terms, only to learn that Napoleon became increasingly demanding. The demission of the bishops was long debated, as was the renunciation of church lands. But the significant diplomatic battle involved the articles concerning the general situation of Catholicism in France. The Pope required that the Catholic religion be declared "dominant" in France. Napoleon was well aware of the violent reaction which that ambiguous word would provoke in the Senate and among the anticlerical public. He would recognize, he said, only that the Catholic religion was that of the majority of the French people. Likewise, afraid of the consequences of a complete restoration of religious liberty, he wished to insert a clause to the effect that Catholic worship would be subject to certain "police regu-

¹Mary Allies, Pius the Seventh, London, 1897, p. 27.
²Leflon, p. 181.
lations," necessary for the maintaining of public order. After many days of debating, no agreement was reached, and Spina returned to Rome.

Negotiations continued meanwhile through Castault, the French Minister in Rome. A crisis arose, and the great Roman diplomat, Consalvi, journeyed to Paris to attempt a solution. After a month of negotiating, an agreement was reached, which was ratified by the Pope on August 15, 1801, and by Napoleon on September 8.

In the preamble, the French Government recognizes "that the Catholic Apostolic and Roman religion is that of the great majority of French citizens." The most significant of the seventeen articles deal with dispositions governing the exercise of worship and the reorganization of the French Church. The first article declares that the Catholic religion may be freely exercised in France, but that its public worship will be "in conformity with the rules of police which the Government shall judge necessary for public tranquility." Other articles deal with the new distribution of bishoprics and the naming of bishops. As Napoleon had insisted from the beginning, all bishops, constitutional and "legitimate," would resign. New ones would be appointed by the First Consul and instituted by the Pope. Bishops would appoint priests approved by the Government. Other articles deal with church property, the support of the clergy, endowments, and the privileges of

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1 Quotations from the concordat are from the English translation in Mary Allies, p. 53 ff.
the First Consul, who would enjoy "the same rights and prerogatives as the old Government enjoyed in regard to the Holy See."

Like all concordats, this one was a compromise. It could not have been otherwise, for in it "two worlds diametrically opposed to each other were to be united," that of the constitutional Church and the papal one. Pius VII could not approve of all of the religious results of the Revolution, and Napoleon could not throw overboard all that had been accomplished for the cause of liberty. Subsequent events would show that there was no true union of these two worlds in the concordat of 1801. Moreover, the concordat left many issues ambiguous and undefined, as Napoleon had no doubt wished, such as the number of dioceses and the extent of the Pope's authority. The concordat provided much of the basis for future conflict.

Nevertheless, both the Pope and Napoleon seemed to have achieved their main objectives. The mere fact that Napoleon had reached some agreement with Rome would please faithful French Catholics, and he had done so without sacrificing the traditional independence of the Gallican Church. Nor had Napoleon given the outward impression of surrender to the Holy See. The settlement of Church lands was entirely in his favor. His powers of administrating the Church, together with the police restriction clause,

1S. Schmidlin, quoted by Leflon, p. 192.
gave him almost complete control over ecclesiastical activity.

The Pope, on the other hand, had made tremendous concessions both in temporal and spiritual matters. He lost the Legations as well as the Church lands. He had found it necessary to sacrifice his oldest and dearest bishops, who deserved a reward for their faithfulness rather than a request for demission. He had no power over the nomination of the bishops, and his refusal to institute them would produce a stalemate for which he could be directly blamed. The police clause was a whip to hold over the head of the Church at every moment; and worst of all, Catholicism was not recognized as the religion of the State or as the "dominant religion" of the French nation.

Yet the papal gains, though they appear somewhat intangible, should not be underestimated. The prestige of the Church and the papacy was greatly enhanced by the mere fact that the revolutionary leaders had been forced to admit their need of the Pope. The very existence of a concordat, however unsatisfactory, was no small triumph for Rome. Moreover, the concordat represented papal reconciliation with the first modern military State, and set the precedent for all later concordats. It would "serve as a symbolic base and point of departure for every politico-ecclesiastical organization in Europe during the next
thirty years." If we add to this the immediate and practical advantages of the restoration of worship and the cessation of schism and religious anarchy, it can scarcely be said that the Pope made a bad bargain.

The promulgation of the concordat on Easter Sunday, April 18, 1802, did not, however, bring about complete cessation of religious strife. If the internal situation of the French Church was much improved, relations between the Consulate and the Holy See grew worse. Napoleon's intention of ignoring the spirit, if not the letter, of the concordat, soon became apparent with the publication of the Organic Articles. Under the pretext of defining the "police regulations" of the concordat, Napoleon severely limited the power and activities of the Church, and ordered seminary students to learn the four Gallican Articles of 1682. This unexpected revival of Gallicanism was highly obnoxious to the Pope. He protested vehemently, but without results. This protest marked the beginning of a long period of tension between the Pope and Napoleon. The situation improved somewhat at the time of the coronation; but the tension led eventually to the abrogation of the concordat.

In the meantime, the French Church entered upon a period of reconstruction. A new episcopate was formed, although entirely of constitutional bishops. The Pope had hoped for at least half "legitimate" bishops, and required

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1 S. Schmidlin, quoted by Leflon, p. 193
a retraction from the constitutional bishops before instituting them. He received no satisfaction on either score. Nevertheless, worship was restored in all parts of the country. Parishes were gradually filled. Among the priests were a few of the old regime. Portalis was named minister in charge of religious affairs, and showed himself very sympathetic to the Church.

The period from 1802 to 1805 was one of relative calm for the Church, but it was a fatal time for the papacy. During these three years, the Pope made a series of concessions to Napoleon which he deeply regretted in later years. The conciliatory attitude of Pius VII revealed itself from the moment that his legate Caprara did not insist upon a clear retraction from the new bishops and priests. The Pope likewise gave in to Napoleon's demand that five vacant places in the College of Cardinals be filled by Frenchmen, and in the Italian concordat of 1803, further concessions were made to Napoleon. Whenever the Pope became firm and tried to stand his ground, Napoleon threatened to tear up the concordat of 1801.

Napoleon maintained extreme Gallican policies within the Church. There was censorship of pastoral letters; the clerical press was strictly controlled; and Napoleon enforced a uniform liturgy for all of France, as well as a catechism which damned all of those who resisted his authority. The Pope occasionally reprimanded his legate in Paris for ceding too much ground, but in general he
followed a policy of appeasement and never failed to believe in the glib promises of Napoleon and his ministers that everything would eventually be set right.

Participation in Napoleon's coronation as Emperor was the last great concession that the Pope was to make. The Cardinals were opposed to papal participation in the ceremony, for they feared the reaction of the other European powers, particularly Austria. Nor was the Pope anxious to anoint so dubious a guardian of the faith. Indeed, Napoleon had for four years been wholly untrustworthy and at times treacherous in his dealings with the Holy See. Yet, with characteristic weakness, the Pope agreed to go to Paris, for as Cardinal Caprara had warned him, it had "become a question of crowning a monarch who would take it very ill if His Holiness sought an excuse for not crowning him."

Pius VII set out from Rome in November of 1804. It was a humiliating journey, for "he was summoned to Paris as if he had been in very truth the 'Emperor's Chaplain,'" as he was often called. Nevertheless, his journey accomplished much for the prestige of the Church. Despite Napoleon's efforts to keep Pius VII in the background, he was received with great devotion by the common people, not only in Paris, but at every stage of his journey. So strong was the position of the Pope on the eve of the coronation

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1Mary Allies, p. 63.
2Ibid., p. 73.
that he might have wrung numerous concessions from Napoleon. He insisted upon the ecclesiastical marriage of Napoleon and Josephine, which Napoleon opposed vehemently, but he missed the opportunity of getting an unequivocal retraction from the juring bishops and the restoration of the Legations, a hope which Pius VII never abandoned.

It may well be doubted, however, whether a firmer attitude on the part of the Pope would have given him any great advantage in the long run, for the political and military affairs of the Empire moved inevitably towards a decisive clash with the Holy See. The enforcement of the Continental Blockade led to a series of encroachments upon the Temporal Power of the Papacy. In 1808, the French forces occupied the papal States, and in 1809, Rome was annexed to the Empire. The Pope, finally convinced of the futility of appeasing the Emperor, took a firm stand against him. On June 11, 1809, the "despoilers of the Church" were excommunicated. On July 6th, the Pope was taken captive to Savona.

While in captivity, the Pope refused to institute more bishops for French sees, many of which were now vacant. The Pope was greatly admired for his firm attitude, and gradually became a symbol of spiritual resistance to the tyrannical Emperor. The Pope's attitude caused numerous practical difficulties for Napoleon, for once again the French Church was on the brink of schism; and the great majority of the bishops and lower clergy
were weary of religious strife. Napoleon now became an enemy of the Church. In 1810, there was a mass exportation of the Italian clergy who refused to accept the Gallican articles of 1682. The Cardinals who opposed Napoleon's second marriage were severely and publicly reprimanded. The "black Cardinals," as they were called after Napoleon forbade them to wear their customary colors, became, like the Pope, symbols of resistance. In the National Council of 1811, the Cardinals unanimously swore fidelity to the Pope.

Meanwhile, the political tide had turned against Napoleon. In 1812, the Pope was taken to Fontainebleau. The following year, Pius VII, physically and mentally exhausted, and apparently unaware of Napoleon's decline, signed on January 25, 1813, the concordat of Fontainebleau, which was to have brought to a close the period of hostility between Pope and Emperor. The terms of the concordat were entirely to the advantage of Napoleon and most humiliating for the papacy. Within a few days, he made a formal retraction of the concordat; for, he said, he had been forced to sign, not only by the Emperor, but by several of the Cardinals, who "mi strascinarono al tavolino e mi fecero sottoscrivere."\(^1\)

The attention of the world was soon diverted from this strange and tragic episode. Napoleon's power had begun to decline. When the Emperor Francis of Austria

\(^1\)Mary Allies, p. 267.
turned against him in August, 1813, his position in Germany was weakened, and in October came the crushing defeat of Leipzig. "While the year 1813 was drawing its sombre shadow over Napoleon's glory, Pius VII calmly awaited events, possessing his soul in patience."¹ In January, 1817, the Allies crossed the Rhine and the long struggle between Pope and Emperor came to an end. The following March, after five years of captivity, Pius VII returned in triumph to Rome.

The Napoleonic era was a period of rehabilitation for the French Church. It was also a period of adjustment to a changing world. The Church had been reconciled to Rome and had achieved a measure of stability in the midst of chaotic social conditions. In 1808, 3,000 of approximately 20,000 French parishes were vacant.² But the Church had none of the economic and social stability of the ancien régime. Throughout the entire period of Consulate and Empire, approximately 6,000 priests were ordained in France, which was the total number of annual ordinations before 1789.³ The priesthood was no longer an attractive career. The Church was thrown back upon its own spiritual resources and the alms of the faithful. However desirable the situation might seem from our modern point of view, it scarcely seemed so to the French Church. Few would have agreed with Bishop Grégoire when he wrote

¹Ibid., p. 232.
²Estimates based on Leflon's statistics, p. 213.
³Ibid., p. 214.
to his colleagues: "Not having any longer political standing you will no longer be tempted to lean on an arm of flesh. God alone will be your support."  

The greatest ally of the clergy throughout these troubled times was the mass of devout common people. Among the educated middle class and aristocracy, there was also an ally in the new generation which during the Revolution had been repelled by the excesses of the Jacobins and the sterility of the nationalist philosophy. The popularity of Chateaubriand's *Génie du Christianisme* (1802) was indicative of the new religious romanticism which was taking root in Europe.  

The Napoleonic era witnessed a distinct rise in the popularity and authority of the papacy. The ancient, formal Gallicanism which was expressed in the Articles of 1682 had been defeated in the Revolution. Napoleon's constitutional Gallicanism ultimately strengthened ultramontanist tendencies. For, in the name of Gallican liberty, Napoleon had maintained the Church as a department of the Civil Service, directly dependent upon the Government for economic support rather than on its own lands and holdings. Thus the clergy were driven to seek the protection of the Pope in any future conflict with the civil power.  

Moreover, the sympathy which the figure of the Pope aroused throughout France in his travels and imprisonment 

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1*Pressense*, p. 399.

2This aspect of the Catholic Revival will be treated more fully in Chapter III.
contributed to the decline of the "gallicanisme sentimental,"\(^1\) which lingered in France long after doctrinal Gallicanism was dead. For in a little more than a decade, Pius VII, who was scoffed at throughout Italy at the beginning of the century as the Pope who "per conservar la sede, perde la fede,"\(^2\) became a symbol not only of a revived Catholic faith but of the ideal of spiritual liberty. "By his firm stand, he raised the Papacy from the depths of contempt into which it had fallen during the 13th century, and he showed that the Holy See was a power to be reckoned with in Europe; while the patience with which he bore his sufferings...and the spectacle of the helpless old man, dragged across Europe at the risk of his life because he would not grant the demands of an overweening tyrant, aroused at once the pity, the anger, and the enthusiasm of the world."\(^3\)

### III. THE RESTORATION

Despite his advanced age, Pius VII gave himself immediately to the task of reconstruction. His best collaborator was his old Secretary of State, Consalvi. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, Consalvi proved to all of Europe that he had lost none of his diplomatic skill, for

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\(^1\) Leflon, p. 232.


he secured almost complete restitution of the papal territories, a feat which he himself had called "humanly impossible;" yet he was aware that recovering the territories was not so difficult as conserving them. The reactionary Cardinal Pacca was at work in Rome during Consalvi's absence. By means of a Papal Bull, the Society of Jesus was restored, as well as the Inquisition. Jews were again confined to their ghetto. The principal collaborators in the Napoleonic government were mercilessly persecuted, much to the dismay of Consalvi, who feared the criticism of the Allied Powers. Quoting Holy Scripture, "Omnia mihi licent, sed non omnia expediunt," he counselled greater prudence. But the rift in the Roman Court was deep; the politicanti and the zelanti had begun their struggle for the domination of the Holy See.

The motu proprio of July 6, 1816, marked the end of the provisional government of the Papal States. A constitution was given which preserved many of the administrative reforms of Napoleon. The general policy was that of centralization of government and the abolishing of ancient feudal rights. These reforms—the work of Consalvi—were not radical, and yet they were bitterly opposed by the Cardinals of the zelanti party. Liberals were likewise left unsatisfied with Consalvi's half-measures, and the movement for Italian unity began to grow.

The Bourbon Restoration in France brought about a
formal restoration of Catholicism, not only in France, but throughout the Continent. By 1814, papal envoys were well received in all parts of Europe. The era of the concordats was initiated. The Ultra-royalist party in France—the most fiercely reactionary political group on the Continent at that time—was anxious to further the alliance of Altar and Throne. Their motives were by no means purely religious. The émigrés were deeply infected by the religious indifference and libertinism of the age, but they became fervent Catholics when it was politically advantageous. Basically, their attitude towards the Church was the same as Napoleon's—they wished to use it for their own ends, although in a very different way. It was their plan that the Church should "assume the task of reconstructing the social and political system of France under the pretense of reinvigorating its spiritual and moral life. Under the cover of religious teaching, the seeds of reaction would be sown far and wide."1

The alliance of the Altar and the Throne, not only in France, but throughout the Continent, was by no means repugnant to Rome. But Pius VII soon learned that Gallicanism, and its equivalent in other countries, had not died. Louis XVIII was unwilling to repeal the Organic Articles of Napoleon except with reservations. When a project for a new concordat was finally drawn up and

1E. Lipson, Europe in the 19th Century (1815-1914), London, 1948, p. 3.
signed by Consalvi and the King's representative on June 4, 1817, the Chambers refused to approve it, for, in their opinion, too much was conceded to the Pope. There was no solution except the renewing of the concordat of 1801, which was definitely confirmed in 1819. Pius VII called the affair "one of the most painful of [his] pontificate," for he had received no satisfaction except the promise of an increase in the number of bishoprics. Louis XVIII kept his promise. In addition to thirty new bishoprics, he granted the Pope other favors, often in the face of strong liberal protests.

Religious developments in the rest of Europe following the Congress of Vienna were similar to those in France. The European Powers longed for the return of the pre-Revolutionary conditions, and in their attempt to restore absolutism, they leaned heavily upon the Church. During the Empire, the situation of the Church in the Italian States was in some respects like that of France. Religious orders had been suppressed, church lands had been sold, and numerous bishoprics were vacant. The restoration of the Church could be achieved only by dealing with the local prince or ruler of each province. The Pope made concordats or provisional agreements with all of them. These concordats were generally far more favorable to the Pope than the French concordat. Nevertheless, tendencies

1Leflon, p. 334.
towards independence from Rome were not absent, as in the case of Naples; and in Lombardy and Venetia, both Austrian possessions, the influence of Josephism was strong.

The Austrian Church had remained relatively stable throughout the revolutionary period. Ecclesiastical organization was undisturbed, and church lands remained intact. In keeping with the Austrian tradition, Francis II jealously guarded the affairs of the Church from papal intervention. No agreement with Rome was reached until 1819, and in it, little of the Emperor's authority over the Church was sacrificed.

The German Church during the Revolution had been despoiled of its lands, and numerous bishoprics had been suppressed. The German Catholic Church had long been isolated from Rome, and it was the desire of Metternich to form a German National Church. His idea was shared by his cousin, Henry Von Wessenburg, Coadjutor of Dalberg, the Prince Primate. Wessenburg had gone far in the direction of establishing a national Church. In the diocese of Constance, he had introduced a German liturgy. But for political reasons, the German princes disagreed over the project; and at the Diet of Frankfurt in 1816, the plan was defeated. Wessenburg, moreover, had been called to Rome to retract. Thus the German Church avoided schism.

Nevertheless, a united German Church would have been easier for the Pope to deal with, so long as it had no pretensions of separation from Rome. As it was, the Pope
found it necessary to deal with the Church of each German State. Bavaria was the first to seek a concordat. In 1817, the zelanti obtained from the Bavarian Minister in Rome several concessions, not the least of which was the guarantee that Canon Law would take precedence over Bavarian State Law, and that the concordat would be incorporated in the Bavarian Constitution. "It was," says Lady Blennerhasset, "the most complete submission [to Rome] made by a modern state." Concordats, or provisional agreements, were negotiated with Prussia, the States of the Upper Rhine, Russia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland. In all cases, there was willingness to enter into an agreement with Rome; but there were no resounding triumphs for the Holy See. Indeed, the zelanti were of the opinion that Consalvi required too little in the way of privileges and guarantees for the Church.

An adequate appraisal of these last eight years of the reign of Pius VII is difficult. In their dealings with the Powers and the smaller countries, the work of the Pope and Consalvi was impressive. In France and Germany, the reorganization and endowment of the religious orders was notable. The Jesuits (restored by a Papal Bull in 1817) were again active, and by 1820 were at work in every European country except Russia and Austria. The famous Congregation, which during the Empire served as a "front" for reactionary groups, carried on extensive

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charitable work among prisoners and orphans. With the Restoration, Catholic charitable and philanthropic societies multiplied. Religious romanticism, which had begun at the turn of the century as a vague longing for a return to the Middle Ages, now became more articulate in the political sphere. Du Pape (1819), by Joseph Maistre, was a defense of political conservatism.¹

Nevertheless, Catholic historians are frank in admitting that many aspects of the religious revival following the Restoration were formal and superficial. "It is the outward worship what was re-established and not the substance of the religion," observed a theologian of the time.² By 1820, it was evident throughout France that a true religious restoration was not in sight. Bishops everywhere complained of the decline of ecclesiastical discipline; there were few postulants for Holy Orders; there was a general attitude of hostility towards religion. The aristocracy were superficially Catholic, the bourgeoisie remained Voltairian, and the masses were faithful to the Church from habit rather than conviction.³ The extreme pessimism of the bishops may have been the result of the disappointment with the religious consequences of the Restoration; for the alliance of Altar and Throne had been

¹The political thought of the period will be treated in Chapter III.
²Quoted by Leflon, p. 367.
³Ibid., p. 336.
heralded with high hopes. Perhaps they had expected moral and spiritual changes which no mere change of political regime can produce. If the spiritual results of the alliance of Altar and Throne were negligible, its political results were disastrous. By linking itself with a reactionary and decadent aristocracy, the Church lost ground as the Restoration government became more and more unpopular.

Pius VII had no profound understanding of the political problems of his day. When he was Bishop of Imola, he had once made a statement (forever to be remembered by the Liberal Catholics) which was favorable to democratic government, and concluded with the advice: "Be good Christians and you will be excellent democrats." Yet he could hardly be called a liberal Pope, for he had no interest in politics as such, and had no real sympathy for republican ideas.

Nevertheless, Pius VII possessed far greater political imagination than the three Popes who succeeded him. Leo XII, Pius VIII, and Gregory XVI interpreted the rise of nationalism and democracy as a horrible perversion of history which the Church must combat by giving its support to reactionary political forces. Leo XII (1823-1829) began his career with numerous reforms in the Papal States, which he attempted to rule as rigidly and puritanically as

Calvin had ruled Geneva. In his dealings with the European Powers, he was likewise conservative and brought no new resources for coming to grips with liberal thought.

Despite the restoration of worship and religious orders, liberalism gained ground in all classes of society. The so-called "sects"—Freemasons, Carbonari, Jugenbund—were the cradles of liberal ideas; but liberalism was by no means limited to the secret societies. Conservatives frequently deceived themselves by supposing that the "sects" were the only enemy. In 1820, an adviser of Metternich wisely remarked that it would indeed have been fortunate if opposition to absolutism "were only the affair of a faction, but that unfortunately it was the question of a whole political party, made up for the greater part from the middle class, and all of the best elements of the nobility as regards intelligence, knowledge, and social forms."

In his encyclical *Quo graviora* (March 13, 1826), Leo XII condemned the secret societies, especially the Carbonari, who had instigated numerous insurrections in the Italian States. The encyclical is a resume of papal pronouncements against Freemasonry since 1738. With each pronouncement, the Pope admits, the societies have increased in audacity (insolentia) and number. He calls upon the

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2 Text in *Recueil des Allocutions Consistoriales, Encycliques, etc.* (from Clement XII to Pius IX), Paris, 1864, p.145.
princes to combat the sects: "Religionis enim causa hoc praeassertim tempore, cum societatis salute ita conjuncta est, ut nullo quidem modo altera ab altera dividi possit."
He reminds them that their power has been given them not only to rule the world, "sed maxime ad Ecclesiae praesidium."
This ill-fated policy of identifying the Church with political absolutism was to continue until the end of the pontificate of Gregory XVI.

Throughout the Papal States, revolutionary activity was severely repressed. In 1825, the Pope ordered the execution of two leaders of the Carbonari, an action which was publicized in the anti-papal press throughout the world.
In his dealings with the French Church, he was cautious and conservative. He was among the first to recognize the dangerous tendencies of Lamennais, whom he considered to be "one of those lovers of progress who, if they were allowed to, would turn the world upside down."

By 1827, the early clericalism of the Restoration in France had produced an anticlerical reaction. When Martignac replaced Villèle as Minister in 1827, censorship of newspapers was abolished. The June Ordinances, depriving the Jesuits of the right to give public instruction, were published. The French bishops begged the Pope to intercede, but he saw fit to approve of the Ordinances. He urged the bishops to submit, for he did not wish to cause further difficulties for Charles X, who had always tried to defend the interests of the Church.

1 Leflon, p. 399.
Leo XII died on February 10, 1329. The news of his death, according to the Prussian Minister in Rome, was received "with indecent joy."¹ His successor in the papacy was destined to be equally unpopular. During the twenty months of his reign, Pius VIII witnessed continual rioting and insurrection in the Papal States. He wept when he heard the news of the downfall of the Bourbon monarchy. But when he died in 1830, he was unaware of the world-wide significance of the French Revolution. For the July Revolution, though it brought no immediate changes in the social order, was in reality a continuation of the Great Revolution of 1789.

IV. LIBERALISM AND THE PAPACY

The French Revolution of 1830 was the result of conflict between the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy, which had been evident since the beginning of the Restoration period. After the fall of Villele in 1827, tension became acute. His successor in the Ministry, Martignac, attempted to appease both liberals and conservatives, and thus pleased no one. Charles X, when he saw the crises approaching, threw his weight entirely to the conservative side, and ceased to make concessions to the Republicans. The new Minister, Polignac, announced that he was determined to "reorganize

¹Nielsen, II, 29.
society, to give back the clergy their weight in State affairs, to create a powerful aristocracy, and surround it with privileges."¹ Thus he defied the opposition. The reaction was immediate. In July, the Ministry was captured by the Republicans.

The Republicans, however, did not dare to make drastic changes, for they feared the intervention of the Allied Powers. The monarchy was not destroyed, but greatly modified. Louis Philippe was fully aware that he ruled by the will of the people, for the strength and stability of the Republican cause could no longer be doubted. France rejected, once and for all, the principle of legitimacy and the theory of the divine right of kings. "The Charter was no longer a royal concession extorted from the weakness of the Crown and revocable at will; it had become the inalienable birthright of the nation."² The anticlerical aspects of the July Revolution are usually explained as the natural consequences of a too close alliance between Altar and Throne. The fall of an unpopular dynasty supported by the Church inevitably produced anticlerical demonstrations. Nevertheless, the revival of the Jacobin spirit cannot be attributed entirely to political circumstances. In reality, Jacobinism had never died. In the hands of bourgeois leaders, anti-religious feeling was a powerful weapon.

¹Lipson, p. 14.
²Lipson, p. 18.
Mobs were incited to destroy church property; priests were attacked on the streets; churches were opened only on Sunday and guarded against profanation. These fierce demonstrations served to frighten the aristocracy and kept the impoverished masses from "claiming their share of the power and profits" which had now devolved upon the middle class.

The anticlerical spirit of the July Revolution was not merely iconoclastic. By 1830, Liberalism had become a kind of positive political faith. The new "religion of liberty" was a far greater threat to the Church than the atheism of the French Revolution. The July Revolution, like that of 1789, had swept away a dynasty; it was filled with a kind of missionary zeal for liberating the oppressed peoples of the world. It was imbued with a religious spirit—that of the Religion of Humanity.

The spark of the Revolution soon found inflammable material in the oppressed provinces such as Belgium and Poland, where the sense of nationality was growing. The Papal States had been ripe for a revolution since the Neopolitan uprising of 1820. When Mauro Capellari became Pope Gregory XVI on February 2, 1831, revolution was at his doorstep. First Bologna, then Romagna, then the Marches and Umbria fell to the revolutionary forces. Papal sovereignty was repudiated. When the revolutionary forces were at the gates of Rome, the Pope called upon Austria to crush the

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1Leflon, p. 419.
revolution. When the Austrian troops arrived, the revolutionary government established itself at Ancona, but collapsed within a month.

The principal European Powers—Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, and England—were alarmed. In May of the same year, they sent a memorandum to the Pope urging numerous reforms which they hoped would avert a more serious conflagration. Gregory XVI undertook some economic, administrative, and judicial reforms, but admitted no political ones. For he believed, not without justification, that any concession to the revolutionaries would open the door to an avalanche of radical demands. After the withdrawal of the Austrian troops (July, 1831), the smouldering embers again burst into flames. Austrian troops again occupied the northern provinces, as well as French troops, which vied with Austria for the control of the Papal States. It was not until 1838 that foreign troops were withdrawn. The final years of Gregory's pontificate, which lasted until 1846, saw no uprisings of a serious nature.

The Pope's decision to crush rising Italian nationalism and democracy by means of foreign military force was a momentous one. It is true that he could scarcely have done otherwise unless he had been willing to sacrifice the Temporal Power and incur the wrath of every crowned head in Europe. But being forced to condemn nationalism and democracy within his own realm and among his own people,
delivering them into the hands of foreign powers, he dis-owned a whole generation of Italian patriots—the "Young Italy" movement—and forced them to seek another spiritual basis for their political faith. This they soon found in the romantic political mysticism of Mazzini.

In France, the liberal doctrines had penetrated the Church itself, where they were more difficult for the Pope to combat. In 1830 appeared the first issue of L'Avenir, a newspaper directed by the liberal priest, Felicite de Lamennais and his followers. With their theme of "God and Liberty," they initiated the Liberal Catholic movement in France. Lamennais had begun as an ardent traditionalist in the school of de Maistre, but gradually became disillusioned with the conservatism of both episcopate and government. The Church, he believed, was perishing for lack of freedom. He became convinced that the Church could flourish only when it was freed from State tutelage. The bishops, who were mere servants of the State, tended to become spiritually and intellectually slothful, and were thus responsible for the decadence of the Church.

He began, moreover, to discover the positive merits of democracy, and to interpret them from a Christian point of view. He saw the transformation of society from monarchy to democracy as inevitable. The Church could not ignore social change; and if the Church remained on the margin of the conflict, the revolution would turn against the Church.
But by assuming a creative role in the social struggle, the Church could actually become the regenerator of society.

By November of the same year (1831), the international aspects of the movement became apparent. L'Avenir became the champion of oppressed peoples, particularly Belgium, Ireland, and Poland. Foreign opposition to the movement was immediate and violent, for Austria, Russia, and England could scarcely tolerate a religious movement which was favorable to revolution within their own realms.

Opposition at home was no less violent. Louis Philippe could not allow criticism of the bishops whom he had appointed. The bishops themselves were the bitterest opponents of Lamennais. There were, to be sure, some ultramontanists among them; but they could not tolerate the fierce ultramontanism of Lamennais, who called upon the Pope to reprimand them for their servility and lack of vision in spiritual matters. Above all, they feared Lamennais' radical idea of complete separation of Church and State, which would leave them without government support. The episcopate condemned and boycotted l'Avenir. At the end of 1831, the newspaper was obliged to close down for lack of subscribers.

Thus far, the Pope had made no official pronouncement regarding l'Avenir, although it was generally supposed that he was against it. Lamennais, however, was more optimistic. He decided to appeal to the Pope and accept his decision as final. With Montalembert and Lacordaire, he journeyed to
Rome in 1831. Gregory XVI was, by training and disposition, an enemy of democracy. But even if he had not been so, it was inconceivable that he would have expressed any outward sympathy for Lamennais' radical school at the moment when he feared an Italian uprising. When Lamennais and his companions arrived in Rome, the Pope was willing to receive them, but informed them indirectly that it would be wiser for them not to press for a decision in doctrinal matters. During their audience, which lasted for fifteen minutes, the Pope spoke of the art of Michelangelo and offered them a pinch of snuff from his snuffbox of lapis lazuli, but maintained a discreet silence on political matters.¹ There were no further audiences. The pilgrims departed and a month later the encyclical Mirari vos appeared (August 15, 1832).

Without mentioning Lamennais, the encyclical condemned most of the doctrines of his school. The idea that the Church is in need of "restoration" or "regeneration" is condemned as "absurdum plane... ac maxime in eam, [i.e., the Church] injuriosum." "Indifferentism" is condemned as the source of the concept of liberty of conscience which is "absurde... ac erronea sententia, seu potius deliramentum..." History proves that States have declined because of one evil: "libertate immoderate opinionum, licentia concionum, rerum novandarum cupiditate." Liberty of press is condemned

¹Nielsen, II, 70.
as "numquam satis exsecranda et detestabilis." And finally, the errors of democratic thought are condemned, and absolute obedience to princes is enjoined. The "deliramenta" of rights of rebellion against princes are the legacy of the Waldensians, the Beghards, "aliorumque hujusmodi filiorum Belial." The separation of Church and State is condemned; for the "concordia" of Church and State "semper rei et sacrae et civili fausta extitit ac salutaris."¹

Most modern historians are inclined to consider this famous encyclical the epitome of political obscurantism. Nielsen calls it "a link in the chain of declarations of war against the whole of modern society."² Catholic historians complain that the encyclical is often criticized for statements that do not appear in the text.³ In all fairness, it must be admitted that some of the liberties (conscience, worship, press) were condemned within a social and philosophical framework radically different from our own. The context makes clear that these liberties were usually condemned in their worst sense, that of "indifferentism." Nevertheless, Mirari vos was an extreme reaction to Liberal Catholicism. "Not a stone remained in its place of the edifices constructed by l'Avenir."⁴ The editors of l'Avenir, the "pilgrims of God and liberty" submitted to

¹Text in Recueil des Allocutions, p. 155.
²Nielsen, II, 67.
³Cf. article on Gregory XVI, in The Catholic Encyclopedia, VII, 8.
⁴Lady Blennerhasset, p. 164.
Rome, "convinced," as they said in their formal declaration, "that they could not continue their labors without opposing the expressed will of him whom God has charged with the government of His Church." But Lamennais did not remain in an attitude of submission. Two years later, he published *Les Paroles d’un Croyant*, which was condemned explicitly in the encyclical *Singulari nos*.

It should be observed that, in condemning liberalism and insurrection against legitimate rulers, Gregory did not condemn constitutional government as such. He could scarcely have done so. Belgium, Poland and Ireland were oppressed by non-Catholic powers and were struggling for religious liberty in the name of democracy and constitutional government. In August, 1831, the Pope had issued the Bull *Sollicitudo ecclesiarum*, in which he reiterated the statements of former popes as to their rights to refuse to be entangled in dynastic politics. Henceforth, new regimes would be recognized *de facto* but not *de jure*. Thus, the Pope could continue to condemn insurrection but could reap the benefits if it was convenient for him.

Gregory XVI was consistent in condemning insurrection and in upholding absolutist governments. No republican government was recognized until it was a *fait accompli*, and even then with certain reservations. The Pope did not hesitate, for example, to recognize the government of the

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1 *Recueil des Allocutions*, p. 171.
new Belgian State in February, 1831. It had won its independence from Protestant Holland. The new constitution guaranteed freedom of worship, but the Pope made it clear that he did not approve of the idea in principle, even though the Roman Catholics benefited by it, and he was slow in initiating diplomatic relations with the new government.

But nowhere did the Pope have to pay a higher price for consistency than in Poland. In that country, Roman Catholicism had become completely identified with the cause of nationalism and rebellion against the Russian autocracy. The Tsar Nicholas conducted from 1832 to 1845 one of the cruelest persecutions in modern history. Roman Catholic people were driven or coaxed into the Orthodox Communion, and the clergy were often tortured or deported if they did not enter the Orthodox priesthood. The Pope protested in 1839 and again in 1842. Yet, after more than a decade of violence against the Roman Church, he was still unwilling to justify the Polish nationalist cause. In 1845, the Tsar, realizing that the Roman religion could not be stamped out, resolved to submit to Rome. His friendly conversations with the Pope, filled with promises of reform, were "sealed with a solemn kiss of peace." Catholic historians are often at a loss to explain the Pope's ineffectiveness during this period of persecution. The Pope, they say, was duped and outwitted by the clever Tsar. The

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1 Leblon, p. 460.
explanation, however, is clear. In order to maintain political principles which he thought expedient, the Pope was willing to make the tremendous sacrifice of the Polish Church. He feared that one word of encouragement to revolution would be a spark to ignite a world conflagration, beginning in his own Papal States.

The political pronouncements of Gregory XVI have been consistently upheld by succeeding pontiffs (Pius IX and Leo XIII), particularly the condemnations in Mirari vos. Nevertheless, his conduct of affairs and his methods of diplomacy have seldom received praise from Roman Catholic historians. He is often reproached for "having gone against the current to such an extent that, at the moment of his death, his [political activity] was condemned by the facts. [His activity], unable to arrest the developments of liberalism, only succeeded in turning [liberalism] against Rome, to the point of endangering the very existence of the Papal State."\(^1\) As in the case of his two predecessors, there was little grief when Gregory XVI died on June 1, 1846.

So great was the desire for reform and national unity that the election of the liberal Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti to the Papal Chair (June 16, 1846) was the occasion for unprecedented rejoicing throughout the Papal States. The new Pope was known as a liberal largely through rumor and popular reports. He was known to be charitable towards

\(^1\)Pouthas, quoted by Leflon, p. 471.
the poor; his personality was attractive and outgoing. But his first encyclical, *Qui pluribus*, showed no sympathy for the radical political ideas of the time; he spoke the same virulent and hyperbolic language as his predecessors in condemning the Freemasons, the Bible Societies, and the false philosophies of rationalism (*Nihil detrimentius, nihil magis impium, nihil contra ipsam rationem magis repugnans fingi vel excogitari potest*).¹

The people of the Papal States, however, were determined that the Pope should be a liberal. They ignored any indication of his conservatism, and became exuberant over his slightest gesture towards reform. The people were in great need of a symbol of the Risorgimento. Pius IX, il papa angelico, served their purpose admirably; and the new Pope did not disappoint them. His first important political act was that of granting an amnesty to political exiles and prisoners (July 16). Conservatives in Italy and throughout Europe feared the results of this spectacular display of liberalism. No conservative statesman was more concerned than Metternich. "God never grants amnesties," he said, "God pardons."² The Pope had made no appeal for repentance on the part of the exiles and, indeed, had spoken no word of reprimand before granting the amnesty.

The early reforms in the Papal States were not radical ones. The Pope made plans for a system of railroads, which

¹Text in *Recueil des Allocutions*, p. 172.
had been opposed by Gregory XVI; he permitted gas lights in the streets of Rome; he founded an agricultural institute, reformed criminal codes, inspected prisons, and excused Jews from attendance at Christian worship. His first significant reform, one which was to have tremendous consequences for the growth of the nationalist movement, was the establishing of a free press on March 15, 1847. This was followed by other political reforms which Pius IX considered to be compatible with his sovereignty. Rome greeted with enthusiasm the formation of the Consulta di Stato, a lay advisory council. The Pope made clear that the council has only consultative powers: "Greatly deceived," he said, "is anyone who sees in the consulta some Utopia of his own..."\(^1\) Nevertheless, the consulta was commonly thought to be a concession to the liberals.

The establishment of the Guardia Civica alarmed conservatives throughout Europe. By putting arms into the hands of the people, the Pope prepared the way for later insurrections. Little by little, the Pope came to be considered the sponsor of every revolutionary demonstration throughout the Papal States. Metternich was so alarmed that he strengthened his garrisons in the citadel of Ferrara, Romagna. Though he was acting within his rights according to the Vienna Treaty, Pius IX interpreted it as a hostile act, as did all the Italian patriots. Metternich was obliged to withdraw his troops. He regretted the radical

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 67.
attitudes assumed by the new Pope, who, he said, "had allowed himself to be taken and ensnared...in a net from which he no longer knows how to disentangle himself, and if matters follow their natural course, he will be driven out of Rome."

The prediction of Metternich came true sooner than he expected. The Pope's concessions, far from placating the people, only spurred them on to further demands for democratic institutions and nationhood. Early in 1848, there were insurrections in Sicily, which soon spread to the Neapolitan mainland. Pius IX feared for the safety of the Papal States, and in his motu proprio of February 10, 1848, he pled with the people of Italy to respect and uphold the supremacy of the Apostolic See. He concluded the allocution with a blessing: "Therefore, O Lord God, bless Italy and preserve her for this most precious gift of all—the faith." This blessing upon Italy, as the Pope later admitted, was "a curse upon Austria," for it was interpreted by the people as a call to national unity and a crusade against their Austrian oppressors.

Soon after the motu proprio, the news arrived that the rulers of Naples and Florence had granted constitutions to the people. The Paris Revolution broke out on February 27, and on March 13 the revolt at Vienna. The Roman clubs, especially the Circolo Romano, stirred up the Roman populace

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1 Ibid., p. 68.
2 Ibid., p. 70.
to such an extent that they demanded a constitution from the Pope; and on March 15, 1848, he was obliged to grant it. The constitution was in no sense a democratic one. It reserved "all the real powers to the autocratic Curia, while attempting to satisfy the liberals with a facade of constitutional machinery."¹ Nevertheless, it satisfied the people.

The granting of the constitution was soon eclipsed by the war against Austria which began with the uprising in Milan (March 13). In his allocution of April 29, 1878, Pius IX proclaimed papal neutrality in the war. From that moment, "the Pope and the Risorgimento parted company."² Pius IX was denounced as a traitor. The growing hostility finally led to the assassination of Rossi, papal Secretary of State, and on November 24, Pius IX escaped from Rome to Naples. On February 9, 1849, the Constituent Assembly issued the proclamation of the Roman Republic, which was to be, in the language of the proclamation, "a pure democracy." The Pope was deprived "de facto and de jure" of his temporal powers, but had "all the guarantees of independence necessary for the exercise of his spiritual power."³ From Naples, the Pope appealed to the Catholic powers of Europe; and on June 29, French troops entered Rome. On April 12, 1850, Pius IX returned to Rome, embittered and hostile towards liberalism and nationalism. No longer the enlightened

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¹James Hastings Nichols, Democracy and the Churches, Philadelphia, 1951, p. 86.
²Hales, p. 76.
monarch, he re-established the despotic rule of the Restoration popes; for he had learned, at a much greater cost than they, that liberalism was incompatible with the system and doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

V. SUMMARY: THE STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF THE REVIVAL

From the foregoing account of the growth of European Catholicism during the first half of the nineteenth century, it may be seen that the Roman Catholic Revival was by no means a clearly defined movement. Its aspects were many and varied, but were chiefly the restoration of worship, the Romantic revival of literature and philosophy,1 and the growth of the power and prestige of the papacy.

Yet, the age of revival was not one of steady advance or complete triumph for the Church. Except in Germany, where the influence of Protestant piety was strong,2 the religious restoration appeared to lack a strong spiritual foundation. National churches dissipated much of their energy in the attempt to recover past privileges. Finally, the papacy showed little skill in dealing with the problems of rising democracy and nationalism.

The age of revival was, above all, an age of transition. Religious developments were often complex and baffling. Throughout Europe, but above all in France, renewed piety

1 See below, chapter III.

2 Ibid.
and fierce anticlericalism flourished side by side. In Italy and Spain, the situation was even more complex. Catholicism in these two countries, by the middle of the nineteenth century, had by no means emerged triumphant from the chaotic conditions produced by the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. The situation of Spanish Catholicism during this period is the special concern of the following chapter.
CHAPTER II
THE CHURCH IN REVOLUTIONARY SPAIN

I. THE INFLUENCE OF FRENCH RATIONALISM ON SPANISH SOCIETY, AND THE GROWTH OF JANSENISM

"In the time of Carlos III the tree was planted; during the reign of Carlos IV the tree sent forth branches and bore fruit; and we have gathered the fruit..."¹ So spoke Cardinal Inguanzo in 1813 concerning the revolution in Spanish life and thought which began with the War of Independence in 1808.

As in France, the roots of the revolution were deep. If Carlos III planted the tree, it was only after Felipe V had prepared the soil. When the young grandson of Louis XIV of France ascended the Spanish throne in 1700, surrounded by French advisers and French generals, he brought with him the traditions and institutions of the House of Bourbon. He brought to the Spanish court, French manners and French dress; but, most important, he introduced certain political and philosophical ideals which would eventually undermine the spiritual foundations of Spanish society.

He brought with him the Gallicanism of Louis XIV and the four articles of 1682, which declared that "Kings and Sovereigns are not, by God's command, subject to any power in temporal matters," and that the Pope's decision, even

in matters of faith, "is not unalterable unless the consent of the Church is given." He introduced the French ideal of the enlightened monarch—the patron of arts, letters, and learning. It was Felipe V who founded the Spanish academies, patterning them after those of France. He brought French teachers to the decadent Spanish universities and sent Spanish students to Paris. Fernando VI followed in his father's footsteps. When Carlos III ascended the throne in 1759, there was a small, select circle of nobles, government officials, and men of learning who were thoroughly versed in the French school and who looked to France for their political and spiritual guidance.

Carlos III, like his Bourbon forebears, was a devout Catholic. Nevertheless, during his long reign (1759-1783), the Spanish aristocracy drifted far from the traditional moorings of Catholic piety and submission to ecclesiastical authority in spiritual and intellectual matters. The change was to be seen in numerous ways, but particularly in the world of letters and politics. Historians agree that the influence of the new French thought was limited to a small circle of statesmen and noblemen, and indeed continued to be a movement of the elite throughout the reign of Carlos IV. The conservative historians, such as Menéndez y Pelayo, consider the French political and philosophical ideas to have been wholly exotic in Spain and rejoice that their influence did not spread to the lower classes. "The contagion was

only in official circles... The mass of the population was
sound.¹ Liberal historians likewise admit the limitations
of the revolutionary thought in Spanish society, and deplore
the "backwardness" of eighteenth century Spain. "L'air du
siècle n'avait fait que passer sur l'Espagne," says Sorel.
"Le peuple ne l'avait point respiré..."²

The explanation for Spain's comparative immunity to
French thought is to be found in her geographical isola¬
tion, her rigid ecclesiastical tradition, and in her social
organization, which was still largely feudal. At the close
of the eighteenth century, Spain was sparsely populated.³
The population was largely rural and scattered; fewer than
forty Spanish cities had a population of 10,000 or more.⁴
The middle class was very small in comparison with that of
France, and was for the most part uneducated. The pros¬
perous French bourgeoisie—the fertile soil in which the
seed of revolutionary thought was sown—had no counterpart
in Spain. Thus, the Spanish "enlightenment" was largely a
movement of aristocracy.

A fair estimate of the influence of French thought on
Spanish life at the close of the eighteenth century, is,
nevertheless, extremely difficult. Fear of the Inquisition,

¹Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 256.
²Albert Sorel, L'Europe et la Révolution Française, Paris,
1914, VII, 324.
³10,500,000, in comparison with 27,000,000 in France.
⁴Antonio Ramos-Oliveira, Historia de España, Mexico, 1952,
II, 147.
which both Carlos III and Carlos IV maintained largely for political reasons, made for hypocrisy among the educated classes. "It was difficult to believe how great were the evidences of incredulity, united with all the externals of devotion..."

Much radical thought never found its way into print, and many Spanish writers hid their revolutionary ideas beneath the cloak of ambiguity. The doctrines of Voltaire were not openly preached until the close of the eighteenth century, says Menéndez y Pelayo. Nevertheless, "if the monster was not seen face to face," he was seen in the "general coloring" of the literature of the age and in political developments.  

There were, at the close of the century, a few radical and outspoken writers, such as the Count Francisco Cabarrús, who openly preached the doctrine of Rousseau. He favored secularized education, the suppression of religious orders, and divorce. But, for the most part, the Spanish philosophers of the eighteenth century were less radical than those of France. Encyclopedism influenced Spanish thought profoundly, but caused no philosophical revolution. There were a great many eclectic philosophers who disseminated French doctrine, being careful to suppress all that bordered on heresy. The outstanding literary figure of Spain in the late eighteenth century, Jovellanos, was orthodox and at the same time receptive to the scientific thought of

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the age. Like the great Feijóo in the first half of the century, he achieved "the dangerous synthesis of the teachings of yesterday with the promises of tomorrow."  

There was a great deal of anticlerical literature in Spain towards the close of the eighteenth century. As in France, the clergy were attacked for their slothfulness, their wealth, and their dissipated habits. The question of clerical celibacy was discussed as a social problem. Superstitious practices in the Church were satirized and condemned. It is nevertheless true that Spanish anticlericalism of the late eighteenth century had not yet assumed so violent a character as it had in France. The enlightened Spaniards, says Jean Sarrailh, merely showed a desire for reform; but they were not atheists.  

Indeed, it is frequently observed that the irreligious spirit of the age expressed itself in Spain far more in immorality than in heterodoxy. De la Fuente emphasizes the moral corruption which had its origin in the Royal Court and spread to the aristocracy and the lower classes.  

Nevertheless, the growth of immorality did not affect the outward display of piety even among the upper classes. Toward the end of the century, not even the upper educated

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3Vicente de la Fuente, Historia Eclesiástica de España, Madrid, 1873-1875, VI, 166.
classes had abandoned their Catholic practices. "Even among these, the basis of personal religious beliefs remained unaltered and was expressed naively in all aspects of daily living: the great number of names given to children to assure them the protection of a host of saints; the pomp and ceremony of religious feasts, which people attended without exception, for they were considered the most important of social events; daily family prayers, and the respectful observance of the Angelus...; the pious greetings which were exchanged upon entering a house...; the practice of daily mass...; and in the abundance of chapels and religious images in private homes..."¹

The influence of French thought on Spanish society was most apparent and significant in the direction of State affairs, which were largely in the hands of liberals of the French school. Carlos III entrusted his affairs of State to ministers—Aranda, Roda, Campomanes—who sympathized with French political and philosophical ideas. The echo of Voltaire's cry, "L'infame," was heard in Spain shortly after the expulsion of the Jesuits, when Roda said: "We have killed the son [i.e. the Jesuit Order] we must now do likewise with the mother, our Holy Roman Church."² Although the phrase was not spoken publicly, and was expressed only in private correspondence, it indicates that

¹Rafael Altamira, Historia de España y de la Civilización Española, Barcelona, 1921, IV, 252. (Further references to Altamira indicate this work, unless another title is given.)

²Descola, p. 243.
The ministers of Carlos IV (1788-1808) were likewise liberal; but after the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, they were obliged to assume a more cautious attitude toward French ideas. Floridablanca took frantic and radical steps toward the suppressing of revolutionary propaganda. He placed troops at the frontier to prevent the entrance of agitators, and sent spies to the French towns near the Pyrenees to inform him of plans to stir up Spaniards against their government. A census of all foreigners residing in Madrid was taken and they were obliged to swear fidelity to the Spanish king and the laws and religion of the Peninsula (July 20, 1791). The law (1787) prohibiting the importation of the Encyclopedia was enforced with new vigor.

Nevertheless, revolutionary literature continued to enter Spain. The inability of Floridablanca to enforce the laws of censorship and importation indicates clearly the political and intellectual climate of the 1790's. There was indecision in the Royal Court as to the advisability of strict censorship; hence there was considerable

1 Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 260, 265.
confusion and contradiction in the laws. Smugglers imported Encyclopedias with the cover and binding of the works of St. Augustine; numerous other tricks were used in order to bring revolutionary literature into Spain, thus indicating the laxness of customs authorities. Indeed, "many public officials were themselves contaminated with benevolence toward liberal ideas." But the lack of conviction was found even at the highest levels of government. The ministers could not prohibit the reading of books which had nourished them for so many years and only now appeared to be politically dangerous. Moreover, Floridablanda's harsh prohibition, together with his refusal to recognize the new French constitution, caused the French government to request his removal after two years in office. In 1792, Carlos IV replaced him with the liberal Count of Aranda, who was hailed by the French revolutionaries as the restorer of philosophism in Spain.

The Inquisition, which had declined during the reign of Carlos III, assumed a new importance after 1789. Of the five thousand persons denounced to the various Spanish tribunals between 1780 and 1820, few were Protestants, Moslems, or Jews. "The Church is no longer threatened by enemies from without; what it has to dread is revolt among its own children." Three-fifths of the accusations were for heretical ideas of French origin.

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1Lea, IV, 391.
2Ibid.
3Ibid.
The Inquisition during the reign of Carlos IV was still feared and respected; nevertheless, it was unable to stop the spread of French thought among the educated classes. This lack of vigor was largely due to the general liberalizing tendencies of the age.\(^1\) However, a decisive factor in the decline of the Inquisition was the unwillingness of Carlos IV and his ministers to give the Holy Office final authority in judging and punishing offenders. The King and his ministers no longer believed in the spiritual authority of the Inquisition, and thus were unable to support it when important cases of heresy were involved. They maintained the Inquisition largely as a political instrument for intimidating and punishing their enemies.\(^2\)

At the turn of the century, the influence of French revolutionary thought on Spanish Catholicism was still, for the most part, indirect; the Spanish Church did not suffer a frontal attack from the revolutionary forces until well into the nineteenth century. Moreover, the "Gallican" tendency\(^3\) in the Spanish Church during the eighteenth century was not diverted into atheistic channels as it was in

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\(^1\)Ibid., p. 338. Cf. Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 237.

\(^2\)The Spanish Inquisition was suppressed by the Cortes of Cádiz in 1813. It was restored by Fernando VII in 1817; in 1820, the liberal government again suppressed it; and it was definitely abolished by royal decree in 1837.

\(^3\)Usually called "Jansenism" in Spain, in the sense of anti-papalism. See below, chapter III.
France during the Revolution. The Bourbon kings of Spain were all devout Catholics, although they tolerated much heterodoxy among their ministers. Menéndez y Pelayo sees in every Spanish Jansenist a disguised atheist. The Jansenists, he says, were, "at the bottom of their hearts," disciples of Voltaire and "disguised sons of the French impiety" who did not dare to identify themselves as such.\(^1\)

But one cannot doubt the sincerity of the majority of those bishops, priests, and laymen who believed that greater independence from Rome would be beneficial to the Spanish Church. The attitude of Jean Sarrailh would seem more reasonable: "Les Espagnols éclairés sont tous avec Charles III pour le défense des droits régaliens, ce que ne fait nullement d'eux des hétérodoxes... Beaucoup sont d'excellents Catholiques; mais ils veulent séparer le domaine de la papauté de celui de leur souverain. Cuique suum."\(^2\)

The tendency toward regalism, or monarchical control of the Church, was prevalent throughout the Hapsburg dynasty, but the Bourbons carried it forward with greater vigor. Carlos III was determined to subject the clergy to his authority. The jurisdiction of civil courts was favored over the ecclesiastical; priests were forbidden to speak against the government or the royal family; bishops could not appoint vicars without the approval of the king. He reduced the number of persons dedicated to religious ser-

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\(^1\) Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 47.

\(^2\) Sarrailh, p. 589.
vice. He combatted moral corruption among the clergy, although this was far less a problem in Spain than in France during the eighteenth century.

These internal reforms were mild compared with the extreme measure for which Carlos III is chiefly remembered—the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain and her colonies in 1767. Carlos III, like his predecessors, feared the Jesuit influence in education and politics, and no doubt coveted their lands and wealth. As defenders of papal supremacy, the Jesuits were a great threat to his ideal of royal supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs. A great many bishops were far more willing to subject themselves to royal rather than papal authority and feared the Jesuit Order; thus they encouraged the King in his growing mistrust of the Jesuits. In 1759, the Jesuits were expelled from Portugal, and between 1764 and 1767, they were driven from France. In 1767, a series of political events which were supposed to have shown Jesuit complicity in anti-monarchical demonstrations gave the King and his royal council a pretext for doing likewise. The expulsion of the Jesuits was a distinct triumph for the Spanish Jansenists. But the Pope did not remain silent. The vigorous protest of Clement XIII initiated a period of struggle between the Jansenists and the Holy See which lasted throughout the reign of Carlos IV and did not terminate until the concordat of 1851 was signed.

During the reign of Carlos IV, there were further
triumphs of Jansenism. It was chiefly through the influence of Moñino, the envoy of Carlos IV at the Papal Court, that the Pope consented, in 1773, to dissolve the Jesuit Order throughout the world. In Spain, the power of the Jansenists increased. The Spanish universities, hitherto in the hands of Jesuits, were now infected with "the virus of Gallicanism." Moreover, the Jansenists were far less vigilant than the Jesuits with regard to the spread of rationalism, and joined their forces with those of the radical reformers in suppressing Scholastic theology and stressing scientific training in the colleges and universities.

The boldest Jansenist step yet to be seen in Spain followed the death of Pius VI in 1799. The liberal minister, Urquijo, induced Carlos IV to sign the decree of September 5 which restored to the bishops the right of issuing dispensations. The decree, which was clearly schismatic, received the support and praise of nineteen bishops. Nevertheless, with the election of the new Pontiff in 1800, the situation changed considerably, and neither the Spanish government nor the hierarchy were willing to continue in a state of schism. With the fall of Urquijo in 1801 and the accession of Godoy, Spain assumed a more conciliatory attitude toward the Pope. There was no revival of Jansenism until the Cortes of 1810.

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1 Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 219.
II. THE CHURCH'S ROLE
IN THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1808-1814)

"On peut dire que, somme toute, au début du XIXe siècle, la situation générale, sans être brillante, était moins sombre en Espagne qu'en France et en Allemagne."¹

The author refers mainly to the theological situation, but the statement is true of Spanish Catholicism in general; for in comparison with the Church in the rest of Europe, the Spanish Church still possessed considerable vigor. There was no noticeable decline in popular piety. The hierarchy was not seriously divided, despite the Jansenist movement; the majority of the canonists favored some degree of independence from Rome, but the majority of bishops were definitely opposed to schism. French rationalism, as we have seen, had invaded philosophical and political thought; but within the Church, there was a vigorous, if somewhat unimaginative, counter-current of Scholastic apologetics.²

Above all, the Spanish Church, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had lost none of its institutional strength. "On the threshold of the nineteenth century," says a modern liberal Spanish historian, "the Church was the cornerstone of the Spanish social structure."³ The ratio of clergymen to laymen in Spain was high compared with other European countries. Even in 1826, when the

²To be discussed in the next chapter.
³Ramos-Oliveira, II, 168.
number of churchmen in Spain was greatly reduced, there was one ecclesiastic for every 91 inhabitants, compared with one for every 153 in Russia, one for every 200 in Italy, and one for every 280 in France.\(^1\) Napoleon's contemptuous remark that Spain was "a country of friars and curates," was not entirely without foundation.\(^2\) The Church possessed considerable wealth. The land and property of the Church at the beginning of the nineteenth century were said to have been double those of the Crown. A conservative historian, Vicente de la Fuente, says that the clergy at the beginning of the nineteenth century were "rich, opulent, and favored."\(^3\) Thus, the fierce patriotism of the clergy during the coming struggle with Napoleon was not entirely a spiritual matter. The Church, during the War of Independence, was well aware of anticlerical practices on the Continent, and thus fought bitterly for the preservation of its property, organization, and position of leadership in Spanish society.

The clergy were the true leaders of the people in the spontaneous uprising and attacks upon the French invaders in 1808. Indeed, there were no other leaders. The government was pitifully weak. Napoleon took advantage of shameful family quarrels in order to make an end of the Bourbon monarchy. He astutely contrived to assemble the members of the royal family—Carlos, María Luisa, Fernando—together

\(^1\) Pío Zabala y Lera, Historia de España y de la Civilización Española, Barcelona, 1930, I, 199.

\(^2\) Descola, p. 250.

\(^3\) Vicente de la Fuente, VI, 177.
with the Prime Minister, Godoy, on foreign soil. Once in Bayonne, he persuaded both Carlos IV and Fernando to abdicate the Spanish throne. The members of the royal family were virtually prisoners of Napoleon, but their exile was made as pleasant as possible. The young prince was, throughout these years, the symbol of Spanish monarchy, for whose restoration the Spanish people fought long and bitterly. But Fernando, living in luxury in Valençay, wrote flattering letters to Napoleon congratulating him on his victories in Spain. He thus contributed nothing to the fierce spirit of resistance among his countrymen.

The soul of the resistance to Napoleon was the clergy. The local Juntas throughout the provinces rallied quickly to the defense of the nation in the name of religion. The war soon became a kind of crusade—a "war of the crucifix"—as Sorel has called it. Clergy and people were stirred by memories of historic conquests in the name of religion. It was, as Sorel has said, "the horror of sacrilege" which gave a distinctive character to the Spanish resistance.¹ The soldiers in the armies of Napoleon were long accustomed to sacrilege in the prosecution of war. Churches were converted into stables. Cathedrals were despoiled of their ancient treasures. Friars and priests were massacred.

¹Sorel, VII, 324.

For the Spanish people, Napoleon was the antichrist. The first pamphlet of the war, from the pen of a priest,
described the activities of the French soldiers in other parts of Europe: "In all countries...they turn monks and nuns from their convents, they favor liberty of conscience, liberty of sects...They promote the doctrine of Calvinism, Lutheranism, and Judaism; they give Jews the rights of citizens..."1 The Spanish Catechism of 1503, composed by a priest for instructing children, asks: "Who are the French? Answer: Ancient Christians and modern heretics. Question: Is it a sin to kill a Frenchman? Answer: No, father, one does a work of merit in freeing this country from these violent oppressors."2 When Napoleon took Pius VII captive to Fontainebleau, the Spanish war became a crusade for the liberation of the Pope. The religious factor in the resistance seems to have been the decisive one. "Insofar as she was Royalist," says Madelin, "Spain would no doubt have been subjected after one or two successful battles; but Catholic in her own violent fashion, the moment...she learnt to identify the cause of Christ with that of the Bourbons and regarded Napoleon as antichrist, she became savagely invincible."3

Spain's fanatically religious patriotism was unique in

1Quoted by Rafael Calvo Serer in "España y la Caída de Napoleón," Historia de España: Estudios publicados en la Revista Arbor, Madrid, 1953, p. 515.
the early nineteenth century. Indeed, the rise of Spanish nationalism was in itself unique and explains to a great extent the violent political-religious struggles which took place in Spain during the revolutionary period. Because of Spain's geographical position, her strong ecclesiastical tradition, and her lack of an educated middle class, the Spanish people were, during the eighteenth century, largely isolated from the revolutionary currents of Europe. Thus, Spain's rejection of the Napoleonic yoke was more emphatic and immediate than in other countries. Since Napoleon was the symbol of foreign heresy, Spanish nationalism was fanatically anti-liberal. Popular patriotism became misoneism—an instinctive hatred of all social and political change. The "enlightened" Spaniards—the *ilustrados*—were driven, if not physically, at least spiritually, from the bosom of the nation. In the Cortes of Cádiz, as we shall see, they formed a theoretical "nation" of their own, which was soon rejected by the clergy, the King, and the people; the *ilustrados* clung stubbornly to their liberal form of patriotism and intermittently forced it upon the Spanish people throughout the nineteenth century. It was the Napoleonic invasion which forced this deep division upon society and gave rise to what has often been called the problem of "the two Spain.*

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III. REVOLUTION AND REACTION FROM 1810 TO 1851

It was not until 1814 that Napoleon was finally driven from the Peninsula. But during the war, there were political developments which had great significance for the future of Spanish Catholicism. Following the capitulation of Madrid on December 4, 1808, Napoleon promised to conserve the Roman Catholic religion, to the exclusion of all others. His brother Joseph, who was made King of Spain, referred to himself on some occasions as "His Catholic Majesty;" 1 and assured the Spanish people that he would uphold "our Holy Religion." 2 But shortly thereafter, he decreed the abolition of the Inquisition, suppressed numerous religious houses, and confiscated their property.

The religious debates among the Spanish patriots, who resisted the Napoleonic invasion, were of greater significance for the life of the nation than the anticlerical measures of Joseph Bonaparte. The Junta Central, which was created soon after the outbreak of the war, appointed a regency of five men in 1810 whose duty it was to convok a Spanish Parliament, or Cortes, whose members were to be representative of Spain and the Americas. The Cortes met for the first time in Cádiz in September, 1810. Politically, the Cortes was hardly a representative body. It is often

1 Díaz-Plaja, p. 78 (text of Capitulation of Saragossa).
2 Ibid., p. 62 (text of Proclamation of July 16, 1808).
observed that, because of the French occupation of Northern Spain, where conservatism prevailed among the upper classes, the Cortes came to be made up largely of southern liberals.

The most important activity was the drafting of the constitution of 1812. The constitution was a thoroughly liberal one, patterned after the French constitution, from which entire paragraphs were copied. The only conservative note appears in Article 12: "The religion of the Spanish nation is, and will perpetually be, the Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion, the only true one, which the nation protects by wise and just laws, and prohibits the exercise of any other." One can scarcely imagine a more definite guarantee of Roman Catholic supremacy in the Spanish nation; even the future of Catholicism is guaranteed. Nevertheless, the chief purpose of the religious statement was to pacify the clergymen who comprised nearly a third of the deputies. The article was highly repugnant to most of the lay delegates. A contemporary liberal wrote that the liberals "approved it with the greatest regret." But he explains that "in order to have established the opposite doctrine [i.e., religious liberty], it would have been necessary to struggle directly with all the violence and fury of the clergy... For this reason, it was thought prudent to leave the matter to the future, to the progress of the Enlightenment, to the enlightened controversy of writers, and to the gradual reform

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1 Melchor Fernández Almagro, Orígenes del Régimen Constitucional en España, Barcelona, 1925, p. 105.
of future Cortes."

The general spirit of the Cortes, however, both before and after the approval of the constitution, was distinctly anticlerical. Indeed, many of the articles of the constitution tended to provoke religious controversy. Article 370 placed public education under the supervision and authority of the government. Religious institutions were obliged to provide for the teaching of the constitution. Parish priests were obliged to read the new constitution from the pulpit; those who refused to do so were fined and otherwise punished.

Article 371 of the constitution guaranteed freedom of the press. An avalanche of bitterly anticlerical and antimonarchical pamphlets poured from the Spanish press. Among them was a grotesquely blasphemous book, the Diccionario Crítico-burlesco by Gallardo. The book was called to the attention of the Cortes and was severely censured, but the author was not punished. This was "the first victory of the irreligious spirit in Spain." It soon became obvious that the Inquisition, which had been dormant for some months because of the lack of a Papal Bull naming a new Inquisitor, should take charge of such matters. A prolonged debate concerning the Inquisition ensued in the Cortes. "The contest was the bitterest and most prolonged in the career of the Cortes." It was not until February 5, 1813, that the

1 Argüelles, quoted by Fernández Almagro, p. 88.
2 Menéndez y Pelayo, VII, 66.
3 Lea, IV, 412.
Inquisition was declared incompatible with the constitution.

The vote for the suppression of the Inquisition was 92 to 30, which indicated considerable strength among the opposition. A campaign was soon organized for the restoration of the Inquisition. The papal nuncio now took an active part in the battle, charging that the abolition of the Holy Office was contrary to the primacy of the Holy See. His spirit of resistance angered the Cortes, and in April of 1873, he was ordered to leave Spain as "an enemy of the Spanish nation, a defender of ultramontanist propositions, and an instrument of the tyrant who oppresses us and who wishes to throw us into a state of religious anarchy."¹

Severe anticlerical measures followed: Church property was confiscated. An attempt was made to establish a National Spanish Church.

The anticlericalism of the Cortes was greatly criticized throughout Spain. The constitution itself was scarcely popular. Conservative historians have long condemned the constitution of Cádiz as a wholly exotic document, an abortive attempt to liberalize the Spanish people. As the War of Independence drew to a close in 1814, the liberals were likewise aware that reform was tremendously difficult. In 1814, the liberals were still a small minority, a kind of "sect" which had no backing from the Spanish people or the clergy. A liberal statesman regretfully observed that the

¹Text of decree in Menéndez y Pelayo, VII, 96.
people understood nothing of the constitution, except that it was "a tissue of impieties," as the priests had told them. Clergy and people had repelled the French invaders and their heretical doctrines as well; when the war was over, they could not be expected to tolerate the same heresy, simply because it was preached to them by fellow Spaniards. Clerical opposition to the constitution was violent in many places, and the Cortes were obliged to punish all those opposed to the government. Clergymen who refused to read the new constitution in their churches, or otherwise opposed it, were exiled. "The government triumphed, but it was a Pyrrhic victory, multiplying its enemies, heightening its reputation for irreligion, and weakening its influences."1

When Fernando VII returned to Spain in May, 1814, he would scarcely have been expected to submit to a liberal constitution. He was by nature cruel, selfish, and vindictive. He was incapable of governing, except despotically. He knew that the collapse of the Napoleonic empire would be followed by a violent monarchical reaction in France and that his absolutism would be backed by the European Powers. Moreover, he was aware of his own tremendous popularity in Spain. The young prince was the romantic symbol of the Spanish monarchy, which, despite the unpopularity of Carlos IV and his immoral wife, was still unanimously supported by the

1Evaristo San Miguel, quoted by Lea, IV, 403.

2Ibid., p. 417.
masses of the population. Finally, he was aware that the liberalism of the Cortes had almost no popular support. Indeed, there was within the Cortes a conservative group whose influence was growing. On May 12, without warning, Fernando VII suspended the Cortes and declared himself absolute monarch.

Modern historians often assume that Fernando ought to have made his peace with the liberals and that somehow he might have incorporated them into his government.\(^1\) It was, however, not within his power to heal the breach between the liberal minority and the conservative masses and clergy. Nevertheless, a wiser king and a less despicable person than Fernando VII could, by pursuing a consistent and trustworthy policy of government, have satisfied the conservatives without antagonizing the defeated liberals beyond endurance. This Fernando was unwilling or unable to do. Moreover, his fierce clericalism, manifested in the restoration of the Inquisition (1814) (now more than ever a political weapon), his restoration of church property, and the admission of the Jesuits into Spain (May, 1815), only served to stimulate the more fanatical elements among the clergy and to antagonize the liberals. These latter gained strength under the cover of the secret societies throughout the regime of Fernando VII, and became more bitterly anti-clerical.

The Church did little to heal the breach in Spanish

\(^1\)Cf. Zabala, I, 103.
society, for by accepting the patronage of this most despised of all Spanish monarchs, the Church lost infinitely more in popularity and prestige than it gained in restored property and privileges. By 1834, as we shall later see, the Church had lost its place of moral leadership in the Spanish nation. During this first period (1814-1820) in the reign of Fernando VII, the affairs of the nation gradually fell into disorder. Chaotic conditions were largely due to unwise financial policies, but there was general discontent with the King's fierce vindictiveness and cruel persecution of all those who opposed him. Thus, the forces of liberation began to grow.

Liberalism had enjoyed a brief period of growth from 1812 to 1814. Freedom of the press had given a powerful impulse to the spread of liberal doctrine. A new and powerful element now began to lend its support to the liberal cause. The military leaders, many of them heroes in the War of Independence, at first had given their support to the restored monarch. Disillusioned by Fernando's incompetence and baseness, they gradually began to consider themselves destined to rule the nation when the proper moment should come. Thus, with military backing, liberalism was eventually to become a serious threat to absolutism. The military leaders were not isolated elements. Their morale was strengthened and their sense of destiny was stimulated in the "underworld" of the secret societies, where the legends of the War of
Independence, together with the mysticism of masonic rites, gave a new and romantic character to the arid doctrinaire liberalism of 1812.

Between 1815 and 1819, there were numerous military uprisings in Galicia, Catalonia, Valencia, and Madrid. The important revolt began in January of 1820 when Rafael de Riego stirred up his troops, destined for suppressing the revolution in Buenos Aires, and persuaded them to declare for the constitution of 1812. The rebellion spread throughout Spain and on March 9, the cowardly monarch agreed to swear to the constitution rather than to abdicate.

During the three-year period of constitutional rule which followed (1820-1823), the liberal Cortes pursued a policy of fierce anticlericalism. "Much of the legislation was no doubt salutary in itself, but, at that moment, it was dangerous, and the blows succeeded each other so rapidly that the sufferers might well regard it as systematic persecution." 1 The Inquisition was suppressed and the Jesuits were banned. The clergy were subjected to civil jurisdiction. Numerous religious orders were suppressed. Heavy contributions were levied upon the Church without papal permission. The Archbishop of Valencia was banished to France when he dared to protest to the government. Shortly thereafter, many more prelates were exiled. When Rome refused to receive the ambassador sent by the Spanish Cortes, the papal

1 Lea, IV, 439.
nuncio was expelled from Spain (1323). "The rupture with Rome was complete and, in the eyes of pious Spaniards, the government had justified the clerical definition of the constitution as heresy."\footnote{Ibid., p. 442.}

Shortly after he had sworn to the constitution, the treacherous King began to organize armed opposition to the liberal Cortes. A counter-revolution was organized in various parts of Spain under the Juntas Apostólicas, led by priests, as in the War of Independence. In 1322, the insurrectionary bands united to form the Army of the Faith and took Seo de Urgel, making it their stronghold. Everywhere, the warrior-priests continued to lead the people against the "Jacobin" government. A "Royalist Regency" was organized of which an archbishop was member, and the Church contributed funds to the prosecution of the war.

The constitutional government was as weak and inefficient as the former absolutist government had been. After the Congress of Verona (1322), the Allied Powers decided that it was the duty of France to put an end to the chaos in Spain, for it endangered the peace and security of Europe. The liberal Spanish government was warned that it must establish order by returning to absolutism or undergo invasion. The liberals believed that a French invasion would do no great harm, for they believed that the people would unite as in 1808 and drive out the invaders. But when the French
Army of invasion crossed the border on April 7, 1823, the Spanish people received them with cries of: "Viva el rey absoluto! Viva la religión y la Inquisición!" demonstrating once again the religious nature of Spanish patriotism. The foreign invader was not repelled if he came bearing the banner of the Catholic religion.

The clerical reaction of 1823-1833 was the most shamefully vindictive that Spain had yet seen. It was, says Menéndez y Pelayo, a more distinctly political reaction than a religious one, "no matter how much the two seemed to work hand in hand at the beginning." It would be useless to try to prove where greater responsibility lay—with the Church or with the government; for the two were indistinguishable, not only at the beginning of the period, as Menéndez y Pelayo says, but throughout it. Despite the pleas of the Russian and French ambassadors, Fernando VII was determined not only to restore all that the Church had lost during the liberal triennial, but to eradicate liberalism through merciless persecution. In this program of proscription, he was wholeheartedly supported by the Church. During the reign of terror which followed, the seed was sown for the anticlerical violence of 1834.

After the death of Queen Amalia in 1829, Fernando sought a fourth marriage and chose as his bride the Neapolitan princess, María Cristina de Bourbon. The Infante Don Carlos,

1Menéndez y Pelayo, VII, 155.
Fernando's brother, considered himself the lawful heir to the Spanish throne in the event of Fernando's death (for the King was childless), unless a male heir were born; for the ancient Salic Law which provided for the succession of a daughter had been repealed in 1713 by Felipe V. In 1830, Fernando, foreseeing the possibility that the new Queen might bear him a daughter rather than a son, published the secret decree of 1789 in which Carlos IV had abrogated the law of 1713 and had commanded the observance of the Salic Law.

In the same year (1830), a daughter was born to María Cristina, later to be known as Isabel II. Carlos, nevertheless, continued to regard himself as the lawful heir to the Spanish throne, for he wrongly believed that the law of 1789 was fraudulent. In connection with the dispute over the legality of the royal decree, there developed a contention of far greater significance. There had grown up in the last years of Fernando's reign a royalist party which, despite the King's clericalism and persecution of liberals, was not satisfied with Fernando's cabinet, for they considered it to be more imbued with French ideas of absolutism than with the traditional Spanish monarchical ideals. The royalists found a champion in Don Carlos and gained the backing of the conservative clergy, many of whom eventually became the spiritual and military leaders of the Carlist War. The cause of

this party was, from the first, a religious as well as a political one, and the Carlist War which followed was a religious crusade.

After the death of Fernando VII in 1833, María Cristina, who was Queen Regent during the minority of her daughter Isabel, turned to the liberals in her struggle against the Carlists. The Queen was known for her great charm and beauty and soon became the idol of the writers and politicians of the romantic younger generation. Although she tended to be moderate in her political views, she was, during her eight-year regency (1833-1840), often dominated by liberal ministers who pressed the cause of constitutional government and reform with great zeal. Her regency was marked by its intense anticlericalism.

The Civil War which broke out shortly after the death of Fernando in 1833 provided the chief motives for the anticlerical measures of 1834. The clergy who supported Don Carlos were quite naturally regarded as traitors by the legitimate government. Early in the ministry of Martínez de la Rosa (1834), there was a decree authorizing government confiscation of all property of clergymen who had left their posts in order to fight on the side of Don Carlos, and religious communities were suppressed if at least one-sixth of their members were affiliated with the Carlist cause. The persecution of the clergy became more intense as the Civil War progressed, for the Church came to be regarded as the ally of the rebellious absolutists and the
enemy of the constitutional government.

Although the fierce anticlericalism of 1834 was provoked first of all by the Carlist rebellion, it must be seen as the culmination of the liberal-conservative struggle begun in 1810 in the Cortes of Cádiz. The boldness of the Spanish reformers is in part explained by the influence of anticlerical spirit of the July Monarchy in France. Moreover, the despotism of Fernando VII had become insufferable and even the common people were capable of judging its effects. They had witnessed the brutal assassination of such military heroes as General Riego, a hero of the War of Independence. The stories of Fernando’s treachery and debauchery were widespread. The economic chaos of Fernando’s regime was felt more acutely by the lower class than any other. Thus the liberals, who promised release from Fernando’s corrupt government, were now able to win the moral support of large numbers of uneducated people who were quite incapable of understanding liberal doctrine.

For the first time in the history of Spain, there was a popular uprising against the clergy. It was occasioned by the cholera epidemic of 1834, which, according to an absurd popular rumor, had been caused by the poisoning of public fountains by the monks. Sixteen Jesuits were killed in Madrid on July 17. The soldiers stood by passively, and the government failed to punish the assassins. Within a few months, brutal attacks on priests were repeated on a larger scale throughout Spain. Priests and nuns were violated in a manner that had no precedent in Spanish history.
The anticlerical spirit of the liberal and moderate governments between 1834 and 1840 was manifested in their extensive program of confiscation and sale of church estates. The reduction of lands and property of the clergy had begun during the reign of Carlos III and had been continued under Godoy. Considerable ecclesiastical property was confiscated during the constitutional periods between 1810-1814 and 1820-23, and again in 1834, as we have seen, as an act of reprisal against the Carlists. During the regime of the radical liberals (1836-37), under Mendizábal and Calatrava, the suppression of religious orders and the confiscation of their property were carried to fanatical extremes. Mendizábal's plan was to sell the property of the Church in order to restore public credit, much damaged during the reign of Fernando VII, and, moreover, to secure funds for the prosecution of the war against Carlos. Nevertheless, the chief result of Mendizábal's policies was to create a new liberal class in Spanish society. "Among the conservative classes, the sale of ecclesiastical property, which took place under conditions more favorable for the purchaser than for the State, created a network of interests which necessarily thenceforth told in favor of the preservation of Isabel's throne, since Don Carlos could not be expected to respect these purchases. Thus, the minister enlisted material interests as indirect support for the legitimate dynasty."

1Rafael Altamira, "Spain (1815-1845)," ch. VIII, Cambridge Modern History, Cambridge, 1907, X, 237.
Relations with Rome became increasingly strained. Gregory XVI had withdrawn his nuncio in 1835 in order not to take sides in the dynastic quarrel and as a protest against the anticlerical measures of the government following the death of Fernando VII. During the radical regime of Mendizabal and Calatrava (1836-37), an attempt was made to put the Church under the direct control of the government. Bishops who were believed to sympathize with the Carlist cause were exiled and replaced by clergymen who, in the words of the decree, "were favorable to Her Majesty's cause." New ordinations were prohibited "in order to reduce gradually the ranks of the clergy"—as the decree bluntly stated. In 1837, the clergy were made to depend directly upon the government for their support. The Jansenist policy of the liberal government was made official in the new constitution of 1837. The Catholic religion was not declared to be "dominant," but simply that "which the Spanish people profess." Anticlericalism abated somewhat after the moderate reaction of 1838. But with the revolution of 1840 and the accession of the dictator Espartero (following the abdication of the Queen Regent), and the close of the Carlist war, there came a severe struggle with the papacy. In 1840, three judges of the Supreme Tribunal of the Church in Madrid were suspended, including the Pope's chargé d' affaires.

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1 Menéndez y Pelayo, VII, 267, 268.
2 Ibid.
in the nunciature. The latter was exiled; the nunciature was closed, its property confiscated. The Church Tribunal was likewise suppressed and the National Supreme Court was given powers of resolving ecclesiastical matters. The Pope protested in March of 1841. Espartero answered him in a manifesto (July, 1841) accusing the Pope of meddling in Spanish affairs and of favoring the Carlist cause.

Espartero followed up this manifesto with a series of anticlerical decrees calculated to frighten the Pope into a more cooperative attitude. José Alonso drew up a plan for a Spanish National Church based on Urquijo's decree of 1799. It was presented to the Cortes in 1842, but the author did not press for its approval. Espartero continued in other ways to persecute the Church. He sent a great many bishops into exile, so that at the close of 1841, only ten bishops remained in their sees. Several new bishops were named by the government and were installed without canonical confirmation. The Church seemed to be on the brink of schism. The Pope was alarmed and reprimanded the Spanish government. He entreated all of Christendom to intercede for the Spanish Church. But Espartero did not allow the Bull of Censure to enter Spain.

After the fall of Espartero in June, 1843, the moderates were again in power. During the dictatorship of Narvaez (1843-1851), the fierce anticlericalism abated. Much of the most radical legislation of Espartero was revoked, although no lost property was restored to the Church if it was now in
the possession of new owners, nor was permission given to reopen suppressed religious houses. The moderates were anxious to renew relations with the Holy See, but their insistence upon papal recognition of Isabel II as legitimate ruler of Spain made matters difficult. But, in the meantime, the Church Court in Madrid was reopened (1844), and bishops were authorized to confer Holy Orders. In 1845, the Cortes decreed the restitution of whatever properties of the secular clergy, confiscated during the Espartero regime, still remained unsold. The new constitution of 1845 restored Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the Spanish nation.

In view of these friendly gestures, the Pope, in 1847, sent a delegate to Spain to confirm new bishops. In 1848, every episcopal see was again filled. When the Italian revolutionaries were pressing for the separation of the spiritual and temporal powers in 1849, the Spanish ambassador in Rome took the lead in getting the support of the Catholic nations for the Pope. In the same year, the Pope recognized Isabel II as legitimate ruler of Spain, and in 1851, a concordat was signed.

After nearly forty years of bitter struggle, the Spanish Church again enjoyed some measure of peace and stability. Indeed, as early as 1838 both liberals and moderates had begun to see the futility of persecuting the Church, and the excesses of Espartero were generally regarded as an absurd
anachronism. Like France in 1830, Spain in 1843 was ready to come to terms with the Church. The struggle of the Spanish Church was, to be sure, no mere repetition of what had happened in France half a century earlier. Spain's sudden confrontation with liberal thought, the religious nature of her nationalism, her prolonged dynastic wars—these and other factors had made the religious problem of Spain well-nigh insoluble. Nevertheless, the crisis of Spanish Catholicism must be seen as a part of the Church's struggle throughout Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century.

A modern Roman Catholic historian writes that during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula was the only region where the papacy was unable to establish a "just compromise" between new ideas and tradition.¹ It is doubtful whether the papacy was successful in achieving a synthesis of the old and the new in any European country. But in no country was the spectacle of a predominantly medieval institution wrestling with the spirit of a new age more dramatic or more real than in Spain.

¹Pouthas, quoted by Leflon, p. 327.
CHAPTER III
THE REVIVAL OF ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY
AND APOLOGETICS

I. THE DECADENCE OF ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

The decline of Roman Catholic theology in the eighteenth century is often attributed to the corrosive influence of the atheistic philosophies of the Enlightenment. While this explanation is true to a great extent, it must be remembered that the eighteenth century was not merely an age of destruction. A new and positive religion had emerged—the Religion of Reason. In many religious circles, Protestant and Catholic, the triumph of the new religion seemed so obvious and inevitable that men did not care to challenge it. The new religion had not merely defeated the old, but had replaced it, to some extent, within the Church itself. Never in the history of the Roman Church had the reaction against heresy been so feeble and inconsequential. The errors of philosophism produced no vigorous and stimulating debates, as Jansenism had done a century before. A great many of the French clergy followed the example of the philosophers and worshipped at the altar of the Supreme Being.

Many of the prelates were not greatly disturbed by this state of affairs. "Nos prédicateurs se montrent assez tempérés..." wrote the Archbishop of Aix. It was necessary, he explained, to conform to some extent to the spirit of the
In order to preserve the substance of religion, "il fallait le protéger par des formes et par des accessoires qui flattent et qui séduisent. Ainsi, ils ne parlent plus que rarement d'enfer, de vengeance, d'éternité. Cette tournure moelleuse et pacifique est commode et tout s'arrange." Others were less pleased with the situation. "Malheureux que nous étions," wrote Bishop Maury in his memoirs, "nous en étions venus au point de ne plus prononcer en chaire le nom de N.S.J.C."

In Germany, the situation was similar. "In almost all the States of Germany," says Lichtenberger, "the spirit of rationalism had penetrated by the end of the last century even to the theological chairs and to the more humble rural charges of the Catholic Church...The element of polemics had almost disappeared from the textbooks of dogmatic theology; and it was not rare to see the Roman Catholic clergy applying the ideas of Kant and Schelling to the exposition or defense of the traditional beliefs." While rationalism had left its mark on Italian and Spanish philosophy, the clergy in these relatively isolated peninsular countries had not succumbed to its influence as in France and Germany.

Hocedez considers the abandonment of Scholasticism as the primary cause of the decadence of theology, particularly in France and Germany, where it was almost entirely abandoned.

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1 Leflon, p. 29.
3 Hocedez, I, 21.
One may doubt whether Scholasticism was the answer to the complex problems of the age, but it must be granted that uncertainty as to philosophical basis had rendered theology ineffective. Empiricism and Cartesianism had dealt a death blow to Aristotle, and Scholasticism had been unable to free itself from outmoded scientific theories. There was no new philosophy which could readily be made the basis of theology and yet allow it to remain within the bounds of orthodoxy. Many Roman Catholic theologians accepted certain aspects of Cartesianism, but "la théologie...cherche, comme à tâton, une philosophie qu'elle puisse utiliser."

It was in Spain that Scholasticism showed the greatest vigor at the turn of the century. In Scholastic apologetics, says Menéndez y Pelayo, "ancient Spain was still alive."

With her strong Scholastic tradition, says Hocedez, Spain might have played an important role in the theological awakening of the nineteenth century. But Spanish Scholasticism was not adequate to the needs of the times. The style and manner of the eighteenth century Scholastics, says Menéndez y Pelayo, was "dull and uninspired."

Traditional Spanish theology, says Altamira, was "no more than a dry skeleton whose only role was that of opposing every innovation and combating all progress."

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1 Ibid., p. 23.
2 Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 398.
3 Hocedez, I, 41.
4 Menéndez y Pelayo, VI, 398.
5 Altamira, IV, 361.
II. THE ROMANTIC AWAKENING

On the eve of the French Revolution, the theology of the Roman Church was like a ruined edifice inhabited by lifeless ghosts. But not even the outward structure was destined to survive. The ancient modes of thought crumbled to the ground in the chaos of the Revolution. As the Army of the Republic and, later, the forces of Napoleon swept throughout Europe, spreading the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people and the brotherhood of man, Catholic apologists found their old ecclesiastical authoritarianism strangely irrelevant. A new doctrinal structure must be raised on the ruins of the old.

The task was tremendously difficult, particularly in France. "L'Eglise retrouvait une France qui avait désappris le christianisme."^1 But if France and much of the rest of Europe had forgotten their Christianity, they had also wearied of the Religion of Reason. "Dégués par l'âufklärung qui devait régénérer le monde et l'a surtout bouleversé par la guerre, dans le feu et le sang, les âmes...éprouvent un mélancolique et cruel désenchantement."^2 If Reason was not omnipotent, then perhaps the heart held the clue to man's happiness and the redemption of society.

The romantic movement created an atmosphere which was

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^1 Hocedez, I, 72.

^2 Leflon, p. 353.
highly sympathetic to religion, and particularly favorable to Roman Catholicism. Rousseau was the precursor of religious romanticism. "Morality and religion," he said, "are not matters of reasoned thinking, but of natural feeling. Man's worth depends not on his intelligence, but on his moral nature, which consists essentially of feeling; the good will alone has absolute value." But romanticism was the triumph not only of sentiment and emotion but of the imagination as well. The torch of romanticized religion passed from Rousseau's hands to those of Chateaubriand, where it burned with dazzling brilliance. In "Le Génie du Christianisme" (1802), Chateaubriand, appealing to the heart and to the imagination rather than reason, showed Christianity to be "so beautiful than one almost wished it were true," as Goyau said.

This masterpiece of Christian apologetics, which caused Napoleon to weep when he read it (at the same time, perhaps, that he was scheming to outwit the Pope!), initiated a school of romantic literature which exalted the poetic and aesthetic values of Christianity. Writers who were weary of strife and bloodshed and frightened by the fierce barriers of nationality which had been raised throughout Europe, turned to the Middle Ages for their inspiration and projected into the past their intense longing for a world of beauty, simplicity, and unity. Their spiritual hunger was nourished by dreams of enchanted

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2 Hocède, I, 73.
castles and picturesque medieval villages. But at the heart of their fantasy was the Gothic Cathedral, the symbol of a lost world of mystery and grandeur. The medieval Church was the benevolent ruler of society. Pre-reformation, pre-humanistic Christianity was idealized. Chateaubriand was surrounded by a group of fervent disciples, among them Bonald, who was to surpass them all and became the founder of the traditionalist school of apologetics.

The new aesthetic Christianity found fertile soil in Germany. German romanticism was intensely nationalistic and more than a little pagan, but it shared in the revival of medievalism and hence sympathized with the resurgent Roman Church. A host of well-known artists, philosophers and writers, including Schlegel, the father of German romanticism, were converted to Roman Catholicism. In Italy, the situation was somewhat different, for the Golden Age to which Italy looked nostalgically was not medieval but rather the Renaissance. Moreover, Italian romanticism was strongly nationalistic, and hence anti-papal; for the temporal power of the Pope, together with the domination of Austria, stood in the way of Italian unity. Thus, Chateaubriand's idealization of the Church as the benevolent educator of society could scarcely become popular in Italy, where it was precisely in the social sphere that the Church seemed most dangerous to democracy and the nationalist cause. Nevertheless, the great Italian novelist, Manzoni, combatted on a lofty moral plane the liberal prejudice
against the Church and, like Chateaubriand, defended "the human and consoling nature of beneficent Christianity, which bestows expressions of tenderness and comfort to weak and discouraged souls."¹

Chateaubriand's masterpiece achieved wide popularity in Spain, but had no imitators among the Spanish writers. Allison Peers calls attention to the relative absence of "picturesque religiosity" in Spanish literature. He explains it by the fact that Spaniards, when looking back upon their own medieval Church, would be less impressed with its poetic values than with its massive institutionalism.² It must also be observed that the nostalgic note in the romantic apologetics which appealed so strongly to the disillusioned liberals of post-revolutionary France was premature in Spain during the early years of the nineteenth century. When the French liberals were growing weary of the excesses of Jacobinism, the religious struggle in Spain had not yet begun. It was not until the 1840's that Chateaubriand's apologetics became genuinely relevant to the Spanish situation, although he was widely read before that time.

The works of the early romantic apologists were timely and useful. But their appeal was limited, for they did not face the deeper philosophical problems of the age. Indeed,

¹Manzoni, quoted by Leflon, p. 493.
they minimized the function of reason precisely at that moment when the Church had a great need for a vigorous restatement of its doctrine. Rationalism, in the profoundest sense, had not died, but had rather been set free from the tight compartments into which the Encyclopedists had tried to force it. A vast new science of nature and human nature had arisen which recognized the practical need of religion, but would not accept religion's authoritative claims. The problem of the validity of religious knowledge demanded an urgent solution.

Moreover, the political and social aspects of the Revolution and the doctrine of popular sovereignty demanded the urgent attention of the theologians. The structure of the Church, even in a post-revolutionary world, still rested largely upon the political institutions of the past. The disciples of liberalism had attacked those institutions along with their philosophical bases. The entire philosophical undergirding of authoritarian society (and, by implication, authoritarian religion) had been challenged. The Church could not remain silent. The Church finally awoke to the need for a profounder and more realistic theology. It is true that, except in Germany, the seminaries were still strongholds of conservatism; but everywhere individual laymen and clergymen had begun to meet the challenge of the new thought. The discussion centered in two great themes—Faith and Reason, and Church and State.
III. THE PROBLEM OF FAITH AND REASON

The German theologians attempted to solve the problem of Faith and Reason by developing a new synthesis of traditional theology and Kantian and post-Kantian idealism. The results of their efforts were not acceptable to the Church, but displayed a creative power and originality that were lacking in other countries. The remarkable fecundity of Roman Catholic theology in Germany is in part explained by the stimulation offered by the Protestant theologians, particularly Schleiermacher, who attempted a synthesis of natural and supernatural theology and tried to establish a connection between theology and the simple faith of the pietists. The Roman Catholic theologians were deeply affected by the conciliatory spirit of this great theologian. It was partly because of his influence that they sought to participate more fully in the new philosophical currents, and adapt the new ideas to those of the traditional theology.

Among the early centers of the Catholic renaissance were Munster and Landshut, where groups of scholars devoted themselves to pedagogical and historical studies. The great universities likewise became theological centers. Drey and Moehler, at Tubingen, were the first Roman Catholic theologians to apply the new science of history to the study of the early centuries of Christianity. At Bonn, Hermes attempted a synthesis of Kantian philosophy and Catholic
theology. He accepted Kant's distinction between pure and practical reason, and showed, as Kant had done, that faith is a practical necessity for all men. However, he disagreed with Kant and other German idealists who maintained that the metaphysical validity of religious beliefs is undemonstrable. He attempted to demonstrate that, in the supra-sensible realm in which pure reason is impotent, faith is not only necessary, but becomes a means of cognition. Nevertheless, the revelation which we receive through faith is in every respect confirmed by reason; hence our reason must necessarily lead us to accept the authority of the Church as a truly divine authority. Hermes was convinced that doubt was the only basis for theological inquiry, and tended to make reason the final test and ultimate criterion of supernatural truth. His theology was condemned in a Papal Brief of September 26, 1335.

The heresy of Günther, another distinguished Roman Catholic theologian of Germany, is more easily discerned. In re-formulating Catholic dogma, he attempted to define central doctrines (the Trinity, the Incarnation, etc.) in distinctly modern philosophical terminology. When many of his definitions were criticized, he did not object, but freely admitted that theological formulas are, and always have been, of a provisional character. "Hence Günther was led to deny in fact, if not in theory, the immutability of revealed truth, and the absolute infallibility of the
definitions of the Church."¹ There were a great many other German theologians during this period who were not censured by Rome. Yet it is significant that the greatest and most creative among them could not escape the heresy of "semi-rationalism."

If in their attempt at synthesis, the German theologians conceded too much to rationalism, the outstanding French apologists of the period went to the opposite extreme. Their distrust of the powers of reason was more thoroughgoing and more profoundly pessimistic than that of Chateaubriand and the romantic school, and led them to develop a philosophy which made tradition the supreme criterion of truth. Traditionalist philosophy may be summed up in two basic ideas: 1) Individual reason is incapable of attaining certainty with respect to moral and religious truth. 2) Moral and religious truth have their origin in primitive revelation, which is infallibly transmitted by tradition; thus, the general consent of the human race becomes the unique criterion of all certainty.²

Thus, Bonald emphasized man's predominantly social nature. Since language is the instrument of sociability, it provides the clue to the origin of all moral and religious knowledge. Language, he says, could not have been discovered by man or by society, but was given to man at his creation; for language is not only a vehicle of

²Formulated by Hocedez, I, 105.
expression, but is the necessary basis or condition of thought itself. Man needs words in order to think as well as to speak. The origin of language is thus mysterious and can be explained only as direct primitive revelation. Hence, man's first act was not a rational one but an act of faith—the acceptance of fundamental religious truth together with the language in which to express it. These fundamental truths are not rediscovered from age to age, since they originated in divine revelation. Rather, they are possessed by society in general and are handed down from one age to the next. Tradition is the safeguard of truth, and the individual must submit to the authority of tradition.

The exaggerated traditionalist doctrine of the impotence of human reason was condemned in the encyclical *Singulari nos* (1834). Nevertheless, traditionalism achieved great popularity throughout Europe, and particularly among Roman Catholic apologists. It provided a strong argument for a return to the authority of the Church in intellectual matters, for the Church may be regarded as the highest and most reliable guardian of tradition. Thus, the traditionalists ultimately attempted to solve the problem of Faith and Reason by advocating submission to religious authority.

There were other attempts to solve the problem of Faith and Reason. Bautain, in a philosophy called fideism, made all knowledge dependent upon premises accepted by faith. Fideism was condemned by Gregory XVI in 1840. A more creative and positive philosophy was the ontologism of Gioberti
and Rosmini. Gioberti made a radical attack on sensationalism, the doctrine that all knowledge is derived from sensations. Since God is the ground of all being and the cause of all events, knowledge of God must be prior to all other knowledge. God is known immediately and intuitively by the human mind, and all other knowledge is derived from our intuition of God, or Absolute Being. Ontologism did much to combat the materialism which still dominated Italian thought in the early nineteenth century, but it was regarded by Rome as conducive to pantheism and was condemned in 1861.

These were the main attempts to solve the problem of religious knowledge in the early nineteenth century. Ontologism and German semi-rationalism were little known in Spain. German religious thought was known in Spain only through the writings of Cousin and the eclectic spiritualists of France. Indeed, the same may be said of German philosophy in general during the first half of the nineteenth century—it entered Spain by way of France. Kant and Hegel were little known in Spain until the middle of the nineteenth century. It was not until 1850 that German philosophy became popular in Spain, mainly through the efforts of the Spanish philosopher and educator, Sanz del Río, who concentrated almost exclusively on the philosophy of Krause (1781-1832), a younger contemporary of Kant who attempted a reconciliation of theism and pantheism.

Traditionalism was known in Spain from the early years of the nineteenth century, although translations did not
appear until after the royalist reaction of 1823. In that year, Ronald's *Analytical Essay* was published in Spanish. In 1826, the works of Lamennais began to appear in translation, as well as the works of de Maistre. The earliest Spanish traditionalist was Pedro Texeiro, whose first book appeared in 1830. The most illustrious Spanish traditionalist, however, was Juan Donoso Cortés. But it was not until after the European Revolution of 1848 that the traditionalist element in his philosophy became marked.

Traditionalism was less influential in Spain than it was in France, for it was a philosophy of disillusionment. Rationalism was blamed for the excesses of the French Revolution, and traditionalism was a reaction to the exaggerated confidence in the power of the human mind to solve the problems of society. In Spain, this reaction was less intense.

Indeed, the Jacobin spirit dominated the Spanish liberals so long as their own revolution was in progress, and the atheistic philosophies of Holbach and Diderot were still popular during the 1830's. The belated rationalism of the Spanish liberals was combatted by harsh and virulent Scholastic apologists such as Francisco Alvarado and Rafael Vélez. Throughout the first half of the century, Spanish liberals and conservatives alike continued to have unbounded faith in their peculiar modes of thought—Jacobin or theocratic, rationalist or Scholastic. A naive confidence in the efficacy of polemics was seen alike in the liberals and
conservatives, and in part accounts for the extreme poverty of Spanish religious thought in the revolutionary period.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH AND STATE

In addition to the problem of Faith and Reason, there was the problem of Church and State. In many respects, it was the more urgent of the two, since the fate of the Church was directly involved in the struggle between the revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces throughout Europe during the Restoration epoch. The problem was not merely a theoretical one, but important doctrinal issues were involved.

Gallicanism was still strong in France at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and throughout the first half of the century, there were in the French seminaries numerous defenders of the moderate Gallicanism of Bossuet. Febronianism, the German equivalent of Gallicanism, was taught in German seminaries long after the works of Febronius were put on the Index in 1820. In Spain, Gallicanism flourished throughout the eighteenth century, and at the beginning of the nineteenth, under the name of Jansenism. The name, to be sure, is misleading. It might be supposed that Jansenism flourished in Spain during the seventeenth century, and that its last vestige was a weakened political form of that

1Febronius was the nom de plume of Nicholas von Hontheim. In his major work, published in 1763, he defended the independence of national churches on canonical grounds. He was influential throughout Europe during the eighteenth century.
heresy. But this is not the case. There were never any important defenders in Spain of the five Jansenist propositions concerning Grace and Free Will. The term was employed in imitation of a common eighteenth century use of the term in other European countries.

Jansenism declined throughout Europe after its doctrine was condemned in the Papal Bull, Unigenitas (1713), and by 1800, no longer existed as a schismatic body except in the Netherlands. The small groups of Jansenists which survived were known chiefly for their anti-papal, anti-Jesuit spirit. In France and Tuscany, the Jansenists cooperated with Gallicans, and by the close of the eighteenth century, the terms were often used synonymously. It was in the sense of anti-Roman that the term was used in Spain. The doctrines of the Spanish Jansenists were based largely on Bossuet, although the ideas of Febronius were also well-known.1 At the close of the century, the most notable Spanish canonists were Jansenists.

During the eighteenth century, Gallicanism, Febronianism, and Jansenism caused no serious problems for the national churches. Indeed, the royal patronage which Gallicans advocated had been a guarantee of the Church’s stability in many countries. But, at the turn of the century, the situation began to change radically; national churches began to suffer at the hands of the secular authorities. Gallicanism

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1Tentativa Theologica (1767), by Antonio Pereira, was a Febronian work of wide influence in Spain.
became a positive danger. Every defender of the Church's independence from Rome was eagerly supported and exploited by rulers who wished to make the Church their political instrument.

This was particularly true in France under Napoleon, but also in Spain following the War of Independence. Spanish anticlericals allied themselves with Jansenist clergymen. Many of these latter, such as Llorente, author of a violently anti-Roman work on the Inquisition, was no longer in good standing with the Church. But a few, such as Félix Amat and his nephew, Félix Torres Amat, were churchmen of unblemished character and enjoyed considerable prestige within the Church. In 1842, the latter, who was Bishop of Astorga, wrote a pastoral (later condemned in Rome) defending the doctrine that the power of the Church resides in the episcopate. But Amat had few followers, for by 1843, the clergy were generally aware that Jansenism led inevitably to the enslavement of the Church to the secular authorities.

Thus, to a certain extent, historical circumstances contributed to the decline of Gallicanism and the rise of ultramontanism in the nineteenth century. In their struggles with hostile governments, the clergy looked more and more to Rome for support. But equally important, in defeating Gallicanism was the new school of ultramontane apologetics which had arisen under the leadership of French traditionalists, whose philosophical ideas were discussed earlier in this chapter. The purpose of their apologetics was not only to wipe out
the last vestiges of Gallicanism but to restore the prestige of the Church as the moral and spiritual leader of European society.

The most eloquent apologists of the new ultramontanism were de Maistre and Lamennais. They made little use of canonical arguments in their defense of papal supremacy. Both shared the new interest in historical and social studies which began in the nineteenth century. Du Pape (1819), by de Maistre, traces the historical evolution of the papacy and attempts to demonstrate that the papacy was from the earliest times the true educator of Christian society. He was a writer of brilliant style and rich imagination. A Protestant historian says, "We may readily grant [Du Pape] to be much truer than any professedly historical survey which traces the growth of the papacy mainly to deceit and corruption."

Lamennais used the social apologetic with even greater effectiveness than de Maistre. His work had a far wider scope. He sowed the seeds of "a new Christian apologetic appropriate to the nineteenth century, out of which could grow not only a revival of theology but also a revival of Christian culture." Early in his career, Lamennais had written in a notebook: "Salus populi suprema lex esto." This motto became the guiding principle of his life. The redemption of society was the chief aim of his apologetics.

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He attempted to show the relevance of Christianity to every walk of life, and particularly to social problems. "Everything," he said, "proceeds from doctrines: morals, literature, constitutions, laws, the prosperity of the states and their calamities, civilization, barbarism, and those terrible crises which destroy whole peoples and renew them."¹ Like de Maistre, he believed that society was threatened with dissolution, and that only by recognizing the superior authority of the Church, and above all, the authority of the papacy, could it be saved. The new social apologetic was popular throughout Europe and widely read in Spain during the 1820's, but there were no Spanish works of this nature until 1840, when the first pamphlets of Jaime Balmes began to appear.

A further problem for the Church during the first half of the nineteenth century was that of guiding the peoples of Europe in their struggle for democracy and nationhood. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, the Church and the papacy played a negative and repressive role in this struggle. Moreover, the outstanding political writers among the Roman Catholics—de Maistre and Bonald—were passionate defenders of authoritarianism in Church and State. They regarded monarchy as divinely ordained and the only basis for the stability of European society.² Lamennais, as we have

¹Quoted by Vidler, p. 74.
²Cf. Béla Menczer, Catholic Political Thought (1789-1848), London, 1952. This book is an anthology with excerpts from de Maistre, Bonald, Chateaubriand, Balzac, von Schlegel, Metternich, Donoso Cortes, Balmes and Veuillot. The political views of these writers are strongly conservative and in some cases violently reactionary.
seen, abandoned the monarchical position and gradually became a defender of democracy, at first because of the advantages that civil liberties offered to the Church, but finally because of the inherent values of constitutional government.

When the Pope condemned modern liberties in 1832, the Liberal Catholic school was dealt a severe blow, although a number of French and Belgian apologists, particularly Lacordaire, Montalambert, and Dupanloup, continued to defend constitutional government, though with great caution. Democracy was not upheld as an ideal but as a means of attaining greater liberty for the Church.¹ Likewise in Italy, Ventura, Rosmini, and especially Gioberti attempted to reconcile Catholic dogma with the ideals of Italian nationalism and democracy; but in 1851, Gioberti turned against the papacy. The Spanish apologists were all fanatical defenders of monarchy during the first half of the century. With the exception of Jaime Balmas, no liberal element was to be found in the political views of any Spanish apologist of the period.

In conclusion, it may be observed that the social and political thought of the apologists of the Roman Catholic Revival displays the same strengths and weaknesses as their theological and philosophical thought. In both there were signs of remarkable vitality; many new and varied aspects

¹Cf. Hocedez, II, 165.
of Catholicism were explored. But the solutions offered for the problems of Faith and Reason and Church and State were at best provisional and made little lasting contribution to the doctrine of the Roman Church.

The strength and the weakness of the romantic apologetics of Chateaubriand's school have been noted. The later German and Italian theologians were profound and creative, but the Church did not permit them to bring their efforts to fruition. The traditionalists emphasized certain important truths with regard to the limitations of human knowledge and man's dependence on tradition and society, but they offered no clear or positive solution to the problem of Faith and Reason. Similarly, in the sphere of political thought, the traditionalists were so strongly reactionary as to harm the Roman Catholic cause more than they helped it.

The Liberal Catholics were positive and creative thinkers, but after 1832 they no longer spoke with clarity and their influence declined until the European Revolution of 1848 when they again enjoyed a brief period of influence. Nevertheless, they awakened the Church to its social responsibilities and sowed the seeds for the Social Catholicism of the late nineteenth century.

The least problematic, and perhaps the most successful type of Roman Catholic apologetic in the first half of the nineteenth century was the historical-social apologetic of de Maistre and Lamennais. The defense of the social efficacy
of Catholicism, despite the limitations of this type of apologetic,\(^1\) was timely and brilliant and led to no dangerous heresy.

As we have seen, many of the most important aspects of the new Catholic apologetics were well-known to Spanish Catholics. But in that country, the Church can scarcely be said to have played an active role in the revival of religious thought. Nevertheless, after 1840, largely through the efforts of Jaime Balmes, a somewhat more vital relationship was established between Spanish Catholicism and the new currents of Roman Catholic thought beyond the Pyrenees; and it was mainly through the works of Balmes that Spain made a positive contribution to the thought of the Roman Catholic Revival.

\(^1\)See below, chapter VI.
CHAPTER IV

Balmes' Early Life and Literary Career

Jaime Luciano Balmes was born on August 28, 1810, in Vich, Catalonia. This tiny provincial capital was somewhat removed from the revolutionary currents of the Spanish court; but Balmes' childhood was not for that reason entirely isolated from the social upheavals of the nineteenth century. Catalonia was a thriving industrial center especially favored by Carlos III and Carlos IV in the preceding century. It was the only region in Spain where an industrial revolution took place in the early nineteenth century. At the time of Balmes' birth, Catalonia was the Spanish equivalent of Lancashire.

In the accounts of Balmes' early life, there is little that foreshadows his later role as a realistic political and social thinker. His biographers portray him as a delicate, sensitive composer of epic and pastoral poetry. Of the early Spanish biographies, the best are those of García de los Santos, Vida de Balmes (Madrid, 1848), and Antonio Soler, Biografía del Dr. D. Jaime Balmes, Pbro., (Barcelona, 1848). From a literary point of view, that of A. de Blanche-Raffin, a French contemporary of Balmes, is superior: Jacques Balmès, sa vie et ses ouvrages (Paris, 1849). The Catalan biography by Father Ignacio Casanovas, S.J., is exhaustive, and contains a complete account of the data supplied by early biographers. It is entitled: Balmes: la seva vida, el seu temps, les seves obres (Barcelona, 1932). It is also published in Spanish translation as the first volume of Balmes' Obras Completas. (Details below.) All references to "Casanovas" indicate this volume, unless other works of Casanovas are cited.

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pious, and precocious child, of the kind that is very common in Roman Catholic hagiography. The early biographers, as well as Ignacio Casanovas, author of the definitive biography, were filled with intense personal admiration for Balmes and perhaps for that reason were inclined to exaggerate his saintly qualities, particularly in his childhood. But there is no reason for doubting the general truthfulness of the various accounts of his early life.

Jaime Balmes was the fourth son in a family of eleven children. His father was a tanner. Both parents were devout Catholics. His mother heard Mass daily with Jaime at her side. His parents were poor and uneducated but they soon recognized Jaime's superior intelligence. The mother took the boy frequently to the altar of St. Thomas Aquinas in the Church of Santo Domingo and prayed for wisdom and virtue for her son. He was a frail child and seldom played with the other children. He was unusually pious and made his first communion between the ages of seven and eight.

Balmes entered the primary school of the seminary of Vich when he was seven years old. His studies consisted of four daily classes in Latin grammar. These years (1817-

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1In his introduction to the Catalan biography, Casanovas says, "My first purpose in writing the biography is entirely personal, and it is that of rendering to Balmes all the proofs of admiration and love." (vol. I. p. xxxiii.)

2Casanovas, p. 13.
1820) were a time of relative stability in Spain. But in
1820, there began a period of political chaos which made
serious study difficult. The liberal reformers of the second
constitutional period (1820-1823) attempted to implant in the
seminaries new, liberally orientated programs of study. The
banishment of the Jesuits in 1820 was a further handicap for
most of the seminaries, for a great many of the teachers were
Jesuits. In 1821-22, the school year at Vich was shortened
and no examinations were given. 1

During these three years (1820-1823), Balmes was en¬
rrolled in the rhetoric class, which was dedicated to further
drill in Latin grammar. During this period, Balmes received
his chief literary inspiration from a circle of amateur writ¬
ters which had formed in Vich. Under the influence of the
new romantic school, a number of priests of literary bent
met and recited their verses. Balmes was deeply attracted
by this group. He was soon composing verses which amazed
his teachers. 2

Balmes describes his thirst for knowledge at the age of
twelve as a consuming passion. "The life of the philosophers
seemed to me the life of demigods on earth." Between the
ages of twelve and fifteen, he was enrolled in the philosophy
course which was intended for those who aspired to Holy Orders.
His first philosophy teacher, Domingo Giró, was a priest of
the Scholastic tradition. The text was by Amat and had a

1Ibid., p. 21.
2Ibid., p. 28.
distinctly Jansenist orientation, but there was no other available. Balmes later considered these three years of philosophical studies as extremely deficient. The teachers were unable to think independently. The students learned propositions by rote.  

The academic year 1825-26 was especially important in the life of Balmes. In 1826, the absolutist reaction to the second constitutional regime (1820-1823) was at its height. In 1826, Fernando's bloody campaign of proscription and terror reached Catalonia. The ultra-royalist party, later identified with the cause of Don Carlos, had begun to form. The Conde de España was sent to Catalonia to stamp out this faction, as well as the constitutional opposition.  

It was thus, at the age of fifteen, that Balmes first witnessed the fierce political-religious struggle which he later attempted to interpret in his writings.

In 1825, Balmes began to read extensively in the episcopal library of Vich. The library, containing 20,000 volumes, was unusually large for such a small city. It was founded in 1779 by Bishop Francisco de Veyán, who turned the Archbishop's Palace into a public library. In that year, Carlos IV had decreed that a library be established in each Spanish diocese, utilizing the books of the Jesuits, who had been expelled in 1767. It is thus interesting to note that Balmes owed his first acquaintance with the world of letters and

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1Ibid., pp. 32-35.
2Ibid., p. 37.
philosophy to the enlightened policies of the eighteenth century monarchs, whom in later years he criticized so severely.\footnote{Ibid., p. 39.}

The library was an attractive place. "Above the marvelous galleries of the Gothic cloister which joined the palace with the cathedral, the bishop prepared two rooms and placed there, on simple shelves, the choice books. Abundant light entered from all sides; the silence was profound, for the rooms were high and thus quite removed from the noises of the city. Moreover, the view from the southern balcony was unique: in the distance were the immense plains and, close by, the lofty Montseny, which Balmes so often contemplated with profound emotion..."\footnote{Ibid.} One can well imagine how deeply a precocious youth such as Balmes was affected by this attractive place of study, particularly since his own home was a poor and humble place. This early experience explains to a great extent the intense fascination which letters and learning had for Balmes throughout his life.

The library was Balmes' real home whenever he was in Vich. He devoted himself to reading systems of logic as well as biographies. He shared with the romantics of his day an intense love of heroes. An early biographer wrote: "He did not care for novels or other types of literature except for biographies, and read with enthusiasm the lives of great men...He felt an indescribable happiness when he
read that the hero had achieved some triumph..."1 Since he was too poor to buy books of his own, he formed the habit of taking notes and meditating long over them, thus forming the habit of concentration which was a help to him in later life.2

Although Balmes' private studies during this period (1825-1826) were rewarding, his formal studies in the first year of theology were of little value. His professors were unable to answer many of his questions and found his presence disturbing, although his conduct was beyond reproach.3 His talent was far superior to that of his classmates, but he was not awarded a scholarship at Vich. Nevertheless, through the influence of the bishop of Vich, he received a small income from certain benefices.4

In 1826, Balmes received, through the influence of the bishop of Corcuera, a scholarship in the College of San Carlos at the University of Cervera. Since the expulsion of the Jesuits, this university had been in a state of decadence. During the constitutional triennium of 1820-1823, Cervera became a battleground for new ideologies. The liberal government enforced the use of textbooks with Jansenist views, and a church history written by a Protestant. In 1822, the liberal Cortes closed the university, but it was opened in 1827 following the royalist reaction. Balmes received the degree of Bachelor of Theology in 1830 after four years of study.5

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1 Ibid., p. 41.
2 Ibid., p. 42.
3 Ibid., pp. 34, 43, 46.
4 Ibid., p. 48.
5 Ibid., pp. 51-53.
Following the July Revolution (1830) in Paris, a wave of radical political doctrine invaded the Spanish universities. The Spanish Prime Minister decided that the universities should be closed. In 1831, private studies were permitted for later examination and credit. Balmes took his fifth and sixth year of theology in this way (1830-1832). In 1832, the universities were reopened. Balmes then returned to Cervera and completed his seventh year of theology. In the same year, he was licensed and presented himself as a candidate for the Chair of Philosophy at Cervera. Although he was admitted to have been the most brilliant of the contestants, he lost. His judges believed that his presence on the faculty would cause problems. They feared that he would be too outspoken in his criticism of the other professors. Balmes was again disappointed in 1833 when he applied for a vacant Canonry. He lost it to a man of more experience.\(^1\)

After his final year of theology (1833-1834), Balmes decided to take Holy Orders. He was ordained in July, 1834. Instead of entering the parish ministry, he returned to the university at the command of his bishop. He enrolled as a student of Canon Law and was invited to teach some classes in theology. At the end of the academic year 1834-35, Balmes left Cervera. Two years later, the university was permanently closed.\(^2\)

In 1833, following the death of Fernando VII, the first

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 72-82.

\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 83-96.
Carlist war began and provided the motives for the violent outbursts of anticlericalism of 1834. In the year of his ordination, the outlook for a young man entering the priesthood was scarcely promising. The parish ministry was now a hazardous and, in some places, dangerous career. The seminaries were very unstable and offered few teaching positions. It seemed for a time that Balmes would be poorly rewarded for his nine years of study.

The years at Cervera had, nevertheless, been years of solid preparation for Balmes' later career as journalist and apologist. Despite the general decadence of the university, there were a few professors of talent and influence in Catalonia. The most influential was Ramón Lázaro de Dou, a man of genuine erudition. He had a keen interest in Spain's social and political problems. Perhaps it was Dou, says Casanovas, who first inspired Balmes to be an orientator of contemporary society. However, the majority of Balmes' teachers were entirely unknown in the world of letters.¹

Balmes did a great deal of private reading during this period. In addition to the regular manuals of Scholastic theology, he mastered the *Summa Theologica* of Aquinas, as well as the Commentaries of Suárez and Bellarmine. For four years, he read little but the *Summa*. He read also the works of Bossuet. Although the library at Cervera was not nearly so good as that of Vich, he had access to some modern philosophical works. He read Pascal, Descartes, Locke, Leibniz, Leid., pp. 97, 98.
Malebranche, Condillac, and a great many historical works. Balmes' reading was chiefly philosophical and historical, but he read popular authors, such as Chateaubriand, and a great deal of the new romantic poetry. He aspired to be a poet himself, but he never achieved any success in this field.¹ An interesting aspect of the intellectual formation of Balmes during this period was summed up in his doctoral address. It was never printed, but an early biographer says it was concerned with "educational reforms, the creation of institutes and normal schools, the need for intensifying the study of mathematics."² He also touched on "other subjects which revealed his progressiveness," and his concern for introducing in Spain "the true principles of modern civilization."³

The period between 1836 and 1841, Balmes called his "hidden years." While the Carlist war waged about him, he dedicated himself to his studies in Vich. Balmes' family belonged to the Carlist party, and perhaps for that reason he failed to get a professorship at the University of Barcelona. It was humiliating for Balmes to depend entirely upon his family for food and clothes. His misery was increased by poor health; he was in the first stage of tuberculosis. His only work during this time was a class in mathematics at the University of Vich.

¹Ibid., pp. 70-73, 88, 101-105.
²Ibid., p. 90.
³Ibid., p. 91.
Although mathematics was only a secondary interest, Balmes taught it with the scientific spirit which was common in his day. In his inaugural address, he spoke the language of the deists: "There is nothing more mathematical than nature itself. The philosophers who called God the great geometrician spoke a profound truth. All that happens before our eyes is subject to physical laws, all calculated with mathematical precision." He defended the study of the sciences and denied that science leads men to irreligion.¹

Throughout this period, Balmes waited patiently for a suitable opening at a larger university or in the field of journalism. But, in the meantime, he applied himself to his private studies at the library of Vich. Balmes' study notebook, covering the period 1838-43, is an interesting document.² According to these notes, Balmes read mostly Church History during these years. He read extensively the works of the Spanish historian, Mariana (1535-1624). Among the eighteenth century historians of the Church, Berault was his favorite. He had frequent recourse to Llorente's History of the Inquisition. Interspersed with his notes on historical works, there are passages from many philosophers of the Enlightenment, such as Montesquieu and Rousseau.

He took copious notes on Bonald, de Maistre and Lamennais.

¹Jaime Balmes, Obras Completas, Madrid, 1948 (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos), VIII, 571. (hereafter, O.C.)
²Summarized in Casanovas, Reliquias Literarias de Balmes, Barcelona, 1910, pp. 263-279.
There are many notes from current periodicals, both Spanish and French, concerned with political and literary developments.

When Balmes entered public life at the age of thirty, he had a solid preparation in traditional theology, acquired largely through his own initiative and a fresh exploration of the sources of Scholasticism. He had a fair acquaintance with contemporary European philosophy and literature. To have accomplished this in decadent seminaries, in the midst of a dynastic war, and in a period of anticlerical violence, is an indication of Balmes' great intellectual curiosity and spirit of perseverance.

In subsequent chapters of the present study, many aspects of the life of Balmes will be discussed in relation to his works. Nevertheless, it is necessary to consider briefly the most important events in his career as journalist, apologist, and philosopher. Prior to 1839, Balmes wrote mainly short literary pieces and poems. When the moderates returned to power in 1838, after the progressive government had persecuted the Church bitterly for nearly four years, Balmes saw the tremendous need for political and religious orientation in Spanish society. Such writers as Chateaubriand, Bonald, and de Maistre had fired his imagination, and he was eager to attempt a new kind of apologetics similar to that of the French apologists. His

1O.c., VIII, 397-778.
purpose was twofold: 1) to demonstrate from a broad cultural point of view the social efficacy of Catholicism. 2) To guide the Spanish nation in acquiring political and social stability. His earliest pamphlets dealt respectively with these themes: Observations concerning the Estates of the Clergy (April, 1840), and Political Considerations concerning the Spanish Situation (July, 1840).

As the religious and political situation grew worse under Espartero in 1840, Balmes and two of his close friends, Joaquín Roca y Cornet and José Ferrer y Subirana, founded a journal called La Civilización. The articles were principally concerned with the two matters treated in Balmes' earlier pamphlets: the defense of the Church as the necessary foundation of society, and the analysis of Spain's social and political problems. The journal was published until August, 1843, and was highly praised in the Catholic journal, L'Univers, of Paris.

Balmes was simultaneously at work on the book which he later considered his masterpiece: Protestantism and Catholicism Compared in their Effects upon European Civilization. This work, too, was dedicated to the first of the two great themes which interested Balmes: religion and society. The

1 O.C., V, 675-745.
2 O.C., VI, 17-93.
3 Balmes' contributions to La Civilización are printed in their entirety in O.C., Vols. V and VI.
4 Casanovas, p. 687.
publication of this work was delayed until 1843, when the first volume of the Spanish edition appeared. In May, 1842, Balmes and his publisher, Taulo, went to Paris and arranged for a French translation, which was undertaken by Alberich Blanche-Raffin, editor of L'Univers, and biographer of Balmes. The first volume of the French translation of El Protestantismo appeared in August of the same year.1

The trip to Paris was Balmes' first long journey. He had seldom been outside of Catalonia, and had not yet visited Madrid. His experiences in Paris made a deep impression on him. He conversed with Chateaubriand, now advanced in years. He met a number of Liberal Catholic apologists: Montalambert, Ozanam, Ravignan, Dupanloup, and the highly popular Lacordaire, whose sermons at Notre Dame were heard by leading French writers and statesmen.2

In July, 1842, while the first volume of the French edition was being prepared, Balmes made a brief trip to London, where he attempted to have his book translated into English and published. There he met a Mr. Gallon, a Roman Catholic convert from Quakerism, and editor of The True Tablet. Mr. Gallon published an article on Balmes as well as one chapter from El Protestantismo, but no English edition appeared until 1849. In London, Balmes made few valuable contacts. He spoke little English and had few letters of introduction. His remarks concerning English Protestantism are brief and

1Casanovas, pp. 358-362, 376.
2Ibid., pp. 362-370.
superficial: the decadence of the Established Church, the doctrinal confusion caused by the "swarming sects" and the open-air conventicles are mentioned in his travel notes. He was deeply stirred by the news of the Roman Catholic Revival in England. He carried away vivid impressions of England's material prosperity, beautiful gardens, and excellent libraries. He was appalled at the number of rare Spanish books which the English had carried off to enrich their own libraries, thus impoverishing those of Spain.  

In October, 1842, after a brief trip to Madrid, Balmes returned to Barcelona. In March, 1843, he began a new fortnightly review called La Sociedad. It was published until September, 1844. Besides the articles of political and social orientation, there were articles on philosophy and theology, including the "Letters to a Sceptic," which were a popular and informal type of apologetics, patterned after those of Ravignan and other French apologists, and entirely new to the Spanish public.  

On February 2, 1844, Balmes wrote to Antonio Brussi, the publisher of his books in Barcelona: "Already you can see the course of events: it looks as though 'big things' are going to happen in 1844. A new weekly will be coming out here in Madrid called The Nation's Thought. You will learn of its


2Balmes' articles are found in O.C., vols. V and VI.

3O.C., V, 245-442.

4El Pensamiento de la Nación (hereafter El Pensamiento).
purpose and orientation in the announcement, and later in the articles themselves. There will be several of us collaborating, all with the same point of view—and not just vague generalities, but a real application of principles to the problems at hand. It is our intention that El Pensamiento should become the real government of the nation.\(^1\)

It was now Balmes' intention to play an active role in Spanish politics. In La Civilización, he had been somewhat limited by the ideas of his collaborators, who gave more space to purely religious subjects than Balmes would have wished.\(^2\) Balmes had written almost all of the material for La Sociedad himself, but he was in some respects subject to the wishes of his financial backer and publisher, Antonio Brussi, who wished to give considerable space to religious articles in order to satisfy the large group of pious Catholic readers.\(^3\) Balmes was to be director and editor of the new weekly, with complete liberty to give it his own orientation. He hoped to intervene in politics principally in two ways. He would attempt to give more timely and detailed criticism of specific political issues than he had done in the earlier journals. Also, he planned to organize a political party based on his own social and religious principles.\(^4\)

\(^{1}\) O.C., I, 715.
\(^{2}\) Casanovas, p. 354.
\(^{3}\) O.C., VI, 3.
\(^{4}\) Casanovas, p. 415.
El Pensamiento was published weekly for a period of three years (February 7, 1844, to December 31, 1846). Its emphasis was distinctly political. There were occasional articles which dealt with political theory, but for the most part, Balmes commented on political events. The main political issues during these three years were the reform of the constitution, the brief and unsuccessful intervention of Balmes' own party in political affairs, and Balmes' campaign for uniting the two dynasties through the marriage of Isabel II and Count Montemolín, son of the pretender, Don Carlos. Balmes' plan for the royal marriage was central to his political strategy. After the announcement (August 28, 1846) of the Queen's intention to marry her cousin, Prince Francis of Bourbon, Duke of Cádiz, rather than the son of Don Carlos, Balmes decided to withdraw from political life. El Pensamiento was suspended at the close of 1846.

Balmes' disillusionment with political activity led him to intensify his study of philosophy. His interest in philosophy was scarcely new. In April, 1845, he had made his second trip to Paris. He remained there for five months studying recent philosophical and theological literature which was not available in Spain. But he surprised the Parisian librarians by taking down from the shelves many dusty tomes of Scholastic theology which were little read in France at that time. Balmes' interest in philosophy was

1 O.C., vols. VI and VII.
2 Casanovas, pp. 462, 495.
apparent in 1843 when he began to publish in La Sociedad his "Letters to a Sceptic." These articles were published as a book in 1846. In 1843, during the bombardment of Barcelona, Balmes wrote a small volume called El Criterio.\footnote{\cite{oc}, III, 541-759.} It was published in May, 1845. This book was a manual of elementary logic and general philosophical orientation. Filosofía Fundamental,\footnote{\cite{oc}, vol. II.} a far more ambitious work than El Criterio, appeared in October, 1846. Its orientation was Scholastic and eclectic. Filosofía Elemental\footnote{\cite{oc}, III, 7-359.} was a simpler and briefer presentation of the same subject matter. It was intended to be a classroom textbook. It appeared in July, 1846.

In 1847, Balmes spent a great deal of his time translating Filosofía Elemental into Latin. Although his health was very poor, he undertook a third trip to Paris in September. He felt the need of being in closer contact, not only with the new currents of thought, but with the important political and social developments of the time.\footnote{Casanovas, p. 525.} Since the suspension of El Pensamiento, Balmes had turned his attention from Spanish politics to those of France, for he knew that Paris was again, as it had been in 1789 and in 1830, the storm center of Europe. There was a recrudescence of the revolutionary spirit, particularly among the working classes, and the throne of Louis Philippe was precarious. Moreover,
Balmes was anxious to learn more of the political reforms of Pius IX, who had ascended to the papal throne in June, 1846. While in Paris, he resolved to leave his Italian journey for a later date and return immediately to Madrid with the purpose of interpreting the policies of the new Pope to the Spanish people.

Balmes' book, *Pius IX*, appeared in December, 1846. The book was by no means an apology for democracy as certain of his contemporaries supposed. In its political aspects, the book was mainly a defense of the new papal policy of making political concessions for the purpose of avoiding revolution. As we shall see in a later chapter, the political ideas expressed by Balmes in *Pius IX* were not wholly inconsistent with his earlier more conservative thought.

Nevertheless, his sudden shift of emphasis laid him open to violent criticism on the part of the Spanish monarchists. To what extent these fierce attacks hastened Balmes' death, it is difficult to say. A number of early biographers believed that such was the case, and Casanovas agrees with them. The question is debatable, for Balmes was suffering from tuberculosis as early as 1836, and in the summer of 1847, he had journeyed to Santander for his health. Whatever the causes of his sudden decline, Balmes decided, in

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1 *C. C.*, VII, 947-1003.
2 Casanovas, p. 534.
February, 1848, that he could no longer continue to write, and he returned to Barcelona. In May, he went to his home in Vich, and died on July 7, 1848, at the age of thirty-eight.

During the eight years of his public life, Balmas left a surprising amount of literature on a wide variety of subjects; only his principal works have been mentioned in this chapter. There was, to be sure, a certain underlying unity in all of his work, for it was guided by one apologetic aim: the defense of the Catholic religion. But his works may be conveniently divided into three types—political, apologetical, and philosophical. In the first, he attempts to orientate Spanish society according to the political and social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. In the second, he defends the Church as a redemptive and civilizing agent in European society; and in the third, he attempts to find a philosophical basis for Catholic theology, particularly with respect to the problem of knowledge. There is a great deal of overlapping. Balmas was by no means an orderly writer, and it is often necessary to trace certain ideas through many different works. The best starting-point for a study of Balmas' works is his political thought; for a great deal of the historical background which it provides is helpful in understanding his apologetics and philosophy.
CHAPTER V

BALMES' POLITICAL THOUGHT

I. BALMES' ANALYSIS OF THE SPANISH CRISIS

There are many ways of studying the political thought of Balmes. A number of writers have attempted to systematize his most important political ideas.\(^1\) There have been a great many essays on central themes such as democracy or monarchy as they are discussed by Balmes.\(^2\) Many writers have attempted to evaluate Balmes' political thought, not only in relation to the thought of his own day, but with reference to subsequent Spanish history and with the purpose of discovering Balmes' relevance to the problems of contemporary Spain.\(^3\) The object of the present study, however, is to explain the formation and development of Balmes' political thought in relation to a major problem which confronted European Catholicism during the Restoration period—

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\(^1\) Cf. José Cortes, Ideario Político de Balmes, Madrid, 1934; Ernesto La Orden, Jaime Balmes, Político, Madrid, 1942.

\(^2\) A bibliography of the principal political studies prior to 1932 is found in Casanovas' Catalan biography (I, xli). Some later studies are listed in Jaime Balmes, Obras Completas (Biblioteca Perenne), Barcelona, 1948, I, ix, "Introducción Política," by Basilio de Rubi. For studies published in 1949-1950, see index of Hispania Sacra, vol. VI, no. 12, 1953.

\(^3\) Cf. José María García Escudero, Política Española y Política de Balmes, Madrid, 1950.
the problem of adapting to new and rapidly changing social and political conditions. The problem, as we have seen in chapter III, had two aspects. The first concerned the Church and State. How was the Church to survive under those governments which had severed their ancient relationships with the Church? Secondly, what doctrinal orientation should the Church offer to societies which were in varying degrees of evolution toward constitutional democracy? Balmes was vitally concerned with both questions.

Balmes was not primarily a political theorist. "The abstract consideration of political forms makes an excellent subject for academic discourses," he said in 1844; "but generalities are of little use" when it comes to solving particular problems of government.¹ Balmes' concern for politics was mainly practical. Throughout his literary career, he believed that the most important moral and religious issues of the day were bound up with political events.² He wrote his first political pamphlet, Consideraciones, while he was deeply absorbed in the writing of El Protestantismo. He was eager to finish it and to put it in the hands of the publisher; but in the meantime, the dark figure of Espartero, Spain's first military dictator, appeared on the horizon. The monarchical tradition of Spain was in peril. Spain had hoped for peace following the Treaty

¹O.C., VI, 622.
²Ibid., p. 13.
of Vergara (1839), but Balmes foresaw another period of fierce struggle among the various political factions, rather than a time of national consolidation.¹

In May, 1840, Balmes put aside the manuscript of El Protestantismo and a month later travelled from Vich to Barcelona to find a publisher for the Consideraciones, in which he tries for the first time to interpret from a Catholic point of view the social and political struggles of revolutionary Spain. Like most political pamphlets, it was written hastily—it is repetitive and poorly organized. In this essay, the often ambiguous and contradictory elements in Balmes' thought are more clearly in evidence than in his later essays. Moreover, Consideraciones is of interest because it contains all of the essential points of his later thought.

"Peace has finally come," he says. "There is an end to the bloodshed." But will there be any real peace for Spain? The past thirty years have been years of calamity. No one can predict a bright future. "The Queen is not yet of age. The constitution is recent (1837). Great and ancient institutions have disappeared or have suffered considerable damage. Government administration is completely disorganized, legislation is in chaos, the deficit is appalling. The Civil War has left in its wake a path of blood and ashes. Uprisings and riots have scattered abroad the germs of immorality and disorder. Spirits are still inflamed, men's consciences are

¹Casanovas, p. 333.
still disturbed. Opinions are in violent opposition, and vested interests are struggling for power."¹ Thirty years of bloodshed and chaos show clearly that Spain is suffering from some serious disorder. Moreover, it is clear that the methods of treating this disorder have not been efficacious, for the situation has grown worse.²

The immediate causes of the present government's instability are apparent: the minority of the Queen, and the dynastic war. Since the death of Fernando (1833), the affairs of the nation have been in the hands of the Queen Regent. The Queen is still only ten years old and cannot direct the affairs of the nation. The legal confusion concerning the Salic Law made civil war inevitable. A dynastic war such as we have had (1833-1839) would sap the foundation of the strongest government.³

But the causes of Spain's disorders are deeper. Spain is proverbially called "the land of paradoxes."⁴ The "strange and unpredictable" aspects of Spanish politics have historical roots. Spain was isolated from the theological and political conflicts of the sixteenth and seventeenth

¹O.C., VI, 19-20.
²Ibid., pp. 30-31.
³O.C., VI, 20-23.
⁴Ibid., p. 29. Balmes refers here, as he does frequently, to what he considered a general European tendency to dismiss Spanish political problems as baffling and inexplicable. Cf. O.C., IV, 697; VI, 146, 386.
centuries. At the beginning of the Bourbon dynasty (1700), Spain came under French influence and felt the impact of French ideas. Nevertheless, Spain's ancient institutions were a "wall of bronze" against the "invasion" of the Enlightenment. But following the French Revolution, no country in Europe could remain isolated from the revolutionary currents.¹

The War of Independence was the proof of the tremendous vigor of Spanish Catholicism. Nevertheless, the Napoleonic invasion brought an avalanche of democratic and atheistic doctrine for which Spain was not prepared. France, too, was Catholic. But civil wars, a period of religious liberty, the Jansenist controversies, and the Enlightenment had prepared the soil gradually for a revolution. "The chief difference between the French Revolution and our own was that France was prepared and Spain was not." The Spanish Revolution came as "a complete surprise." From this encounter of "two irreconcilable enemies" (i.e., Spanish Catholicism and French revolutionary ideas), there came violent repercussions which have lasted for thirty years, causing a deep division in Spanish society and a continuous "circle of reactions."²

But it is the liberals, says Balmes, who are primarily responsible for the prolongation of these chaotic conditions. The grave error of the liberals was not to realize that

¹O.c., VI, 33-35.
²Ibid., pp. 38, 39, 91.
political institutions must rest upon social institutions.\footnote{Ibid., p. 52. This point is emphasized throughout Balmes' political writings.} They have undermined the two bulwarks of Spanish society—the Church and the monarchy. Spain, like the rest of Europe, is still captivated by the monarchical ideal. The prevailing tendency throughout Europe is to cling to or return to the monarchical form of government. The reason for this is obvious. Liberals have given an exaggerated importance to individual liberty. "It is as clear as the light of day that if modern society is seriously in danger, it is not because of a preponderance of hierarchies, but because society has disintegrated through excessive individualism." A strong central power is needed to restore order.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 67, 68, 87.}

The monarchical tradition is particularly strong in Spain. In Spain, royal blood has never been spilled, as in France and England. Monarchy is "rooted in religious ideas which for centuries have not varied. It is strengthened by antiquity, identified with customs, and intimately bound up with our most precious national memories."\footnote{Ibid., pp. 84, 85.}

Having pled the cause of the Spanish monarchy, Balmes is careful to place it on a lower level than the Catholic religion. The Catholic spirit in Spain is even stronger than the monarchical sentiment. Spain has seen different types of monarchies—the benevolent monarchy of the medieval
period, with its special liberties and _fueros_ for the nobility, and the absolutism of the Bourbons. But religion in Spain has never varied. The religious convictions of the Spanish people are vigorous and profound. "In Spain there is not, as in other nations, that vague religiosity, half philosophical and literary, which is nourished by the vague doctrines of Protestantism." Moreover, "the sudden impact of the philosophy of Voltaire...has made our Catholic sentiments more zealous, suspicious, and easily alarmed." Therefore, any government which wishes to be strong in Spain must respect religion. "There can be no compromise in Spain on religious matters; rather, Catholicism must be respected and revered in every sense." This the liberals have failed to do.¹

Whatever government is in power would do well not only to respect the religious unity of the Spanish people, but to take advantage of it in the building of a strong nation. Leaders must appeal to our religious unity in order to heal the wounds of the civil war, and to combat the impiety and immorality which began with the revolution. But above all, whatever government is in power must do one thing for religion—"refrain from destroying it." "Respect the sacredness of the conscience by applying the principle of liberty; respect the rights of the clergy as the rights of other citizens are respected; do not allow...impiety and anti-Catholic doctrine to be taught in the universities; and do

¹Ibid., pp. 72, 73.
not allow the press to pervert or corrupt the nation; and the rest will take care of itself, for the work of God does not need man's weak hand to sustain it." In France, we do not see the anticlericalism of former years. Why must it continue in Spain? "How small, how childish are those men who in this day and age...still sound this discordant note, which is clearly an anachronism."\(^1\)

The party which Balmes clearly regards as the true guardian of the Spanish tradition of a strong monarchy and a strong Church is the defeated Carlist party. Carlism, he says, is "profoundly rooted in national soil...It must be respected and incorporated, with certain modifications, as an element of government."\(^2\) Nevertheless, Balmes is realistic. Neither the Carlists nor any other party can any longer rule Spain, for Spanish society is made up of many and varied elements: "There are to be found here opinions from all schools, men of every country. Spaniards who belong to the time of Carlos II frequently come into contact with partisans of the Franch Convention. And nevertheless, if there is to be a government, indeed if there is to be a nation...all must be brought into harmony. These violent and irreconcilable enemies must somehow be made to live in peace."\(^3\)

But Balmes has few concrete suggestions as to how this reconciliation may be effected. In the first place, he

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\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 78-80, 87, 88.  
\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 46-49.  
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 92.
calls attention to no elements in liberal or moderate political philosophy which deserve to be incorporated into the life of the nation. His attitude toward liberalism is, as we have seen, wholly negative. He likewise rejects the philosophy of the moderates. The doctrinal position of this party was similar to that of the French doctrinaires.\(^1\) They upheld constitutional or limited monarchy and were moderately anti-clerical. Their position in both respects Balmes regards as fundamentally false.\(^2\) He indicates no desire to compromise with liberal or moderate principles of government.

He observes that "all governments need a certain degree of flexibility so that, without losing their true nature, they may adjust to the constant variety which transforms all human institutions."\(^3\) Nevertheless, he insists that the government which Spain needs must be firmly united with the "ideals of the Spanish people" (i.e., Catholicism and monarchy), and must appeal to "the great conservative principles of society."\(^4\) Hence it must be concluded that Balmes does not advocate reconciliation in the profoundest sense. His own philosophy is basically conservative, and he advocates only such concessions to liberalism as expediency requires.

\(^{1}\) Cf. Suarez, p. 103.
\(^{2}\) C.C., VI, 68-71.
\(^{3}\) Ibid., p. 27.
\(^{4}\) Ibid., pp. 80, 92.
II. CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN BALMES’ THOUGHT:
FRENCH AND SPANISH TRADITIONALISM, SCHOLASTICISM

This basically simple political outlook involved Balmes in a number of difficulties. Throughout his political career, he found it necessary to fight on two fronts. On the one hand he defended, according to his convictions, the "purely Spanish monarchy," and combatted those modern liberties (speech and press) which, in the hands of liberal governments were a threat to the Church. At the same time, he could not afford to assume a wholly negative attitude toward these democratic institutions, for they were fast gaining ground in Spanish society. The philosophy of concession which he developed frequently contradicted his conservative opinions and led to considerable ambiguity in his writing.

Balmes was by no means alone in his dilemma. It was the problem of the Church throughout Europe, and, as we have seen in chapters II and III, it was a most difficult problem for the papacy. Gregory XVI, even as he upheld the rights of princes and condemned modern liberties, found it necessary to approve of the use of democratic liberties in Ireland, Belgium and Holland, in order to defend the rights of the Church. The aged Pope, however, did not attempt to play an active and creative role in the revolutionary struggles, but Balmes set himself the task of guiding Spanish society during this period of transition. His views were not entirely original. They reflect many aspects of the numerous attempts
which Catholicism made to come to terms with democracy throughout revolutionary Europe.

There are many elements of French traditionalism in Consideraciones as well as in Balmes' later articles in La Sociedad, La Civilización, and El Pensamiento de la Nación. The continual emphasis upon the need for founding political institutions upon social ones shows traditionalist influence. Like de Maistre and Bonald, he feared that excessive individualism and the decline of the principle of authority would lead to social dissolution. There is a strong traditionalist note in Balmes' reference to "the great conservative principles of society...old as the world, existing before eternity, communicated to society as the breath of life." Finally, like the traditionalists, Balmes upholds monarchy as the ideal form of government.

But Balmes' defense of monarchy is somewhat different from that of the French apologists. The traditionalists' strongest argument for monarchy was that, together with the Church, it would prevent the dissolution of European

1 Professor Flint gives an account of this aspect of traditionalism (p. 375).

2 O.C., VI, 92. See above, pp. 93, 94.

For Balraes, this argument is secondary. He is inclined to extol Christian monarchy for its own sake. He sympathizes strongly with the Carlist concept of the benevolent, paternalistic monarch, and sees in it the solution of Spain's political problems.

Carlism, or Spanish traditionalism, has been defined in the following way: "Traditionalism founds the social and political regime of Spain on the traditional principles of the Catholic religion and pure monarchy, rejecting absolutely the principles of separation of Church and State, popular sovereignty, universal suffrage, and complete liberty. Carlism was the first traditionalism." The earliest Carlist, or traditionalist, document was the Manifesto of the Persians (so called because of an unimportant allusion to the ancient Persians in the first line). It was presented by a group of royalists to Fernando VII upon...

1 Bonald wrote in 1819: "When Europe emerges from this violent crisis, she cannot perish except by wasting away. The day when the atheistic dogma of the sovereignty of the people replaces in politics the sacred dogma of the sovereignty of God; the day when Europe ceases to be Christian and monarchical, she will perish, and the sceptre of the world will pass to other hands." (Menczer, pp. 88, 89.)

2* C., VI, 252.

3 Spanish traditionalism and French traditionalism have little in common except the ardent belief in monarchy. Spanish traditionalism does not share the French traditionalist theories of knowledge and revelation outlined in chapter III. In all further references to traditionalism in this study, the context will make clear which is meant.

his return from exile in 1814 in order to express their profound disagreement with the constitution of 1812. The Manifesto upholds the absolute supremacy of the Catholic religion and has an essentially medieval concept of monarchy.

The scholastic origin of Carlist doctrine is clear:

"The absolute monarchy is a work of reason and intelligence: it is subordinate to the divine law, to justice, and to the fundamental laws of the State...Thus the absolute sovereign has not the right to employ authority without reason (a right which God Himself does not possess)." Nevertheless, the sovereign is subject to no human power. The Cortes are to be consulted by the King "in difficult matters." The Cortes "moderate and temper" royal power, but without coercion or restraint. The rights of the nation, expressed through Cortes, are given "the modest titles of counsels, requests, and supplications."² The King, said the authors

1Texts of Manifesto in Balmes, O.C., VII, 657 ff. Cf. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, I-II, 96, 5, ad 3um: "In the judgment of God, a ruler is not free from the directive power of the law; but should voluntarily and without constraint fulfill it." Also De Regimine Principum, book 1, chapter 12: "Just as the divine control is exercised over all created bodies and over all spiritual powers, so does the control of reason extend over the members of the body and the other faculties of the soul: so, in a certain sense, reason is to man what God is to the universe. But because...man is by nature a social animal living in a community, this similarity with divine rule is found among men, not only in the sense that a man is directed by his reason, but also in fact that a community is ruled by one man's intelligence; for this is essentially the king's duty." (Aquinas: Selected Political Writings, ed. A. P. D'Entrèves, tr. J. G. Dawson, Oxford, 1948, pp. 67, 141.)

²Cf. Summa Theologica, loc. cit.: "A ruler is said to be above the law with respect to its constraining force: for nobody can be constrained by himself; and the law derives its power of constraint only from the power of the ruler." (D'Entrèves, p. 139).
of the Manifesto, is regarded by the people as a father."

"There must be one ruler, for government by many is prejudicial."  

The Carlist monarchical ideal is that which Balmes defended. In May, 1846, during his campaign for uniting the two dynasties, he published in El Pensamiento with favorable comments a number of passages from the Persian Manifesto. But since 1842, he had defended the concept of a paternalistic monarchy, though he did not identify it with Carlism. An absolute monarch in the European Christian tradition, Balmes wrote in 1843, is limited not by law but by morality, customs, and public conscience. "It matters little if this restraint is not actually in evidence so long as it exists." Moreover, a monarch stands "on a higher plane than his subjects. He has nothing to fear; his judge is not among mortals, but in Heaven." When full power is deposited in the hands of a king, the door is closed to passion and ambition, particularly if the monarchy is hereditary. "The power thus loses its evil nature and becomes benevolent."  

Likewise in 1844, when he wrote extensively concerning the reform of the constitution, he employed the language of

1 Cf. De Regimine Principum, book 1, chapter 1: "Kings are sometimes called the fathers of their people." (D'Entreves, p. 9.)

2 Cf. Ibid., book 1, chapter 2: "Now it is clear that that which is itself a unity can more easily produce unity than that which is a plurality...So government by one person is more likely to be successful than government by many." (Ibid., p. 11.)

3 O.C., VI, 257-259.
the Carlists. The King was to be declared sovereign, and the Cortes were to be consulted only "in difficult matters." In the same year, Balmes' party, called the National Monarchists, and headed by the Marquis of Viluma during their three-month period of ascendancy in Cortes, declared their principles. They advocated a "purely Spanish monarchy," and opposed the doctrine of popular sovereignty as it was understood by the liberals.¹

Thus, to a large extent, Balmes shared the general weakness of the traditionalists' plan of restoration. Their ideal of the Catholic monarchy was intimately bound up with a world that no longer existed. The medieval monarchy derived its strength and stability from the general acceptance —by King and people—of a hierarchy of divine and human laws which were considered universally valid. Not even in Spain, isolated as it was from the rest of Europe, could a general respect for ancient law and religion be taken for granted.²

Balmes' political doctrine, like that of the Carlists, was basically scholastic. In his popular articles, however, he avoided scholastic language and arguments. He was aware that scholasticism was in disrepute among the liberal and

¹ O.C., VI, 629, 752, 753.

² In 1840, Théophile Gautier wrote, "Spain is no longer Catholic." (Quoted by Menéndez Pidal, p. 235.) In 1844, Balmes wrote that the revolution had "altered the religious habits of a considerable number of Spaniards." O.C., VI, 439.
moderate politicians whom he hoped to influence. Nevertheless, he devoted a large section of El Protestantismo to an exposition of scholastic political theory.\textsuperscript{1} He expounds the scholastic doctrines of the origin of society (chapter 49); the divine origin of civil power (chapter 50); the limitations of monarchical power (chapters 51, 54, 55, and 56); and the proper use of monarchical power (chapter 53).

Of particular interest is his exposition of scholastic teaching on the limitations of royal power. Many of the scholastics, says Balmes, taught that the ruler receives power not directly from God, but by way of the people. The doctrine is implicit in Aquinas,\textsuperscript{2} and explicit in later scholastics, such as Suárez, Saavedra, and Bellarmine.\textsuperscript{3} The scholastics also taught that men have no absolute obligation to obey tyrannical kings nor unjust laws, and that they are justified in overthrowing unjust governments under certain conditions.\textsuperscript{4}

In El Protestantismo, Balmes wished to prove that the Roman Catholic Church was not on the side of political

\textsuperscript{1}O.C., IV, pp. 500–704.

\textsuperscript{2}Balmes refers to the Summa Theologica, I-II, 90, 3: "But the power of compulsion belongs either to the community as a whole, or to its official representative..." (D'Entrèves, p. 113.)

\textsuperscript{3}O.C., IV, 520. Balmes refers to Bellarmine, De Laicis, I, 3, 6. With regard to civil power, Bellarmine says: "Quinta nota, ex dictis sequi, hanc potestatem in particulari esse quidem a Deo, sed mediante consilio et electione humana."

\textsuperscript{4}O.C., IV, pp. 559 ff., 591 ff., 611 ff.
tyranny during the Middle Ages, and for that reason he emphasizes the most democratic aspects of scholastic political theory. But Balmes was well aware that medieval contractualism had little in common with modern constitutionalism based on the doctrine of popular sovereignty. The scholastics did not regard the King as responsible to the people in the practical exercise of his authority, even though theoretically this authority was in some way dependent upon the people. Moreover, says Balmes, even though civil power resides with the people, it originates with God.¹

For Balmes, as for the medieval and Renaissance scholastics, this doctrine was basic. The community might be regarded as the source of law and authority so long as the divine origin of all authority were acknowledged. For it was assumed that a people which acknowledged the divine origin of its power would also recognize the divine origin of the Church's power. Nevertheless, as Balmes points out, Rousseau regarded the divine origin of civil power as irrelevant, and his followers often denied it.²

Scholastic doctrine, says Balmes, must not be put to subversive use, as Lamennais did in Affaires de Rome, drawing parallels between the doctrines of St. Thomas and modern

¹C.C., IV, 519.

political writers. In studying the scholastics one might at first be led to believe "that their language was excessively democratic." But "after examining their entire system, it is obvious that they harbored no subversive designs... nor anarchical theories." The chief purpose of the scholastic teaching on the indirect or mediate communication of power, says Balmes, was to make clear the difference between ecclesiastical authority (which is received directly from God), and civil authority (which is received by way of the people). Even today this is the best application of the doctrine even though at the same time "it serves to remind civil authorities that government depends in some way upon society." Thus, Balmes is conservative in his application of scholastic political doctrine. He would scarcely countenance the exercise of civil authority by the people in order to limit the power of the monarch.¹

III. BALMES AND LIBERAL CATHOLICISM

Until the writing of Pius IX in 1847, Balmes continued to defend his ideal of absolute monarchy in the three journals for which he was responsible. But at the same time (1843-1846), and in the pages of the same journals, Balmes made reluctant concessions to liberalism. This he did, not because he believed in the possibility of compromise (for he

¹Ibid., pp. 614, 556-559.
emphatically rejected the moderate ideal of a limited or constitutional monarchy), but because, as we have previously noted, he believed that the Spanish Church must be prepared for adjusting to those democratic institutions which seemed likely to triumph in Spanish society.

In 1844, Balmes reluctantly admitted that the pure monarchy was no longer possible in Spain. He wrote: "Even though some extraordinary circumstances should place the crown upon the head of Don Carlos," it would be useless to attempt a restoration of absolutism in Spain. "Absolute monarchy does not exist, nor has it existed anywhere, without a number of other institutions to support and defend it. In Spain, all of these institutions have disappeared; the nobility have no influence; the clergy have no political influence; there are no consejos."¹ Such an admission was rare for Balmes, but clearly indicates his basic political realism.²

As early as 1840, Balmes had seen the need of utilizing modern liberties in advancing the cause of religion and monarchy. In Consideraciones, he lamented the civic indifference of the Spanish Catholics and urged them to make use of the "representative institutions which now prevail" in order to make their cause triumph. He commands the Irish Nationalists for having done so. Again in 1844, he wrote:

¹Consejos were the ancient bodies of royal counsellors, whose powers were largely advisory. They were gradually replaced by ministries in the constitutional period.

²C., VI, 625.
"Is there freedom of the Press? Very well, take advantage of it for defending the sacredness and justice of the cause of religion... Are there elections? In that case, go to the urns... Enter every arena where the fighting is going on: employ all legal weapons, even when they have been forged by our enemies."

It may be observed in the foregoing passage that Balmes expresses no approval in principle of freedom of the press or modern constitutional government. He merely urges their use. His position in this regard is essentially that of the French Liberal Catholics after 1834: "Catholicisme libéral modéré." They too advocated the use of the modern liberties (religion, speech, and press) which had been condemned by the papacy in principle, but which might legitimately be employed in the defense of religion.

After the failure of his plan for the royal marriage (August, 1846), Balmes abandoned the hope of a true monarchical restoration in Spain. He saw that the future of the Spanish Church depended largely upon its ability to employ democratic methods in its own defense. This turning-point in Balmes' political career nearly coincided with the election of Pope Pius IX in June, 1846. A month later, the new Pope granted amnesty to political exiles, making it clear that he intended to abandon to some extent the conservative policies of his predecessor. This marked

1 Ibid., 63, 75-77, 484.
change in papal policy had great influence on Balmés' own political thinking.

Balmés had always been a staunch defender of the papacy, although he was more moderate in this respect than the French ultramontanes of de Maistre's school. He lavished no high praise upon Gregory XVI, but he regarded his policies as sound and prudent. He was cautious in his appraisal of the new Pope. He published without comment the news of Pius IX's early administrative and educational reforms. When Balmés retired from public life at the end of 1846, the Pope was well established as a liberal monarch. In the last issue of El Pensamiento, Balmés had intended to publish his views on the new Pope. His friends urged him to express some opinion, but he told them that the time had not yet come for such a statement.

On May 29, 1847, Monsignor Antonio Brunelli, the new papal delegate, arrived in Spain, after seven years of ruptured relations between Spain and Rome. Brunelli sought out Balmés and relied upon him heavily in solving the problems of the Spanish Church, which had consecrated no new bishops since 1840. Through this friendship, Balmés no doubt received first-hand information about the activities of the new Pope. Although Balmés kept the matter secret, it is possible that during this time Brunelli suggested to Balmés

1O.C., VII, 722.
2Casanovas, p. 527.
the writing of his pamphlet, Pius IX. The Spanish Catholics were strongly prejudiced against the "liberal" Pope. They feared that he would make concessions to the Spanish liberals in the matter of church estates, and therefore they had received Monsignor Brunelli very coldly. He was naturally anxious to find someone who might defend the policies of Pius IX.\(^1\)

Balmes still remained silent on the question of the papacy, but in September planned a trip to Paris and Rome. He wished to study the latest political developments, but he was also anxious to learn world opinion concerning the new Pope, though he said nothing of this at the time.\(^2\)

"Paris is France, and France is Europe" he once remarked.\(^3\) There was no better place for him to gather the information that he needed in order to form his own opinion concerning the papacy. He cancelled his trip to Italy and returned to Madrid in November. He immediately commenced to write his impressions of the papacy. He wrote to a friend, García de los Santos, that he had nothing important planned, but that "in my spare time I scribble a few things on paper to pass the time of day."\(^4\) He wished to keep his project secret, for it involved an important change in his outlook on political matters. He wished to give a thorough

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\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 520-530.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 526.
\(^3\)O.C., VII, 1032.
\(^4\)O.C., I, 841.
and complete, rather than fragmentary, account of the reasons for that change.

In December, 1847, his essay, *Pius IX*, appeared in Madrid. "The pontificate of Pius IX," Balmes began, "has put the world in a state of expectancy." "Few world events have ever attracted such lively attention" as the activities of the new Pope. Indeed, we must confess that "in this spectacle there is something so new that we are left in amazement." "All that is ancient seems to be crumbling and falling." A new world advances towards us, and we are impelled to ask, what does it mean? Although the change in Rome has appeared drastic, says Balmes, we must attempt to understand it. What is it that the new Pope proposes to do? "To concede to the times what is just and proper, and to refuse to do what is unjust and harmful. To improve the conditions of the people without promoting anarchy. To prevent revolution by means of reform...To establish a political and administrative order which can stand on its own feet without the help of foreign bayonets...To develop a public spirit in the papal states...and guarantee the future of the temporal power of the papacy."¹

Balmes attempts to show the wisdom and expediency of the papal reforms. The reforms of the religious orders should surprise no one, says Balmes. "Christianity itself was a kind of great reformation, for it produced a profound change

¹O.C., VII, 936, 949-950.
in ideas, customs, institutions—in society and in individuals—changing completely the face of the earth. The Church, too, has always been a reformer..." Balmes likewise approves of the Pope's policy of favoring Italian unity, and his policy of maintaining independence from foreign powers, particularly Austria. The papal amnesty is defended, and the formation of the civil guard and the granting of a constitution are shown to be prudent and necessary measures, with sufficient safeguards for the sovereignty of the Pope. Balmes' general argument is simply that such reforms were necessary in order to avoid worse catastrophes. "If you wish to avoid revolution, promote evolution."¹

He condemns the policy of absolute resistance to social change: "Absolute resistance to every idea of liberty can possibly be defended in theory as the only way of salvation for the nations; but it so happens that this theory is contradicted by the facts. To insist that the Austrian or Russian system of government is the only hope of society is to disinherit the human race; for the world is not going the way of Metternich and Nicholas." He goes on to say that all of America and the majority of the European countries have adopted some form of constitutionalism. "Let us respect the past," he says, "but let us not think that we can restore it." Moreover, it is absurd to "curse the

¹Ibid., pp. 960, 969, 981-997.
present and the future; for those things which are now growing old, was there not a time when they too were new?"1

These and similar arguments are a forceful repetition of Balmes' older idea, usually expressed with caution, that social change is inevitable. To be sure, there is nothing in Pius IX to indicate a forthright approval of democratic institutions. Balmes accepts them because they are now definitely established in most countries of Europe and America. Catholicism can adjust to this new situation: "The Catholic religion can place a cross above the place of the Cæsars, and also above the popular assemblies." But as to the inherent value of democratic institutions, he does not commit himself. He maintains, rather, an attitude of political relativism. Catholicism must not "link itself inseparably with any form of government; for governments grow old and disappear. They are changed like a suit of clothes, according to the times and countries...So far as political forms are concerned, there is nothing that is essential to religion: they all offer to religion advantages and disadvantages."

There is, however, a new element in Balmes' plea for political realism. He now appeals not merely to reasonableness and expediency, but to certain irresistible forces of history: "The world is on the march; he who halts will be trodden underfoot, and the world will continue in its


march." "There is something in the course of events which can no longer be contained in tiny molds...There is something in the enigmas of the future which cannot be locked up in diplomatic portfolios." "Why is it that so many countries, so many powerful interests have been unable to resist the invasion of the modern spirit?...When so many are carried away, the current must be very strong." These and similar passages show the influence of the current ideas of historical development.¹

A most striking aspect of Balmas' changed outlook is his interpretation of the Church's role in society. Chapter nine of Pius IX is dedicated to the defense of the thesis that the Church must not cling to outmoded forms of government and that democracy is not necessarily hostile to Catholicism. While the idea is not entirely new in Balmas' thought, he applies it in a very pointed way. He mentions the folly of having hoped for a real restoration of church privileges at the Congress of Vienna. There is an implicit criticism of Gregory XVI's continued dependence on the Holy Alliance. The new Pope, he says, "no longer deals with the Europe of the Holy Alliance, but with the Europe of the July Revolution." "The new Pope wonders...if it would not be wiser to prepare for the future; and as he seeks to direct the spirit of the age, a new policy has emerged."²

¹Ibid., pp. 972, 977, 978. See below, chapter VI.
²O.C., VII, 998, 999.
The task of the Church is clear: "Christianity, in addition to offering men eternal salvation, saved the world from complete ruin; only Christianity can save it a second time..." Neither kings nor demagogues can redeem society, but only "the union of religion and the spirit of progress." "Repressive measures must not be counted on too strongly... ideas must be combatted with ideas..." "The civic spirit of the enemy must be combatted with our own civic spirit." The Church does not fear the spirit of the times, for there is nothing in Catholicism that opposes "material progress, the development of the intelligence and the exercise of political liberty." "Among the human institutions which crumble and decay, do not include the Catholic religion."  

IV. AN EVALUATION OF BALMES' POLITICAL THOUGHT

"Pius IX fell like a bombshell into the Catholic camp," says Casanovas. 3 A large number of the clergy turned against him and accused him of seeking a Cardinal's hat in exchange for his defense of the Pope. Balmes was firmly convinced that his new outlook involved no radical change, nor any renunciation of his former views. He never took up the pen to defend himself against the bitter attacks of his enemies for he believed that it was useless. As he lay dying of

1Balmes does not express approval of political liberty; the Church, he says, is not opposed to "the exercise of political liberty."

2Ibid., pp. 977, 980, 1000.

3Ibid., p. 948.
consumption in Vich, he said again and again, "My Pius IX has not been understood."

While Pius IX is a clear affirmation of the moderate Liberal Catholicism which had always been present in Balmes' thought, it must be observed that there is no indication of his having abandoned his preference for monarchical government. Nor is there any indication that he approves of democratic institutions in principle. The failure of the monarchical restoration in Spain and the liberalism of the papacy inclined Balmes more strongly toward the philosophy of concession. But it is quite likely that, if Balmes had lived to see the Revolution of 1848 and the Pope's return to conservatism, he too would have decided that it was still too early to make concessions to liberalism.

This tension between conservative and liberal elements in Balmes' thought has been misunderstood and misinterpreted by a large number of writers, mainly because they fail to relate his thought to the larger problem of the Church's adjustment to changing political conditions. Sr. Basilio de Rubí grants that Balmes' political thought is "eclectic", but offers no explanation for his "dialectic" of liberalism and conservatism. The exaggerated liberalism of Pius IX, he says, was aimed at creating a "theatrical effect" which satisfied a certain "temperamental need" of Balmes. Likewise, Sr. Roure explains these "variations" in doctrine as the

1Casanovas, pp. 530-537.
2Basilio de Rubí, pp. xxvii, xxx, xlvi.
result of a kind of emotional fluctuation which is typically Spanish.1

Like many of Balmes' contemporaries, Vicente de la Fuente rightly regarded Balmes as a monarchist, but thought that his liberalism was merely a question of political tactics. Balmes, he believed, urged the monarchists "to concede a bit politically in order to gain something in religious matters." This compromise was "an honorable transaction."2 Likewise, a modern writer considers Balmes "a traditionalist thinker...whose political tactics differed from those usually employed by our traditionalists." He regards Pius IX as an error in Balmes' political judgment: there was too much in it in the way of concession and not enough of repression.3 Such writers fail to see that Balmes did not regard these concessions as temporary political measures, but as an attempt to adapt Catholicism to changing social conditions.

On the other hand, a number of commentators have asserted,4 and a great many more have assumed, that Balmes achieved an effective synthesis of liberal and conservative political views. Blanche-Raffin, who, among the early biographers, held the most moderate political views, attempts to give this impression, and in order to do so, he ignores the most conservative elements in Balmes' thought. He says nothing,

1Narciso Roure, La Vida y Obras de Balmes, Madrid, 1910, p. 252.
2De la Fuente, VI, 242.
3García Escudero, p. 127.
for example, of Balmes' emphatic rejection of the French doctrinaire maxim: "The King reigns but does not govern."¹

Later writers, principally Menéndez y Pelayo and José Corts, assume that Balmes reached some middle ground between moderate liberalism and traditionalism. But in order to create this impression, they imply that Balmes was never wholly or sincerely dedicated to the cause of a pure monarchy.

"Whoever calls Balmes an absolutist is mistaken," says Menéndez y Pelayo.² Sr. Corts says that Balmes' belief in monarchy was not so passionate as that of the French apologists.³ But Balmes was indeed devoted to the cause of absolutism so long as he believed that there was a possibility of a Carlist restoration.

Similarly, Ramón Menéndez Pidal contrasts Balmes with "right-wing traditionalists," and emphasizes Balmes' liberal ideas. He calls attention to an article in which Balmes advocates coming to terms with "the New Spain."⁴ But he fails to mention that, in the same article, Balmes shows a thorough repugnance for "the New Spain with its incredulity and indifference...its modern ideas which oppose our traditions...its imported customs...its love of pleasure...its strong tendency to wipe out the last vestiges of all that is truly


⁴ Menéndez Pidal, p. 236; Balmes, VII, 207.
Spanish." His chief argument for coming to terms with the New Spain was political expediency.

Thus it can scarcely be said that Balmes effected a true reconciliation or synthesis of conservatism and liberalism, for he failed to discover any positive values in liberalism. It must be remembered, however, that in his time—and indeed, throughout the nineteenth century—even the most advanced Roman Catholic thinkers did not dare to express forthright and unqualified approval of democratic liberties. Following the renewed condemnation of these liberties in the Syllabus of Errors (1864), Dupanloup made explicit the theory which had long been common among Liberal Catholics. In principle (thesis), he said, modern liberties are undesirable, but in the present circumstances (as hypothesis) they may be tolerated as the lesser of two evils. It was not until Leo XIII's encyclical Immortale Dei (1885) that this view was officially adopted by the papacy. Thus Balmes may be regarded as an advanced Roman Catholic thinker for the time and place in which he lived.

Moreover, despite their often ambiguous and provisional character, Balmes' political writings were filled with a conciliatory spirit which had a salutary effect upon Spanish society in his time. It is true that many regarded his attitude with suspicion. A liberal journal once referred to him

1 Ibid., p. 209.
2 Hocedez, II, 166.
as "timidly Carlist with a bit of liberal varnish." Many extreme conservatives distrusted him and called him "the Spanish Lamennais." Yet his writings were read avidly even by the most prominent liberals. As a journalist, Balmes stood in sharp contrast to the violent apologists of the old school such as Francisco Alvarado. El Pensamiento was entirely free of the bitter invective which filled the pages of such newspapers as El Catolico.

In his commentary on Spanish politics and religion, Balmes pointed to important historical and philosophical issues. His accurate exposition of scholastic political doctrine, which in his time "neither absolutists nor liberals were willing to understand," was a genuine contribution to Spanish political thought in the 1840's. In his prolix commentary on European political developments from 1840 to 1848, he often pointed to significant moral issues. He awakened the Spanish Church to the social implications of religion more than any Spanish thinker before him, and perhaps more than any since his time.

Between 1840 and 1846, Balmes achieved wide popularity as a journalist. There can be no doubt of the practical success of his writings. In 1847, Balmes printed in one

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1. O.C., VI, 758.
2. Casanovas, p. 482.
4. O.C., VI, 758.
5. Menendez y Pelayo, Dos Palabras sobre el Centenario de Jaime Balmes, Vich, 1910, p. 16.
volume a selection of his political essays. A large first edition sold out immediately and many others followed. His journals were read not only in Spain but in Paris and Rome as well. In 1845, the future Cardinal Wiseman wrote to Balmes asking for a complete file of *El Pensamiento*. Leo XIII called *El Pensamiento* "an inexhaustible treasure of true wisdom."²

Balmes' political writings were read in Spain and Latin America throughout the nineteenth century, and are still read today because of their doctrinal, historical, and apologetical interest. The value of Balmes' political doctrine has long been debated among Spanish writers. Even among his staunchest supporters there are many who regard his political writings as inferior to his apologetics and philosophy. Sr. Salcedo Ruiz, for example, regards Balmes' political thought as somewhat sophistical.³ Others have regarded him as impractical and immature in his political thought.⁴ On the other hand, Menéndez y Pelayo believes that Balmes left Spain "a body of Spanish and Catholic political doctrine, material for inexhaustible study."⁵

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¹O.C., I, 866 (letter from Wiseman to Balmes).
²García Escudero, p. 126.
⁴Basilio de Rubí gives an account of some of these criticisms, pp. xxiii-xxiv.
⁵Menéndez y Pelayo, *Estudios y Discur...s*, v, 222.
While it may be granted that Balmes made a significant contribution to the political thought of his day, it can scarcely be said that his political doctrine, as such, has any great and lasting value. The present-day value of Balmes' "liberal" thought is very slight; it is simply the admission of the need for making concessions to liberalism. His ideas in this respect have little positive content. His conservative thought is still found highly useful by those who seek a variety of arguments for authoritarian regimes, and it is chiefly in this way that Balmes' thought is used in Spain today. Many of the most recent treatises on Balmes' political thought are little more than apologies for the present Spanish dictatorship. Sr. Corts, for example, clearly relates Balmes' thought to the ideals and program of the Falange.\footnote{José Corts Grau, "Balma, Político," in Balmes: Filósofo, Social, Apologista y Político, by Juan Zaragüeta et al., Madrid, 1945, pp. 447, 448.} Sr. García Escudero recognizes that his book (the winner of the Francisco Franco Prize in Journalism, 1943) has a strong political bias, but believes that no Spaniard could study Balmes in any other way.\footnote{García Escudero, pp. 180, 181.} The author is right in this respect, for the great majority of the religious and political problems which Balmes treated are still living issues in Spain today.

Even though the doctrinal content of Balmes' political writings be regarded as slight, the historical value of his writings must be readily granted. They are, says Sr. Roure,
"a most luminous exposition, a most lively commentary on modern Spain."\(^1\) Indeed, it would be difficult to find a more lucid, penetrating commentary on the religious and political struggles of a period which is generally considered the most chaotic in Spanish history. It is perhaps for that reason that an unorthodox thinker such as Miguel de Unamuno, who had little regard for Balmes as a philosopher, nevertheless considered him "an excellent journalist."\(^2\)

Finally, in addition to the doctrinal and historical interest of his political writings, the apologetic element in them adds to their value for present-day Roman Catholic readers. But Balmes' new defense of the Church, which is frequently found in the pages of his journals, is more fully developed in other larger works, which are the subject of the following chapter.

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\(^1\)Roure, p. 197.

CHAPTER VI
APoloGETICS

I. THE BACKGROUND OF EL PROTESTANTISMO

Balmes wrote little apologetics of a distinctly theological nature. *La Religión Demostrada al Alcance de los Niños* is a children's commentary on the catechism. The chapter on Natural Religion in *Filosofía Elemental* contains the traditional proofs of the existence of God and a refutation of pantheism. A number of articles, such as that entitled, "A Strange Kind of Christianity," contain criticisms of the new Christian Naturalism which had begun to flourish in Germany under the influence of Schleiermacher and Strauss, and which was known in France through the writings of Cousin, Jouffroy and Quinet. These criticisms are of a very general nature. The Spanish public, as Balmes realized, had little interest in the new scientific approach to Biblical and theological studies.

He gives some attention to the defense of such Catholic doctrines and institutions as purgatory, the veneration of saints, and others which were regarded as superstitious by the eighteenth century rationalists. These articles, together with miscellaneous apologetic pieces, make up the

1 O.C., v, 5-43.  
2 O.C., III, 378-404.  
3 O.C., v, 141.
bulk of "Letters to a Sceptic." In them, Balmes imitates the style of the popular French apologists, Dupanloup, Lacordaire, and Ravignan, all of whom he greatly admired.¹ Before advancing his arguments, he attempts to win the sympathy of the reader.

Balmes did not excel, however, as a defender of Christian doctrine. His greatest gifts as an apologist are displayed in his defense of the rights of the Church. Balmes defended the material interests of the Church with a host of practical and legal arguments.² He attacked the belated Jansenists such as Félix Amat, who favored independence from Rome, and unwittingly delivered the Church into the hands of the anticlericals.³ He advanced numerous canonical and historical arguments, among them the argument that the Spanish Church had recognized papal supremacy since the third century.⁴ Nevertheless, in the prologue to Observaciones Concerning the Estates of the Clergy,⁵ he says that it is necessary to abandon the traditional arguments based on canon law, and, as the French ultramontanes had done, consider the larger question of the Church’s role in society. It was in this type of apologetics that Balmes excelled.

Observaciones was written during the moderate ministry

¹Cf. O.C., V, 829, 840.
²O.C., VI, 787 ff., 1007 ff.
³See above, chapter III.
⁴O.C., V, 71 ff., 179 ff.
⁵Ibid., p. 675 ff.
of Pérez Castro (1839), when the Cortes were considering the possibility of re-endowing the Church following a period of seven years during which much of the property of the Church had been confiscated. Balmes' timely pamphlet won the approval of the moderate politicians. Those among them who were men of letters were amazed at the vast erudition of this unknown curate.\(^1\) They were not aware that Observaciones was based upon a much more ambitious work, as yet unpublished. This was El Protestantismo, which was ready for publishing in 1840, although the printing of the two editions, Spanish and French, did not begin until 1842 and was not completed until 1844. The arguments contained in Observaciones are all developed more fully in this larger work.

Like Observaciones, El Protestantismo was an answer to the urgent need of defending the Church and its property from a hostile government. To be sure, Balmes does not mention this highly practical motive for writing the book, for he wishes to place his arguments upon as lofty a philosophical plane as possible. He does, however, refer to another practical reason for writing El Protestantismo—his fear of Protestant propaganda in Spain.\(^2\) A number of critics have mistakenly believed that this was an important reason, or perhaps the principal one, for writing the

\(^1\)Ibid.

\(^2\)O.c., IV, 767.
It is true that British Methodists, as well as the Bible Society, were active on the Peninsula during the anticlerical decade (1834-1843). Nevertheless, Balmes was apparently unacquainted with the principle agents of both groups, William Rule and George Borrow, and gives no evidence of interest in the details of Protestant activity in Spain. This motive appears to have occurred to Balmes as an afterthought, since he does not state it specifically until the last chapter of the book.

Whatever his practical motives may have been, there is no doubt that El Protestantismo grew out of a genuine interest in the problem of religion and civilization. In the prologue, he notes with satisfaction the new philosophical approach to history, and particularly the growing interest in religion as a factor in the development of society. There were, nevertheless, many errors to be combatted in this regard, said Balmes. Thus, just as Bellarmine and Bossuet had defended the Church, "according to the needs of their times," the Church must now be defended by an appeal to history. Although a great many of the errors which

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1Cf. Hocedez, II, 191; also the translator's preface to an early English translation: Protestantism and Catholicity compared in their Effects on the Civilizatıon of Europe, tr. from the French version by C. J. Hanford and R. Ker- 

2O.C., IV, 13.

3Ibid., p. 14.
Balmes undertook to refute were common to the historians of his time, he chose as his adversary, the French statesman and historian, Guizot.

Guizot is frequently regarded as the most influential French historian of the first half of the nineteenth century.¹ He had achieved great popularity in Spain at the time that Balmes wrote.² Although his writing lacked the beauty of style and the richness of detail which characterized the work of such romantic historians as Michelet, Guizot nevertheless typified some of the best tendencies of his time with respect to historical writing. He observed scrupulous honesty in the use of documents, and originality in the selection of source materials. Above all, he typified the new tendency to interpret history philosophically, i.e., to explain it according to broad general principles and to analyze the forces at work in society. Balmes admired and imitated these aspects of Guizot's work.

Nevertheless, he criticized Guizot on many minor points and two major ones. Guizot regarded the Reformation as a step forward in the history of mankind. Moreover, he believed that the progress of Western society

¹Cf. Flint, p. 354: "A new era in the philosophical study of history was initiated by Guizot."

²Cf. Menéndez y Pelayo, Dos Palabras, p. 14: "The first course of the History of Civilization of Guizot...was at one time the Koran of our publicists and statesmen."
during the Middle Ages was due to many forces rather than one, although he regarded the Christian Church as a great civilizing power. The first of these concepts was the more obnoxious to Balmes, and that which, according to his own testimony, challenged him to write El Protestantismo.¹

If it had not been for Guizot's great popularity in Spain, Balmes perhaps would not have singled him out as his opponent, for Guizot's view of the Reformation as progress was held by the great majority of the nineteenth century historians, regardless of their religious beliefs. The eighteenth century view of the Reformation had been somewhat ambiguous. The rationalists had commended in the Reformation all that tended to combat medieval superstition. Yet many, such as Voltaire and Hume, regarded the Reformation somewhat cynically; they saw it as a time of plundering of church lands and of bitter sectarian squabbles. It was not until the nineteenth century that the Reformation was clearly identified with human progress. "The principle of the Reformation was essentially active and progressive," wrote Michelet.² There was, to be sure, a violent reaction on the part of the orthodox Roman Catholic historians, but none of these were writers of the first rank.

What concerned Balmes most deeply, however, was the corresponding belief that Spain's backwardness was due to

¹O.C., IV, 767.
her rejection of the Reformation. This idea was widespread even though, at the same time, Spain was becoming "a land of legend and fantasy" subjected to "the melancholy gaze of the romantics of the world."¹ Writing in 1840, Macaulay expressed a common British opinion of his time: "Our firm belief is, that the North owes its great civilization and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the Protestant Reformation; and that the decay of the Southern countries of Europe is to be ascribed mainly to the great Catholic revival [i.e., the Counter Reformation]."² The French attitude toward Spain was similar. In his famous article on Spain in the Encyclopédie Méthodique of 1782, Masson had asked, "In ten centuries, what has Spain done for Europe?"³ In 1829, Guizot wrote, "Le caractère fondamental de la civilisation, le progrès...semble refusé en Espagne, tant à l'esprit humain qu'à la société... Ce peuple a été isolé en Europe; il en a peu reçu et lui a peu donné."⁴ Moreover, beginning in the eighteenth century, there was within Spain itself a strong tendency to attribute Spanish decadence to the "pernicious influence of Catholicism."⁵ As we have seen in chapter III, this attitude was

¹Pedro Sáinz y Rodríguez, La Evolución de las Ideas sobre la Decadencia Española, Madrid, 1925, p. 72.
²Macaulay, pp. 252, 253.
³Cited by Sáinz y Rodríguez, p. 62.
⁵Sáinz y Rodríguez, p. 57 ff.
common among the liberals of Cádiz, and continued throughout the nineteenth century. It was this popular concept of Catholicism and culture which Balmes proposed to combat in *El Protestantismo*.

Guizot's second major error—that the civilizing of the West had depended upon many factors other than Christianity—likewise greatly concerned Balmes. But in this respect, Balmes was singularly unfortunate in his choice of an adversary, for Guizot was even more generous—and far more accurate and realistic—in his appraisal of the influence of medieval church than the romantic historians. Although he was critical of the political activities of the medieval church, he said that it was "a great and salutary influence upon the intellectual and moral development" of European civilization.¹

Guizot distinguished between Christianity as a religion and the Church as an institution, but generally regarded the latter as the true guardian of the former, at least until the thirteenth century. He did not agree with the French eclectics who regarded Christianity merely as a spiritual ideal or a philosophical system wholly independent of the Church.² Nor did he sympathize with such tendentious writers as Quinet, who, in their hatred of political Catholicism, made an absolute distinction between the historical


²Cf. Guizot, p. 91.
influence of Roman Church and that of the Christian religion.  

Finally, as a devout Protestant, Guizot believed not only in the social efficacy of religion, but in the guidance of Divine Providence in history.  

He held, moreover, that "two elements of civilization—the social and moral developments—are intimately connected."  

Thus, Balmes might have been expected to regard Guizot as a wholesome influence upon the belated Voltairianism of the Spanish liberals. But Balmes rarely acknowledged the values of Guizot's historical work, for he was bent upon proving his own theses, and thus drew undue attention to those points on which he disagreed with the French historian.

II. RELIGION AND SOCIETY

In *El Protestantismo*, Balmes sets himself the task of demonstrating that the progress of European civilization during the Middle Ages was entirely the work of the Church; that the Reformation interrupted this progress, turned European civilization from its true course, and prevented Western society from fulfilling its historical destiny as Christianizer of the world. It was his plan to compare Catholicism and Protestantism with regard to their religious,

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2Guizot, pp. 42, 59.

3Ibid., p. 32.
social, and intellectual influence.

But before undertaking the first comparison, Balmes attempts to give a general description of Protestantism. It is significant that he is, from the outset, unable to define Protestantism clearly. He does not call it a religious movement, or a school of thought; it is simply "a fact which is bound up with the principal events of modern history." In describing Protestantism's advance throughout Europe, Balmes ascribes to it a kind of consciously purposeful activity. It made use of the new spirit of critical investigation to propagate its doctrines; it created new and powerful political interests. It employed strategem and force to further its ends. It sought guarantees for its own economic and political stability.

Having described Protestantism as a kind of movement with a clearly defined strategy, Balmes says, somewhat inconsistently, that it has no positive "constituting principle." "It is a formless conglomeration of innumerable sects." It is purely negative; it has no "principle of life," but rather one of dissolution. Protestants have but

\[\text{1O.C., IV, 14.}\]
\[\text{2Ibid., p. 15.}\]
\[\text{3Ibid., p. 16.}\]
\[\text{4Here Balmes goes a step further thanBossuet, who recognized the principal types of Protestantism, even though he described them in terms of their "variations, subtleties, equivocations, and artifices." Cf. preface to his History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches, tr. from the French, New York, 1829, p. 3.}\]
one thing in common—rebellion against legitimate religious authority in the name of private judgment.\textsuperscript{1} Balmes thus describes Protestantism as a movement which was powerful enough to distort the course of history, and yet so weak, negative, and amorphous that it was unable to produce positive moral or social values.

Balmes offers an exceedingly simple explanation of the causes of the Protestant Reformation. Abuses in the Church and the neglect of religious reform were not, as Bossuet said,\textsuperscript{2} a principal cause of the revolt; these were merely a pretext for it.\textsuperscript{3} The religious revolution of the sixteenth century was the natural outcome of heresy, and to that extent "a simple repetition of what had happened in every century." Yet this heresy assumed the alarming proportions of a social conflagration because of "the peculiar characteristics of the age in which it arose." It was a time of social upheaval, literary awakening and "lively communication" among the peoples of Europe. In such an age, revolution was inevitable.\textsuperscript{4}

Balmes concludes this brief general description of Protestantism by refuting Guizot, who held that the Reformation was primarily "a great undertaking for the enfranchisement of human thought, and...a rebellion of the human under-

\textsuperscript{1}\textsc{O.c., IV, 17.}
\textsuperscript{2}Balmes quotes the passage from Bossuet, p. 19.
\textsuperscript{3}\textsc{O.c., IV, 22.}
\textsuperscript{4}\textsc{Ibid., pp. 25, 36.}
standing against power in spiritual matters." He points to another passage of Guizot which apparently contradicts the foregoing idea. The Court of Rome, says Guizot, was not highly tyrannical in the sixteenth century; it had never been "more easy, more tolerant, or more disposed to let things take their course, provided the rights it had hitherto enjoyed were recognized...It would willingly have left the human mind undisturbed, if the human mind would have been equally complacent with it." But the contradiction was not so great as Balmes supposed. Guizot describes somewhat confusedly in this chapter the paradoxical attitude of the sixteenth century papacy. It was indeed true that, during this period, Rome permitted both moral and doctrinal irregularities, but only so long as her authority was not directly or openly challenged.

Following this general description of Protestantism, Balmes devotes several chapters to a contrast between Catholicism and Protestantism in their religious aspects. The comparison is not doctrinal. He merely attempts to show that Catholicism is superior to Protestantism in ministering to the needs of the human spirit. Respect for the principle of authority in Catholicism has produced an institution of amazing stability and constancy, whereas

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1 Guizot, p. 203.
2 Ibid., p. 204.
3 O.c., IV, 34, 35.
4 Ibid., p. 121.
the Protestant principle of the right of private judgment has led to anarchy. This is simply because "without the authority of the Church, there is nothing certain in faith."\(^1\) Without the Church, "the Christian religion disappears." Protestantism "cannot show us its heavenly titles nor give us the full certainty that...it speaks the words of God Himself."\(^2\) Protestantism has reduced Christianity to a philosophical school.\(^3\)

Balmes' defense of the principle of authority, not only in religious matters but in science and philosophy as well, is almost identical with that of the French traditionalists. Man instinctively seeks an authority in every walk of life.\(^4\) A few great thinkers dominate every age. "Human understanding is almost always unconsciously submitted to the authority of other men."\(^5\) Tradition preserves for us the authoritative voices of great men. We must not despise "this storehouse of salutary...truths which have been preserved by society from generation to generation."\(^6\) The extent of Balmes' dependence upon the traditionalists at this point is seen in his brief mention of their theory of language,

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 50.
\(^2\)Ibid., pp. 50, 51.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 49. Cf. Bossuet, p. 172: The Reformation "stripped Christianity of all its mysteries and changed it into a sect of philosophy..."
\(^4\)Ibid., IV, 56. See above, chapter III, pp. 93, 94.
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 59.
\(^6\)Ibid., pp. 67, 68.
"that mysterious expression of things in which we find such profound truths without knowing who has communicated them to us."¹ But no direct reference is made to the traditionalists, and as we shall see in the following chapter, Balmes does not hold consistently to these extreme views.

Following this digression on the need for authority, Balmes returns to Protestantism. Having rejected the legitimate authority of the Church, Protestantism tends to substitute two other kinds of authority: that of divine inspiration and that of reason. Balmes does not consider the Protestant concept of the guidance of the Holy Spirit with relation to historic Protestantism, but only with relation to the fanatical sects, which Balmes describes in great detail, emphasizing their most extravagant aspects. His sources of information are unreliable and confused. Wesley is listed along with John of Leyden, Johanna Southcott, and Sweedenborg, as the leader of a hysterical sect. These aberrations are contrasted with Spanish mysticism as it is typified in Santa Teresa and San Juan de la Cruz.²

On the other hand, says Balmes, Protestant rationalism, or the tendency to substitute the authority of reason for that of the Church, has led to incredulity and religious indifference.³ This idea was exceedingly common in Balmes'  

¹Ibid., p. 60.  
²Ibid., p. 70, 74, 79.  
³Ibid., p. 87.
time, and indeed had been so since the seventeenth century. Bossuet had traced the growth of indifference to Protestantism. Indifference in turn led to deism, which was "atheism in disguise."¹ Likewise, the nineteenth century apologists believed with de Maistre that incredulity was the eldest daughter of the Reformation.² But in no case are cause and effect clearly traced, and Balmes does not improve upon the work of his predecessors in this respect.

Despite its inherent tendency to degenerate into atheism, Protestantism has survived. This is because it has retained certain vestiges of Christianity, such as preaching, which, according to Balmes, survived only in the attenuated form of "moral discourses"—"reasonable things" preaching each Sunday by "a man dressed in black."³ Moreover, an entire people can never become completely irreligious, for society itself would disappear without religion of one kind or another.⁴ But Protestantism, says Balmes, has nothing to offer the present age of change and upheaval. Only Catholicism, with its strong principles of authority and order, can regenerate society. Balmes notes with satisfaction the Roman Catholic Revival throughout Europe, and

¹Bossuet, p. 172.
²Cf. de Maistre, p. 339: "The structure of philosophism could only be erected on the vast basis of the Reformation."
³O.c., IV, 102, 139.
⁴Ibid., p. 100.
declares that it is the hour of Catholicism's greatest opportunity.¹

Balmes now turns to the main question which he proposes to examine in the course of his work. "If Catholicism and Protestantism are compared, which of the two is more favorable to true liberty, to the true progress of the nations and to the cause of civilization?"² This aspect of the history of the Church, says Balmes, has been greatly neglected. He proposes to demonstrate that Catholicism civilized the nations of Europe; that when the Protestant revolt occurred, the Church's task of civilization was about to be concluded; and that whatever progress there has been since the Reformation, has been made not because of Protestantism, but in spite of it.³ He begins by examining the social influence of the medieval Church, reserving for the next section the distinctly political aspects of the question.

Like Bossuet, and unlike the eighteenth century historians, who tended to glorify antiquity, Balmes paints a sombre picture of the ancient world, referring particularly to violence, tyranny, the corruption of morals, and the impotence of religion.⁴ The Church changed society in two ways: 1) Through its teachings, which sowed the seed of gradual and pacific regeneration. 2) Through its active

¹Ibid., pp. 109-113.
²Ibid., p. 121.
³Ibid., p. 124.
⁴Ibid., pp. 130-137.
work as a regenerative society. The Church's task of social amelioration affected the individual, the family, and society in general. Balmes begins with the individual, and specifically with the question of slavery, for the Church was the first true defender of human dignity.\footnote{Ibid., p. 140.}

The eighteenth century philosophers, says Balmes, tended to regard the Church as the ally of tyranny and oppression.\footnote{Ibid., p. 124. Turgot and Montesquieu were notable exceptions.} But today, historians readily admit the important role of the Church in the gradual abolition of slavery. Such a historian is Guizot; but unfortunately, Guizot believes that other factors also entered into the abolition of slavery in the Middle Ages.\footnote{Ibid., p. 141. Cf. Guizot, pp. 108, 109.} Slavery was abolished, says Balmes, exclusively through the influence of Christianity.

With extensive documentation, Balmes shows that, in ancient times, slaves were regarded as inferior beings. He is likewise detailed and thorough in tracing the impact of Christian thought and institutions on slavery. There are certain significant omissions. He says nothing, for example, of the contribution of Stoic thought to the amelioration of treatment of slaves. His thesis that the decline of slavery was due to the sole influence of Christianity was an over-simplification which is not admitted even by the most conservative Roman Catholic historians, such as Paul Allard, who regarded Christianity as "one principal cause"
of the disappearance of slavery in Europe.\(^1\)

There is, moreover, a certain lack of historical perspective in his survey. The early Christians, he says, and St. Paul in particular, preached a new relationship between slave and master, since all men are equal in the eyes of God.\(^2\) This new concept of human dignity was a precious seed which was to bear fruit centuries later. But Balmes does not attempt to explain why Paul did not condemn slavery as such. He says, to be sure, that the sudden abolition of slavery would have thrown ancient society into a state of anarchy which would have been greatly to the detriment of the slaves themselves.\(^3\) But Paul's own reasons for condoning slavery were intimately bound up with his theology, and particularly his eschatology. Balmes appears to have no interest in Paul's social outlook nor his theological views. He is equally unhistorical in his treatment of the views of Augustine and Aquinas on slavery.\(^4\)

Balmes gives an excellent survey of the numerous measures taken by the medieval Church for the alleviation of the suffering of slaves;\(^5\) but he is weak in his explanations

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\(^2\) P.C., IV, 151.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 143.

\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 175, 177.

\(^5\) Ibid., pp. 163, 170, 178, 181.
of the reasons why the Church itself was involved in the system of slavery, even to the extent of being a slave-holder. Balmes implies that the higher goal of complete liberation was ever present to the Church, and that it carried on with caution and prudence its plan of gradual emancipation.\(^1\) There is no suggestion that the Church itself may have been too deeply involved in the evils of the age to act as an effective judge of this great moral issue. Nor is there any historical perspective as to the gradual awakening of social consciousness within the Church itself.

There is, nevertheless, an even greater deficiency in Balmes' treatment of the problem of slavery. He has promised at the beginning of the book to carry out a "continual comparison" of Catholicism and Protestantism in their effects upon civilization. Such a comparison would require him to consider slavery in modern times, but he does this very briefly, for the historical facts do not support his thesis. He refers to the encyclical of Gregory XVI (November 3, 1839) which is a résumé of four centuries of papal condemnations of slavery, beginning with Pius II in 1462.\(^2\) He says nothing of the fact that both Protestantism and Catholicism condoned slavery in the European colonies throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Moreover, two of the strongest movements against slavery in modern times originated in British and American Protestantism and in the

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 175, 179.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 197.
humanitarianism of the French *philosophes*, the latter being chiefly responsible for the abolition of slavery in the Spanish colonies. Of these two forces, Balmes makes no mention at all.

The Christian concept of the worth of human personality, says Balmes, brought about the decline of slavery. It has, moreover, permeated every aspect of European culture, and is the basis of the European ideals of social and political liberty. But, says Balmes, Guizot has attempted in vain to find another origin for these ideals. He believes that they originated in the "feeling of individual independence" which was "the predominant sentiment of the barbarian state."¹ In spite of its alliance with brutality, "the desire for independence is a noble moral sentiment." It is "the consciousness of personality and human free-will in its fullest development." This feeling of independence was unknown in the Roman world and in the Christian Church; in Christianity there was "an inward struggle to subdue individual liberty, and to give blind submission to what faith decreed."²

In a later chapter, Guizot modifies this view to some extent, for he grants that, from the fifth to the eighth century, Germanic individualism was "in a state of extreme coarseness and ignorance" and in need of refinement.³ But he neglects to add, says Balmes, that Christianity was

¹Guizot, p. 52.
²Ibid., p. 53.
³Ibid., p. 64.
the transforming influence. He refutes at great length Guizot's opinion that early Christianity tended to suppress spiritual independence.\(^1\) The true source of European individualism, in the highest sense of spiritual freedom and self-respect, is not barbarism, but Christianity.\(^2\) According to Christian doctrine, each human personality has a unique destiny to fulfill.\(^3\) The Christian is responsible before God for fulfilling the purpose for which he was created; each life is sacred and society must respect it. Christians in turn must be aware of this sacred trust. We "must obey God rather than men" though the whole world is against us. Conscience should "awaken in man a lively sense of the worth of his personality."\(^4\)

This kind of spiritual freedom, long proclaimed by Catholicism, has contributed far more than is generally recognized "to a true understanding of man," "to the perfection of the individual, and to the heightening of the sense of independence, nobility, and dignity."\(^5\) Thus, the contribution of Catholicism is "something more than mere mysticism." It is "the development of the total man." This is the only true and reasonable individualism, "the most fruitful element in true civilization."\(^6\) This eloquent

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\(^1\) O.C., IV, 209, 211, 229.
\(^2\) Ibid., pp. 212, 221, 218.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 232.
\(^4\) Ibid., p. 239
\(^5\) Ibid., pp. 232-234.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 236.
apology for true humanism is strongly reminiscent of the Christian romanticism of Gioberti and the Christian democrats of the "Young Italy" movement. This, however, is the only passage in which Balmes shows profound concern for the needs of the human spirit. This humanistic note does not permeate his otherwise strongly institutionalist, authoritarian concept of Christianity.

Proceeding from the individual to the family, Balmes discusses the Christian ideal of marriage and the dignity of woman. He contrasts the high moral position of women in Christian society with that of pagan women. He laments that Protestantism, by admitting divorce, destroyed the ideal of the indissoluble marriage. He tries, although unsuccessfully, to show that the Catholic ideal of celibacy has contributed to the sanctity of marriage, and does not admit that there is a conflict between the ideals of virginity and consecrated motherhood. He admits no positive contribution of Protestantism to the ideal of the Christian family.

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1 See above, chapter II.
2 O.C., IV, 141, 256, 272.
3 Ibid., p. 246 ff.
4 Ibid., pp. 259-263.
5 Ibid., p. 258.
6 He could scarcely have been expected to do so, since Protestants themselves did not deal extensively with this theme until Troeltsch undertook to do so. Cf. Ernst Troeltsch, Protestantism and Progress, tr. W. Montgomery, New York, 1912, p. 93 ff.
The most interesting aspect of the section on the family is Balmes' refutation of certain ideas which were commonly held by the romantic historians with regard to the chivalric ideal of womanhood.¹ They frequently traced this ideal to purely Germanic origins.² Why, asks Balmes, do historians persist in attributing the most beautiful aspects of European civilization to the "vague and superstitious sentiments" of the barbarians?³ Nevertheless, he is perhaps aware that his own method of attributing everything to the influence of Christianity is not beyond reproach, for he attempts to justify it: "When we seek to explain important phenomena in the social order, it is far more philosophical to seek their origin in ideas which have for a long time had strong influence upon society, and in the customs and institutions which have emanated from these ideas..."⁴

The influence of Christianity upon society as a whole is the theme which occupies Balmes in the remainder of this section of his work. It is here that he sets forth his basic idea of the role of the Church: While Christian ideas have a direct influence upon social development, these ideas, to attain full effectiveness, must be embodied in and safeguarded by the Church. This point is continually

¹E.g., Thierry, Barante, Michelet, Thiers.

²This idea grew out of the neo-Teutonic cult of the nineteenth century.

³O.C., IV, 271.

⁴Ibid., p. 272.
emphasized by Balmes, for the French eclectics were inclined to grant the social effectiveness of Christian ideas, but reject the authority of the Church. Balmes points out that society is indebted to Christianity in its institutional, not merely philosophical form. European society was civilized, not "by an idea thrown out haphazardly," but by a "body of truths and precepts descended from Heaven, transmitted to the human race by a Man-God, and through a Society founded and authorized by Him..."¹ Throughout El Protestantismo, Balmes attempts to make the Church the necessary guardian of Christian ideas, and indeed, the chief instrument of God's redemptive activity in history. There are, nevertheless, a number of instances in which Balmes abandons this rigorous institutionalism.

Balmes considers first the influence of Christianity on the "public conscience" of Europe. European society, in contrast to ancient Roman society, has no need of public censors because its laws and customs are imbued with the spirit of religion, while Roman religion was powerless to check immorality and license.² The superiority of public morality in Europe has been brought about by the continual inculcation of Christian moral standards; if a moral idea is true and vital, it will eventually triumph in society, for it is the voice of God.³ Nevertheless, adds Balmes,

¹Ibid., p. 274.
²Ibid., p. 283.
³Ibid., p. 282.
the influence of the clergy has been decisive. They "take the place of" the ancient censors and may be said to have molded the public conscience of Europe.¹

Balmes' detailed and extensively documented study of the influence of Christianity on European customs may be summarized briefly. Christianity, he says, introduced a "certain gentleness of manners, which in war prevents great atrocities, and in time of peace renders life more quiet and pleasant."² He points to the influence of the Church in lessening the evils of blood revenge and private wars, and the Church's initiation of the "Peace of God" in the tenth century. The humanitarianism of the eighteenth century philosophers he regards as "effeminacy,"³ for his thesis would scarcely admit the influence of Christian ideals outside of, or even in opposition to the Church.

In dealing with the influence of the Church upon public welfare, Balmes raises a number of important questions without answering them satisfactorily. He criticizes Montesquieu for defending the Protestants who suppressed church hospitals on the grounds that they fomented idleness;⁴ the civil administration of public welfare is inadequate because philanthropy is, as Chateaubriand said, "the false

¹Ibid., p. 289.
²Ibid., p. 303.
³Ibid., p. 308.
⁴Ibid., pp. 329-331.
coin of charity. 1 He refers to the anticlerical argument that the Church, through its welfare institutions, preserves excessive social authority and usurps the authority of the State. To this he replies simply and dogmatically that the Church "will not allow itself to be despoiled of this beautiful privilege." 2 His solution for the social problems of Europe in his own time was an enlarged system of public charity administered by the Church. 3 Thus his social ideal is essentially theocratic and medieval: charity without social reform. 4

The section on the social influence of the monastic orders is one of the longest in El Protestantismo, and perhaps the best from a literary standpoint. The historical details are few and drawn from standard sources (Augustine, Cassianus, Palladius). Balmes considers the monastic movement as a whole rather than in terms of its outstanding personalities. St. Anthony and St. Benedict, generally regarded as the respective founders of Eastern and Western monasticism, are barely mentioned. There are notable omissions of historical fact. The scandalous abuses in the Eastern orders during the fifth century, freely admitted by

1 Ibid., p. 336.
2 Ibid., p. 335.
3 Ibid.
modern Roman Catholic historians, are not mentioned.¹ The activities of the Mendicant Orders of the fourteenth century are vividly described, but little attention is drawn to their frank criticism of wealth and corruption within the Church nor of their strong reforming tendencies. Balmes adheres closely to his thesis of a unified, well-nigh perfect Church at work in the midst of a barbaric society.

A number of controversial doctrinal matters are dealt with extensively, such as the Biblical and Christian origin of the monastic orders.² But for the most part, Balmes defends the orders on practical grounds. He gives particular attention to the pioneer virtues of certain orders which built roads, cleared land, and irrigated the soil.³ The most interesting aspect of this section is its strong romantic flavor. There are lyrical descriptions of the profound emotions experienced by the traveller as he contemplates the ruins of ancient monasteries.⁴ Such passages recall Chateaubriand's fascination with ancient Christian monuments.⁵ But for Balmes, aesthetic emotion is mixed with

²O.C., IV, 402-406.
³Ibid., p. 428 ff.
⁴Ibid., p. 398.
historical curiosity: every ruined abbey is "a rich mine of precious knowledge for the science of religion, of society, and of man."¹

The romantic influence is likewise seen in Balmes' description of the solitude and sadness of the religious vocation. Sorrow has for us an "indescribable attraction" and moves us more deeply than our happier experiences. We are but strangers on earth and the "sombre image of death is ever present in our minds."² The religious life, says Balmes, appeals to our imagination and our sense of the dramatic.³ His description of the melancholy other-worldliness of monastic life is the purest romanticism and is strongly reminiscent of Chateaubriand, although the morbid note of misanthropy, frequent in Chateaubriand, is not to be found in Balmes.⁴

Further romantic elements are seen in Balmes' extravagant praise of the idealism of the military orders,⁵ his sympathy with the adventurous spirit of the thirteenth century friars,⁶ and his praise of the sublime self-sacri-

¹O.C., IV, 398.
²Ibid., pp. 407, 408.
³Ibid., p. 409.
⁵O.C., IV, 432.
⁶Ibid., p. 441.
fice of the redemptive orders. This touch of romantic idealism contrasts sharply with the practical, almost utilitarian note which frequently predominates in Balmes' appraisal of the Church's influence.

III. THE EFFECTS OF RELIGION ON POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY

The third part of El Protestantismo is devoted to a study of the influence of the Church on the political growth of Europe. In the foregoing section on the social aspects of Christianity, Balmes says little about Protestantism; nor does he make any direct comparisons of Protestant and Catholic influence. In the present section, however, the comparison is direct. Balmes begins by showing that Roman Catholic political doctrine during the medieval period and the Counter Reformation was favorable to the growth of democracy. He then attempts to prove that the political influence of Protestantism was so disastrous as to "change the course of civilization" and "produce immense evils in modern society." Protestantism is, in essence, rebellion against legitimate authority. Rebellion leads to anarchy, which in turn produces tyranny. Hence, since the advent of

1Ibid., p. 455.
2See above, chapter V.
3O.C., IV, 768.
Protestantism, Europe has been torn between anarchy and tyranny.  

This thesis was common to the Catholic reactionaries of the French school. Lamennais had written in 1809: "The reformers of the sixteenth century undermined at the same time the foundations of the religious order and of the social order. They established the principle of anarchy in the Church and in the State, by attributing sovereignty to the people and the right of private judgment in matters of belief to each individual. Thus, the final consequence of their maxims has been the most complete destruction of religion and the most fearful disruption of society."  

The chief difficulty of such a thesis is that of showing precisely how religious anarchy produced social anarchy. This Balmes attempts to do in various ways.

"It is well known," he wrote, "that Protestantism from its commencement proclaimed the right of insurrection against civil powers; and no one is ignorant of the fact that Catholicism has always preached obedience to these powers. Thus the former has been from its infancy a revolutionary element, and the latter has been an element of tranquility and order." Balmes refers here to Knox, Beza, Jurieu, and other sixteenth century Calvinists who

1 Ibid.

2 Quoted by Vidler, p. 45 f.

3 Balmes was aware that this was not true of Lutheranism.

4 O.C., IV, 591.
taught that it was the duty of responsible representatives of the people to resist the tyranny of kings. In most respects, however, Calvinist political ideas were like those of the sixteenth century Jesuits. The Calvinists laid greater stress than the Jesuits upon the principle of representation; but all based their "democratic" ideas largely upon medieval contractual theory. Moreover, whether the Jesuits or the Calvinists were more inflammatory is debatable. Mariana, whom Balmes greatly admired, was an advocate of tyrannicide. Thus, Balmes gives no historical evidence for his radical distinction between sixteenth century Protestant and Roman Catholic doctrines of popular rights.

It is curious to note that Balmes does not give detailed consideration to the growth of the sects in Germany and England in order to prove his thesis that Protestantism was responsible for social anarchy. He refers to the Anabaptists, the Huguenots, and the Puritans, but only in a general way. His historical knowledge of Protestantism was scant, and perhaps for that reason he does not develop this argument more fully.

Balmes did not, however, rely chiefly upon the argument of the immediate political and social effects of Protestantism in order to prove his thesis that the Reformation

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2 O.C., IV, 696.
produced anarchy. Guizot and the liberal historians had attempted to explain the Reformation as a greater stirring of the human spirit in favor of liberty and progress. But unlike later, more scientific historians, they saw no need for relating particular religious doctrines to specific historical developments. Likewise, Balmes described the anarchical effects of the Reformation in terms of "spirit" and "tendencies," and he believed that he was justified in doing so.¹

Having demonstrated that Protestantism led to political anarchy, he must next show that Protestant anarchy produced tyranny. He has little difficulty in doing this, for Europeans of every political persuasion had long observed with Montesquieu that "upheavals have always strengthened the hand of authority."² Balmes' liberal adversaries would have regarded the absolutist reaction as a temporary obstacle in the pathway of liberty and progress. But Balmes had no understanding of the growth of constitutional government under the influence of English Puritanism and continental Calvinism, for he said that, with the appearance of Protestantism, the peoples of Europe "ceased to make progress toward representative forms of government."³

But, in addition to the "law of anarchy and despotism"⁴ there is another explanation for the growth of despotism

¹Ibid., p. 632.
²Menczer, p. 81.
³O.C., IV, 670.
⁴Ibid., p. 675.
following the Reformation. Protestantism encouraged the growth of absolutism by breaking the political power of the Church and the papacy.¹ Before the Reformation, the Church had served as a counterbalance to the despotic monarchs and the papacy had served as a mediator among rival powers. This theory of the balance of royal and ecclesiastical power was widely defended by the French ultramontanes, but it offers a number of serious difficulties.² First of all, it rests upon the assumption that at the time of the Reformation, the medieval Church had moral and political ascendancy over medieval society. But if papal power was on the decline, as most historians agree, and Balmes frequently admits, how might the papacy have been reinvigorated so as to have become universal arbiter and moral guide of European society?³ Moreover, while it is true that the medieval papacy served as a counterbalance to royal power, it was at the same time, as Balmes elsewhere suggests, a stimulus to the growth of absolutism: "Kings grew bolder in opposition to the pretentions of the Holy See."⁴

These weaknesses in Balmes’ argument are insignificant in comparison with his major difficulty. As we have seen in

¹Ibid., p. 594.
²Cf. de Maistre, p. 278.
³O.C., IV, 741.
⁴Ibid., p. 681.
the preceding chapter, Balmes was an ardent defender of
monarchy. Prior to the failure of the royal marriage, he
had placed his hope for the restoration of the Church in
the "pure monarchy" limited only by "reason and justice."
He regards the rise of strong monarchies in the sixteenth
century as desirable and inevitable. Medieval popular in-
stitutions, he wrote, had little stability, and by the
sixteenth century, they had already begun to decline
through economic and social causes,¹ and not merely be-
cause of the influence of Protestantism as he elsewhere
insists.² It was necessary, he says, to sacrifice popular
institutions for the greater advantages of centralization.³
It is true that absolutist government tends to become des-
potic, but everything human "brings with it something evil,"
and monarchy is no exception. "The great extension of
force and power was sure to produce abuse and excess."⁴
Thus it is difficult for Balmes to sustain his original
argument that the rise of modern despotism was due solely,
or principally, to the influence of Protestantism.

The last part of El Protestantismo is devoted to a
study of the comparative influence of Protestantism and
Catholicism on science, philosophy, and letters. Balmes
first turns to the matter of Roman Catholic intolerance

¹Ibid., p. 697.
²Ibid., p. 677.
³Ibid., p. 682.
⁴Ibid., p. 659.
toward unorthodox opinions. Many of Balmes' arguments in defense of the Church are of little interest: 1) The need for historical perspective in judging religious institutions. 2) All peoples are intolerant to a greater or lesser degree. Other arguments are both original and thought-provoking. Tolerance, says Balmes, has in modern society become a euphemism for indifference. True tolerance can be practiced only by those who have firm beliefs. Men with beliefs are tolerant of what they regard as error because they practice charity and humility. Humility, says Balmes, makes us aware "that we too are in need of pardon," though not (presumably) because we too may be in error—at least not in the case of orthodox believers. Nevertheless, it is experience which makes the believer more tolerant. Frequent contact with unbelievers gives us patience and resignation. (Balmes says nothing of greater sympathy for the unbeliever or his point-of-view.)

Nevertheless, says Balmes, a certain degree of "intolerance" is inevitable on the part of Roman Catholics. It is generally believed that errors of understanding are

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1Balmes treats this question in his section on the social influence of the Church, but it fits more logically into this final section.

2O.C., IV, 340.
3Ibid., p. 349.
4Ibid., p. 346.
5Ibid., p. 344.
6Ibid., p. 345.
innocent; for no one, it is said, can be condemned unless his own conscience condemns him. Only the Roman Catholic Church teaches that, except for cases of invincible ignorance, errors of understanding are as culpable as criminal actions.¹ False ideas lead to evil actions.² Balmes' argument, it may be noted, is based upon a false premise. Every society, not merely the Roman Catholic Church, must regard certain opinions as blameworthy. Anarchical ideas, for example, are regarded by every modern state as culpable and punishable by the State. The distinction is, rather, between the lay State with minimum control of individual behavior and opinions, and theocratic State with a maximum control. Nevertheless, Balmes raises a question of considerable interest.

The question of Roman Catholic intolerance leads Balmes naturally to the subject of the Inquisition. But in his lengthy treatment there are only a few points worthy of mention. His general argument is a common one—that the cruelty of the Inquisition was due to the cruelty of the times and that the heresies of the eleventh and thirteenth centuries endangered the stability of European society. But he blames Protestantism for the severity of the Spanish Inquisition under Felipe II. There was considerable freedom of thought in Spain in the fifteenth century, but the

¹Ibid., p. 355.
²Ibid., p. 359.
need for rejecting Protestantism led to intransigence.\textsuperscript{1}

The decline in the severity of the Spanish Inquisition in the eighteenth century he attributes to the decreased menace of Protestantism.\textsuperscript{2}

In discussing the comparative influence of Catholicism and Protestantism, Balmes considers first the Middle Ages and concludes that the thought of dissenters, such as Abelard, was invariably inferior to that of the great orthodox doctors of the Church, such as Thomas Aquinas, who was in no way hampered by ecclesiastical authority.\textsuperscript{3} In his discussion of the Renaissance, Balmes argues that, if the humanism of Erasmus and Vives flourished before the Reformation began, the Roman Church cannot be considered a repressive influence.\textsuperscript{4} But he does not take into account that both of these great thinkers were frequently at odds with the Church. Turning to the modern period, Balmes does not attempt to discredit science and philosophy in Protestant countries; he simply attempts to show that Catholicism was not an impediment to such Roman Catholic thinkers as Descartes, Malebranche, Bossuet, and Pascal.\textsuperscript{5} But again, he does not take

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 382. This idea is accepted by a number of modern Hispanists. Cf. Marcel Bataillon, \\textit{Erasme et l'Espagne}, Paris, 1937.

\textsuperscript{2}Most authorities attribute it to the influence of French rationalism. See above, chapter II.

\textsuperscript{3}O.C., IV, 745-750.

\textsuperscript{4}Ibid., p. 758.

\textsuperscript{5}Ibid., pp. 724-765.
into account that Cartesianism was long combated by the Church, and Pascal was of doubtful orthodoxy.

IV. BALMES' HISTORICAL VIEWS

While we have attempted to point out certain merits and weaknesses of Balmes' apologetics in the course of the exposition of his thought, a general critique of his works is necessary. El Protestantismo is generally classified as a work of historical interpretation. Balmes considered it an appeal to history. "Historical questions are decided with facts," he wrote.¹ Thus his work must be judged in part according to the truthfulness of its historical content.

Balmes shared the great enthusiasm for historical studies which was typical of the post-revolutionary era. The Hegelian ideal of "the thoughtful consideration of history" appealed to him deeply. In numerous passages throughout his works, he sets forth the norms of what he considered good historical writing. In El Criterio, he considers the various methods of ascertaining historical fact.² His main ideas on the subject of historical writing are set forth in criticism of the work of other historians. They are found scattered throughout his works, but they may be summarized in the following way:

1) While general historical works are necessary and

¹Ibid., p. 11.
²O.C., III, 608.
valuable for our study, provided the life of the historian is known and his point-of-view is taken into account, it is essential to consult contemporary documents and source material. This latter must be rich and abundant, not merely political, but social, and above all human. It must make us feel "the intimate life of individuals, families, and peoples."\(^1\)

2) Historical writing is not merely the amassing of details but a work of analysis, "penetrating the cause of events and pointing out the exact results of each."\(^2\)

3) The most important and most difficult task of the historian is synthesis or generalization: "the forming of clear and exact ideas of the character of an epoch."\(^3\)

With regard to generalization, Balmes makes a number of further observations. There can be no generalization without careful documentation. He censures historians who attempt to "sum up in two words the labors of many centuries."\(^4\)

Historians must beware of forcing subject matter to fit certain preconceived ideas.\(^5\) The historian must be fair and impartial. "There is nothing in the world which cannot be discredited by showing only one side of it..."\(^6\)

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1\(^{Ibid.}\), pp. 685-687; IV, 324, 580.
2\(^{Ibid.}\), p. 685.
3\(^{Ibid.}\).
4\(^{Ibid.}\), p. 580.
5\(^{Ibid.}\), p. 290.
6\(^{Ibid.}\), p. 339.
be seen that Balmes understood the best norms of the German and French historians, but for the most part failed to follow them. He violated some of them more flagrantly than others.

There is first of all the matter of documentation. In his *Reliquias Literarias,¹* the work which served as a basis for his biography of Balmes, Casanovas makes a detailed list and analysis of Balmes' sources.² Sr. Fermín de Urmeneta has made a similar study with particular reference to Balmes' historical sources.³ Both point to the wide variety of primary sources used by Balmes, assuming that he had first-hand acquaintance with all of them. Nevertheless, Balmes' material often has the appearance of having been borrowed from other writers. There are, for example, numerous citations which are identical with those given by de Maistre in *The Pope,* and in the same context.⁴ Chapter V of El Protestantismo contains a series of quotations from works of Mme. de Staël, Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, Grotius, and Puffendorf, which are obviously borrowed from *The Pope,* since they are identical and are given in the same order as

²See above, chapter IV.
⁴Hume (de Maistre, p. 278; Balmes, V, 713); Beattie (de Maistre, 119; Balmes, IV, 620); St. Francis de Sales (de Maistre, 52; Balmes, V, 45); Luther (de Maistre, 151; Balmes, IV, 244).
de Maistre gives them. Some of these, in turn, de Maistre had taken from Bossuet, but he gave due credit.¹

In many aspects of his work, however, Balmes gives evidence of extensive use of source materials, particularly ecclesiastical documents. But his documentation is often prolix, and frequently his use of documents is not creative. For example, he does not attempt to understand the historical circumstances out of which political doctrines grew. Likewise, he used Church pronouncement against social evils merely to defend the Church from the charge of tyranny, but not as a means of understanding social conditions in the period under consideration. With few exceptions, Balmes used source material as the eighteenth century historians had done, i.e., as "proof-texts," rather than as the best nineteenth century historians did—as a means of exploring the past.

Balmes' greatest deficiency with regard to source materials is seen in his study of Protestantism. He studied no Protestant sources firsthand.² Menéndez y Pelayo calls attention to this fact. But he believes that writings of the Reformers were not available for Balmes' study.³ They may, indeed, have been inaccessible in Vich or Barcelona, but in Paris the works of the Reformers were well-known


²Casanovas (Reliquias, p. 270) believes that Balmes had access to a Spanish translation of a life of Luther written by his friend, Johannes Matthei (1504-1565). There is only one reference to Matthei in El Protestantismo (p. 94).

³Menéndez y Pelayo, Dos Palabras, p. 12.
among the best historians and even published in popular works, such as Michelet's *Memoirs of Luther* Compiled from his own Writings (1842). Balmes' knowledge of Protestantism was drawn chiefly from Bossuet, as his frequent references to the *History of the Variations* would indicate.

In this respect, Balmes did not differ greatly from the contemporary French apologists. De Maistre drew heavily upon Bossuet; and Lamennais, despite his plea for a more careful study of Catholic documents, did not do the same with regard to Protestantism. But neither of these latter set out to write a comparative work on Protestantism and Catholicism as Balmes did. A better knowledge of Protestant sources, says Menéndez y Pelayo, "would have been useless" to Balmes, "for he wrote not as a theologian, but as a historian of civilization; he did not study Protestantism in its dogmatic essence nor in the variety of its confessions, but in its social influence." It is doubtful, however, that the social effects of Protestantism can be studied without a clear understanding of Protestant doctrine.

Balmes was equally ignorant of the positive aspects of Protestant culture. This ignorance has frequently been a source of embarrassment to his defenders. The translator of the first English edition of *El Protestantismo* wrote in 1849: Balmes "does not say that nothing has been done for civilization by Protestants, but he does say that Protestantism

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1 Cf. Vidler, p. 45.
2 Menéndez y Pelayo, *loc. cit.*
has not been favorable to it; and I beg the reader to mark well this distinction for it is a point which has been much misunderstood. ¹ Balmes, however, makes no such distinction anywhere in his writings. Similarly, a modern writer (on the basis of the brief passage on Protestant preaching referred to above), writes: "Balmes, by no means unjust to Protestant successes, was well aware that in historical Protestantism there has been thought and vigor."² But this awareness is precisely what Balmes lacked.

In fairness, it must be said that, when Balmes wrote El Protestantismo, the scientific study of religion in relation to society was in its infancy. Quinet, in his Génie des Religions (1841) was perhaps the first to develop systematically "the idea that the fundamental and generative principle in civilization is the religious principle," and "that the political form assumed by society is universally determined by its religious beliefs, and molded on its religious institutions."³ Quinet developed his thesis along broad philosophical lines. It was not until seventy years later, in the work of Troeltsch, that specific forms of Christian belief were related to social and political development during limited historical periods. Such scientific rigor could scarcely have been expected of Balmes.⁴

¹p. viii.
³Flint, p. 547.
⁴Nevertheless, Balmes has been regarded by some writers as a predecessor of Troeltsch and Max Weber. Cf. Menczer, p. 185.
Finally, Balmes' historical work must be criticized because he failed to make a true historical "comparison of Protestantism and Catholicism in their effects upon European civilization." Such is the title of his work, and such is the plan which he announces in his first chapter. But his method of comparing medieval Catholicism with modern Protestantism is unsatisfactory. Moreover, it is a method which he himself condemns when employed by his opponents, who frequently compared the more progressive aspects of modern Protestant society with medieval obscurantism. He says: "Comparisons involving different historical periods and wholly different historical circumstances" are "an adulteration of history."¹

Far more logical would have been a comparison of modern Roman Catholic civilization and modern Protestant civilization. Balmes does not make it entirely clear why no such comparison is undertaken, but two reasons are suggested, although somewhat indirectly. First, no truly Catholic society has existed since the Reformation. Since that time, "Catholicism has been unable to conduct itself in a normal way, even in those countries where it has remained the predominant or exclusive religion. Almost always it has found it necessary to keep itself in an attitude of defense; hence it has been obliged to expend a good share of its resources in fighting for its own existence."² Secondly,

¹O.C., IV, 710.
²Ibid., p. 167.
in judging Protestant society, it would be unfair to attribute to the influence of Protestantism those institutions which had their origin in medieval Catholicism. "The first steps in all things are the most difficult, and the greatest merit belongs to the originator."¹

The only way of making a true comparison, says Balmes, would be to find two societies "precisely alike in position and circumstance," but without reciprocal influence, the one entirely subject to Catholic, the other to Protestant influence.² But since no two such societies have ever existed, it is doubtful that Balmes was justified in undertaking his comparison at all. It is, however, curious to note that, despite its title, Balmes' work contains little information on Protestantism and no true comparison of Protestantism and Catholicism.

"Historical erudition," says Menéndez y Pelayo, "was not Balmes' strong point."³ The highest value of El Protestantismo is that it contains "a true philosophy of history."⁴ As a modern writer has pointed out, the central theme of Balmes' philosophy of history is Divine Providence.⁵ "Religion is the best philosophy of history," Balmes said on

¹Ibid., p. 710.
²Ibid., p. 709.
³Menéndez y Pelayo, Dos Palabras, p. 15.
⁴Menéndez y Pelayo, Historia de los Heterodoxos, VII, 445; Cf. also Casanovas, p. 189.
several occasions. It cannot be assumed, however, that Balmes had a consistent or unified view of history. El Protestantismo is, rather, an attempt to work out a Christian philosophy of history in the light of contemporary historical thought and in harmony with the apologetic aims of the book.

In his study of the Middle Ages, Balmes sees Providence as a guiding, creative force whose chief instrument is the Church. The mission of the Church is that of civilizing barbaric society. Balmes offers a "simple and general formula which sums up the period: barbarism tempered by religion, and religion disfigured by barbarism." In this struggle, the Church was victorious. It is "beyond doubt" that toward the close of the Middle Ages, under the guidance of Catholicism "the individual and society were rapidly advancing toward perfection." As he approaches the early Renaissance, Balmes looks even more upon Providence as a creative power in society. The Renaissance in all of its aspects—scientific, artistic, commercial, and social—"proceeded from good, was in itself good, and was directed toward a good end." Yet it was not the simple result of

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1 O.C., V, 117, 562.
2 O.C., IV, 442.
3 Ibid., p. 629.
4 Ibid., pp. 648, 706.
5 Ibid., p. 629.
the civilizing activity of the Church, but rather a part of a divine plan according which "everything progresses toward a destiny that is determined in the secret councils of the Eternal."¹

This aspect of Balmes' philosophy of history bears a marked resemblance to that of Guizot, who also related the idea of historical progress to that of divine guidance. Guizot was, together with Cousin, the chief popularizer of the nineteenth century doctrine of developmental progress.² He believed that progress and development were "the fundamental ideas contained in the word civilization." He also believed that European civilization had "entered into the plan of Providence" and had advanced "according to the intentions of God."³ Balmes was strongly influenced by this concept of development, and has much in common with the nineteenth century philosophers who "began to replace the traditional Christian reading of the past by a new reading of it in terms of continuous immanental movement."⁴ He differed from them only in that he saw the Church, as it was "moved by the Spirit of God,"⁵ as the chief instrument of Providence.

¹Ibid., p. 128.
³Guizot, pp. 29, 42.
⁴Baillie, p. 131.
⁵O.C., IV, 148, 322.
In his interpretation of the Reformation and of modern history in general, Balmes' view of history and Divine Providence changes abruptly. He sees the modern age, beginning with the Reformation, as a series of tremendous catastrophes. Providence is seen largely in terms of judgment and chastisement. While the basis of this philosophy is, of course, Biblical, it was nevertheless largely through the influence of the French traditionalists that Balmes incorporated it into his interpretation of history.

The traditionalists—de Maistre, Bonald, Lamennais—were the foremost political apologists of the anti-revolutionary school. Their philosophy was one of pessimism and despair, but their language was often that of traditional Christian theology. Their view of modern history was wholly negative. "For three hundred years," said de Maistre, "history has been a continuous conspiracy against truth."¹ They idealized the social and ecclesiastical ordo of the Middle Ages, but unlike Balmes, saw no "pattern of progress" in medieval history. Moreover, they regarded the transition from medieval order and stability to modern chaos as a gradual process of disintegration, culminating in the French Revolution. De Maistre regarded the revolution as "essentially Satanical,"² but Satan was God's instrument for punishing

¹Quoted by Flint, p. 369.
²De Maistre, p. xxiii.
sinful man. Social evils are an expiation of original sin and a means of purifying and regenerating society.\textsuperscript{1} While de Maistre's orthodoxy may be questioned at many points, his view of social catastrophe is essentially that of the Hebrew prophets.\textsuperscript{2}

The language and ideas of de Maistre are reflected in Balmes' writings. In an essay entitled "Historical Studies Founded on Religion," he says that all of Hebrew history can be interpreted in terms of human sin and divine punishment. "With this formula, everything can be explained; without it, nothing."\textsuperscript{3} The history of God's chosen people was "an endless series of calamities and disasters" punished by "the wrath of an all-powerful God." Throughout the history of humanity, we see "the lamentable consequences of the Fall of Man" and "the signs of the expiation to which the descendants of Adam are condemned."\textsuperscript{4}

Balmes sometimes gave this interpretation to modern catastrophes. In a passage in \textit{El Protestantismo}, Luther is called "the son of perdition" and the "genius of evil" whom "the God of Vengeance" employs in punishing "the sin of the people."\textsuperscript{5} But unlike de Maistre, who clearly points to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1}Cf. Flint, p. 379; Hocedez, I, 78.
\item \textsuperscript{2}He says that the scourge of war is "particularly divine" and that "it is for a great and fundamental reason that the title God of Hosts illumines every page of Scripture... War is divine of its very nature, because it is the law of the world." From the seventh dialogue of \textit{Soirées de St. Petersbourgh}, Menczer, p. 66.
\item \textsuperscript{3}O.C., V, 118. Cf. de Maistre: "Le péché original explique tout et sans lui on n'explique rien." Hocedez, I, 79.
\item \textsuperscript{4}O.C., V, 120, 121.
\item \textsuperscript{5}O.C., IV, 472.
\end{itemize}
those social manifestations of original sin which are the object of divine wrath, Balmes is exceedingly vague. 1 When judgment is mentioned in connection with the Reformation, the emphasis is upon the "deep secrets of Providence" and "the incomprehensible ways of God." 2 Likewise, with reference to the Spanish Revolution, no particular social transgressions are mentioned as the object of God's wrath.

The reason for this omission is obvious. Because of the apologetic purposes of his book, Balmes could not apply Biblical theology too rigorously. He was unwilling to admit that the Catholic people or the Church had undergone divine chastisement. This lack of a true prophetic note is one reason for the theological superficiality of El Protestantismo. 3 Mauriac once said of Le Génie du Christianisme that "for Chateaubriand to have written such a book means that he had no sense of sin in him." 4 The same might be said of El Protestantismo. If Chateaubriand sacrificed too much to aesthetic considerations, Balmes sacrificed too much to polemics. Moreover, Balmes was unable to see the creative power of Providence at work in the modern world. He grants that there

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1 E.g., the incredulity of the French nobility in the nineteenth century. Cf. de Maistre, p. xxiv.

2 O.C., IV, 468; V, 713. It is more common, however, for Balmes to refer to the Reformation in quasi-mythological language; e.g., "ill-fated Reformation" (IV, 463), or "the apple of discord" (IV, 678).

3 It should also be noted that, in referring to divine judgment, Balmes never refers to divine mercy.

has been some social and, above all, scientific progress since the Reformation, but he hesitates to give this progress the blessings of Providence, for he would then be forced to pronounce judgment on democratic institutions and philosophies which, in their extreme form, had been condemned by the Church. Nevertheless, Balmes could produce no unified Christian view of history without seeing clearly the hand of Providence—both as judgment and creative power—throughout the whole course of European history. This he failed to do.

There are indications in El Protestantismo that Balmes was dissatisfied with his interpretation of history. In one passage he refers to the present age as one of "transition" rather than chaos. Although it was possible that another series of calamities "awaited mankind, there was reason for hope."2 Shortly after the completion of the manuscript of El Protestantismo, Balmes wrote in La Civilización: "We are not sceptical about the destiny of humanity."3

In July of 1843, in an article called "Social Transition," Balmes makes a significant change in his view of modern history. He criticizes his former negative view of modern history as a period of transition. This view, he says, is conducive to pessimism and scepticism. All peoples

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1 O.C., IV, 425, 709.
2 Ibid., p. 110.
3 O.C., V, 462.
of the world have lived in a perpetual state of transition. Perpetual change is a law of history.¹ But is social change always progress? Some argue, he says, that entire civilizations have decayed. Others argue more convincingly that new and more splendid civilizations have always risen to take the place of those that have disappeared. Balmes then affirms his belief "that mankind has always progressed, that the state of humanity was better in the Middle Ages than in ancient times, and that at the present time it is in many ways superior to that of all earlier periods."²

It is true, he says, that the tragic effects of the Lutheran schism "might make us doubt the truth of this proposition." Nevertheless, in general, civilization has advanced during the present age. Even in the religious sphere, not all is black. Roman Catholic missions are flourishing, and the Protestant sects have to some extent spread "the light of Christianity" in countries formerly dominated by "idolatry and ignorance." "In these same countries, there has been moral, intellectual, and material progress...Though we depict the last three centuries in the darkest colors, we must agree that humanity has not lost ground; on the contrary, it has gained, and with interest."³

Two years later, Balmes again affirmed his belief in

¹Ibid., p. 310 ff.
²Ibid., pp. 317, 318.
³Ibid., p. 320.
progress in Pius IX.\textsuperscript{1} Toward the conclusion of this pamphlet, after repeating his thesis that Protestantism had impeded the march of European civilization, he adds: "But we must consider things not as they should be, but as they are."\textsuperscript{2} These significant changes in Balmes' view of history have not been noted either by his critics or defenders. Apparently it did not occur to Balmes to revise or soften the views originally expressed in \textit{El Protestantismo}, which was in its second edition by the time of his death.

\section*{V. THE INFLUENCE OF \textit{EL PROTESTANTISMO}}

Despite its numerous shortcomings, \textit{El Protestantismo} has proved to be Balmes' most popular work. Numerous Spanish editions of the work were published in Barcelona, Madrid, and Paris throughout the nineteenth century. Today, \textit{El Protestantismo} is a standard apologetical work in Spain and Latin America. French editions appeared in 1842, 1851, 1857, and 1931. The first English translation was published in 1849. In America, there were thirty editions before 1900. German editions appeared in 1861 and 1882. The earliest Italian translation appeared in 1845, but there have been many since that time.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1}See above, chapter V.
\textsuperscript{2}O.C., VII, 1000.
\textsuperscript{3}Bibliographical data may be found in many reference works. The best bibliography of the various editions and translations is that of Basilio de Rubf, p. xvii.
The reasons for the popularity of the work are not difficult to surmise. The "black legend" of Spanish Catholicism and the myth of Protestant cultural superiority lasted far into the nineteenth century and have by no means disappeared today. An eloquent defense of Catholic civilization was badly needed in Balmes' time. A British Catholic journal, The Correspondent, wrote concerning El Protestantismo in May, 1845: "Spain has been the theme of such furious declamation, the influence of Catholicity in that part of Europe has been so cruelly attacked, that it is pleasing to hear on this subject the testimony of one of the most learned of her children."¹ Likewise, the French apologists were badly in need of a defense of Catholic civilization and for that reason publicized widely El Protestantismo.²

Balmes' work was particularly useful because it was not closely allied with any extremist school of philosophical or political thought. The usefulness of de Maistre's work diminished constantly because of his philosophical scepticism, and exaggerated political conservatism, both of which eventually met with the disfavor of Rome.³ Chateaubriand's

¹Quoted in the preface to English translation of El Protestantismo (1849), p. xi.


³The errors of traditionalist philosophy were condemned in Mirari vos (1832) and Singulari nos (1834). Exaggerated political intransigence was censured in Diurnum (1861).
works were doubtful on many points of doctrine,\(^1\) and were closely associated with the aestheticism and sentimentality of early Romanticism. Even in Balmes' time, Chateaubriand was widely criticized for having created a "spirit of frivolity" with respect to religion.\(^2\) El Protestantismo was of unquestioned orthodoxy. Balmes dedicated it to Pope Gregory XVI, assuring him that "as soon as the Sovereign Pontiff...shall pronounce sentence against any one of my opinions, I will hasten to declare that I consider that opinion erroneous, and cease to profess it."\(^3\) But Rome found no error in the work and commended it highly.\(^4\) At the same time, as we have seen, the work reflected some of the most popular aspects of romantic literature and philosophy without carrying any of them to dangerous extremes.

Despite its popularity, El Protestantismo has rarely been praised by the best Spanish writers. The most extravagant praise came from Menéndez y Pelayo, who called it "the most important Spanish book of the nineteenth century."\(^5\)

\(^1\) Cf. Balmes, O.C., IV, 764.
\(^2\) O.C., VIII, 475.
\(^3\) O.C., IV, 768.
\(^4\) Ibid., p. 7.
\(^5\) Menéndez y Pelayo, Historia de los Heterodoxos, VII, 445. It is clear from the context that he has in mind works of philosophy and apologetics. As we shall see in the following chapter, such works were exceedingly rare in nineteenth century Spain. It is doubtful that Menéndez y Pelayo would have ranked Balmes with as great a novelist as Pérez Galdós, to name only one example of outstanding nineteenth century writers.
With the exception of Ramón de Maeztu, who had high regard for El Protestantismo, most of the outstanding contemporary thinkers of Spain have ignored the work. Unamuno called it "unfortunate and shoddy," and at the same time called attention to the limited nature of the socio-historical apologetics which El Protestantismo represents, for the task of the Church is not to produce a superior culture but to save souls. A modern critic, Fidelino de Figueiredo, believes that El Protestantismo has had a very limited appeal. Except for those who were already in agreement with Balmes, the work "convinced no one of the deadly influence of Protestantism on liberty and ideas." The book has served only to "revive and consolidate" the arguments of the Spanish Catholics, "giving them cohesion and a new desire to fight."

A number of critics, such as Toussaint, have believed that in El Protestantismo, Balmes advanced the most significant type of apologetic for his time. Balmes was himself convinced of the tremendous importance of his approach to apologetics; he believed that to demonstrate the social usefulness of religion was urgent and decisive. "To say that Christianity has civilized the world is to say that Christianity is true," he wrote. But, like Chateaubriand's maxim that the excellence of the Christian religion is proof of its

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1Cf. Sencourt, loc. cit.
2Unamuno, "Religión y Patria," loc. cit.
3Fidelino de Figueiredo, Las Dos Españas, Santiago de Compostela, 1933, p. 204.
4Toussaint, p. 132.
5So.C., VIII, 332.
divine origin, Balmes' maxim was not universally accepted. Bareille wrote in 1854: "Il est de bon ton aujourd'hui de savoir reconnaître ce qu'il y a d'util et de grand dans les influences, surtout sociales exercées par le Christianisme." Yet at the same time, agnosticism and unbelief were gaining ground in France. Balmes, himself, had recognized in 1843 that it was not enough to admit "the immense benefits bestowed upon humanity by Christianity." For this was precisely what the French spiritualists recognized, and yet their religion was "a strange and dangerous kind of Christianity." Balmes had perhaps begun to realize that the most serious religious problem of the age was that of Faith and Reason. In his later, more ambitious work, *Philosophie Fondamentale*, he attempts to lay the philosophical foundations for a more lasting type of apologetics.

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1Cf. Chateaubriand: "Le Christianisme...vient de Dieu, parce qu'il est excellent," I, 7.

2Bareille, loc. cit.

3o.c., V, 141.
CHAPTER VII

BALMES' PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT:
THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE

I. LOGIC

In his Letters to a Sceptic, Balmes tells of the profound attraction which philosophy held for him during his early years at Vich. 1 When he entered public life in 1840, his philosophical interests were still very strong, and continued throughout his journalistic career. But he published no philosophical works until 1845, when El Criterio appeared. A year later, Filosofía Fundamental was published.

Balines points to a very clear reason for his decision to write on philosophical subjects. There was in Spain a need for "sound philosophy." 2 He refers to the "errors" of the German idealists and the French eclectics, who during the decade 1840-50 had just begun to penetrate Spain. 3 Balmes prophesied correctly that the influence of foreign philosophy in Spain would soon increase. He pointed to the need for "a Spanish philosophy." 4

Balenes was aware of the decline of materialism and rationalism throughout Europe. He recognized the spiritual

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1 O.C., V, 247.
2 O.C., II, 7, 9.
3 O.C., III, 664.
4 This phrase appears but once in his writings. There were few Spanish elements in his philosophy. He perhaps meant by it "an orthodox philosophy," but thought that the other phrase would have greater appeal. (O.C., II, 7.)
values of German idealism and French eclecticism, both of which had created an atmosphere which was highly favorable towards religion.¹ But he believed that many dangers lurked in the new spirituality. Idealism leads to scepticism, or at best to a vague pantheism, which is "disguised atheism."² The foundations of the new philosophy must be examined.³ Thus, explains Balme, I do not propose to found a new philosophy, but merely to "examine fundamental philosophical questions."⁴ This is not merely a negative task. "Sound philosophy" must be "presented to the light of day struggling against error." It must not be satisfied with "overthrowing the adversary." It should "aspire to found a noble and enduring edifice."⁵ These highly practical motives were foremost in Balmes' mind when he initiated his brief philosophical career.

Balmes' philosophical works deal with the principal branches of philosophy: logic, epistemology, ontology, and ethics. El Critério⁶ includes logic and a brief section on ethics. Filosofía Fundamental⁷ is his largest

¹ O.C., II, 611.
² O.C., III, 392.
³ O.C., II, 741.
⁴ Ibid., p. 9.
⁵ Ibid., p. 416.
⁶ O.C., III, 541-755.
⁷ O.C., II.
philosophical work. The ten books which comprise it may be divided roughly between epistemology and ontology. The epistemology includes criteriology¹ (Book I, On Certainty), a part of the aesthetics² (Book II, On Sensation), and ideology (Book IV, On Ideas). Ontology is introduced by a study of the idea of being (Book V). There are six more divisions, mostly brief, dealing with such ontological subjects as space, unity, number, time, infinity, substance, necessity, and causality. **Filosofía Elemental**³ was written as a textbook for seminaries and contains a condensation of material already published in the two works already mentioned, with the addition of several chapters on the philosophy of language, psychology, theodicy, and history of philosophy.

In the present study, we shall deal mainly with Balmes' logic and epistemology. It is in these branches that his basic philosophical position and his most characteristic ideas are set forth. Moreover, it is in his epistemological studies that Balmes deals most vigorously with those aspects of modern philosophy which he believed to be incompatible with Catholic doctrine. In discussing Balmes' logic, we shall refer mainly to El Criterio. This book is the best

¹The terms "epistemology" and "criteriology" came into use since Balmes' time; he had no technical words for describing this part of his work. The terms are used in this study for the sake of convenience.

²In the Kantian sense of "the theory of sensibility."

³O.C., III, 1-540.
known of his philosophical works. It was written especially for young people, and is the best example of Balmes' informal, popular style. We shall refer to the treatise on logic in *Filosofía Elemental* only in order to clarify doubtful points.

Balmes called *El Criterio* "an essay for directing the faculties of the human spirit." It contains both traditional and original elements. The traditional basis of *El Criterio* will first be considered. For Balmes, logic was a *scientia specialis*, a kind of doorway to philosophical studies. Logic was for him, as it was for the medieval scholastics, an instrument of knowledge, rather than an end in itself. Likewise, his use of basic terms is in accord with scholasticism, though he is careful to avoid excessively technical language and rarely refers to the scholastic origin of his ideas.

"To think rightly is to know the truth," he says at the beginning of *El Criterio*. To know the truth is "to know the reality of things." The intellect has two activities, speculative and practical. The first is directed towards knowledge, the second directs our

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1 O.C., III, 551.
2 Ibid., p. 557.
3 O.C., III, 553. The classical "correspondence theory" of truth. Cf. "per conformitatem intellectus et rei veritas definitur; unde conformitatem istam cognoscere, est cognoscere veritatem," Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 16, 2. Edition "Studii Generalis," Ottawa, 1941, vol. I, p. 115. (Further references to this work will be indicated as *Summa*. All quotations are from the aforementioned edition, to which references will be given in parentheses.)
Speculative intellect gives us principally two kinds of knowledge: 1) knowledge of the existence (or non-existence) of things, and 2) knowledge of the nature of things. All knowledge begins with the senses. The senses, unless organically defective, do not err; it is we who err in using them.

Our knowledge begins with sense-perception, which furnishes material for the intellect. Cognition involves three activities: conception, judgment, and discussion. Conception is the "inner activity whereby we 'grasp' an object with our minds." Judgment is the affirmation or

1 O.C., III, 564. The scholastics made this distinction. Cf. Aquinas, who says that the speculative and practical intellect, while not distinct powers, differ according to their ends: "speculativus differre a practico fine." The purpose of the speculative intellect "veritatem cognitam ordinat ad opus." Summa, I, 79, 11. (II, 493.)

2 O.C., III, 565.

3 Ibid., p. 573. Likewise, Aristotle and the scholastics held that "nihil est in intellectu quod primum non fuerit in sensu."


5 Balmes does not treat here the difficult problem of the transition from sense-perception to cognition. This is reserved for Filosofía Fundamental, Book IV.

6 O.C., III, 621. Balmes gives a metaphorical rather than a technical definition. As we shall later see, he believes that the first step in cognition is impossible to analyze. But he retains the term "concept," which in the scholastic sense is the "verbum mentis" whereby the intellect becomes aware of abstractions or universals. Cf. Summa, I, 27, 1 (I, 182).
denial of a relation between one thing and another.\(^1\) Discussion (ratiocination) is inferring one thing from another.\(^2\) These traditional elements form the basis of Balmes' logic. Knowing begins with sense-perception, upon which the intellect acts both intuitively and discursively; speculative knowledge is in turn applied to man's moral or technical activity.

The traditional manuals of logic in Balmes' time concentrated almost exclusively on one aspect of cognition—discussion. The functioning of the sensitive faculties was taken for granted, as well as the application of speculative truth to man's moral and technical activities. Balmes gives little importance to the traditional "laws of reasoning." For most people, he says, their usefulness is extremely limited. Moreover, the real difficulty lies in knowing how to apply them; at this point, teachers almost always fail.\(^3\) Balmes devotes most of his discussion to the "education of the sensitive faculties," and the moral and technical

\(^1\) O.C., III, 43, 629. The traditional definition is more limited, referring specifically to propositions. To judge is to affirm (or deny) the relation between subject and predicate. Cf. Summa, I, 13, 12 (I, 89, 90).

\(^2\) O.C., III, 61. Discussion is inference from self-evident truths (per se notae). Truths inferred from others are called "per aliquid notae," and are arrived at "non statim sed per inquisitionem rationis," Summa, I-II, 57, 2 (II, 1006).

\(^3\) O.C., III, 640 ff.
application of truth. "A good logic," he says, "should take into account the whole man, because truth stands in relation to all of man's faculties." ¹

"A good logic should not limit itself to the intellect, but should include all that influences our knowledge of reality." ² In El Criterio, these faculties are referred to as emotion, passion, and sentiment, though these terms are not used in a technical sense. ³ Intuition and inspiration are also mentioned. ⁴ In the treatise on logic, he defines the faculties other than intelligence as external sense, imagination, and internal sense. ⁵ Thus, Balmes gives the general impression of having abandoned scholastic intellectualism for a more vital concept of cognition which embraces "the whole man." However, a close examination of his terms shows that he is essentially scholastic.

According to Aquinas, the "faculties of the soul" are sensory, vegetative, locomotive, and intellectual. ⁶ What Balmes calls external and internal sense and imagination correspond to the various aspects of the sensory faculty

¹Ibid., p. 551.
²Ibid., p. 10.
³Ibid.
⁴Ibid., p. 649.
⁵Ibid., p. 10.
as described by Aquinas. The external senses are the five senses. The internal senses are sensus communis, memory, imagination, and the cogitative power. Balmes singles out the imagination as a special faculty with two powers: reproducing and combining sensations. But these two functions clearly correspond to memory and cogitative power in Thomist teaching.

Balmes occasionally implies that emotion plays a special role in cognition. The function of emotion is to give force and strength to the acts of the will and the intellect. But, upon close examination, it is seen that what Balmes calls emotion is nothing more than that which Aquinas designates as passion. According to Aquinas, passion is a kind of "movement" of the soul. It belongs to the affective part of the soul rather than the cognitive; it accompanies the "sensitive appetite" rather than the "intellectual appetite." Passions are in themselves neither good nor evil. Passions can obscure the judgment of reason, but when

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1This is the sense which receives and synthesizes the outer sense impressions; there is no connection between this term and "common sense" in its modern use.

2O.c., III, 18.

3Summa, loc. cit.

4O.c., III, 753.

5Summa, I-II,22, 2 (II, 842, 843).
controlled by reason they are an aid to virtue.\(^1\)

The foregoing Thomist doctrine is essentially that of Balmes. "Knowledge and the judgment of truth reside solely in the intellect."\(^2\) Emotion is required only for appreciating "truths" which are concerned with "the beautiful, tender, melancholy or sublime."\(^3\) Passion obscures the intellect;\(^4\) it must at all times be kept in subjection to the will, which is in turn subject to reason.\(^5\) "Reason is a monarch condemned to a continual struggle with rebellious passions."\(^6\) Nevertheless, emotion is necessary for carrying out what the intellect commands.\(^7\) The more delicate emotions, or "moral sentiments," are essential to the religious life.\(^8\)

Balmes holds firmly to Thomist intellectualism. He is emphatic in his rejection of romantic epistemology, with its emphasis on the emotional and intuitive elements in cognition. "It has been said that from the heart proceed great ideas; but it could be added that from the heart proceed

\(^1\) Summa, I-II, 24, 1-3 (II, 648-851).
\(^2\) O.C., III, 11.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 666. This kind of "truth" in modern terminology would be called expressive or emotive meaning.
\(^4\) Ibid., p. 667.
\(^5\) Like Aquinas, and unlike the medieval voluntarists (Duns Scotus, William of Occam), Balmes makes the "rational will" subject to the intellect.
\(^6\) O.C., III, 721.
\(^7\) Ibid., p. 726.
\(^8\) Ibid., p. 734.
great errors.\(^1\) "In vain does our age attempt to proclaim the omnipotence of the passions and their triumph over reason through an irresistible force."\(^2\)

Thus, it is clear that Balmes has discovered no new or vital relationship between heart and intellect, as his prologue implies. His logic is novel in that he pays so much attention to the emotions. But what he calls "the education of the emotions"\(^3\) is carried out in a somewhat negative fashion. The main emphasis is that emotions are not safe guides of thought or conduct. There are occasional statements which seem to indicate slight concessions to romantic epistemology. "Sentiment is a strong force which...develops and multiplies the powers of the soul."\(^4\) But the idea is not developed. It is occasionally implied that inspiration, intuition, and imagination have some important role in cognition.\(^5\) But Balmes employs these terms very loosely, and he does not clearly assert that they are unique ways of knowing.

Similarly, with regard to will and intellect, there is no original insight. By including a brief section on ethics

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\(^1\)Ibid., p. 741.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 722.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 27.
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 682.
\(^5\)Ibid., p. 649 ff.
in *El Criterio*, and by devoting much attention to technical applications of the general principles of knowledge, Balmes stresses the intimate relation between thought and action. In one passage, he says that "knowledge must be practical."¹ But he does not question the scholastic doctrine of the primacy of the speculative intellect.

The chief values of *El Criterio* are practical and pedagogical rather than philosophical. A wide variety of themes are treated: the choice of a career; norms for reading popular literature; norms for studying the various branches of science. There are chapters on practical aspects of psychology, such as the laws of attention. There is a brief introduction to the chief problems of philosophy. The chapter on evidences of the Christian religion is more effective and clear than similar passages of the *Filosofía Elemental*. Despite the varied nature of the subject matter, the progression from one idea to another is more natural and clear than it is in Balmes' more ambitious works. There are a number of excellent anecdotes and dialogues which serve to illustrate difficult points. Thus, in *El Criterio*, Balmes accomplished in a practical and modest way his purpose of "directing the faculties of the human spirit according to a system which is different from those traditionally employed."² He leaves for a later work a more thorough consideration of the basic problems of epistemology.

¹Ibid., p. 555.
²Ibid., p. 552.
II. CRITERIOLOGY

In Filosofía Fundamental, Balmes attempts a serious study of the problem of knowledge. In Book One, On Certainty, the largest section of his work, he examines the bases of philosophical certitude. He asks the question, how may I attain certainty? In Book Four, On Ideas, he examines the origin and limits of knowledge. There is, however, a great deal of overlapping and repetition, so that it is not always clear which aspect of epistemology Balmes is dealing with. For the sake of clarity, in the present study, it will often be necessary to supply transitions from one idea to another and omit certain ideas which have no clear relation to the main arguments. We shall begin with the problem of certainty.

While it is true, says Balmes, that philosophers have argued needlessly and extravagantly on the question of certainty, it is a question that cannot be ignored. All philosophical questions are somehow involved in that of certainty. Moreover, to know the true limitations of human certainty is in no sense degrading or humiliating. For man is the only creature who can know the limitations of his own mind; and thereby he proves his dignity.\(^1\) To consider the limitations of certainty is in some respects fascinating. For in the mysteries of science, amidst the very assaults of doubt and

\(^1\)This idea is developed poetically, in the manner of Pascal.
uncertainty, there is something captivating and sublime.¹

Nevertheless, the problem of certainty is a snare for those who do not distinguish between the three questions which it involves: 1) the existence of certainty; 2) its basis; and 3) the mode of acquiring it. "Its existence is an undisputed fact; its basis is the object of philosophical research, and the mode of acquiring it is frequently a concealed phenomenon not open to observation."²

The first question, can I attain certainty?, is not a legitimate one in Balmes' opinion. He does not refer here to the radical religious scepticism which the question implies. But he asserts that experience proves to us that we have certainty on such basic matters as the existence of the corporeal world and the life of the soul.³ Certainty does not originate in reflection. It is a "happy necessity" which nature imposes upon us.⁴ This concept of the "intellectual instinct" is basic in Balmes' thought, and it is important to note that at the outset he places certain limitations upon this instinct. It is not, he says, a "blind certainty." It is "an instinct conformable to reason," not opposed to reason, but its basis.⁵

¹O.c., II, 11-14.
²Ibid., p. 15.
³Ibid., pp. 15, 17.
⁵Balmes' uncertainty at this point may be noted: the "instinct" is the basis of reason, yet it must conform to reason. Ibid., p. 19.
Thus, philosophy should not dispute the fact of certainty. It should first affirm its existence and next explain the means of acquiring it. This has been done in many ways. Since Descartes, many philosophers have attempted to seek one basic principle of all human knowledge, and to point to it as the sure criterion of certainty. A first principle may be understood either as a source from which all truth flows, or as a foundation upon which all other truths rest.¹

Let us first consider, says Balmes, the possibility of a single basic truth from which all other truths naturally and spontaneously flow. Balmes then refers to "a very luminous and interesting theory" of Aquinas. In the "universal intellectual order" there is a hierarchy of intelligent beings which converge upon a center in which they unite. The center is God, "who understands by means of a single idea, which is His own essence." The divine unity is not perceived by us directly, but is reflected in "the instinctive tendency of our intellect to simplify, to reduce everything... to unity." But the unifying instinct in man cannot lead him to the source of unity; it is a longing for a good which cannot be attained in this life. "In the meantime, we must rest satisfied with the shadows of reality."² It is charac-

¹Ibid., pp. 15, 17, 28.
²O.C., II, 29, 32. Balmes refers to the Summa, I, 89, 1 (I, 549) and I, 55, 3 (I, 339). According to the Thomist concept of the "scale of being," man's knowledge is necessarily multiple. "Unde oportet, quod ea quae Deus cognoscit per unam, inferiores intellectus cognoscant per multa; et tanto amplius per plura, quanto amplius intellectus inferior fuit." (I, 340).
teristic of Balmes' approach to Aquinas that he does not appeal to his authority, nor base his argument upon Thomist metaphysics. The doctrine of Aquinas is referred to simply for the "image of truth" which it presents.

He attempts to demonstrate in other ways that "in the human order" there is no primordial truth which is the source of all others. The multiplicity of human knowledge cannot be reduced to one principle, first of all, because of the complex and varied nature of truth itself. There is a fundamental distinction between real (contingent) and ideal (necessary, or logical) truth. Real truths express or presuppose the existence of something; ideal truths are purely relational. Now it is obvious, says Balmes, that a real truth cannot be the origin of all others, for it expresses a particular, contingent fact. No mere fact of the existence of a person or an object can of itself lead to any other truth unless another fact is established and the two are related. But the discovery of a relation involves generalization, which is a form of ideal truth. Universal and necessary truth is needed to fecundate individual and contingent fact.¹ No one, from the humblest artisan to the greatest philosopher, can reflect on any subject without the help of ideal truths.² Therefore, no real truth, the mere expression of a contingent fact, could possibly be,  

¹0.c., II, 40-42.  
²Here Balmes notes that Descartes could not express his intuition of the relation between thought and existence without appealing to an ideal truth, "Whoever thinks, exists."
by itself, the source of any other truth.

Likewise, no purely ideal truth can be found which is the source of all other truths. If it is true that a fact unrelated to an idea remains "in isolated individuality," an idea apart from a fact is sterile. Geometrical truths may be made to yield new truths within their own sphere; but however complex, they are ultimately nothing more than "sterile combinations of ideas." The union of real and ideal truth produces "positive and useful science in the moral, metaphysical, and physical orders."¹

Despite the impossibility of finding a first principle which is the source of all truth, the various schools of philosophy have nevertheless attempted to discover one. Philosophy needs some final resting-point. If we are asked our reasons for assenting to a given proposition, we cannot go on explaining ad infinitum. But rather than to seek a great and luminous truth which reveals all others, we must seek a truth which, in a more limited sense, will serve as a foundation of knowledge and a criterion of certainty.²

But the schools have been wrong in supposing that there is only one criterion of certainty, for the truths which we perceive correspond to different orders. Each criterion is valid within its own order. Balmes then considers the criteria which have divided the schools. Descartes' principle: _cogito, ergo sum_, or the criterion of consciousness;

¹This point is made more clearly in *Filosofía Elemental* from which it is quoted here. (O.C., III, 276.)
²O.C., II, 37, 88.
the principle of contradiction; and the principle of evidence.¹

He concludes that Descartes' principle is a valid criterion of certainty only within the subjective, purely internal order. It offers us only the certainty of our own existence—our own thoughts, sensations, sentiments, and the acts of our will—"all of which we can say, I experience it." But it cannot be made the criterion of certainty of objective truth, although consciousness is obviously a necessary condition of objective truth. "There is no philosophy without a philosopher, no reason without a rational being; the existence of the subject is, then, a necessary presupposition." Thus, "consciousness is an anchor, but not a beacon."²

Likewise, the criterion of necessity, or the principle of contradiction (a thing cannot be and not be at the same time) is absolutely valid within the ideal order. Yet it is not a fundamental criterion of certainty because it is readily seen to depend upon another criterion—that of clear and distinct ideas, or evidence. For if we are asked, why is it true that a thing cannot be and not be at the same time?, we must answer, because it is evident. In the idea of being, we see most clearly the exclusion of not-being. The principle of contradiction, like all axioms and

¹Ibid., pp. 88, 95, 96.
²Ibid., pp. 43, 90, 106, 138, 139, 209.
laws of logic, is known only by immediate evidence.¹

The principle of evidence (whatever is contained in the clear and distinct idea of anything, may be affirmed of it with all certainty) thus appears to be basic. A truth which is self-evident is one in which the predicate is clearly seen to be contained in the subject. Thus, it is the guarantee of the laws of logic. For whoever denies, for example, that being clearly excludes the idea of not-being, need not be taken seriously. We may say of him, "His intellect is unlike that of other men."²

Once we admit the criterion of evidence, "everything is coordinated in the intellect; an ideal universe, admirably harmonized, takes the place of chaos."³ Nevertheless, we soon encounter a difficulty. So long as we confine this criterion to the ideal order, there can be no objection to it, except on the part of madmen. But when this criterion is applied to the order of existence, as must be done if the principle is to have any meaning and usefulness, many philosophers since Descartes have asked, how do we know that, in the real world, what is evident is true? How can we be certain that things actually are as they appear to be, and that our ideas of things correspond with the objects themselves?⁴

"God is truthful," says Descartes. "He cannot deceive

¹Ibid., pp. 96, 126, 130, 133.
²Ibid., pp. 131-135, 140.
³Ibid., p. 134.
⁴Ibid., p. 142, 143.
While this is undoubtedly true, there is no need for appealing to the supernatural. The fact of our certainty regarding self-evident truths can be explained in a simpler way. Man assents to self-evident truths in the real order—and hence to the objectivity of his ideas—because he has "an incontestable right" to do so. His assent obeys "a law of necessity" which is "at the foundation of reason." "This is the ne plus ultra of human understanding; philosophy can go no farther."¹

This foundation of certainty may be called an "intellectual instinct," or, since it is common to all men, "common sense." This latter term is vague, says Balmes; but, "if the fact is agreed upon, the name is unimportant." Nevertheless, Balmes offers the following definition, although it is neither clear nor complete, as we shall later see. "I believe the expression 'common sense' to denote a law of our mind, apparently differing according to the different cases to which it applies, but in reality and apart from its modifications, only one, always the same, consisting in a natural inclination of our mind to give its assent to some truths not attested by consciousness nor demonstrated by reason, necessary to all men in order to satisfy the wants of sensitive, intellectual and moral life."²

Although we shall return later to the problems involved in this criterion, it must be pointed out that the phrase "some truths" is nowhere clearly defined. The natural

¹Ibid., pp. 143, 145.
²Ibid., pp. 180-192.
inclination to assent, Balmes implies, is present in some way with respect to every type of truth. It is necessary in the case of self-evident truths. And although he says in his definition that it applies to truths "not demonstrated by reason," he says elsewhere that "our understanding necessarily assents, not only to first principles, but also to all propositions clearly connected with them," i.e., those dependent upon mediate evidence. Balmes concludes by pointing out that the intellectual instinct is most necessary in those cases where there is neither immediate evidence nor rational proof. He gives many examples. These are "moral truths," as well as truths which depend upon the testimony of other men (e.g., who doubts the existence of Rome?), and those which are dependent upon the consistency of the laws of nature (e.g., how do we know that the sun will rise tomorrow?). "In all these cases, there is a natural inclination, impelling us to assent."¹

Finally, Balmes attempts to set forth the conditions of "true and never-erring common sense." They are "1) That the inclination be every way irresistible, so that we cannot, even by aid of reflection, resist or avoid it. 2) That every truth of common sense be absolutely certain to the whole human race. 3) That every truth of common sense stand the test of reason. 4) That every truth of common sense have for its object the satisfaction of some great necessity of sensitive, intellectual or moral life."² Here we must note

¹Ibid., pp. 191-194.
²Ibid., p. 195.
two difficulties in Balmes' position. First, he makes common sense subject to the test of reason, although he has previously stated that it is the foundation of reason and in some sense prior to it. Thus, the two criteria are interdependent, but it is not clear in what sense. If each depends upon the other for its validity, the question of priority must be raised eventually.

But Balmes does not see the need for establishing any priority among his criteria; nor does he see the need for clarifying the relations which exist among them. Each is necessary within its own sphere. First, there is the criterion of consciousness which "embraces all facts intimately present to our souls as purely subjective." The principle of contradiction may be included in that of evidence, upon which it depends; and evidence "extends to all objective truths, upon which our reason is exercised." And the intellectual instinct or common sense is a valid criterion for "those cases which lie without the domain of consciousness or evidence."¹ But since there are few truths which can be said to belong exclusively to any of these three orders, Balmes must admit that the criteria are interdependent. They are all exercised simultaneously and harmoniously. "They all mutually affirm and complete each other; for we must note that those truths of which all men are certain do in some sense rest upon all criteria."²

¹Ibid., pp. 202-204.
²Ibid., p. 206.
At the close of this chapter, we shall refer to the difficulties involved in this threefold foundation of knowledge. But before doing so, it is necessary to consider the background and origin of Balmes' thought with regard to the three criteria. We shall begin with the criterion of consciousness.

Descartes' principle, cogito: ergo sum has often been criticized, says Balmes. Many have considered it simply as a compressed syllogism (enthymeme), and a basically defective one. In its complete form, the syllogism would be: "Whatever thinks exists; I think; therefore I am." But the major term is not demonstrable; nor is it admissible for Descartes to assume it, since he presupposes universal doubt. In a veiled form, this syllogism is present in many of Descartes' arguments, says Balmes. Nevertheless, it is obvious that Descartes intended to offer this principle not as an argument but as a statement of a fact known through intuition.

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1 O.C., II, 100. He quotes from Descartes: "There is a contradiction in conceiving that what thinks does not at the same time as it thinks, exist. And hence, this conclusion I think, therefore I am, is the first and most certain of all that occurs to one who philosophises in an orderly way." *Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, Principle VII. (The Philosophical Works of Descartes, tr. Haldane and Ross, Cambridge, 1911, I, 221.)

2 O.C., II, 101. Descartes denies that his principle is known through syllogistic reasoning: "He who says, 'I think, hence I am, or exist;' does not deduce existence from thought by a syllogism, but, by a simple act of mental vision, recognizes it as if it were a thing that is known per se." Reply to Objection II, no. 3. (II, 36.)
By it, he meant simply that the sense of my thought makes me know my existence.

But the discovery of this fact, says Balmes, was not so significant as Descartes supposed. First of all, his method of discovering it was by no means unique. Methodical doubt is in some sense necessary in every argument. Descartes assumed the uncertainty of the proposition "I think" in order to demonstrate it, as all philosophers do in certain arguments.\(^1\) Moreover, when Descartes concluded that he could not doubt his own consciousness and made this fact the basis of his science, he did nothing unique. All ideological labors begin by establishing the fact that we are conscious of our ideas; this is a fact which even the sensationalists must admit. Descartes expressed the principle with great simplicity and clarity; therein lies its virtue. But, like all reformers, he exaggerated the significance of his discovery.\(^2\)

With regard to the criterion of clear and distinct ideas, or the principle of evidence, it is likewise apparent that Balmes was not a true Cartesian. He did not share Descartes' distrust of the senses and he did not employ his rigorous mathematical method. But above all, he differed from Descartes in that he did not recognize the unique role of intuition in the apprehension of self-evident truths.

\(^1\)He quotes the passage in which Descartes agrees with his critics that his doubt is fictitious. Reply to Objection II, no. 1. (Ibid., p. 32)

\(^2\)O.C., II, 52, 104-108.
"Upon close examination," he says, "we shall easily perceive that the formula of the Cartesians merely expresses the legitimacy of the criterion of evidence."

Thus, Descartes' belief in the importance of inner certitude meant little to Balmes.

Balmes is chiefly interested in the logical functioning of the principle of evidence. He wishes to defend the validity of the scholastic concept of immediate and mediate evidence. According to Aquinas "a truth can be accepted as evident either in itself or through another truth," either through immediate or mediate evidence. Evidence is immediate when the relation between subject and predicate is immediately apprehended. Evidence is mediate when a "middle term" (a common term of comparison between subject and predicate) must be employed in order to demonstrate the truthfulness of a proposition. Demonstration by mediate evidence is synonymous with reasoning or discursion. But whether a proposition is immediately or medately evident, the predicate is truly contained in the subject. It is only because our minds are relatively feeble that we cannot immediately perceive the identity of the terms of a complex proposition.

The validity of this scholastic doctrine is challenged by Kant, says Balmes, for he asserts that in the ideal order

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1 Ibid., p. 131.
2 Summa, I-II, 57, 2.
there are no "analytic"\(^1\) (self-evident or per se notae) propositions except the simplest axioms. The scholastics, as we have just seen, taught precisely the opposite doctrine: that all necessary, or ideal, truths are either self-evident or medially evident. Or, if they had used Kantian terminology, they would have said: All a priori judgments are in some sense analytic, for the predicate is contained in the subject even though the identity is not immediately apparent. But for Kant, all meaningful, informative statements (except for axioms, which to him are tautologies) in the ideal order are purely synthetic, i.e., blind combinations of unrelated elements. Now it is true—and to this scholastics agree—that an element of synthesis is involved in all demonstrative reasoning; but the demonstration of ideal truths is essentially analytic. The scholastics consider to be purely synthetic only those propositions which are verifiable in experience, such as that which Kant gives as an example: "All bodies are heavy."\(^2\) But all logical and necessary truths are analytical.\(^3\)

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\(^1\)Kant distinguishes between analytic and synthetic judgments in the following way: "Analytic judgments (affirmative) are therefore those in which the connection of the predicate with the subject in thought through identity; those in which the connection is thought without identity should be entitled synthetic." (Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, tr. Norman Kemp Smith, London, 1929, Introduction, section 4, p. 48.)

\(^2\)Kant, loc. cit.

\(^3\)O.c., II, 117-119.
The falseness of Kant's position is apparent, says Balmes; for he will not even admit that arithmetical judgments are analytical. Kant says that if we look closely at a simple proposition such as seven plus five equals twelve, we find "that the concept of the sum of seven plus five contains nothing save the union of the two numbers into one, and in this, no thought is being taken as to what that single number may be which combines them both." Now it is true, says Balmes, that in this proposition, the perception of identity is not immediate, but it does not follow that the proposition is therefore synthetic rather than analytical. Explanations suffice to demonstrate the identity of the terms. 

Although Balmes' refutation of Kant is supported by arithmetical demonstrations which cannot be summarized here, his basic argument is simple. All analytical judgments are

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1 Balmes quotes here from the Critique of Pure Reason (Introduction, section 5, p. 52). He does not make clear that Kant believed that the certainty of the proposition seven plus five equals twelve depended on the actual process of counting, which in turn depended upon sensible intuition rather than conceptual analysis. Many modern critics consider Kant's insistence upon the purely synthetic nature of arithmetical judgments to be a highly debatable point, or even a serious defect in his system. Cf. Norman Kemp Smith, A Commentary to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, London, 1923, pp. 39, 42. Also, H. W. Cassirer, Kant's First Critique, London, 1954, pp. 116, 117; and H. J. Paton, Kant's Metaphysics of Experience, London, 1936, i, 89.

2 C.C., II, 165 ff.
nothing more than the breaking down of conceptions, simple or complicated, into their component parts and restoring them to their original unity. The employing of a "middle term" in order to explain the identity does not alter the analytical character of the proposition. The difference between a simple axiom (e.g., "the whole is greater than its parts," which Kant admits to be analytical) and the most complex geometrical problems is only one of degree of complexity. Thus, "it may be inferred that all judgments in the purely ideal order are analytical, since every cognition of this order is obtained by the intuition of whatever is involved, to a greater or lesser degree, in the conception. There is no more synthesis than is necessary to bring the objects together, by uniting their conceptions in one total conception, which in turn serves for the discovery of the relation of the partial concepts." Thus, concludes Balmes, the capacity of the human mind to unite conceptions of different things in a total conception, and to discover in it their mutual relations, is not a serious problem for philosophy, as Kant would imply. The rational powers of the human soul are not "mysterious," but an

1. His psychological analysis of this process is very detailed, but essentially clear: "The intellect distinguishes between identical things, and then compares them in order to make them again identical." (O.C., II, 141.)

2. Ibid., p. 172.
By attacking the validity of Kant's views with regard to mathematical judgments, it is apparent that Balmes intended to call into question Kant's concept of a priori synthetic judgments in metaphysics. He implies this when he says that "perhaps" Kant's erroneous concept of causality originates in a faulty understanding of mathematical judgments. He promises to return to the problem in the final book (Book Ten) but does not do so. For the moment, he is content to demonstrate that the transition from self-evident propositions to those which are immediately evident is in no sense mysterious or arbitrary. This method of discussion, which was the foundation of scholastic philosophy and theology, was believed to yield true knowledge of God and the universe. Hence it was of crucial importance to defend it. Balmes does not here face the difficulties involved in Kant's belief that the truth of a priori synthetic propositions is limited to the world of experience. Balmes raises

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1Ibid. He refers here to the passage in the Critique of Pure Reason that there is an unknown element (X) "which gives support to the understanding when it believes that it can discover outside the concept A a predicate B foreign to this concept, which it yet at the same time considers to be connected with it." In the case of arithmetical judgments the X is supplied by intuition. (Introduction, section 4, p. 51, and section 5, p. 53.)

2Cf. Cassirer, loc. cit., "If it be asked whether Kant is justified in contending that his doctrine of analytic and synthetic judgments is of crucial importance for his philosophy as a whole, our decision cannot but be influenced, to a considerable extent, by the view we take of the tenability of his theory of mathematics."

3O.c., II, 171.
this problem in his ideology, as we shall later see, but he does not attempt to solve it in Kant's own terms.

The common sense criterion in Balmes' epistemology is sometimes traced to the influence of a group of Catalan philosophers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who were supposed to have been influenced by Thomas Reid (1710-1796). But the group had no significant influence on Balmes, for he does not mention them in his philosophical writings. Moreover, any influence of the Scottish School on Balmes would most likely have been through Balmes' own reading of Reid and Dugald Stewart. There are several references to both of them in his writings. The references to Reid are very general, and those to Stewart are in connection with mathematics. Balmes was well acquainted with the works of Jouffroy, whose translations of Reid and Stewart were well-known in France at the time of Balmes' visits to Paris. It is almost certain that Balmes' quotations from Stewart (translated by him into Spanish) were from French translations, since he knew little English.

1 Casanovas mentions this common supposition but does not support it (p. 498). Because of the relative insignificance of the Catalan philosophers, the principal historians do not consider the problem to be very important. Sr. Angel Salcedo thinks there was similarity of ideas, but no direct imitation of the Scottish School. (Salcedo Ruiz, IV, 127.)

2 Cf. O.C., III, 508; II, 187.

3 O.C., V, 280.

4 Balmes quotes from Stewart's Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind (Part I, ch. II, section 3).
But with regard to his idea of common sense, Balme acknowledges no indebtedness either to Reid or Stewart. In a brief paragraph on Reid, he implies that the latter was greatly indebted to the Jesuit philosopher, Claude Buffier (1661-1737) for his doctrine of common sense. It is quite likely that, if Balme had been indebted to Reid, he would have been reluctant to acknowledge it, since Reid was a Presbyterian clergyman. In only one instance does Balme point to the possible origin of his thought. In his chapter on common sense, he says that "a serious author" has held the same doctrine of common sense. In the note at the close of the chapter, he says that this author is Penelon, and quotes a brief passage from De l'Existence de Dieu.

1Reid made frequent references to Buffier. Cf. Thomas Reid, Essays on the Powers of the Human Mind, Edinburgh, 1803, II, 237, 408. There is a long quotations from Buffier's Traité des premiers Vérités. Dugald Stewart, in his Introduction to the aforementioned edition of Reid's work, acknowledges Buffier as "one of the first writers who introduced the phrase common sense into the technical or appropriate language of logic." (I, cxvi.)

2O.C., II, 197.

3Cf. Oeuvres Philosophiques de Fénélon, Paris, 1845: De l'Existence de Dieu, Seconde Partie, ch. 1, p. 92 ff. The reference to common sense is curious, for it is not a characteristic idea of Fénélon. Fénélon believed in the instinctive nature of reason: "la raison est le fond de notre nature même," (p. 99). But he is essentially Cartesian: "S'il Dieu avait fait ma raison fausse et incapable de connaître la vérité, il l'aurait faite essentiellement mauvaise; et par conséquent serait mauvais lui-même," (p. 101). One may conjecture that in the text Balme actually referred to Reid when he mentioned "a serious author." For Reid was widely known as the philosopher of common sense. But Balme perhaps thought it more prudent not to acknowledge a Protestant source of a doctrine that was in itself open to criticism.
The question, however, is whether there is any resemblance between the views of Balmes and those of Reid regarding the principle of common sense, as it is frequently asserted. Since neither attempts a clear definition of the term, the comparison is difficult. Balmes believed that the definition mattered little "so long as the fact is agreed upon." Reid said that "sense, in its most common, and therefore most proper meaning, signifies judgment. From this it is natural to think that common sense should mean common judgment, and so it really does." But "what the precise limits are which divide common judgment from what is beyond it on one hand, and from what falls short of it on the other, may be difficult to determine."

There are interesting parallels in their development of the idea of common sense. For both, it is a kind of instinct, but ultimately of divine origin. "This inward light or sense is given by Heaven." Similarly, Balmes says, "It is a precious gift, which the Creator has given us to make us reasonable before we reason." Reid quotes a saying of Hobbes, "When reason is against a man, a man will be against reason," and comments, "This is equally applicable to common sense." Balmes says that if a man makes extravagant assertions,

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1 Cf. Encyclopaedia Espasa-Calpe, VII, 303, "Balmes."
2 O.C., II, 190.
3 Reid, II, 236, 237.
4 Ibid., p. 234.
5 O.C., II, 93.
6 Reid, II, 245.
"common sense is against him." There are many other parallels with respect to the dependence of society upon common sense, the conformity of common sense to reason, the role of common sense in sense-perception and in our conviction that the external world is real.

While Reid did not attempt to define common sense, he nevertheless limited its function. Reason has two offices, he says—"to judge of things self-evident," and to draw conclusions from self-evident propositions. "The first of these is the province, and the sole province, of common sense." Balmes is not similarly clear, as we have seen. Common sense operates in every sphere, but particularly where there is "neither demonstration nor evidence."

The most significant difference between Reid and Balmes is that the latter makes no positive or creative application of the criterion of common sense, whereas Reid spent a lifetime attempting to formulate the common sense beliefs of men. While he did not claim finality for his "common sense principles," and realized that differences of opinion

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1 O.C., II, 190.
2 O.C., II, 192; Reid, I, cxv.
3 O.C., II, 19; Reid, II, 245.
4 O.C., II, 227. The application of common sense principles to the problems of sensation and perception was the theme of Reid's first book, Cf. An Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense, Edinburgh, 1810.
were inevitable, he nevertheless believed that, by examining their common convictions in every sphere, men might be brought into agreement. "Nature hath not left us destitute of means whereby the candid and honest part of mankind may be brought to unanimity when they happen to differ about first principles." ¹

As we have noted, Balmes subjects the common sense criterion to conditions which are impossible to fulfill, so that common sense, either individually or collectively, is virtually useless as a test of certainty. This becomes particularly clear in Balmes' criticism of the traditionalist doctrine of the sensus communis. The criterion of popular agreement, says Balmes, is "exceedingly difficult if not wholly impossible." For "how are the suffrages of all mankind to be recognized?" And to what extent "would the simple non-assent of some destroy the legitimacy of the criterion?" ² This failure to draw any positive conclusions from the common sense principle distinguishes Balmes very sharply from Reid, although it is quite likely that the general ideas of intellectual instinct and common sense were suggested to him by the Scottish School.

III. IDEOLOGY

In his criteriology, Balmes attempted to answer the

¹Reid, II, 293.
²C.C., II, 199.
question, how can we be certain that our means of cognition are valid? He establishes three criteria or tests of the reliability of our knowledge—the inner testimony of consciousness, the objective proof of immediate and mediate evidence, and the primitive witness of the intellectual instinct. Having demonstrated that certain knowledge is possible, Balmes attempts to explain the origin of knowledge. His first object is that of determining the respective roles of sense-perception and intellectual activity in cognition.

He begins by pointing out the two extremes reached by modern philosophy: radical empiricism, or sensationalism, which holds that all ideas can be explained as transformed sensations; and extreme idealism, which limits all cognition to the sphere of the mind. Despite these extravagant opinions, says Balmes, experience and reason convince us that there is a real communication between the internal and the external world. For Balmes, the sensation is an "internal affection" immediately experienced by the subject and accompanied by the instinctive certainty that the object of our perception truly exists. A comparison of the quality of our sensations when we dream and when we are awake, must convince us that only when we are awake are our sensations produced by real objects. This instinct

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1Balmes refutes Condillac at great length, although he was aware that extreme sensationalism was no longer in vogue.

2O.C., II, 442.

3Ibid., p. 211.

4Ibid., p. 225.
which impels us to attribute our sensations to external objects is confirmed by reason.¹

Although we are inwardly certain of the communication between the self and the real world, the process by which our knowledge is formed cannot ultimately be comprehended or defined. Nevertheless, it can be described, albeit imperfectly. The following statement expresses Balmes' general view of cognition, although he did not intend it as a formula: "The origin of all cognition is in the senses, these being the exciting causes of the intellectual activity, and a kind of laborers who supply it with materials, which it then combines in the manner necessary to raise the scientific structure."² The description is metaphorical rather than scientific. Balmes' ideology is, for the most part, a defense of this theory of the origin of knowledge. It is not, however, a complete or orderly exposition. The book, On Ideas, is a series of loosely related epistemological essays. Nevertheless, there are three lines of thought which are of particular interest: 1) Scholastic teaching with regard to the origin of knowledge. 2) The basic agreement between Kant and Aquinas with regard to the origin of knowledge. 3) Their profound disagreement with respect to the scope and validity of knowledge. 4) Balmes' proofs of

¹Ibid., p. 234, 235. There is a well-developed argument based upon our awareness of two types of sensation: 1) Those of the "active imagination" which we ourselves can direct, and 2) Passive sensations which are dependent upon natural phenomena. In the latter case, we are fully aware that the outer phenomena depend upon natural laws of cause and effect, and that the sensations do not exist simply within our own minds.

²O.c., II, 442.
the objective validity of our knowledge of the real world.

Before considering Balmes' views on Thomist epistemology, it is necessary to give a brief summary of Aquinas' theory of the origin of knowledge. His theory was essentially Aristotelian. All knowledge originates with the senses and is acted upon by the intellect in the following way. External objects produce an image in the internal senses (species sensibilis impressa). These images are in turn preserved by the sense imagination as phantasmata, or "memory images." This part of cognition we may call sensory cognition; it is a material process. But the transition from matter to mind is somewhat more difficult to explain. Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that "a corporeal thing cannot impress itself on an uncorporeal thing" and that therefore a "higher and nobler force" is required to make the transition from sense-perception to concept. This is the acting intellect (intellectus agens) which illuminates the sense image and "by a process of abstraction" transforms it into a concept, or idea (species intelligibilis expressa).

Aristotle attempted to find a middle way between the materialistic philosophers of nature, such as Democritus, who held that knowledge is explained by the emanation of "copies" of objects which make an impact upon the atoms of the mind; and Plato, who held that the intellect is a wholly spiritual power, independent of sense-perception. This problem is discussed by Aquinas in the Summa, I, 84, 6 (I, 519, 520).

These aspects of perception are treated in the Summa, I, 78, 4 (I, 477, 478).

Cf. Summa, I, 84, 6 (I, 519, 520).
Balmes comments on this theory, and emphasizes the importance of the scholastic distinction between image and concept. The scholastics drew a clear "dividing line between intellect and imagination." Descartes and Malebranche respected it. Locke began to efface it, and Condillac obliterated it. The objective validity of knowledge cannot be defended unless the line is maintained. Balmes appeals to inner experience to demonstrate the accuracy of the scholastics in distinguishing between image and concept. We are constantly aware of images even in thinking of abstractions. Infinite intelligence we may imagine as a sea of light; immensity is unlimited extension. But, though imagination always accompanies ideas, it is not itself the idea. This we can easily demonstrate by asking ourselves, when we imagine a sea of light in connection with eternity, is this eternity? We are convinced that it is not. "All this demonstrates the existence of an idea which has no connection with representations, and essentially excludes what is contained in them."  

Balmes then comments on the "ingenuity" of the Aristotelian doctrine of the acting intellect. This faculty was an "invention" of Aristotle to explain the communication between sensation and understanding. The sense image, although it is somewhat purified from the grossness of the external senses, cannot enter the intellectual order until

1 loc., II, 420.
2 Ibid., p. 421.
it becomes more aerial and pure. Unintelligible objects must be rendered intelligible. Thus, a "mediator" is required, which is the acting intellect. This faculty "possesses the wonderful secret of stripping sensible species of their material conditions, of smoothing every roughness which prevents their coming in contact with pure understanding, and transforms the gross food of the sensitive faculties into the purest ambrosia." This theory, says Balmes, should be called "ingenious rather than extravagant, poetical rather than ridiculous." It involves a profound philosophical sense. Moreover, it is the only satisfactory way of explaining a very important, but mysterious ideological fact—the relation of the intelligence to the sensible world.¹

Balmes then attempts to demonstrate Kant's basic agreement with scholastic epistemology. Lest he "be accused of levity in comparing Kant's philosophy with that of the schools," he quotes large excerpts from the Transcendental Aesthetics and the Transcendental Logic.² Among them is the well-known passage from the introduction to the Transcendental Logic: "Thoughts without contents are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. It is, therefore, just as necessary

¹Ibid., pp. 432-434. Nevertheless, Balmes is elsewhere highly critical of certain details in the Aristotelian epistemology. He believed that the species intelligibilis, which the scholastics believed to be created by the abstracting powers of the acting intellect, was an unnecessary complication, since the real nature of the transition from object to mind cannot be known, but only described. Balmes held, along with later scholastics, such as Suárez, that our knowledge of particulars is direct. (O.C., II, 471, 473.)

²O.C., II, 434.
to make our concepts sensible...as to make our intuitions intelligible...These two powers or capacities cannot exchange their functions. The understanding can intuit nothing, the senses can think nothing. Only through their union can knowledge arise. But that is no reason for confounding the contribution of either with that of the other; rather it is a strong reason for carefully separating and distinguishing one from the other."

Balmes notes here the sharp distinction between sensation and concept, and the distinct functions of sense and intellect in cognition. This is the essential agreement between Kant and the scholastics to which Balmes refers. But he draws numerous parallels, including the comparison of Kant's sensible intuition and concept to the species sensibilis and the species intelligibilis of the scholastics.\(^1\)

Though Kant agrees with the scholastics as to how we know, says Balmes, there is no similar agreement as to what we know. Beginning with the same facts as the scholastics, Kant "destroys metaphysical science by taking from it all power to know objects in themselves."\(^2\) He quotes numerous passages from the Transcendental Logic in which Kant asserts or implies that the noumenal world is

\(^1\)Kant, p. 93.

\(^2\)Ibid., II, 437, 438.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 441.
unintelligible. "It would be hard to find a more noxious doctrine," says Balmes. He finds Kant's idealism very similar to that of Berkeley and equally conducive to scepticism.

Balmes concludes his exposition of Kant by observing that "careful, assiduous, and profound labor" is needed to refute the doctrine of the German philosopher, but that he will not undertake to do so "step by step," for "the understanding is not satisfied with negations." It is far more important to build up than to tear down. Balmes then presents a series of arguments defending the objective validity of our knowledge of the real world. The arguments are varied and are often well developed in themselves. But the chief weakness is that they adhere to no central point.

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1Cf., "Therefore all concepts, and with them all principles, even such as are possible a priori, relate to empirical intuitions, that is to say, in general, they have no objective validity, and in this respect their representations are merely the play of the imagination or of understanding." (Kant, p. 259.)

2O.C., II, 445.

3Ibid., p. 440. Balmes quotes a brief passage from the second edition of the Transcendental Aesthetic, in which Kant defends himself from the charge of scepticism (Kant, pp. 38, 39). Balmes says he will not decide whether Kant's refutation is a retraction or a contradiction. (O.C., II, 347.)

4Ibid., p. 446. There are further references to Kant with respect to the concept of reality and negation (Book V, ch. 13), time (Book VII, ch. 13), substance (Book IX, ch. 10), and possibility (Book III, ch. 17). Of these, the reference last mentioned is the most thorough, although largely negative. He demonstrates that Kant's position is conducive to scepticism as to the existence of a real world, and not merely with regard to the possibility of knowing it.
There is a psychological argument. Consciousness is, by its very nature, the experience of communication between the real and the ideal orders; to doubt the reality of the communication is to doubt our own consciousness.\(^1\) This argument is difficult to reconcile with his criteriological position that consciousness tells us nothing certain with respect to the external order.\(^2\) The discrepancy could perhaps be explained by noting that Balmes carefully distinguishes between our knowledge of the nature of the real world, and our awareness of its existence. "The mind may not know the nature of this reality, but it knows for certain that it exists."\(^3\)

There is an argument which involves a distinction between incomplete and indeterminate conceptions. The former refer to something real, imperfectly known; the latter are purely logical and relational, having no validity in the order of existence. Kant says that our a priori judgments belong to the latter class. Balmes holds that they belong to the former: our knowledge of the world is positive and real, though incomplete.\(^4\) In this and similar arguments, Balmes relies too heavily upon the scholastic method of

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 456 ff.

\(^2\)Cf. "Consciousness is so limited to the purely internal, that it is of itself worth nothing in the external order..." Ibid., p. 139.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 458.

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 459.
"distinguishing" between similar concepts. For once the distinction is made, he does not always defend his own concept, but rather asserts it dogmatically. Finally, Balmes often argues that knowledge of the real world is not impossible; and implies that therefore we do possess such knowledge. Despite these defects, there is considerable vigor and eloquence in his arguments, and their apologetical, rather than purely philosophical, value can be readily admitted.

Balmes reinforces the argument referred to in the former paragraph with a reference to the scholastic doctrine of the scale of being. Only God can have perfect and intuitive knowledge of the universe; our knowledge is conceptual and therefore imperfect, but nevertheless real. Balmes is apparently aware of the excessive rationalism of the scholastic arguments, for in the following chapter he presents an argument which contrasts sharply with them. The human soul, he says, aspires to something far beyond itself in the intellectual order. But we see the same phenomenon with regard to sentiment and will, particularly in man's response to nature.

"When man comes in contact with nature herself...he experiences...a foretaste of the infinite...Go into an uninhabited region and sit down by the seaside...Abandon yourself to the spontaneous movements of your soul, and you will see how sentiments...elevate it above itself and

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1Ibid., p. 460.
2Ibid., p. 464.
absorb it, as it were, in immensity. The soul's individuality
vanishes from its own eyes, as it feels the harmony presiding
over that immense creation of which it forms but a most in-
significant part."¹ The argument is intended to show that
because we have "infinite longings," we cannot believe that
the world of experience is ultimate reality. But the argu-
ment is presented in the language of pantheistic mysticism
which implies the ultimate identity of the individual and
the infinite. This sudden outburst of romanticism is not
integrated with Balmes' basic rationalism.

The remaining arguments may be summarized briefly.
There is an argument based on an analogy. Our knowledge
of the ordinary objects of every day experience is imperfect,
and yet it never occurs to us to doubt the existence of these
objects. We should be equally willing to believe in the
reality of a world which transcends sense-experience, even
though our knowledge of it is incomplete.² The following
argument is repeated in different ways: If the objects of
our cognitions are ultimately unknowable, all intellectual
activity becomes a mockery.³ There are several appeals to
common sense, usually at the conclusion of other arguments.
The reality of the communication between known and unknown
is "so evident, so rooted in the consciousness of our own
acts, so perfectly in accord with all that we observe in the
proceedings of the human mind that it causes us a strange

¹Ibid., pp. 466, 467.
²Ibid., p. 460.
³Ibid., pp. 462, 463, 489.
surprise to meet philosophers whose erroneous doctrines
oblige us to explain and defend it. This passage is a good
example of Balmes' frequent appeal to the common sense prin-
ciple as a dogmatic conclusion of an argument. 1

Towards the close of the ideology, there are a number
of essays which return to Balmes' original theme, the ori-
gin of knowledge. Geometrical and non-geometrical concepts
are compared in order to clarify the difference between
image and idea; 2 the roles of imagination and conception
are analyzed in relation to artistic creativity. 3 The
Cartesian concept of innate ideas is refuted; our sensory
and intellectual faculties which produce ideas are innate,
but not the ideas themselves. 4 The traditionalist theory
of the origin of language is criticized. 5 Finally, there
is a reference to the concept of universal reason in which
there appears to be a Platonic or Augustinian note. "The
reason of all man is united by the infinite intelligence; God, then, is in us." "The intimate communication of the
finite with the infinite is one of the most certain truths
of metaphysics." "One same light illuminates all finite
intelligence: this is God, their Creator." 6 These passages

2 Ibid., pp. 418, 419, 424, 425, 468.
3 Ibid., pp. 469, 470.
5 Ibid., pp. 492, 493.
6 Ibid., pp. 496, 487, 491.
suggest a tempering of Balmes' extreme rationalism. But he
draws no epistemological conclusions from these "sublime and
consoling thoughts." He staunchly maintains up to the con-
clusion of his ideology that our conceptions of reality are
the result of discursion rather than intuition. ¹

IV. CRITIQUE

There are two basic problems in Balmes' epistemology:
1) The legitimacy of the common sense criterion, and 2) the
function of each of the three criteria. With regard to the
first problem, it has already been noted that common sense
may scarcely be regarded as a true criterion of certainty.
The fact that all men hold certain basic beliefs is not, in
itself, a proof of the truthfulness of these beliefs. For,
as Balmes says, there is no way of determining precisely
what these beliefs are; and even if this were possible,
the beliefs would still be subject to the test of reason.
It may be wondered why Balmes placed so great stress upon
this dubious criterion of knowledge. His reasons for doing
so are more clear in other of Balmes' works than in Filosofía
Fundamental. Common sense and the intellectual instinct
provided Balmes with a convenient philosophical basis for
urging assent to religious dogma.

In chapter V of El Protestantismo, Balmes refers to
"the instinct of faith," which is not only a natural

¹Ibid., pp. 463, 502.
inclination to believe, but a tendency to submit to authority in secular as well as religious matters. Reliance upon authority is necessary because human reason is "intrinsically weak." Thus, like fideists and traditionalists, Balmes appeals to the authority of revelation in urging assent to religious truth; but he attempts to ground this assent in a natural psychological principle—the intellectual instinct, or the natural inclination of the human mind to assent to the basic truths of existence.

The second problem—that of the functioning of the three criteria—must likewise be seen in relation to the larger theological problem of Faith and Reason. Since Balmes does not clarify in what sphere each criterion is ultimately valid, there is but one epistemological conclusion to be drawn from his work: All knowledge is in some way dependent upon the spontaneous assent of the subject, and yet to some degree it is the product of reflective thought. If Balmes was unable to make a more positive or significant contribution to the solution of the problem of certitude, it was in part because his theological position with regard to religious knowledge was not well defined.

Nowhere in his writings does Balmes face clearly the problem of Faith and Reason, although he touches upon it briefly in El Protestantismo. He attempts to define the respective areas in which faith and reason operate. They belong, says Balmes, to two different levels of existence.

1 O.C., IV, 56.
2 Ibid., p. 65.
Philosophy and theology are like "two spheres, both very large, occupying different positions in the immensity of space." Men wish to bring the two spheres together, so that the light of reason may "penetrate the region of incomprehensible mysteries." The Church has "tolerated" this attempt, but regards it as ultimately useless. To faith belong the questions of the nature of God, man's origin and destiny, and above all, questions of morals and ethics. With regard to these matters, reason has contributed nothing. The proper sphere of reason, and that in which it has made a great contribution, is our understanding of the material world.¹

But Balmes does not maintain this sharp distinction between rational and revealed knowledge. Reason is exceedingly weak, but it is nevertheless capable of discerning truth from error in "lofty metaphysical matters."² The highest object of philosophy is to attain "knowledge of God."³ Balmes frequently wavers in his estimate of the comparative importance of reason and revelation. This was because he found it necessary to combat two types of enemies, whom he refers to in "Letters to a Sceptic:" "If Kant has placed too severe limitations upon reason, others have exaggerated the force of reason and have attempted to explain the entire universe in terms of reason alone."⁴ Thus when he

¹Ibid., p. 728; also III, 533-537.
²O.C., V, 335.
³O.C., III, 378.
⁴O.C., V, 336.
combats the rationalists, Balmes is inclined to minimize the powers of reason and appeals to faith and revelation. When he refutes Kant and the Kantian idealists, he tends to exalt the powers of reason and the validity of the knowledge which reason yields, above all, our knowledge of God and ultimate reality. But Balmes offers no clear solution to the problem of Faith and Reason, and his uncertainty in this respect is reflected in his epistemology; for he cannot describe clearly the respective roles of reason and intellectual instinct in cognition.

A further weakness of Balmes' philosophy, and that which is most readily admitted even by his defenders, is its lack of unity. Menéndez Pelayo, whom Casanovas calls "the most illustrious extoller of Balmes,"¹ says: "It is true that he had greater powers of analysis than synthesis, more dialectical vigor and polemical dexterity than unity of philosophical conception; more strength in criticism than in affirmation. Thus, he left in his philosophy many gaps and contradictions which detract somewhat from its systematic value." "Balmes was—let us not be afraid to admit it—an eclectic philosopher."² Also, the American Roman Catholic apologist, Orestes Brownson (1803-1876), who called Balmes "one of the greatest writers and profoundest

¹Casanovas, p. 502.
thinkers of Spain, and indeed of our times," nevertheless criticizes Balmes' "syncretism." "He recognizes no philosophical formula which embraces the whole subject matter of philosophy, and does not appear to be aware that the primum philosophicum is, and must be synthesis."¹

Balmes failed to see the need of finding a clear point-of-view and holding to it consistently. At the close of his criteriology, he explains why he has approached the problem of certainty from many points-of-view: "The philosophy which considers man only under a single aspect is incomplete and in danger of becoming false:...to become excessively exclusive is to place oneself on the brink of error."² But this laudable purpose of avoiding exclusiveness did not excuse him from the task of reconciling conflicting elements in his philosophy. He seems not to have been aware of the tremendous difficulties involved in adapting scholasticism to modern philosophical thought. He points to certain incompatibilities and refutes specific modern ideas—often basic issues, as in the case of Kant. But rather than a broad and general comprehension of the problems of philosophy, he had a fragmentary knowledge of many schools, and thus did not know how to relate ideas except in specific problems. His work often reveals original and careful thinking as well as clear insights into specific problems.

¹Orestes Brownson, introduction to Fundamental Philosophy by Rev. James Balmes, tr. Henry F. Brownson, New York, 1856, I, ix. (The translator was the son of the apologist.)

²O.C., II, 204, 205.
Yet Balmes is not gripped by any of his best ideas in such a way as to bring them to fruition.

Thus, it is not difficult to explain why so few critics have found in Balmes' work purely philosophical values of the highest order. His philosophy has been praised largely for its incidental values, as we shall presently see. Of more than 250 bibliographical items on Balmes, which are listed in Casanovas' Catalan biography, only sixteen deal with specifically philosophical themes. Some of these are monographs, but they are mostly brief articles. Among philosophers of international reputation, only one--Cardinal Mercier--has expounded Balmes' ideas with any degree of thoroughness. Casanovas laments that, although Balmes is widely acclaimed as a philosopher, few have read him with

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1Casanovas, I, xxxix to lvi. Cf. Basilio de Rubí, II, xxv, xxvii. There are several articles mentioned here which have appeared since 1932.

2Founder and first director of the Institut de Philosophie at Louvain. The Institut was the first home of the neo-scholastic movement at the close of the nineteenth century.

3D. Mercier, Critériologie Générale, Louvain, 1900, pp. 89-102. Mercier gives a detailed account of Balmes' criterionology. His view of Balmes is generally favorable, although he describes his position as "exaggerated dogmatism." He notes minor technical deficiencies and a confusion of ontological and logical orders in Balmes' three criteria. His chief criticism is the following: "Dans la thèorie de Balmès, le point vulnérable est la foi à un instinct rationnel auquel devrait obéir l'intelligence sans avoir l'évidence pour guide." (p. 102.) Mercier does not take into account Balmes' numerous statements that the intellectual instinct is guided by reason.
care. He points to the many editions of his works, the numerous translations (English, French, German, Italian) of Filosofía Fundamental and El Criterio. Despite this apparent enthusiasm for his philosophical writings, asks Casanovas, why has no significant book ever been written on Balmes' philosophy?

Among the secondary, or incidental, merits of Balmes as a philosopher, the following are the most frequently mentioned: 1) His importance as a restorer of scholasticism. 2) His stimulating effect upon Spanish thought. 3) His contribution to the enrichment of Spanish thought through contact with Europe. 4) The practical value of his philosophical writings, particularly as a basis for Roman Catholic apologetics.

With few exceptions, the critics of Balmes' philosophy consider him a restorer of scholasticism and a precursor of the late nineteenth century neo-scholastics. In the profoundest sense, Balmes was not a restorer of scholasticism.

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1Casanovas, p. 500.

2A notable exception is Menéndez y Pelayo, who sees Balmes as a continuer of the Spanish eclecticism which began with Juan Luis Vives in the sixteenth century and culminated in Peñalba two centuries later. Menéndez y Pelayo has difficulty in explaining the fact that Balmes has little regard for the Spanish philosophers who were supposed to have been his predecessors. Cf. Menéndez y Pelayo, Estudios y Discursos, pp. 216, 217.

He does not deliberately attempt to restore scholasticism as a system of philosophy. Although he was "deeply devoted" to Aquinas, as his biographer says, he did not take a comprehensive view of his philosophy or attempt to "re-create" his thought for the nineteenth century. Indeed, Balmes never defines his general attitude toward the scholastics. Certain doctrines he accepts in a metaphorical sense; others he apparently accepts without criticism or adaptation (e.g., the doctrine of the unity of the divine essence). Frequently he is non-committal.

Although he did not attempt a genuine restoration of scholasticism, Balmes nevertheless attempted to revive many elements of scholastic philosophy. It has been pointed out that the basis of his logic was solidly scholastic. The strongest element of his critériology (the criterion of evidence) is interpreted in the scholastic sense. The ideology is scholastic in its predominant intellectualism, its emphasis upon the respective roles of sense-perception and intellectual activity, and its insistence upon the intelligibility of the real world.

Throughout the *Filosofía Fundamental*, Balmes acts as a kind of "publicist" for the scholastics. Large passages from the *Summa Theologica* are quoted for the benefit of "the

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1 M. de Wulf gives two essential principles of neo-scholasticism: 1) That it uphold a body of traditional doctrines. 2) That it adapt them to modern intellectual needs and conditions. (M. de Wulf, *Scholasticism Old and New*, tr. P. Coffey, Dublin, 1910, pp. 150, 153.)

2 E.g., "St. Thomas' theory of intelligibility may be more or less solid; but in either case it shows considerable ingenuity." (O.C., II, 76, 77.)
friends of solid and profound metaphysics;"¹ a great many scholastic doctrines are explained with modern terminology. Balmes frequently points out that certain supposedly modern ideas were stated originally by the scholastics.² Even though there is no real "adaptation to modern intellectual conditions," Balmes was the first nineteenth century philosopher who attempted to "popularize" scholasticism, however inadequately. Thus, it is not wholly inappropriate to call him a precursor of neo-scholasticism.³

Critics frequently refer to the stimulating effect of Balmes' work on Spanish philosophy. Ganivet considered his philosophy fresh and original in "form and approach."⁴ Menéndez y Pelayo believed he was the only Spanish philosopher of the past century who stimulated people to think for themselves.⁵ Miguel de Unamuno considered Balmes a mediocre philosopher, but he wrote in 1912: "I cannot deny that Balmes contributed as much as, or more than, anyone else to

¹Ibid., p. 34.
²This seems to have been one of his main reasons for presenting certain doctrines of Kant (Cf. Ibid., pp. 116-118).
³M. de Wulf, an outstanding historian of the Louvain School calls Balmes "an original thinker, whose doctrines have many points of contact with scholasticism." (Cardinal Morcier and others, A Manual of Modern Scholastic Philosophy, tr. T. L. Parker and S. A. Parker, London, 1917, II, 480.)
⁴Ganivet, II, 637.
⁵Menéndez y Pelayo, Dos Palabras, p. 9.
awaken my philosophical curiosity."\(^1\) Despite his somewhat negative, dogmatic manner, Balmes almost always appealed to thought rather than authority. If his conclusions were not always profound, neither were they so trivial that they did not invite further reflection.

Balmes was the first philosopher to attempt to interpret German idealism to the Spanish people.\(^2\) Indeed, before his time, few orthodox thinkers in Spain had given much attention to modern philosophy. His expositions of Descartes and Kant were extremely deficient; it is true; he did not attempt to capture the thought of any philosopher in its entirety. By ignoring the honest doubt which lay behind Descartes' methodical doubt, he failed to understand his significance in the history of European thought. His presentation of the thought of Kant is fragmentary and negative. In his chapter on Fichte, he quotes several very obscure passages from the *Doctri ne of Science*, ridiculing rather than explaining the difficult terminology.\(^3\) Nevertheless, these fragments were the first Spanish translations of the German idealists.\(^4\) The passages from Fichte, with their "mysterious formulas, A = A and Ego = Ego," first awakened Unamuno's youthful curiosity with regard to

\(^1\)Miguel de Unamuno, *Con tra Esto y Aquello*, Buenos Aires, 1945, p. 59.

\(^2\)Cf. Salcedo Ruiz, IV, 135.

\(^3\)O.C., II, 43.

\(^4\)Since Balmes knew little German, he probably relied on the French translations.
the German philosophers. Moreover, there are a number of expositions of foreign philosophy (Leibnitz, Vico, Malebranche, Fénelon) which are positive and fair.

The merit which is most enthusiastically attributed to Balmes' philosophy, and that which can be most readily admitted, is its timeliness and usefulness. Throughout the nineteenth century, *El Criterio* played an important part in the education of Spanish youth. Unamuno refers to his favorite anecdotes and poetic passages from this book. Despite the "vulgar eloquence and commonplaces," many of the passages affected him deeply and intimately in his youth. His *Filosofía Elemental* was written as a textbook for seminarians and translated into Latin at the request of Archbishop Affre of Paris. A number of philosophical essays written in a journalistic style appeared in *Letters to a Sceptic*. These and other works show Balmes' gift for adapting philosophical material to particular needs.

Something of this practical spirit entered into the writing of *Filosofía Fundamental*. As we have noted earlier, Balmes saw the need for a "sound philosophy." The work must be orthodox and yet, in some sense, modern; the two elements must be blended. Balmes' largely practical gifts were not

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1 Unamuno, loc. cit.


3 Unamuno, pp. 65-66.

4Cf. Pourre, p. 258: "Filosofía Fundamental is not a purely speculative work...It is an eminently practical book..."
equal to this task. Despite the lofty nature of the subject matter, many chapters of *Filosofía Fundamental* are similar to the political essays which Balmes was writing simultaneously. They suffer from the same defect—the lack of integration of unrelated or conflicting ideas. Philosophy written to fill some practical need is seldom of the highest order.

If many of Balmes' admirers have tended to exaggerate his importance as a philosopher, it is in part because of the philosophical poverty of Spain throughout the nineteenth century, and the lack of "sound" Roman Catholic philosophy throughout Europe prior to the neo-scholastic movement of the late nineteenth century. The decadence of philosophical studies in Spain during the first half of the century has been noted in chapter III. In 1850, Juan Valera, one of Spain's best-known literary figures of the past century, wrote that despite his mediocrity, Balmes was Spain's "only philosopher."\(^1\)

In the second half of the century, conditions were much improved. Julián Sanz del Río, the Spanish disciple of Krause, had great influence over the younger generation, and turned their attention to German idealism. But Sanz del Río was not an original thinker; nor were there any original thinkers among the Spanish positivists or neo-cartesians.\(^2\) There was little creative philosophy in Spain

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\(^1\)Salcedo Ruiz, IV, 134.

until the "generation of '98" attempted to renovate Spanish thought at the turn of the century.¹ Until that time, Balmes was the only modern philosopher of Spain to attract any attention in other European countries, and the only one to be translated.² Thus, when de Wulf calls Balmes "the most distinguished name in modern Spain" (in the field of philosophy), this is not so much a tribute to Balmes' genius as it is a reflection on the poverty of Spanish philosophical thought during that period.³

It is somewhat more difficult to understand why Balmes should have been translated and read outside of Spain, particularly in Germany,⁴ where philosophy reached a high peak of creativity during the nineteenth century. In all European countries there was a lack of orthodox Roman Catholic philosophers with something of a modern outlook. The early neoscholastics, such as Kleutgen (1811-1885) in Germany, Sanseverino (1811-1865) in Italy, and González (1831-1894)⁵ in

¹Of these, only Unamuno and José Ortega y Gasset may properly be called philosophers.


³Cf. Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe, VII, 381: "A giant in the regions of thought." The most extravagant estimate of Balmes' philosophy is given by Siegfried in The Catholic Encyclopedia (loc. cit.): "Balmes has a universally admitted place of honor amongst the greatest philosophers of modern times."

⁴The Enciclopedia Espasa-Calpe (loc. cit.), mentions several German translations of Filosofía Fundamental and Filosofía Elemental.

⁵Cardinal González had little regard for the eclecticism of Balmes. Cf. Rubía, I, xxviii.
Spain, were rigidly orthodox and made no attempt to accommodate scholasticism to the thought of the day. As we have seen in chapter III, the most influential Roman Catholic philosophers (traditionalists, fideists, ontologists and semi-rationalists) were heretical or came close to heresy. This lack of "sound" yet modern philosophy led Pope Leo XIII to encourage a return to scholasticism in his encyclical, Aeterni Patris (August 4, 1879), which resulted in the neo-Thomism of the Louvain School.

Thus, a philosopher who was thoroughly orthodox and at the same time well acquainted with modern thought was something of a rarity in Balmes' time and for many years afterwards. Referring to Filosofía Fundamental, a modern writer says, "Le génie Catholique au XIX siècle, a produit peu de travaux aussi neufs et aussi solides." Brownson wrote of Filosofía Fundamental in 1856 that there was nothing in English which could compare with it. This unique combination of orthodoxy and modernity which Balmes achieved, although at the expense of unity and integration, gave him a modest but significant place among the Roman Catholic philosophers of the nineteenth century.

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1 Cf. Hocedez, II, 197 (Kleutgen and Balmes are contrasted); 351, 366 (Sanseverino). Also Salcedo y Ruiz, IV, 1148 (González).


3 Toussaint, loc. cit.

4 Brownson, p. xvi.
CONCLUSION

In the three chapters which are devoted to the various aspects of his writings, an attempt has been made to point out the influence of the literature of the Roman Catholic Revival on Balmes' thought. At the same time, it has been shown in what ways Balmes contributed to the political, apologetical, and philosophical thought of the revival. A summary of that contribution and some general observations on the nature and influence of Balmes' work are in order.

The values of Balmes' political thought were seen to lie mainly in the positive attitude of social and political realism which he attempted to instill in Spanish Catholics and liberals; the broad social, philosophical, and historical perspective which he gave to the problems of the Spanish Church in the revolutionary struggles of the early nineteenth century; and the conciliatory spirit and high moral tone of his political writings, which had a salutary effect upon anticlericals and Catholic traditionalists alike. The chief weakness of his political thought was seen to be that of virtually all Roman Catholic political thinkers of his time—the failure to achieve a genuine reconciliation of liberalism and Roman Catholic doctrine.

The value of Balmes' apologetical work lies chiefly in its demonstration of the social significance of religion, and the contribution of Christianity to European civilization. El Protestantismo was the first full-length, thoroughly
orthodox work devoted entirely to the subject of Catholicism and civilization. It was written in a popular style, embodying romantic elements and the popular concept of historical development. It was a unique contribution to the popular literature of the Roman Catholic Revival. Its principal deficiencies were common to the social apologetics of the Roman Catholic Revival—a failure to appreciate the positive contributions of Protestantism and the Enlightenment to European culture, and an exaggerated emphasis upon the social and cultural manifestations of religion, which led to theological superficiality.

Balmes' philosophical works, in addition to their many practical values, illuminated problems which were of considerable importance to Roman Catholic theology in the nineteenth century. Balmes pointed to the need for a criteriology which transcended the narrow and dogmatic rationalism of the preceding century, but largely failed in his attempt to construct a broader foundation of philosophical certitude, although his concept of the intellectual instinct provided a convenient steppingstone to religious dogmatism. He combatted extreme sensationalism and subjective idealism, which, he believed, led inevitably to philosophical and religious scepticism. He affirmed the reality and intelligibility of the world which is the object of sense-perception, and the existence of an eternal order transcending sense-experience. Although he is indebted to many philosophical schools, his attempt to solve the problem of knowledge is original. His
approach is eclectic and scholastic, and despite its lack of integration, pointed in the direction of the flexible kind of scholasticism which eventually found favor in Rome, and was adopted by the outstanding Roman Catholic philosophers of the late nineteenth century.

Balmes' influence cannot be judged solely in terms of his specific contributions to the various fields in which he wrote. When his work is considered as a whole, it may be seen to typify in a remarkable way the thought of the Roman Catholic Revival, both with regard to its merits and its deficiencies. Perhaps the greatest merit of Balmes' thought, like that of the Roman Catholic Revival in general, is its broad scope. He explored new fields and opened up new avenues of investigation for future philosophers and apologists. Although Balmes' work, as we have seen, does not always stand up under close scrutiny, the tremendous range of his thought is impressive. A modern critic calls attention to his "humanistic spirit," his great versatility and intellectual curiosity, "all aimed at a better understanding of the Spanish character."\(^1\) But Balmes' "humanism," like that of Lamennais, was always placed at the service of a cause. If new territories were explored, it was always with the purpose of winning them for the Church.

Balmes also typified the Roman Catholic Revival in its greatest weakness—the lack of a strongly spiritual, distinctly religious emphasis. The revival boasted of fewer

theologians, Biblical scholars, and mystics, than it did of publicists, popular apologists, and social and political thinkers. Although the spiritual fervor of an age is hard to measure, no Roman Catholic historian has held that the age of the Roman Catholic Revival was one of great moral and spiritual awakening for the Catholic people of Europe.  

While the reasons for this deficiency are no doubt complex, it may be attributed in part to a failing of many of the greatest apologists of the time. In their concern for the literary, social, political, and philosophical relevance of Catholicism, they tended to neglect the bases of the Christian faith. This deficiency is seen particularly in the thought of Balmes. His concern for the Church's role in society, his preoccupation with material welfare of the Church, his defense of doctrinal orthodoxy, and his refutation of philosophical errors, left little room for a positive proclamation of Christianity.

Despite his intense admiration for Santa Teresa and other mystics of Spain's Golden Age, Balmes had little mysticism of his own. Balmes, the practical Catalan, "was not made of the same stuff as San Juan de la Cruz, the Castilian," said Unamuno. "Vich is not Pontiveros." But

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1 Leflon is conservative in his appraisal of the spiritual vigor of European Catholicism from 1800 to 1846. He believes that in all countries there were signs of spiritual revival, but that these should not be exaggerated or interpreted too optimistically. (Cf. pp. 366-376; 499-510. Also, see above, chapter I, p. 27.)

2 Cf. O.C., VIII, 426.

3 Unamuno, Contra Este y Aquello, p. 64.
the difference cannot be explained merely in terms of geographical location or regional temperament. As Leflon has observed, there was throughout Catholic Europe a general lack of mystical and devotional literature in the early nineteenth century.

Balmes' philosophy, as we have seen, was strongly Aristotelian and Thomistic, with only occasional suggestions of Platonic mysticism and moderate Augustinian illuminism. Balmes' concept of the Church was predominantly institutional, rather than spiritual or mystical. His reaction to German pantheism was so extreme that only on one occasion did he show any sympathy for the nature-mysticism of the romantic school. His only defense of religious mysticism was strongly utilitarian.

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1 Leflon, pp. 371, 372.
2 See above, p. 259.
3 See above, p. 253.
4 Mysticism, wrote Balmes in "Letters to a Sceptic," is of "great utility" in religious institutions. "The heart is in need of certain stimulating forces; if these are not offered by virtue, vice will supply them. The flame of passion which is not directed toward God will be directed toward creatures. Do you suppose that a heart such as that of Santa Teresa could exist without love? If her heart had not been consumed by the pure flame of divine love, it would have burned with the impure fire of earthly love." (O.C., V, 441.)
It was not until the last year of his life that Balmes began to learn Greek and Hebrew for the purpose of Bible study; for "he saw clearly," says Casanovas, "that the basis of Catholic theology must always be the study of the Holy Scriptures." In the same year he planned to write a theological treatise and a compendium of sacred history.\(^1\) It is possible that, if Balmes had lived longer, his work might have developed a more strongly religious character.

Just as Balmes' contribution to European Catholicism must be seen in its totality in order to be understood and appreciated, so a broad perspective is needed in judging his influence upon Spanish Catholicism. He contributed much to Spanish thought, but he also served as a symbol of Catholic resistance during the anticlerical regency of Espartero, and was the soul of the Catholic restoration during the moderate rule of Narvaez. At the time of his death, it became clear that, despite the hostility toward Pius IX, Balmes had assumed a genuinely heroic stature in the eyes of Spanish Catholics.

The Catholic journal, *El Heraldo*, regarded him as the champion of ancient Spain: "Like Chateaubriand, he appeared on the final day of the revolution in his country...in order to vindicate the forgotten rights of Spain's ancient institutions."\(^2\) More enlightened Spanish Catholics regarded him as a vital point of contact between Spain and Europe.

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"Before Balmes," wrote José María Quadrado, "Spain was for intellectual Europe nothing but an object of disdain." But now, he wrote, the name of Balmes "has become European--indeed, universal."¹ Although Balmes was not a true synthesist of ancient and modern thought, many of his contemporaries regarded him as such. His collaborator, Joaquín Rocas y Cornet, wrote at the time of his death: "His lofty intelligence has caused to shine among us a beautiful reflection of ancient wisdom, blended with the nascent splendor of the modern school. Standing, like Chateaubriand, Bonald, and Lamennais, between the ruins of the past and the promise of a new age, Balmes comes forth in the armor of an ancient warrior, but initiated in the tactics of modern combat. The vigor of two ages is found united in him."²

Perhaps the greatest contribution of Balmes to Spanish religion was his attempt to bring it within the orbit of European culture. He not only advocated the acceptance of the inevitable changes in philosophy and politics which contact with Europe had brought, but urged the use of foreign thought--particularly that of the French apologists--in the defense of religion. To what extent Balmes was a "European-izer" of Spanish philosophy and religion has been much debated.³ It is clear that Balmes can be classed neither with the fierce eighteenth century defenders of Spanish

¹Blanche-Raffin, p. v.
²Ibid.
³Cf. Salcedo Ruiz, IV, 134 ff.
traditionalism, such as Forner, nor with such outspoken modernists as Cadalso and Cabarrús. But neither can he be classed with such creative synthetists as Feijóo and Jovellanos, who, despite their love of Spanish tradition, were frankly enamored with the science and philosophy of the new age.  

For Balmes, Spain's need for coming to terms with modern European culture was a painful necessity rather than an exciting challenge. But his contribution to that reconciliation was not, for that reason, without value. He was at all times hopeful as to the possibility of such a reconciliation. Indeed, there is a strongly optimistic note in his writings which is as greatly needed in contemporary Spain as it was in Balmes' time. In 1845, he wrote concerning the struggle between the old Spain and the new: "Who can say whether, in the inscrutable secrets of the Eternal, this struggle is not destined to produce incalculable good? ...From this very struggle which we deplore, is it not possible that, one day, torrents of light and life may come surging forth?"  

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1See above, pp. 51, 52.

2O.C., VII, 215, 216.


---------. Vida y Obras de Balmes, tr. from the Catalan by Miguel Flori. Vol. I of Obras Completas, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos. (This edition, like the original, contains Balmes' correspondence, but does not contain the extracts from Balmes' works which were included in the original edition.)


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