

paragraph. Is he conscious of his error, and guilty? Sometimes yes, sometimes no; much or little, or not at all, as the case may be. Only God knows—we cannot tell. He may certainly have a strong dose of good faith at the beginning of his dreams, and an unconsciousness of danger which is explained too well by the absence of the philosophical light required for its perception. Then come the timely warnings of the Church and the unavoidable shock of his modern judgments against the decisions of the supreme 'magisterium' or teaching authority. What will he do? There grace awaits him, and so does doubt, together with conscience troubles. If he stops and bows with loyal simplicity of mind and heart, he is saved. He will have proved himself an advanced, a very advanced, guard, of Modernism—a great deal too much, assuredly. He will have neared the brink, but avoided the fall reserved for the radicals of the party. They have no notion of submitting their 'private mind' to the authority of a supernatural 'magisterium.' It is the shipwreck of their faith, whatever they may say or pretend. The rest is a matter of course. First, Protestantism; later on, Rationalism, Materialism, or worse still.

The 'Moderate' Modernist, still a Catholic and resolved to so remain, is in reality a friend of the Church, a friend, doubtless, ill-advised and most compromising, but still a friend and, moreover, too loyal and sympathetic not to deserve gentle handling. The Church has long treated him with indulgent longanimity. The severe lesson of the 'Lamentabili,' on her part, is but an act of condescending charity in which she mildly recalls to him certain very old principles of faith and reason too long forgotten. She does not require him to entirely renounce his dream of social Catholicism, which is also her own, but in another measure and under another optic angle. She only asks him to put more theological science into his views about the future of dogma and religion, more philosophy into his hypotheses, more cold reason and reserve into the exaggerated cultus which he too inconsiderately paid to the modern mind.

IV.—THE MODERN MIND.

What, then, is this mysterious divinity which counts such passionate adorers in its ranks? Most brave hearts hate it as the very devil; while others claiming equal bravery are bewitched by it to the lengths of being unconsciously drawn into the sacrifice of their faith—nay, sometimes of their reason. Whence comes, in regard to the modern mind, that asperity of contradictory sentiments which threaten to divide the Catholic world into two hostile camps—the 'conservatives' and the 'progressists' (so-called)? There must be some terrible misunderstanding and subtle equivocation. What, then, is the modern mind? Something undoubtedly very complex, since it is the object of such different judgments from men of equal intelligence and sincerity. The only safe and logical method to fix the definition of a 'whole' so vague, is to analyse separately its parts. Let us do a little anatomy.

First of all, it is beyond doubt that a master idea dominates the whole question: the idea of 'progress'; and this idea immediately brings in three others: progress as an accomplished 'fact,' future indefinite progress as an 'ideal,' progress as the 'good' of humanity. Hence these three basic propositions: progress as a 'fact,' progress as the 'good,' progress as the 'ideal' of human life.

In the second line we find subordinated to the idea of progress—as different means or forms of progress—the following ideas:—

1. The general idea of EVOLUTION—all progress is a change, therefore an evolution.
2. The LIBERAL idea: the evolution of the progress of the human individual brings him to the more or less perfect and conscious possession of his liberty in the twofold aspect of his intelligence (Rationalism) and of his will (Liberalism properly so called).
3. The NATURALISTIC idea: the evolution of human progress is effected on the line of nature in all its orders; progress is not (they say), and cannot be other than scientific—that is to say, independent and more and more free from any foreign tutelage, and therefore from any religious tutelage, any supernatural influence.
4. The MATERIALISTIC idea: the first and supreme need of man is to live happy here below; therefore to live in well-being and comfort; now the unceasing progress of science and evolution increases the well-being of temporal life; it is therefore to this term that the law of indefinite scientific progress conducts humanity.

In the third line, we must enumerate all the Tendencies, Theories, and Thousands of Means which gravitate round the principal ideas already stated,

either as co-operations in their practical realisation, or as consequences of the philosophy which inspires them.

The 'fact' of the profound transformation of modern civilisation is there, and, like every fact, as such, it cannot help being a fact; it imposes itself. But not only does it impose itself as an accomplished fact, but it imposes itself also in its virtual, necessary, incoercible prolongation, and ought to last, because it is the human idea to realise it daily more and more in its greatest possible proportion.

The modern mind, therefore, in its deepest and commonest notion, is a spirit of progress (so called). Whence it assumes this threefold attitude: SCORN for the past, SYMPATHY for the present, ENTHUSIASM for the future. That's a matter of course. How could one love the past which has hampered progress? How wish to preserve it, since it is already 'overreached' by the present movement and could only impede its onward march? How not admire all the good given to man by present progress? And, lastly, how not surrender one's self unreservedly to the hopes of indefinitely increasing progress in the future?

The modern mind goes further, much further, if it lets itself slide ever so little down the logical slope of the second plane—practical execution—where we saw it take up four famous theories: evolution, liberalism, naturalism, and materialism, until

A More Inexorable Logic

pushes it, far from the safeguards of faith and the supernatural, into the philosophical aberrations of immorality, scepticism, and final agnosticism, which is the grave of human reason.

We don't say that every man—especially every Catholic—smitten with the modern mind, goes those lengths; everyone stops where he can and as he can. It remains to be seen whether it is possible to take one's share in the movement of the modern mind, and afterwards withdraw from it, when once one has given one's self unreservedly, without precautions or restraints, at the outset, to its violent impulses.

Besides, what matter? We have to define the modern mind such as it is almost universally prevalent in contemporary thought. If its complacent admirers find that there are useful distinctions to make, well and good. But why don't they themselves make those restrictions in seasonable time, instead of

Deceiving the Simple and Unwary

by an incessant appeal to that grand, obscure, and monstrous fetiche the 'modern mind' alone? Under the influence of the cherished idea of the modern mind, our modern society has indeed been greatly transformed. The craving for sensuous enjoyments promised to it by scientific progress quenches more and more in the hearts of the people the yearning for virtue. Where faith sinks, pride rises, and with pride repulsion for the yoke of authority in any shape. It is, so to speak, the triumph of nature over grace—of nature with the whole train of all its original corruptions. It is also, from top to bottom of the social scale, the triumph of 'liberalism' (as defined above), until it becomes eventually the universal apotheosis of egotism—not even in its more ideal and acceptable form, but of egotism of flesh and lust unbridled.

Such is modern society, and such, in any case, the dominant features, daily more accentuated, of the civilisation in store for humanity. Such the modern mind has willed and made it. Science, liberty, pleasure, and a full stomach—to any extent. God, faith, religion, morality—as little as possible, and in the end, logically, none at all. The least severe observation we can make is that the modern mind exhibits all sorts of things, good and bad, true and false, old and new.

What antiquity, for instance, old as the world, old as the angels, appears in the liberal

Error of 'Non Serviam'

('I will not serve'), in our contemporaries' rebellions against God and His law, a simple perpetual echo of the first sin hurled by a created will against the Creator! What antiquity again in the fierce race for the improvement of the pleasures of the body; in that conception of the scientific perfection of human life by the increase of material well-being, regardless of the soul, of morality, of a future life—the practical echo of all the materialistic philosophies of past times! What, in fine, is so ancient—twenty centuries old—as that effort, so-called critical, of free thought, of pure reason, striving to evade the authority of supernatural faith, of revealed dogma?

What is truly and genuinely modern is (1) the scientific 'philosophy' of progress—progress material, evolutive, indefinite, in which modernists put the ideal last end of mankind (and yet how many old ideas here); and (2) the 'present social state' which this philosophy has begotten, and which future civilisation must in the same order of ideas still more accentuate. This being said, we now