

others we are largely in agreement. The party has much of the present mischief in Ireland to answer for."

The Church and Freedom

Protestantism has a heritage of lies that its sincere supporters would be well advised to discard before, with the advance of learning and research, the whole world comes to laugh at them. A Protestant tradition in English history and in English literature has long been in possession, and because few Englishmen were able or anxious to read anything outside what was written in their own tongue, the falsehoods had a long start: John Bullism was a favorable breeding-ground for it. Gradually people are beginning to regard as harmless idiots the average Stiggins who speaks now of the ignorance of the Middle Ages, of the doings of Pope Joan, of the Bull of Adrian, and of the walling up of ununs. Learning is becoming popular and the light of the Middle Ages is penetrating even into the dense head of John Bull: it is beginning to dawn on the man-in-the-street that the men who built St. Peter's were not fools, that Dante knew a lot in comparison with Lloyd George, that Raffael could teach the best English painters a lot about colors, and that Aquinas was a safer guide in philosophy than German dreamers like Hegel or Fichte. One day it will also dawn on the deluded victims of the Protestant tradition that while the Reformation was the real cause of Prussianism, the source of tyranny and of State idolatry, the old Catholic Church was the guardian and the inspirer of true freedom right down through the ages. It is worth while recalling a few sentences from the old teachers in order that we may see how they had, centuries ago, the secret of freedom and the right conception of true Democracy after which we are groping to-day as a result of the fact that we have been led astray for three hundred years by Protestantism and Germanism. The very social and political principles of the American Constitution, which is the grandest document of liberty and right that we possess to-day, are based on the teachings of saints and sages dead centuries ago, and an American interpreting the clauses of the Constitution in the light of right reason is actually re-echoing the wisdom that the Reformation buried and decried because it stood for freedom and the Reformers did not want freedom. The achievement of Protestantism has been to put back the clock three hundred years. And having done so it had the dishonesty to say that Catholics were to blame. Protestantism in its development is Prussianism. America is fighting on old Catholic principles against Prussianism; now that England is safe she wants to protect Prussianism again and the freedom of small nations does not matter. Protestant England again blocks the way and the Democratic President has to fight every step of the road to liberty against those to whom the principles of the Rights of Man are hateful. Let us see now how the true Democracy which is opposed by Protestantism and Orangeism was taught by the Church centuries ago. The fundamental principle of equality was thus defined by Leo XIII.: "There is but one Creator and one human race, and God creates all men equal. There is no essential difference between any two human beings. . . . Men are born with physical differences, but these differences do not destroy the natural law of equality." Many years later the theologian Bellarmine repeated this doctrine: "In an earthly kingdom all are created equal, and, as a consequence, the political power resides immediately in the people until they transfer it to some ruler." In these words we have the very keystone of Democracy and the refutation of the Protestant fiction of the divine right of kings. In the following words of Mariana the doctrine is expressed still more clearly: "As it was by the people's consent that the first kings in every country were placed at the head of affairs, all legitimate power of the king comes from the people. I would advise the people to limit the power by laws and ordinances, lest it should to the injury of the people degenerate into a tyranny." (Book 1, Chapter 8.)

Teaching of St. Thomas

The surest Catholic guide is Aquinas, who taught that (1) government should be for the common good of the people, and that the people (2) have the right of deposing rulers: "Government become more unjust in proportion as despising the common good of the people it looks to the private advantage of the ruler. The farther, therefore, it recedes from the common good the more unjust a government is." (*De Regimine*, 1. cap. 3.) "If the people have the right of providing themselves with kings, the king after his appointment, may be lawfully deposed by the people, or his power may be restricted if he abuses it." (*De Regimine Principis*, 1. cap. 4.) These words contain truths that might well be studied by the victims of profiteering governments to-day. If the freedom that they promise were rightly understood there would be no slavery under Prussianism or under Jingoism, and the ideals of Democracy would not be confined to America alone. The men who blackened the Church knew how well they were building a bulwark to protect their own selfish ends, as they still are protected by Protestantism against all right and justice in Ireland.

From Leo III. to Aquinas is a long call, and we find the same principles advocated by both. Again they were repeated fearlessly by that great medieval democrat, Suarez, who wrote: "The civil power, whenever it is found in one man or prince, has emanated from the people and the community either directly or indirectly. It cannot otherwise be possessed." (*Lib. II. cap. 1.*) Coming closer to our age we hear Liguori declaring that, "It is certain that the power of making laws is given to men, but this power belongs to no one except the community, and it is transferred by the community to one or several rulers by whom it may be governed." (*On Nature and Obligation of Law*, Book I., Treatise II., Cap. 1.) Taparelli, the famous Roman philosopher, taught the sacredness of human rights in the following words: "The principles of natural rights cannot be erased from the human heart. They remain forever. The supreme power should never, in any whim or in any ambition, offend them. Acting against those principles is acting in the interest of wrong. The circumstances of government often seem to demand much license; but the principles of natural right are things of eternal sacredness. The history of tyranny is nothing else but a history of outrage of those principles; and the history of happy states is nothing but a history of their observance. The whole use of government is the public good, and none other." Try Lloyd George, try William Massey, try William Hughes, before a jury on that passage of wisdom and what will their sentence be? What respect have these people had for natural rights, or for truth, or for justice? Is not the whole history of their governments during the past four years the history of outrage and tyranny? Are not the words MENE, MENE, THEKEL, UPHARSIN already written before their eyes, and has not the day of reckoning already dawned for them and for all the supporters of Plutocracy and oppression? The few extracts we have cited are enough to show that the Church taught the true principles of freedom and that, for their own interests, Protestant historians calumniated our teachers as they always calumniated their opponents, true to Luther's teaching. In conclusion, let Alcuin tell how Christianity is always the champion of freedom for mankind: "Positive laws cannot be made unless for the good of the people. Rulers are necessary, but only for the public good; their office is not for their own interest, but for the interest of the State, in all its extent. This principle is not much perceived in pagan nations, for in those nations tyranny has covered the human intellect with darkness. But it is well perceived in Christian States. The light of faith has dispersed idolatry in worship and chased away cruelty in government. It has been commanded that Caesar shall get what is his, but Caesar has been endowed with no right against what natural justice demands for all the people."

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