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Joseph McCabe Index

The Tyranny Of The Clerical Gestapo Catholics The Most Priest-Ridden Of All People

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Chapter I

POISONING THE MIND OF THE YOUNG

In the preceding booklet I showed that the structure of the Church of Rome is such that an alliance with Fascist powers is its inevitable attitude. It is an institution that survives from the Feudal Age and, since it is not now permitted to exercise the physical tyranny over men which it still claim's, it must, whenever wealth and privilege are threatened, associate with any forces which disown the democratic restraints of our age and by violence and bloodshed suppress the critics of privilege and seek an extension of their wealth and power.

Historically it always did this; and nearly all who are not Catholics, and very many Catholic's, now see that this is in our time the meaning of the diplomatic activity of the Vatican during the last ten years, the shameless applauding of bestiality by the high priests of Germany and Italy, the treason of the priests of Austria, Fiance, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia, and the support of isolationism in the British Empire until 1939 and in the United States until 1941, and in South America today.

But how do the half-million agents of the Black International contrive to win the support for such a policy of tens of millions of men and women half of whom professed to be free Citizens of democratic lands until the Papal-Fascist paralysis began to creep over them and a very large part still live in such countries and

swear loyalty to their ideals? I have shown and will further show in the fifth booklet of this series, that Catholic priests and writers change their political philosophy with startling rapidity when their country turns Fascist. In country after country in which but a few years ago they talked about the principles of freedom and democracy with all the gush that is so familiar on clerical lips in America -- in Germany and Italy, in Franco Spain and Salazar Portugal, in Vichy France and Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria -- they now find those principles as demoded as drawers or corsets, even "poisonous" and inconsistent with the authoritarian state which the Pope urges upon all good Catholics. They have not yet reached the stage in America and Britain. Will they do so? And if not how can the Black International use the vast sums it extracts from the people to help on a regime of tyranny and exploitation?

First let us get a clear idea of the body of subscribing members of the Church. How many Catholic's there are in the world it is less easy to say than to ascertain the number of bacteria in a cubic inch of soil. Comparing the figures given even by Catholics is an ironic pastime. They are meticulously "accurate" down to the last unit, yet they differ from each other by tens of millions; which surely afford's some excuse even for a hardened skeptic like myself.

I consult the new Encyclopedia Americana, which has an odor of sanctity as well as of scholarship, and learn, in an article by a member of the editorial board (and apparently a Catholic) that the number of Catholics in the world is 294,583,000. That sounds admirably precise and moderate compared with the 350,000,000 or even 398,277,000 (British Catholic Directory) which other Catholic writers claim, but study how the figure is made up. In Europe, says the writer, there are 183,760,000; and he then analyzes this into 35,000,000 in France (where optimistic Catholics do not claim more than 10,000,000), 20,000,000 in Spain (where, when there were free elections, the people so long overruled the Church that it had to take to the long knife), 26,000,000 in Austria (where the total population is only 7,000,000), 13,000,000 in Hungary (where the population is about 9,000,000 and the Catholics are about half), and so on.

It is a greater miracle than the Immaculate Conception. But Catholics absorb miracles as babies absorb milk. A distinguished Catholic journalist D. Gwynn (Pius XI, 1932) quotes with approval the agstirqnec of Macaulay that "there were certainly not fewer than 150,000,000" in 1840. The population of most countries has trebled since then, where not greatly affected by the birth control of these wicked skeptics, yet Gwynn thinks that the growth of these 150,000,000 into 350,000,000 (his figure) in a century, and with fertility joyous and unrestrained, "must astonish all inquirers."

And this writer, who is an expert on France, knows that the total figure of Catholics he gives includes 30,000,000 Frenchmen and

proves in his special work on the subject (The Catholic Reaction in France, 1924) that there cannot even be 10,000,000.

Similarly in regard to the number of Catholics in America, which concerns us most. The Encyclopedia Americana gives 50,000,000 for North America, of whom 20,000,000 are in the United States. As there are only about 4,000,000 Catholics in Canada and the whole population of Mexico (which the Vatican does not regard as very orthodox) is only 16,000,000, the arithmetic again transcends my profane intelligence. But when I turn to the Census of Religion, taken (that is to say, supplied by the clergy) in 1936 and published as the official record in 1940, I learn that Roman Catholics in the United States number only 19,914,957; and you really must trust a figure that is so definite even to the last unit.

The official compiler reflects on the remarkable growth since 1926 (18,605,003 -- not a baby or a village idiot left out, you notice). But an unconsecrated calculation seems to yield that in that decade the general population of America, in spite of a tremendous traffic in contraceptive's rose by more than 8 percent while the Catholics, who abhor those diabolical devices, increased by less than 7 percent.

I should love to linger in this pious and stimulating field of the statistics published by the Black International but we have sterner business to approach, and I have written much elsewhere on the subject. I have concluded, after many weary days spent in analyzing the results of months of research, that the number of genuine Catholics in the world is between 150,000,000 and 200,000,000, and it seems generous to use for practical purpose the round figure of 190,000,000. It will be understood that I do not include here the new compulsory Catholics of Italy, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, etc. If an American Catholic is proud of them, and insists on including them let him do so; but is it too much to ask that he state also, at least to himself, that they have "returned to the Church" only while every priest is ready to denounce rebel's to the firing squad or the torturer?

But our figure invites further consideration. It includes about 50,000,000 illiterate American Indians. Add the illiterates of the Philippines (7,000,000), and the French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies, a large percentage of the peasants of Spain, Portugal, Poland, Slovakia, etc., and you see that more than a third of the grand Catholic total are folk whom we need not consider here. It is no mystery how the priests keep them servile. It is hardly more mysterious how they keep their despotic hold on further tens of millions: the peasants of Spain, Portugal, Poland and Italy who are called literate because they mastered their A B C's and the dense masses of descendants of these who fester in the poorer quarters of our cities and industrial towns. The domination of these also by priests requires no profound explanation; and quite a large number

at the other end of the social scale are very easy victims of clerical bossing of a subtler sort. Of the remaining half of this grand total of 180,000,000 more than one- third are children.

We will discuss in the next book the whole question of ignorance or culture, and varieties of culture, in the Roman Church, but it is well to get clearly in mind here that when the Catholic writer boasts of his 300,000,000 or 350,000,000, "Subjects of the Pope," or when a statesman thinks that this gross figure compels him to speak with profound respect of the Pope and his Church, the suggestion is nonsensical. We shall further see that the stuff imposed upon pupils in Catholic secondary schools and colleges as "science" and "history" is a gorgeous tissue of untruth that differs from the reality almost as much as a Theosophist's view of ancient Egypt differs from that of an Egyptologist, so that even in their case we are not greatly puzzled. However, let us take the matter broadly. Leaving out of account the babes and sucklings and the poor folk who either never open a book or could not read one, how does the Church of Rome ensure the submissiveness to a body of generally ignorant priests of some millions of men and women in modern civilization?

The first part of the answer is the Catholic school. Cardinal Hayes, who had an astounding success in talking rank nonsense with the utmost gravity, once said, referring to American preeminence in education: "It is the Catholic contribution which has enabled the United States to take the world's leadership in this field." Horace Mann was, I suppose, a Roman Catholic, not a skeptic as the Dictionary of American Biography represents him. . . . But, no one will expect me to argue on that point.

The Catholic hierarchy in America never professed to have any other aim in collecting vast sums -- they spent \$23,000,000 on new schools in 1927 -- for the erection of schools of their own than "the good of the Church," the safeguarding of the faith (the docility to the clerical Gestapo) of their people. They care nothing whatever about the general cultural level of a country. They just whip up the laity to a fanatical zeal for having schools of their own. Catholic ladies have told me, defiantly, in England, where a question about the treatment -- that is to say, the amount of subsidy they will vote out of public funds -- of Catholic schools is prepared by the clergy and sternly pressed upon candidates for election, that they would not for a moment hesitate to vote for a candidate who promised to favor their schools no matter what his views were on national or local policy. Once the question of the Catholic school was raised by the priests at an election they ignored every other issue.

The zeal of the priests to whip up this fanaticism suggests at once in what the Catholic differs from the national school. In most parts of America today where there are large bodies of Catholics

the national school dare not permit a teacher or a class-book to say a word that Catholics resent. Educational experts have shown that in Boston and Chicago the Catholic clergy, acting through their lay dupes, control education in this respect in the national as well as their own schools. Even from third or fourth-rate towns mothers have written me that the teachers of their children in the national schools were so subject to Catholic influence that they used real Catholic language. Possibly this partly explains why in the United States Catholic schools, of all grades, have a less proportion of pupils to the general membership of the Church than in other countries.

There are not many more than 2,000,000 pupils in Catholic elementary schools, and if you multiply this by five, the usual ratio of such pupils to total membership in Catholic quarters, it would give America only 10,000,000 Catholics. One of the drives of the hierarchy in recent years has been to spread Catholics or Catholicism over the more thinly-populated regions so as to get everywhere sufficient to claim a school or to eviscerate the teaching in the local national school.

It is, of course, chiefly in regard to history, science, and general knowledge classes (with reference to current events and institutions) that the priests are so keen to, "protect" the child, but even more important than this, the Church says, is "the Catholic atmosphere." Every school is a church. Statues of Mary and the more popular saints, painted in all the colors of the rainbow, and Catholic colored pictures crowd the walls and window-ledges. Prayers and hymns open and close the day, and specific lessons on the faith are given or the children march to the church to hear them. Holidays may be given in honor of distinguished ecclesiastical visitors or important Church events. Mass must be heard on the Church's "holy days" and children of seven and over are conducted to the church periodically to confess their "sins." From the age of five to sixteen or seventeen -- it is just the same in the secondary school and the "academy" for girls -- the hypnotic influence continues. Catholic books of the most mendacious character are given as prizes.

Semi-magical talisman's (blessed medals, little pictures, scapulars, Agnus Deis or tiny wax lambs enclosed in cloths, etc.) must be bought and worn next the skin night and day. A Catholic adult goes to church once a week: a Catholic child spends half the day in it every day. And the theme of the myriad influences that seep into the child's mind all the time is "Our Holy Faith:" our unique, incomparably superior, exclusive, god-given creed.

Why should one call this poisoning the mind? Isn't it a scheme, devised and perfected by thousand's of educators of the young before Pestalozzi and Froebel were born, for forming the character of the child or training it in habits of decency, self-restraint,

truthfulness, and regard for others? When you read a non-Catholic writer who says that sort of thing inquire if he has ever taken the least trouble to ascertain whether the Catholic children who have spent nine or ten years in this atmosphere are in fact any better than any body of children who have been reared in a purely, or almost purely, secular school-atmosphere. I wager that you will find that these "liberal" writers have never even glanced at the question. They could discover with very little trouble that in any of the blacker areas of our cities -- the areas in which chronic poverty and ignorance have created a tradition of unsocial conduct -- the Catholics are not a bit less drunken, violent, and prone to vice and crime than their neighbors. They could learn authoritatively that Catholic's have a higher percentage in the jails and brothels than they have in the general population. They can learn the facts about social behavior in Ireland or any predominantly Catholic country. They know that in our class or social environment Catholics are not superior to others in sound qualities. of character.

The Catholic primary school which I attended 60 to 70 years ago was in a poor industrial suburb of a large city. I often go back to it to observe the very great progress it has made in cleanliness, sobriety, restraint, public decency, and all important social qualities. It was very foul in my boyhood, and I knew all its vices and crimes. Catholic workers as a body behaved like others all round me, and what a boy did not see he did not fail to learn from others. Vividly do I remember how, when the master left us in the higher forms for a half-hour, the older boys from the poorest and least restrained quarters told us, joyously, every bit of foulness they had picked up, while Mary and the Saints looked down at us from the walls, and how behavior out of school was such as one would expect.

The real function of the school was to make loyal Catholics of us, to din into our ears until it was ineffaceable impressed that our religion was not a religion like that of the Protestant schoolboys, but the truth from God that could tolerate no comparison. A favorite sport was for the whole body of us to "Scuttle" (stone) the pupils of some Protestant school and chant some doggerel like "Prodidog, Prodidog, go to hell, while all the Catholics ring the bell"; and the priests and teachers never preached to us on that.

They would today, of course; Catholics must show that they are good neighbors; but beneath all the smiles and recognitions that "there is good in all religions" you see the same arrogance and intolerance. Catholics are unique. All the world belongs to us, and will come back to us when the work of the devil, which began at the Reformation, is finally undone. The parallel with Nazism is again perfect; and the aim is the same -- the power and wealth of the Leader and the Gestapo. The whole purpose of this ceaseless droning about the uniqueness of our Holy Church and Holy Faith and Holy Mother and Holy everything down to the water for

chasing devils is to make and keep Catholics submissive. So they can be raised, almost without explanation, to a blind fury against Russia or Mexico, can be turned into howling mobs to prevent their neighbors from seeing films which the priests do not like, can be fooled for years about the real meaning of the policy in which they are induced to cooperate.

If this blind devotion, with its inevitable submissiveness to authority, be not thought poisonous enough, remember that it is in large part secured by a monstrous and mischievous untruth. Belief in hell and devils belongs to a stage of human development that is not consistent with modern ideals. Probably the majority of priests do not believe in them today. But they are as essential to the Catholic school and journalism as a heroine is to a novel. They are essential, not for moral purposes -- this flimsy scaffolding of character is one of the chief reasons why the Catholic training breaks down in post-school years -- but as an instrument of moral terrorism and to protect the myth of the holiness and uniqueness of the Church. The Church, the child gradually learns, has so many "enemies" (critics) just because it is so holy and precious.

The devil, who is picturesquely represented to every child as a sort of super-Nazi with a devouring thirst to bring more and more million's of souls into his overcrowded and insanitary domain, is at the back of all this opposition to the Church. The good Catholic must not even listen to what his agents say, most particularly when they assume the disguise of honest and decent men. For "sins of the flesh" the Catholic can get pardon at any time and escape hell by confessing but to leave the Church, to read or hear anything that might cause one to leave the Church, is the most terrible sin of all because one obviously cuts oneself off from the tribunals of forgiveness and the "channels of grace" (sacraments). So from the age of seven the children are made to sing, lustily, hymn's with lines such as "hell is raging for my soul" and "earth and hell unite, and swear in lasting bonds to bind us."

It would take a whole book to analyze adequately the comprehensive poison of this "Catholic atmosphere." A psychologist would find it a fascinating study in social psychology but of course, no psychologist in America dare publish a book on it. I will give in the next book some weird evidence, which has just reached me, of the ripe results of it in Catholic countries, but I must here be content with a bare outline of this first part of the mechanism of the clerical Gestapo for making and keeping the people blindly submissive and zealous for "the good of the Church."

It is hardly necessary to add that the lessons are carefully arranged to suit the atmosphere. The Bible is rarely seen -- in my youth few Catholics ever saw a Bible -- but there are lessons, on Fundamentalist lines on "biblical history" as a gradual preparation of the world for the coming of Christ and his instructions (mainly

secret) to found the wonderful Church. Science is fearfully mutilated. Colleges can have admirable chemical and physical laboratories because inorganic science is quite harmless, and botany is fairly safe. The mutilation begins with geology and paleontology. They are today manuals of evolution, so you can imagine what the Catholic version of them looks like. General biology and physiology must be adulterated so as sustain the myth of a "vital principle," and Catholic psychology is as far removed from science as the Civil War is from modern politics. Prehistoric archeology, the science of prehistoric man, is, when any notice at all is taken of it, a sheer caricature.

But history is the great field of the poisoner. A very familiar jibe speaks of liars, damned liars, and statistics. It is a clumsy absurdity as regards statistics but a neat classification if you change the word to "Catholic historians." I need not here examine the manuals used in Catholic schools. In my various works I have nailed many thousand Catholics to the counter and shown that even the Catholic Encyclopedia, the flower of American Romanist scholarship, is full of them. You can therefore gather what kind of stuff they impose upon their own children in their own schools and colleges.

I repeat that it is not merely mendacious but poisonous. When a Jesuit can say in what all American Catholics consider to be the cream of their scholarship (the Encyclopedia) that all branches of the Church recognized the supremacy of the Pope in the first four centuries, which is the exact opposite of the truth, you know what to expect.

The version of history, from the alleged and mythical years of Peter in Rome to the exploits of the present Pope, that is imposed upon Catholics, beginning in the elementary school, is the richest tissue of brazen lies that I know. And, which one need not tear one's hair because children are taught as history those lives of saints and martyrs which Catholic authorities denounce as forgeries, the story as a whole is profoundly mischievous and antisocial. Its one aim is like the purpose of all the rest, to keep Catholics so submissive to their caste of consecrated guides that they will swallow every statement or instruction without serious inquiry into its justice or injustice.

Chapter II

THE PRIEST RULES THE FAMILY

It would be a mistake to imagine the troops of Catholic boys and girls who issue from the primary or the secondary school every year as just as solidly enthusiastic for their Holy Faith as a troop of boys or girls issuing from an Adolf Hitler School in Germany. I take it that the conditions are much the same in urban America as in

urban Britain, and in the latter there is plenty of Catholic evidence that boys desert the Church in very large numbers during the three or four years after leaving school.

At Catholic conferences of teachers and priests it has been stated that in British cities 30 to 60 percent (in different localities) of the boys abandon the Church. This can surprise only those folk who lazily admit, as most do, the Catholic boast of "marvelous numerical progress", in Britain and America. In neither country are they making any numerical progress. I have shown over and over again, and have in the last chapter pointed out that the latest Census figures confirm this, that the Catholic body, in spite of its higher birth rate, does not increase as much as the general body of the population. It is a pity there is no American who can force this truth into the official mind at Washington.

The transfer of the Catholic children from the artificial atmosphere of the school to the secular life is something like transplanting hot house seedlings to the open air in a late spring. There would, in fact, be a still larger number of casualties if it were not for the fact that the boy has already spent two hours on the street or outside the school for every hour he has spent in its theatrically insincere atmosphere. He has already learned that there is considerable doubt about these picturesque devils who are raging for his little soul and about the holiness of his priests and popes. The girl who passes from the nuns' academy to a city store or workshop finds that the section of her anatomy which the good sisters told her, with bated, breath and downcast eyes, is the Temple of the Holy Ghost now learns that that is not the general view. Of course they have been prepared for this by warnings that "the world" is like "the flesh" and the devil, a deadly enemy of the good Catholic. Somehow the world, when the child enters it, does, not quite resemble the villain of an old-time melodrama. The hold of the Gestapo begins to slip.

The priest prepares for this by his grip on the family. I say that Catholics are the most priest-ridden of all people but it will not be forgotten that the power of the priest differs enormously in different places: in Quebec and in Ohio, in rural Mexico or Brazil and in New York City, with every shade of difference between those two extremes. No one who knows the "really Catholic country" (even Eire) will question that the people are far more priest-ridden, more bullied and intimidated by the clergy, than people are in rural Protestant areas, to say nothing of people under Buddhist, Hindu, Shinto, Taoist, Moslem, or Jewish authorities. The Jews and Moslem have no priests, in the ordinary sense, and the priests of the Asiatic nations do little more than perform ceremonies. Yet, although the priest in America has not yet the despotic power his colleague has in Quebec or Portugal -- he expects to have it someday -- I am inclined to say that even in America Catholics are amongst the most priest-ridden of people.

The clergy dominate the family as they do the school. It is the priest's duty to visit every home in his parish once in (usually) three months. Naturally he shirks unattractive homes and spends more time in those where the company is jovial and the bottle travels freely. He generally has a little directory or note- book with particulars about each. I do not suggest that Catholic married women are more pliant than others but it will occur to most people that the visit of the priest in the afternoon, when the husband is at his job and the children are in school, comes pretty close to G.B. Shaw's explanation of the popularity of marriage: it combines the maximum of temptation with the maximum of opportunity.

There is, of course, a good deal of misconduct, for the priest of amorous disposition can learn on which day the "help" is away, but, whatever else happens, the priest takes this opportunity to inquire about the loyalty of the husband and the children who have left school. An unsatisfactory report will bring him in the evening to see them.

In order to appreciate the priest's peculiar control over the family one must understand the power which the Church claims and exercises over marriage. From the 4th Century it fought for 700 years to get this power, and the laity successfully resisted until the bloody-minded "saintly" Popes Gregory VII and Innocent III perfected the Roman scheme of priestcraft, and the "great" Schoolmen proved to demonstration that this scheme, a transparent clerical fabrication of comparatively recent date, was established by Christ. How the priests won this power just when gaiety and skepticism were increasing in Europe must be read elsewhere.

Briefly the Church brought matrimony under its iron authority by making it a sacrament, an indissoluble contract, a ceremony essentially requiring the presence of a priest. It discovered "impediments," some of which were subject to removal by dispensation (to the great profit of the Vatican) and some, theoretically, not. This not only led to a prodigious traffic in dispensations, which still continues in large part as I explained in the last book, but it gave the archbishops and Popes a very important authority over the lives of nobles, princes, and monarchs in the matter of their marriage's.

Three cases which have been fully discussed by American critics like Boyd-Barrett, Marshall, and Selde's and may here be recalled briefly, will illustrate this tyranny. The late Count (then Mr.) Marconi married the Hon. Beatrice O'Brien in a Protestant church in London -- "she was a Protestant and he an apostate" -- in 1905. They had three children but separated in 1918 and were divorced in 1924. The Church very generously concedes that it does not claim authority over non-Catholic marriages, but it also claims that one who has been baptized a Catholic, as Marconi had been,

remains subject to it. In any case Marconi wanted to marry the Catholic Countess Bizzi-Scala, and he applied to Cardinal Bourne in London for a declaration that his marriage was null and void from the start: in other words, that he had never been married to Beatrice O'Brieri -- though the Church, with great charity and ingenuity, declares that the children of these sham marriages are legitimate. The canonists at Rome fastened upon the fact, or the allegation -- you know what evidence is worth in divorce suits -- that Marconi and his bride had agreed before marriage that if it proved unhappy they would seek a divorce.

Therefore there was no real marriage, said the learned priests of London, pocketing their fees. But Beatrice did not altogether like the idea that her children were only saved from being bastards by the sophistry of priests and she appealed to the Rota tribunal at Rome. Marconi was now rich and he "paid the expenses" of the trial. He got his decree of nullity, married his countess, and was in high favor at the Vatican until he died in 1937.

In the second famous case Consuelo Vanderbilt, who had married the Duke of Marlborough in 1895, left him in 1905 (after bearing two sons) and got a divorce, applied to these learned and ingenious Catholic authorities in London to ease her conscience by declaring the marriage null from the start. You see, she now wanted to marry the Catholic Count Balsan.

The London authorities had to share so promising a case with the Roman Rota, and the decree of nullity was granted. She had, she swore, married against her will and because her mother said that she would die of heart-disease unless Consuelo married the Duke. No internal consent, said Rome, so no marriage. Consult the authors I have named if you want to read the testimony of these aristocratic folk in detail and learn how the Vatican authorities proved to the hilt, when a storm arose, that they were absolutely compelled to declare the marriage null and money had nothing to do with it. What interests me is the Church of Rome here claims a power that is not only greater than but antagonistic to that of the State. What, you probably ask, would be the social situation if every girl who thought her husband a beast could go to a court and get it to declare that she was not married to him because "I didn't want to marry him -- mother made me," or "he, said he would let me get a divorce if I wasn't happy"? But, don't be too nervous. First, She would get no alimony. Secondly, Rome does not deal with a hundred cases a year and says that half of them are "free." We already know something about Rome's "free" services. The certificate may be free, but the frame may cost a mighty lot of dollars.

A third case confirms us in these cynical reflection's. Miss Anna Gould -- how the names in these cases do smell of money -- married the Marquis de Castellane in 1895, went through the usual

routine until they quarreled, divorced him in 1906 and married the Duke de Sagan. He was a Catholic, but with true French chivalry he deserted the Church for his loved (and wealthy) Anna. The elegant Castellane, being a Catholic, felt himself out in the cold and applied to Rome for a nullity-decree so that he could marry again.

Anna had, he said, spoken about divorce before their marriage. The cardinals of the Rota rejected his application, accepted it on appeal, then rejected it again. Castellane appealed to the Pope, who referred the matter to a committee of cardinals, and they declared the marriage invalid. To be quite sure on so sacred a point the Pope enlarged the committee, and it declared the marriage valid. Don't imagine that a count, a marquis, or a millionaire always gets this previous decree. But you might care to ask me whether all the marquis's money had gone or whether American dollars were weighed against his thin French francs. I regret that the finances of these spiritual transactions are kept in a decent secrecy.

A fourth case differently illustrates this beneficent power of the Church to tie and untie indissoluble marriages. A few years ago a Catholic American actress fell in love with a married producer. He got a divorce from his Jewess wife but the austere Church will no more allow a marriage to a divorced person than it will grant a divorce. The man however became a Catholic and married his Catholic actress. Now, there's a pretty conundrum: so pretty that when I published the facts in London two years ago one of the chief writers on one of the chief Catholic papers howled that here I displayed either my gross ignorance of Catholic matters or . . . The rest was silence. They delicately refrain from calling me a liar -- in print.

But it is simple, and this Catholic journalist would have learned a little about her own religion if she had read the article "Pauline Privilege" in her Catholic Encyclopedia. Paul -- remember, in mitigation, that he did not know that marriage is a sacrament and indissoluble -- advised lady-members of the little group called Churches that when one was married to a pagan who was contemptuous of his faith she was free, after gently expostulating with him in vain, to leave him and marry a Christian. Those learned theologians of the Middle Ages who made a stalwart defense of the whole scheme of priestcraft and are now pressed upon us by Catholic apologists as modern-minded thinkers, worked out that this was quite consistent with marriage being a sacrament and indissoluble, and it is part of the law of the Church today. In the case I have given above we have a simple application of it. The gentleman becomes a Catholic, doubtless after profound meditation on the beauty of the faith and not because priests had told him about the Pauline Privilege. To meet American civil law he has already divorced his wife, but in the eyes of the Church he is still married. All that he had to do however is to ask his late wife,

whose answer you can imagine if you know the riper Yiddish, if she cares to become a Catholic or to live with him without ever making any reflections on his religious adventures. Even from this, however, Rome claims (clause 1211 of the new Canon Law) that it can grant a dispensation, and, the lady being already divorced, it was probably not done. The emancipated partner is then free without any further fuss to marry a good member of the Church.

Other aspects of Catholic law and practice illustrate this power of the clerical Gestapo, even to the extent of flouting the civil law, in a matter which is generally regarded as the supreme personal concern in the life of a man or woman. Although this control of marriage is so obviously priest-manufactured that the laity, as I said, defeated for many centuries every attempt to obtain its legislation about marriage fills one of the longer sections of the new Code of Canon Law, and from the elaborate nature of the clauses you will understand that very large and profitable body of the appeals to the Roman Congregations which I described. Probably the most lucrative dogmas (to the Italian caucus) in the Whole Roman scheme are the sacramental nature of marriage and the doctrine of purgatory (through indulgences), and both are transparent medieval fabrications in so far as they are dogmas.

Notoriously the Church goes beyond any civil law in assigning the degrees of relationship within which it is forbidden to marry. In the Middle Ages they stretched so far that in a small town or village everybody was related to everybody, and it was a golden age of dispensations; or it would have been if folk had taken their religion seriously in the Middle Ages. The new Canon Law says that Catholics must not marry (without a Roman license) if they are related by blood within three degrees, by marriage, within two degrees, or by spiritual relationship (god parents in baptism). So it is no longer possible for canonists to say, as they did in the Middle Age's, that a marriage from which a rich person wants to escape, never was a marriage because (as in the case of "Saint" Louis and the very un-saintly Queen Eleanor) the man is related to the woman through some incident they have succeeded in discovering in the lives of their great-great-grandparents, or through an act of fornication, which in that age might be taken for granted between their fifth cousins or other remote relatives. But the field is still rich in possibilities; note carefully that marriages which are valid in civil law are not valid in Church law and vice versa.

Mixed marriages are another interesting field. I have recently been consulted on two cases in England. M has married N (a Catholic) on a strict agreement of honor between themselves that no religion shall be imposed upon children of the marriage, who shall choose their philosophy of life when they grow up. There is one child, now in her early teen's, and the wife repudiates the promise, at the priest's order, and she and her relatives choke the girl with proselytism. In the second case a man wants to marry a

Catholic girl, and she has assured him that there is no law of the Church that all children of a mixed marriage shall be baptized and reared in the Catholic Church.

I am not concerned with whether these girls lied on their own account or were directed by the priest to lie -- I beg his pardon, to make a "mental reservation." Both are equally possible. But the law of the Church is clear. Not only is a dispensation required for a mixed marriage but it will be granted only on four conditions (clause 1061). There must be a serious reason: the non-Catholic must promise never to say anything to disturb the Catholic's faith and must agree to the Catholic baptism and education of all children: the priest must be morally certain that the promise will be kept: and he must have the promise in writing.

The next clause (1062) says that the Catholic party (who gets a promise that his or her faith shall never be interfered with) must solemnly promise to take every opportunity to interfere with the creed of ("convert") the non-Catholic. Clause 1070 enacts that such a marriage is invalid unless the Catholic has got a dispensation, so that the promises cannot be evaded by concealing the marriage from the Church.

Another provision which flouts civil law and has led to a vast amount of social trouble is that a Catholic (a baptized person, whether he or she has left the Church or not) does not enter into a valid marriage unless it is performed by a priest (1904). This was enacted by the Council of Trent so as to prevent Catholics secretly slipping from the power of the priest. When Catholics multiplied in Protestant countries, some of which bitterly resented such interference, Rome often suspended it, but in 1908 it was declared to be in force in all countries. You see one consequence of it. The millions in America who were baptized in the Church and later left it and married like other citizens are to their Catholic friends, not married, and their children are bastards.

There is a similar defiance of civil law in the enactment that a couple who had committed adultery before marriage, or ex-nuns and priests who had once taken a vow of celibacy are not validly married. On the other hand, this very peculiar code of law about marriage, which is supposed to have raised civilization in this respect to a higher level, again drastically flouts civil law by Saying (1104) that a priest can for "a very serious reason" celebrate a marriage without witnesses and conceal it from the civic authorities by entering it in a "secret register," and that such a marriage is perfectly valid. Further, Church Law says that youth's can validly marry at the age of 16 and girls at the age of 14 (which in Britain is two years below the legal age of consent). And in fine this Code of the Church that never makes a moral mistake lays great stress on that need of "internal consent" which, as I showed in the above cases, opens a wide field for perjury and contempt of the civil law.

Some of the American judges who tell their fellow-citizens how the Roman Church "does good" and strengthens American civilization would not exactly be embarrassed if married folk applied to them for divorce on the simple ground that they were prepared to swear that they "did not really consent" when they said "I do." They would order them out of court.

I am not in this book concerned with the defiance of civil law and authority which is implied, if not flouted, in these clauses, and the defiance of our modern ethic of sex-relations we will consider in a later book. For the moment it is enough that here we have an invasion of the most personal concerns of men and women which really beats the Gestapo. Concerned as the Nazis are about copulation and children, they are content with one drastic law-forbidding copulation with Jews -- and leave the rest to the influence of their "ideals." What will occur to any reader, even if he is entirely ignorant of the history of these matters or does not know that the laws were framed in an age of intense priestcraft, is that they so obviously mean power and wealth to the clergy. To say that they have an important moral or social significance is preposterous. Some of the laws are plainly created for the profit of selling dispensations from them, and all are designed to extend and emphasize the power of the Black International over the laity. The Fuhrer has framed them: the Gauleiter and the Gestapo see to the observance of them.

I have said little about divorce, though the Church's refusal to recognize the validity of it is clearly a monstrous invasion of the civic rights of a man or woman. It is as useless to talk about Christian duty as about the sanctity of marriage and social interests. Until the 11th Century the Church recognized more grounds of divorce than the majority of states do today. The Greek and most of the Protestant Churches, who know just as much about Christian duty but less about priestcraft, recognize divorce. And the Roman Church at once, when it suppressed divorce as part of its comprehensive assertion of power over the laity, permitted an extraordinary development of those nullity-decrees which I illustrated in the foregoing cases. Catholics who had money were as free to change partners as folk are in most of the states of the American Union today. That is no reckless statement.

The highest authority on France in the beautiful 13th Century, Prof. Luchaire, often claimed to be a Catholic and certainly not anti-Catholic, says that women of the noble class "had a minimum of three or four (successive) husbands." I have fully dealt with that elsewhere and must not be tempted to enlarge upon it here.

The law against birth-control is an even more audacious, more purely clerical, and more recent invasion of the rights of the individual and the family. The motive for that sacred fury of priests and bishops against the use of contraceptives which causes them

to hound women like Margaret Sanger, get Catholic mobs to break up meetings, and make insolent attacks on medical or civic authorities who favor the establishment of clinics has in reality nothing to do with either morals or religion. It is an occasion for asserting and thereby increasing their power in the community, and it is one way of impressing more deeply on their own people the prohibition of birth-control. It keeps up the fiction that it is "filthy."

There are few points on which the claim of the Black International is as plainly based on their own material interest as it is here. There is nothing in traditional Catholic theology that makes birth control sinful. The question did not arise until the 19th Century when the birth rate began to gain on the death rate and when the extensive use of crude contraceptive's began in France. It then became apparent to the clergy that if non-Catholics checked their natural increase by the use of preventives and Catholics could be intimidated from using these by a threat of eternal punishment the Church might hope in this way to cover to some extent its large numerical losses. A Catholic mother told me that her priest had frankly said this at one of their "mother's meetings." It is, at all events, not only the true but the obvious inspiration of the clerical opposition to birth control; and it is one of the grossest pieces of Gestapo tyranny over the family and the individual. It is one of the points on which the Pope most naturally allied himself with Germany, Italy and Japan. They wanted as many potential soldiers as possible: the Church wanted as many contributing members as possible. Neither cared the toss of a coin about the other reasons.

It is here frankly ridiculous to ask us to pay serious attention to the solemn statements of grounds for the opposition which Catholics are now invited to insert even in our Encyclopedias. To quote the "divine command" to "increase and multiply" from a piece of ancient Jewish fiction is an insult to our intelligence; especially on the part of priests and nuns who pretend to be superior to the rest of us precisely by ignoring the command and regarding the mechanism of multiplication as even more repulsive than defecation. But the usual argument that God's will and purpose in the organs of generation is defied, is not much better. This also is stultified by the doctrine of the Church that priests, monks, and nun's, who are presumably equipped with those organs, are much dearer to God just because they forswear the use of them. But the argument is in itself absurd. It was used against the use of anesthetics in difficult childbirth. It is answered by the Catholic's own defense of celibacy: that provided a sufficient number of people marry and couple to maintain the population the "divine purpose" is met.

In any case, now that medicine and surgery are increasingly reducing the death rate an unrestrained birth rate is a growing evil.

When Hitler and Mussolini and the Japanese government forbade Malthusian propaganda and whipped up the birth rate explicitly as a preparation for war, were they cooperating with the divine purpose? Is a great war, which checks the growth of the population, part of that purpose? Are bacteria and fatal diseases? Overpopulation is, notoriously, an outstanding cause of poverty, suffering, unemployment, even war. But overpopulation would be grave in our own time if it were not for the general use of contraceptives and in the future it would reach heights which these opponents of birth control on social grounds never dare consider. Without birth control or immigration (which is ceasing) the population of the United States would be 500,000,000 in the year 2000, 4,000,000,000 in 2110. . . . Need I continue.

The Catholic clerical attitude is a piece of blatant hypocrisy. Its real purpose is to strengthen the power of the clergy and multiply those who support them. Its ostensible grounds are so flimsy that Catholic men and women are in this respect defying their priests to such an extent that the matter is now openly discussed in Catholic literature. For their more comfortable and better educated people they have had to say that it is permissible to restrict births by refusing to have intercourse except in the wife's sterile period, but they cheat even these because the Ogino-Kraus theory of sterility which they follow is -- and the clerical leaders must know it -- rejected by the great majority of medical authorities. Most of us would like to characterize their interference in such matters in even stronger language, because at the best it is based upon a view of sexual intercourse at which the modern world smiles, but we must be content to point out that we have here a tyranny over a man's life which goes far beyond the claims and practices of the Gestapo.

A final illustration of the tyranny over the family is the childish ceremony of "churching" or Purification. When a child is born it is rushed to church at the earliest date the doctor permits for "baptism." This is supposed by those who take a "broad view" of the Roman Church to be just a registration of the newcomer in the ranks of the faithful. It is, of course, nothing of the kind. It is part of the scheme of clerical control and is based upon a priest-made superstition that seems to any properly educated person revolting. The idea of it is that all men are born with the sentence of eternal punishment, or at least of eternal exclusion from heaven, hanging over them (original sin) because a legendary Adam broke into a legendary orchard ages ago. That pink morsel of flesh is, on Catholic teaching, to suffer, privately, forever for Adam's sin if it died before it is put through the weird rites known as baptism!

Most people think that the tyranny and absurdity -- one would almost say obscenity -- end there but they do not. Because ages ago in the dawn of Hebrew civilization, when savage superstitions still lingered in the tribes, the priests laid it down (Leviticus, XII:2) that a woman was "unclean" after bearing a child -- for seven days

if it was a boy and fourteen if it was a girl -- and must go to the priest to be purified, priests get the Catholic women of Boston, New York, and Chicago to act upon the same childish superstition today. It is voluntary, but the priests urge it upon every "good" Catholic mother. Polite non-Catholics say that it is just a pretty symbolical ceremony. As usual, they decline to look up the facts. The ritual enjoins that the woman must remain, as a sort of sinner, "at the door of the church" until the priest's magic has "purified" her, and then leads her into the church. He has made an honest woman of her. Photographs of the ceremony in the 20th Century ought to be preserved amongst those records of contemporary life which are stored in some places for the future sociologist.

Chapter III

THE PRIESTLY CENSORS OF MORALS

These points do not tell the whole story of that tyranny over the family which the priest exercises, largely through his afternoon visitations. He wants to know if parents and children have joined the various societies and fraternities, suited to every age and both sexes, which are organized for the purpose of carrying his school-control over later years, We return to these in the last chapter. He inquires if any fail to attend the church every Sunday, what they read, what shows and dances they attend, whether the children who have left school have fallen into "bad company," and so on. Whether he is really concerned about their morals or no depends upon the character of the priest, which is generally doubtful, but every priest is very keen on keeping them in the Church. Where the Catholic body is strong and includes a number of Catholic employers the priest has a very persuasive argument for loyalty.

I have known a priest in a British town of medium size to walk into a shop in which a Catholic had a score of employees and order him to dismiss non-Catholics and hire Catholics recommended by himself, or order a woman who kept a small store, to cancel her purchase's from non-Catholic sources and deal with Catholics. But here we are mainly concerned with that form of tyranny which the priest calls concern about the morals of Catholics.

Here the "unprejudiced" non-Catholic -- it is remarkable how often a writer whose circulation can be injured or promoted by the clergy or a politician with an eye on the Catholic vote -- becomes ironical. Do we, he asks, first deny that the Church "does good" and then quarrel with it for attempting to do good by a paternal vigilance over the morals of the community? Or do we deny that moral culture has anything to do with the welfare and progress of a civilization? I must defer to a later book the reply to the second question, in which we must discriminate, but we may remind these "liberal" folk of one or two matters that concern the answer to the first, which he regards as so easy.

One point is that the concern of the Black International about conduct is far less than its concern about loyalty and is largely hypocritical. Ever since the early part of the Middle Ages the Church has insisted on its dual guardianship of faith and morals, yet I have abundantly shown in my historical works that, while it adopted murderous methods of guarding the faith of the people it was so really unconcerned about their morals that the period when the power of priests and Popes was supreme (the 11th to the 16th Century) was the most immoral in the history of normal civilization. I do not here take the word morals to refer chiefly to sexual morals. I say that there was more fiendish cruelty, more ghastly injustice to the poorer nine-tenth's of the community, more contempt of the idea of honor and good faith, than in any other 400 years of history apart from the Dark Ages. But the verdict is particularly sound if you make the Christian sex-code one of the chief points of your ethical scheme of conduct; and this state of things -- see my large History of Morals -- lasted well into the 19th Century and lingered longer in Catholic than in non-Catholic countries.

To express surprise or incredulity at this statement is to confess that one has never made a serious study of it. At its best the Catholic code is false to the realities of life and largely based upon superstitions about sex that the candid mind at once rejects. Further, it is framed in a doctrinal system on the level of the crude boogie-will-get-you-if-you-are-naughty of the nursery.

The moment the Catholic goes out into life, either on leaving the school or (in the case of the Irish), by emigration to a better educated country, the framework begins to yield to the acid in the new atmosphere. Thirdly the Church has frustrated its moral efforts, as far as we can respect these, by making it easy for the people to escape what it calls "the consequences of sin" (the confessional, indulgences, etc.). And fourthly the clergy themselves have throughout the Catholic countries shown, and in Catholic countries continue to show, a monumental example of vicious conduct: lying, intolerance, cruelty, greed, and disloyalty to their vows. I have fully developed these points elsewhere and need only summarily recall them. The fourth point applies less in our age, since the clergy are compelled by public opinion to mind their own conduct, but they still apply.

But is not the zeal of the priests for good morals in our time something new and of valuable service to the community? Is it not on this ground that they unite with other Churches -- with "good people everywhere," in a current phrase -- and so promote the interests of the state that Washington is bound to treat them with respect? Are they not now so really resentful of vicious conduct that they go out beyond the Catholic family and parish and have a deep influence on the morals of the whole community?

In discussing these matters we are up against a large problem -- the question which moral code or which clauses of it are socially important -- that must be deferred to the sixth book of this series, where we will boldly challenge the whole ideal of the Church. But we can make a provisional reply. It is that the priest certainly wants to control the morals of the entire community. He does not merely forbid his own people to go to see a film in which his Church finds immorality but he brings heavy pressure to bear on film companies and fires his Knights of Columbus and Dames of the Holy Grail to intimidate exhibitors so that even non-Catholics shall not see them. His Church brings the same pressure to bear on authors, publishers, and booksellers to prevent them from supplying the general non-Catholic public. He threatens civic authorities with the Catholic vote unless they send the police to stamp down on these "filthy" and "swinish" discussions (which he has never beard) on birth control.

Of all that there is so little question that I do not think it necessary to give here proofs of Catholic interference. Seldes and other writers give plenty of evidence, but in point of fact Catholics boast of what they do in this field, and I do not suppose there is an American who has not heard of Breen and the Catholic spiritual guides of the pious colony of artists at Hollywood or of the campaign against birth control.

What is more important is to understand why they assert this moral censorship. A distinguished British social writer, the late John A. Hobson, being pressed to defend the puritanical code which (from force of environment) he upheld though he was a skeptic and generally addressed himself to skeptics, replied that he placed it on an aesthetic basis. Logically that is unassailable. A man has as much right to prefer a certain type of character as a certain type of female figure; though, naturally, this gives him no right to quarrel with a neighbor's different taste. But this theory at once removes the question of chastity from the field of sociology. The stability of civilization does not depend upon tastes but upon hard facts, and it is now generally agreed by men who do not allow priests to dictate their opinions that whether, for instance, an actress in a film or on a stage has too narrow a diaper or how many young folks decline to wait until they are married are not issues of any serious social significance. The priest, of course, raises a vague suggestion that civilization crumbles if we permit are to raise the temperature a degree or two and mumbles about ancient Greece and Rome (which were really more virtuous even in this respect than his Beautiful 13th Century), but most of us have got beyond those fairy-tales of Catholic history.

Why then is the Black International in America so frothy with sacred fury about morals? Mainly because it gives them an important place in public life and furnishes a nice-sounding excuse to the politicians and other's who find it profitable to give them

prestige and influence or dangerous to refuse them. The priests help to guard the foundations of the state, the American home and family. And so on. Many of these politicians, civic authorities, editors, etc., who smile beside the priests on public platforms may even believe what they say because none of them know the facts, about morals in past ages or the genuine sociological position of morals. You might as well expect them to make deep economic study to ascertain the truth when bankers and industrialists assure them that unrestricted competition is the second chief foundation of the state or to inquire, when they are told that something is un-American, whether America is really better off without it. Anyhow, statesmen, bankers, editors, judges, and employer's just take the word of the Church that it is doing a most important work and pass on the good news to the public. The priest goes back to his people and says you see what a splendid position we have won for the once despised Church in America. And his brewers take out their wallets and brewers' widows open their checkbooks.

But you do not need to study either history or sociology, and these people know it. Sex-morals have so little to do with social welfare that the American civilization, which is the second greatest (after Russia) in the world is also the most advanced sexually. It tries to shut out an idealist like Bertrand Russell for moral turpitude and then has to have a Catholic League of Decency and other whole armies of amateurs helping the police to prevent artists and showmen from giving the American people what they decidedly want. One of these censors would be the first to paint a terrible picture of the license that would ensue in novels, magazines, theaters, films, and cabarets if you just left the purveying to the familiar law of supply and demand. I find American novels at a decent literary level better than British and much better than French or German, and at least two-thirds, if not four-fifths, of them reflect an attitude to sex in the middle-class readers that is far from puritanical, in spite of such censorship as there is. The sale of sexological literature confirms this.

On the other hand the American civilization has some grave defects which are not found in the Russian. Notoriously there is an abnormal amount of corruption in business, politics (local and federal), and juridical and penal circles.

There is too high a proportion of serious crime, too much suffering of the poor and helpless, too much wanton extravagance of the rich. But do you hear (the Catholic Church thundering against these evils? Or do you hear bankers and statesmen applauding it for some crusade against them? Never. The G-Men made more impression in a year on the real moral evils which injure civilization than the Church made in a generation. Tammany, which has been one of the cess-pools of America for a century has always been, and is, tied up with the Church. Do not talk to me about Coughlin. Half his followers are not Catholics, and it is just because he gets

some millions of Americans to respect a priest, and therefore in a vague way the Church to which he belongs, that the authorities permit for the present the blatant and -- as has repeatedly been shown -- insincere ravings of the mountebank. Just where he does represent the Church and violates Justice and decency (in his anti-Semitism and libeling of Communists) he is neither moral nor a promoter of the real interests of America.

For the last few years the sacred fury of the priests has expended itself in a crusade against Russians and Communism. I might add the pitiless campaign of lying about democratic Spain as, although the Catholic laity were divided, the clergy were almost wholly on the side of the rebel who has murdered thousands in cold blood and is torturing tens of thousands. But examine the ferocious attacks on Communism in which the clergy generally carried the laity with them. To call this a moral crusade is a mockery. The attempts to justify it by repeating discredited libels from the London Times were exposed repeatedly yet this had not the least influence in restraining the Catholic onslaught. Apart from these bogus outrages the attack was not moral but immoral. A man has as much right on decent principles and under American law to try to persuade others that all the means of production ought to be a national possession and all commodities and services equally shared as he has to argue for the New Deal or universal conscription -- to say nothing of a right to poison the minds of children and delude adults with false statements.

Whenever You apply a genuine moral test to the work of the clergy they fail, yet the country grants them an amazing power in the only respect claimed to be moral but certainly not moral in the social sense and challenged by some of the best writers in America and probably at least half the educated class. It is the familiar Roman story. Claim that you are rendering a service to civilization by preventing people from seeing a film like *The Birth of a Baby* or by getting censors at Hollywood who will cut out a bit of saucy dialogue (at which the entire audience would break into laughter) or order the alteration of a bath-room scene, and then when a writer seriously challenges the utility of the work and the moral standard of the censors get his book suppressed.

Indeed in the matter of films the so-called moral censorship is in large part a pretext for preventing a disturbance of Catholic propaganda and has been so used in notorious cases. Anyone who has seen or read G.B. Shaw's *Saint Joan* knows that, in his usual defiant way (certainly not for profit) he was attacking freethinkers and playing to the Catholic gallery. His Inquisition scene, for instance, was a concession to Catholics at the dire cost of historical truth. Yet the Catholic censors cracked their whips and threatened an all-American boycott because it did not represent as they wanted the official sanctity of Joan. It was much the same with *The Informer*, which showed the real combination of cruelty and piety

in the priest-ridden Irish, and with Blockade which exposed the lies which the priests were telling about the Spanish people.

It is, however, the principle, the fact that the religious leaders of about 15,000,000 Americans are allowed to control the entertainment of the entire population, that matters. It is all the more exasperating to any man who remembers that in the Catholic lands of Southern Europe the most licentious spectacles were permitted by priests (who then did represent the entire community). In the pious Middle Ages pageants and parodies of the Mass were permitted in the churches and cathedrals which would make a Catholic Boston lady faint, and orgies followed on the streets which, if they were now perpetrated in private, would rouse Irish policemen to break in with axes and mercilessly beat the audience. If you can read French, and if there is a copy of it in America, try to see M. du Tilliot's *Memoires pour servir a l'histoire de la Fete des Foax* (1741). The Catholic author, who devoted years to his inquiry, gives a richly documented account of monstrous scenes that the clergy permitted (and often took part in) in the cathedrals and churches of France (and Spain, Germany, etc.) wild orgies on the streets on "holy" days all through the Ages of Faith. On some of the illustrations he gives, from banners that had headed processions on these days, we see men performing in the public street acts which one of the most distinguished French writers, V. Marguerite, was expelled from the Academy, at the insistence of the clergy, twenty years ago for attributing in a novel (*La garconne*) as secret practices to a few morbid men and women of the richer class! Until quite recent times -- for all I know it may still be true -- spectacles were exhibited semi-publicly -- you had merely to charge for admission to the room and exclude children -- which would not have been tolerated in ancient Rome. I often saw myself when I lived in the South of France, 40 years ago, the poster at the door announcing such shows as *La mademoiselle et l'ane*. That means "The young lady and the donkey," and that is all I dare tell you about it. In those days the French priests were pale with indignation because a few morbid folk in Paris were said (questionably) to attend Black Masses, in great secrecy, but hundreds of thousands nightly paid to see these really public shows.

Here is one more -- I could give scores -- illustration of this hypocritical delicacy about sex. Until 1878 castrated soprano singers were used instead of females in many churches (and operas) of Italy and even in the Papal choir at Rome. This was as notorious a fact as the venality of Papal officials and was noticed in nearly every book of travel of visitors. I have met old men who have lunched and discussed with these eunuchs in Rome. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* (article "Eunuchs") continued until the latest edition to say that these emasculated men "driven long ago from the stage by public opinion remained the musical glory and

the moral shame of the Papal choir till the accession of Pope Leo XIII." The recent edition was revised by Catholics, and not only is the reference to the churches suppressed, but it is audaciously stated that Leo XIII simply found the custom in vogue in the opera. Clerical writers, having thus suppressed the most accessible and weighty evidence, have already begun -- I have had proof in the last few weeks -- to say that this story is another libel of the Holy Church! But apart from the unexpurgated earlier editions of the Britannica it is stated as an ordinary musical fact in Grove's standard Dictionary of Music ("Soprani") and all the older dictionaries and books on church-life in Rome. Every Pope, every nun, in Rome knew that the castrati ("the castrated," as they were commonly called) or soprani in the Papal and other church choirs were men who had been, for church purposes, treated as men used to treat each other in the wildest of the Wild West. Now the Black International wants to dictate to America on the ground that its Church has an age-old tradition of extreme delicacy in regard to sex! The claim is even more preposterous than the shoddy version of history which attributes the fall of Rome, etc., to sexual freedom. The real aim is the same as in the furious campaign against Spaniards and Bolsheviks, the alliance with the Fascist scum of the modern world the sycophancy to the rich -- care for the power and wealth of the Black International.

Chapter IV

THE SHAME OF THE CONFESSIONAL

In discussing this catholic censorship of art and entertainment I have inevitably moved beyond the priest's tyranny over his own people and considered the outrageous interference of the Catholic hierarchy with the freedom and tastes of the general population.

If any doubt still lingers in the mind of the reader about the truth of my statement that the real aim of this is simply to increase the power and prestige of the Church let him reflect that the clerical Gestapo has in this respect a power to control its own subjects which is far greater than the power of other ministers of religion. A priest may tell you that in claiming a national censorship his Church merely wants to remove "temptation" from the eyes of its followers. That again is a hollow claim.

Its real plea is that it is rendering a Service to American civilization and must therefore be respected as a valuable national institution. In the domestic sphere the Church boasts that it enables folk to "resist temptation" far more effectively than any other Church does. The chief reference here is to its doctrine of mortal sin and the confessional, and it is an important part of the tyranny of the spiritual Gestapo.

Catholic teaching, stamped upon the mind from childhood onward by myriads of sermons, books, hymns, services, etc., is that some sins are venial (pardonable or lighter) and some mortal (or punished with eternal torment unless they are confessed to a priest and absolution received). Reading books or seeing pictures or shows that in any degree stir the sexual feelings is declared very emphatically by the Church to be one of these mortal sins. One should understand clearly how unique the position of the Catholic is. He believes that after reading even a passage of a book that criticizes the faith or the clergy or seeing a film that gives him a sexual feeling, he is under sentence of eternal damnation and if he dies suddenly -- a street accident, bombing, heart-failure, etc. before he has confessed this to a priest he will infallibly and with no hope whatever of escaping it suffer terrible torture for all eternity.

It is well also to understand the position of the Catholic friend who smiles and tells you that he does not take this literally. If he does not he rejects the teaching of the Church on a point which it makes as vital to the creed as the divinity of Christ or the atonement: more Vital, indeed, since the power of the priests is based to a far greater extent on the doctrine of hell.

In rejecting or ignoring this dogma a Catholic necessarily rejects the basic dogma of the teaching authority of the Church and opens the door wide to general skepticism. He cannot honestly repeat the simplest form of the Catholic creed and, if he is a writer, he dare not even remotely hint at his position. is he a Catholic? Please yourself, but you will have little difficulty in realizing that this peculiar attitude toward one of the most fundamental dogmas of the Church is very uncommon in the Catholic body. From the Church angle the man who says this is in worse plight than the crook or the fornicator. If he does not act on the belief which he professes, to reject and confess his sins at least once a year he, in Catholic theology, may still be a member of the "body" of the Church but not of its "soul." In plain English he is only a nominal Catholic and keeps his position for social or other reasons. Any Catholic who tells you that he is free to question or reject thins fundamental doctrine lies. He certainly knows better.

It is through the further doctrines of confession and indulgences that the Church makes this dogma one of the most profitable in its theology and the chief source of its despotic power. People who indolently, or from an amiable ignorance of the subject, say that the Catholic Church is much the same as any other are very far astray. The Protestant bows to the commands of the Lord and what he believes to be doctrines in the New Testament. Even the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church of America lay it down in the 39 Articles that the Christian need not listen to any command or doctrine that is not found in the Scriptures. But the Roman Church imposes as a binding dogma -- binding under the

usual penalty of hell -- that "Commandments of the Church" are on the same footing as the Ten Commandments. They put on the same level as an act of grave injustice the failure of a Catholic to attend Mass on Sunday morning, to abstain from meat on Friday, or to neglect confession at Easter. The penalty is the same for murder, adultery, or defrauding the widow or orphan -- hell.

A pleasant thought, isn't it, that some 10,000,000 adult American's believe this. Hell and the devil have dominated their minds from the time when they were in the infant-school. Naturally there are millions of Protestants who are in the same condition, but (in no Protestant Church do the authorities say that it is hell to transgress their commands), in none is a man prevented by priestly inquisition and periodical confession from taking a more liberal view. The Church of Rome can deal out sentence of hell and annul the sentence of hell when it pleases.

That is the chief root of the strange tyranny I have so far described. A Catholic apologist would resent the word tyranny. His people, he would say voluntarily submit to the priest who dictates what they shall read or not-read, what shows they shall see or not see, whom and in what conditions they shall marry, and so on. Does he mean that they like it? Oh. no: but they hold a creed that reconciles them to the system. And the fundamental article of that creed is that the Church take's the place of Christ and can condemn a child of eight years to hell or acquit a man who is as encrusted with sins as an old ship is with barnacles. It may all sound very flatulent to you, but you will never understand Catholic life and action unless you know it.

This doctrine of hell and its annex, purgatory, is turned into a source of power and wealth chiefly by the further doctrines of penance and indulgences. A mortal sin -- for instance, when you kiss a girl too ardently even for a few seconds -- incurs sentence of hell instantaneously by an automatic spiritual machinery. All sorts of things are mortal sins and, though, you may find it incredible, Catholics believe that the majority of themselves walk the streets, cheerfully, under the dire sentence. The curse holds until the act -- in case they have forgotten this fateful act, as they commonly do, they run over a charming and exhaustive list of sins (in their prayer-books) before confessing -- is confessed to a priest and he gives absolution. Theologians, who are really not quite as obtuse as the gentle lady saint who in a vision saw Catholics falling every minute "like snowflakes" into hell have thought out the mitigation that when one is going to die without the possibility of seeing a priest an act of sorrow will do the trick. I doubt if many Catholic's know that piece. The only sure way to escape the sentence is to confess. The obligation is to do this. once a year, but fraternity rules and custom generally prescribe once a month.

Many would like to ask one psychological question about the mind of a Catholic. Gladys for instance, goes to confession on February 28 and is not due again until March 31. But she has a date on March 7 (or 17th especially) and . . . Does she go about in fear and trembling in the meantime? Not in the least. You must work it out for yourself but be sure of one thing: Catholics really believe all this stuff. Nervousness about it is unusual. A priest in a poor quarter of London told me this experience. I believe it has become "a story" since I wrote it 45 years ago, but it's true. He was assisting an Irish laborer, of lurid life, in his last hour and found the man terribly afraid. When he explained how merciful God is the man murmured: "It's not 'im, it's the other b_____.

Once the "soul" has gone to hell it is all over. Almost the one thing which the Pope "cannot do is to get a soul out of hell. It sounds remarkable but the Catholic way of salvation is almost fool-proof, and Catholics rarely think about going to hell. Confession to a priest means that you glance back, in quarter of an hour or so of preparation, over the month (or year) with the aid of your list of sins and then tell him which you committed and how often in each case. One priest I knew used to tell of a bright boy who, with admirable succinctness, reeled off his load speedily as: "Thirty b-s, 25 p-s, and 40 d-s".

It is not necessary to tell venial sins, and better-behaved children are often puzzled. A sharp little girl, of inquiring mind, once accused herself to me -- the reader probably knows that I was a father-confessor for years -- of adultery. But of tales of the confessional there would be no end. See my Twelve Years in a Monastery.

Another essential difference of Catholicism is that the priest does not assure the penitent "that God forgives him" or her. He says, and means "I absolve thee." It was part of the power-policy of the Church to shape the institution (or sacrament) of penance on those lines. Confession. to a priest is, of course, an old religious practice. It was as familiar in ancient Babylonia as it is in a Catholic country, though the priest did not release from a sentence of hell, in which no Babylonian believed. Their idea was that for sin the great God Marduk let the devils have a go at a man, and it was relief from the tooth-aches, head-aches, belly-aches, etc., consequent upon sin that he sought. Confession to a priest was as common in ancient as in modern Mexico.

But all that must be read elsewhere. The Catholic theory is that after the priest's magic formula and wave of the hand the devil retires, baffled, and all that the Catholic has to look forward to its purgatory. Catholics may assure you that it is one of the beauties of their creed that it avoids the stark and inhuman alternative of hell or heaven for eternity. It says that lighter sins or those who have escaped hell by confessing must suffer or be "purified" for a

time in purgatory. It is not now essential to believe that the torture is by fire, though the learned (and very modern) Thomas Aquinas proved to the hilt that souls could feel torture by fire, and since it is a spiritual state, there is no question of time. But the Church finds it hopeless to impress the dogma without this material terminology. A popular hymn exhorts Catholics to "Pray for the Holy Souls that burn, This hour amidst the cleansing flames," and the indulgences which they "win" or buy speak of shortening the purgatorial punishment by 30 days or 100 days, or abolishing it altogether.

In short, this purgatory and indulgence business, however beautiful and humane you may think it, has been the most profitable religious doctrine that was invented. We need not go back to the Middle Ages, when indulgences were sold as literally as cigars are, or think of the sale of them by the millions a year in Spanish Catholic lands -- no doubt Franco has restored it -- until recent years. In discussing the Church's finances I said that a Catholic pays for every Mass that each of the 250,000 priests says every day, and the aim is usually an indulgence. I described the enormous traffic in medals, small pictures, relics, scapulars (little pictures on cloth strung over the shoulders and worn next the skin), etc. The normal aim of all this is to secure indulgences. But the subject is too large to be treated here.

What concerns us more is that the doctrine of hell, of a barbarously conceived penalty for a sin from which the priest must absolve a man, is obviously the main source of the power of the clerical Gestapo. Let us admit that the Roman Church did not invent the dogma of hell, as it did that of purgatory, and that priests do not now receive money for absolution, though they assuredly did this in the Middle Ages. But as a source of power over the laity it is a doctrine of unrivalled value. The Church could not have any hope of putting its own commandments in regard to church- attendance, fasting, marriage, divorce, birth-control, reading critical literature, etc., on the same footing as the Decalogue if it had not first lodged the belief in eternal punishment and in its own right to declare when and how this punishment was incurred In the mind of the laity.

Confession is obviously and essentially based upon the dogma. Unless one appreciates this the spectacle of 10,000,000 Americans whispering periodically to a priest how many times they Swore or lied, how many times they just thought that a girl was desirable -- hell drops in with the first thought -- or handled themselves, seems grotesque. The "liberal" view, that Catholics esteem the practice because it eases their consciences and gets them spiritual guidance, is preposterous nonsense. Most Catholics detest the need of it and, as a rule, hurry through it mechanically. But only the small minority who are Catholics in name only, for social or business reasons, shirk it. One of the first questions the visiting

priest asks the mother at Easter time is whether all members of the family have "been to their Easter duties." The minimum obligation is confession and communion once a year "and that at Easter or thereabouts." The priest keeps a tally.

And the most intriguing feature of the whole business is that this "sacrament of penance" with its dire obligation to confess to a priest at least once a year is one of the most obviously priest-made dogmas in the whole weird structure of Catholic teaching and discipline.

The Christian Church, one of many ascetic developments of the Greek-Roman world, did assuredly start with a lively concern about sins. The end of the world and general judgment -- idea which had been borrowed from the Persians -- were believed to be near at hand. The practice arose, therefore, of compelling members who had strayed to confess their sins, generally in the sense of expressing sorrow for sins which were known to the others, before admitting them to the mystic supper. Doubtless the "overseer" (bishop) or presiding "elder" (priest) recited some sort of formula of absolution. In the 2nd Century, as the idea of priesthood developed, it was claimed that the clergy could forgive sins, and a clause in support of this was worked into the New Testament (Matthew XVI, 19). The next step in the fabrication of the priest's power was to declare that forgiveness could be obtained only through the priest's absolution and the laity must be compelled to ask for it periodically. This was so clearly an ecclesiastical move that even the people of the Dark Age resisted it, as they resisted the priestly control of marriage, and there was no law of compulsory confession until the year 1215, when the truculent and despotic Innocent III had completed the fabric of ecclesiastical power.

It is too large a subject for discussion here, and we are concerned only to point out how this rounds off the power of the priest over the laity and gives him an authority and right of inquisition that the Nazi Gestapo might envy. But one further point must be noticed briefly.

Protestant writers insist that the confessional is actually a corrupting institution while non-Catholic apologists for Catholicism claim -- they never examine facts -- that it must be an effective moral agency. In a careful analysis of my experience as a confessor and of discussions with others I have shown (in my *Twelve Years in a Monastery*) that the Protestant contention is, if certain excesses are struck out, correct to a very wide extent. It is true that there is no misconduct in the confessional, in which priest and penitent are separated by a wooden partition, and of wire grille, but assignations can be made, and the priest often hears confessions in places where there is no separation. I have known a priest who systematically got young women to pretend illness, go

to bed, and send for him to come and hear their confessions. It is rare.

More common is the demoralizing effect on girls and certain types of women of the intimate sexual talk that is not merely permitted but required by the priest. He cannot pass a vague self-accusation of a girl that she has been "immodest" (as the nuns teach her to say) or indecent. He must ask. Does she mean a solitary act and how far did it go? Was it with another girl or with a man, and just how far did that go? Was the man married or a priest? Was it with a dog (not uncommon with certain types) and how far did that go? If she that she saw a film or read a book he has to know if the bad thoughts culminated in the usual way, and so on. Since most priests are normally "fleshy" and the woman is stimulated by the sort of sacred license the occasion permits her, any man can guess what the emotional development is likely to be. The cinema from which the priest is so eager to banish temptation for the sake of his Catholic girls, rarely reaches the temperature that the confessional so often does.

Chapter V

CATHOLIC ACTION A CLERICAL MANEUVER

Writers who find it more convenient to make reflections on the Church of Rome without making a close study of its history and life -- it is much easier to pay it compliments in this way -- generously describe it as a vast body of 300,000,000 or 350,000,000, men and women who are devotedly attached to a "venerable creed" and are therefore bound to have a priesthood and hierarchy for organizational purposes and to preserve the necessary discipline. We have seen, or I have shown in a score of works, that this view is as false as the theory of a Seventh Day Adventist that the strata of the earth's crust are heaps of rubbish left by the great Deluge.

There are not 50,000,000 lay men and women in the Catholic world who are old enough and sufficiently educated to be described as deliberately subscribing to a creed. The vast majority of the 180,000,000 Catholics are children, illiterates, or semi- literates; and most of the remainder are duped by a mendacious literature and fooled by a dogma which prevents them from reading exposures of its untruth.

From a sociological viewpoint the Church of Rome is an economic corporation of some quarter of a million priests, high and low. It differs from the ordinary economic corporation in the fact that the 100,000,000 more or less adult lay members are not shareholders but, as in the propagandist societies, just subscribing members. And it differs from these propagandist or idealist bodies and societies very profoundly in the fact that it holds, and has for centuries proceeded on, the principle that these subscribing

members must be held together by violence as well as deceit: that they cannot leave it when they profess to believe its creed no longer but remain subject to it and may be coerced by any kind of suffering (privation, jail, torture, even death) when the Church finds it feasible to inflict. Ten years ago you might have boggled at this conception of the Church of Rome.

Very many Socialists and Communists did, saying that it was a harmless old wreck and serious people gave all their attention to politico- economic matter's. Now, in their tens of millions, in penury or a miserable mental slavery, in jail or in mourning for their dead, they lie like withered swathes of corn across the planet from Brazil to Italy.

To preserve this structure the Church of Rome had not only to lodge certain childish basic dogmas in the minds of the subscribing members and guard them from the contamination of truth but to draw a magic line between clergy and laity. It invented the sacrament of Holy Orders. It erected a sanctuary rail in the chapel. The priests were officially "holy men," special proteges of the Holy Ghost, separated from ordinary folk by sacred vows, rights, privileges, and powers. They talked to you from a pulpit as if you were children and ordered you to do this and that as if you were slaves. If you laid a hand on one -- if you came home unexpectedly and caught him, let us say, at your special bottle -- it was the terrible crime of sacrilege. They could not be taken to a common court of law or asked to pay taxes. To ask them to show annual balance-sheets would be an outrage. Your business was to pay and be meek.

The laity were always apt to be restive under this system. In the earlier part of the Middle Ages the Romans themselves fought the Popes off and on for two centuries for the right to govern themselves. Everywhere, as I said, they resisted priestly attempts to control marriage or impose such laws as compulsory confession. Princes and nobles defied the clergy hundreds of times, but by the terrors of excommunication and interdict the clergy worked on the illiterate masses and won. By the 19th Century these terrors were as vapid as those of the haunted house or the comet, and the historic disintegration of the old Church began. The success of science in mastering disease and death led to a rapid increase of population, but even this could not be made to conceal the fact that the Church was losing about a million members a decade. Slowly and reluctantly the clergy had to turn to new methods, and one of these, particularly during the last 20 years, is what is called Catholic Action. Some call it Catholicism with a punch, others a cooperation of laity and clergy. It is a combination of the two.

The laity began to take action long before the late Pope organized this new movement or tendency. The fight of the German Catholics against Bismarck was mainly conducted by the

laity. The militant Christian Socialism of that county and Austria was Catholic Action. France had several powerful lay movements in the 19th Century, and a Papal Delegate was sent to America to curb the laity long before Pope Leo XIII, in 1899, gave a public and severe snub to the American bishops for their innovations. However, it is usually said, the Catholic laity won the right of personality, and in Catholic Action they march side by side with the priests, no longer mere contributors but militant and largely self-governing bodies.

Not quite. Catholic Action does not mean either that the priests were forced to make concessions or that their tyranny is less. To a larger extent it was not a new movement but a coordination of developments due to the requirements of modern life.

The multiplication of schools and in so many countries the exclusion of nuns and religious brothers from them caused the appearance of a vast army of Catholic teachers, and, since the Catholic school is, as I said, really a chapel, these men and women formed a kind of "Third Estate," a body more or less intermediate between the clergy and the laity. The development of Catholic journalism created another large body of active workers in the cause of the Church. Already the Church made considerable use of Catholic journalists in the employment of the ordinary press, of teachers in non-Catholic schools or education departments, of local politicians, of civil servants in all branches of the national administration, and so on. Lay Catholicism already was militant.

Even ordinary folk, especially women, could be wound up to make it a very spirited fight in the few weeks before an election when there was question of granting larger subsidies to Catholic schools. Some day the question of the taxation of Church property will be raised and you will see high-pressure Catholic Action during election-campaigns. Most of the women would sell America to Japan if concentration on "the danger to the Church" were to imply this.

The present movement is an extension and organization of all this. All sorts of existing elements were brought together. In America the Catholic young men's National Union goes back to 1875, and the monstrous Catholic Welfare Conference, the National Council of Catholic Men, the National Council of Catholic Women, the Knights of Columbus (800,000 strong), etc., go back 20 or more years. Now we have organizations of Catholic Nurses, Teachers, Actors, Writers, Sociologists, youth, and all sorts of oddments: Holy Name Societies, Dames of the Grail, the Sword of the Spirit. the Knights of America, etc. etc., All with horn-rimmed secretaries and organizers, some with elaborate staffs in Washington or Radio Hours; and back of all a vast network of newspapers and the billion-dollar treasury of the Church. It is estimated that more than 5,000,000 zealous adults, apart from the

clergy, are organized for Catholic Action in America and greatly fancy themselves as soldiers of the Church.

I had almost described them as the Shock Troops of the great campaign to Make America Catholic, but overt action is not their usual line. Quiet, stealthy, conspiratorial action best suits the situation. A city must find itself in the grip of the Church before it perceives the white fingers closing round it. The Knights of Columbus are quite ready to crack skulls at a Birth Control Conference or a public meeting to tell the truth about Spain or Russia, but they are just as ready to conspire with Wall Street to bring on a war to annex Mexico or for a peaceful penetration of Canada. During a tour of that Dominion I learned that they had secretly initiated the Premier of Quebec to their ranks. Journalists (on non-Catholic papers), civil servants, librarians, councilors on library or education committees, etc., quietly consult the interests of the Church. A London daily was pained to discover that an important member of its staff altered cables in favor of the Church before publication.

Another has a sub-editor who controls the correspondence columns in the same interest. The zealous 5,000,000 fill America with such intrigue. It is publicly stated by American writers that Farley used the influence of his genial personality to prevent Roosevelt from lifting the rather disgraceful Spanish Embargo; but I should doubt if the more elegant dames of the movement go as far as the aristocratic French lady who, notoriously, seduced Radical statesmen in the preparation of the shame of France and triumph of its Church.

So the tail comes to wag the dog. Catholics in America are about one-tenth of the whole community -- somewhere in this series of books I will provide the material for a reasonable judgment on that point -- yet they have such power that the average American imagines they must be about one-fourth. They are just, as a body, the shrunken remainder of the vast body of descendants of the Irish, Italian, Polish, German, Czech, French, and other immigrants of the last 100 years. And they set up in business at Washington and insist that the President in his decisions shall ask them for the Catholic view of the matter!

In other countries except Britain, where Catholic Action is much the same as in America but more subterranean and less effective, Catholic Action is generally Fascist. In Germany Hitler has killed it very dead. In France, Belgium, Holland, Austria, and Czecho-Slovakia it worked zealously for the triumph of the Nazi- Papal plot. In Spain and Portugal, and now in Belgium and France, it is entirely Fascist or Vichy, which is the same thing. A correspondent just gets a letter through to me from a Portuguese town and says that Catholic Action and Fascism are identical, hold their meetings in the churches, and get anybody who criticizes them sent to jail or

penal colonies. Seldes describes the ghastly medieval tortures that are used on such critic's today in the jails of Portugal, under fanatical Catholic Salazar, who gets nothing but compliments in the American-British democratic press.

That, in the light of the "great" encyclical (Quadragesimo Anno.) of the late (assisted by the present) Pope, is the appointed final phase of Catholic Action. The Catholic young men boast that the priests, instead of exercising a tyranny over them, now welcome them as co-workers, are fooled. The bishops ultimately control the policy of every branch. The Gestapo preside at every meeting of the plotters. When Catholic Action in France some years before the war became a powerful royalist-Fascist movement on lines in harmony with Vatican policy, the Pope scattered it by condemning its leader's. This was part of a deal of the Vatican with the French government. When Catholic Action in Italy took the form of a Catholic democratic movement and became strong enough to stand up to the Fascists (often physically), the Pope obliged Mussolini by driving its priest-leader, Sturzo, into oblivion and paralyzing the movement. German Catholics complain that the Pope betrayed Catholic Action in their country to Hitler. Make no mistake about it. The priest rules Catholic Action. The American zealots ought to have realized it when they were taught to respect Japan as the Pope's ally, when they were lashed to fury against democratic Spain and Soviet Russia, when they found themselves rubbing shoulders at their fervid demonstrations with Germans and Italians who have been branded as conspirator's and Irish and French who are not much better.

But in a later book on the Church and democracy we will consider this antithesis of democratic pretensions and real aims in American Catholicism. Catholics are the most priest-ridden of all peoples of the civilized world: American Catholics are the most priest-ridden in America. They take orders from their clerical Gestapo as no other religious bodies do. The priests dictate their schooling, reading, entertainment, courtship, marriage, diet on certain days, and every aspect of their lives that can be brought under the broad heading of morals. It is not submission to dictation, they say, but compliance with a creed of the truth of which we are convinced. Who gave you the creed? The Gestapo. Have you thoroughly and critically examined it? No, the Gestapo forbid. Why not test the word of your Gestapo by reading a few critics in defiance of them? We might lose our faith, and that would be terrible. Why? The Gestapo says so. This reminds us of the story of the man who, confronted with a difficulty, got under himself and carried himself across!

Joseph McCabe Index

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