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The Black International No. 13

Rome Puts a Blight on Culture

THE ROMAN CHURCH THE POOREST IN CULTURE
AND RICHEST IN CRIME

by Joseph McCabe

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Chapter I

WHO ARE THE CATHOLIC 300,000,000?

It occurred to me while I was revising the manuscript of the preceding book that most readers would like to have, before I proceed further, a full and clear statement of the grounds on which I challenge, in fact disdainfully reject, the total numbers of Catholics in the world that are usually given. These numbers vary in Catholic writers and standard works of reference from 250,000,000 to nearly 400,000,000. The figure given in the new *Encyclopedia Americana* by a Catholic expert is 294,583,000. The figure in the *Catholic Directory*, which may be described as an official publication of the British Catholic authorities, is 398,277,000. Authoritative works of reference, which take amazing pains to ascertain exactly how many tons of steel are produced annually in or tons of rice imported into the United States give world-totals which similarly differ from each other by tens of millions when they turn to "the venerable Church of Rome."

Does it matter? Yes, it matters very seriously for three reasons. First, these big figures are an essential part of the bluff which priests put up when they claim, as they do in America, special consideration and privileges for their Church. Secondly, they are an important part of the deception which these priests practice on their own followers, since they give, and are intended to give, Catholics a vague impression that their creed has not merely been that of the civilized world for fifteen centuries but is endorsed by the largest body of men and women in the leading countries of the modern world. Thirdly, the publication of these figures by Catholic writers and authorities affords a rich illustration of that recklessness and untruthfulness of statement which it is the aim of these booklets to expose.

The Church of Rome knows within very much closer limits how many members it has. Every priest makes an annual report to his bishops—I have assisted in this job—and these reports provide national totals which are forwarded to Rome. Two things, amongst others, are reported: how many Catholics in the loose sense—baptized persons—there are in the parish and, particularly, how many of them are real Catholics as testified by attendance at church on Sundays and the number of confessions at Easter. But neither local prelates nor the Vatican ever publish these results. The nearest approach to an official international annual is *Orbis Catholicus*, and it gives no world-total; though if you add up the statements for each country the total runs to about 350,000,000.

The sum-total is therefore usually compiled by an entirely dishonest method, but even professors of sociology who include the Churches as socially valuable agencies never condemn this. Countries which, from geographical or historical conditions, never accepted the Reformation are still called Catholic countries, and the

whole population is usually included in the Catholic total or only from 1 to 5 percent is allowed for Protestants, Jews, and—though they generally form the largest body—skeptics. These countries (France and its colonies, Italy, Spain and its former colonies, Portugal and its colonies, Spanish America, and generally Austria), with a total population of more than 200,000,000 make the bulk of the Catholic figure. For other countries the figures are equally fantastic. The Catholic writer in the *Encyclopedia Americana* gives 11,000,000 to Russia, where no Catholic claims more than 3,000,000 and there are now certainly not 300,000: 39,000,000 to Austria and Hungary, which have had for quarter of a century a total (mixed) population of only 15,000,000: 24,000,000 to Germany, where the Church is in ruins: 35,000,000 to France, which is at least five times too much.

In examining these figures we must clearly understand the conditions. What is a Catholic or a member of the Roman Church? The Canon Law is simple and peremptory: everybody who once received Catholic baptism. American Catholic writers are uneasy about this arrogant theory of their Church that you cannot secede from it, and they are shifty and evasive in defining what they mean when they claim that there are more than 20,000,000 Catholics in the United States. In a fantastic—Catholics call it a scientific—work, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?* (1925), Fr. G. Shaugnessy says that by Catholic he means one who has received Catholic baptism, marries in the Church and has his children baptized, and at death receives the last sacraments. He at once admits that the third condition is “rather theoretical”—he is perfectly aware that it is not taken into account—and he ought to know, and probably does know, that Irish, Italian, and other Catholics commonly marry in the Church and allow the mothers or relatives to have the children baptized though they have definitely abandoned it. From quotations given in *Moore's Will America Become Catholic?* (1931) it appears that in Catholic periodicals Fr. Shaugnessy, a professor at a Catholic college, is accustomed to give the usual definition of a Catholic: one who was baptized in infancy. This is the strict law of the Church, and it is the guiding principle of the priests who compile the parochial statistics from which the national and world-totals are compiled.

Now we have no objection to Catholics making fools of themselves by repeating “Once a Catholic always a Catholic,” which entails that in their opinion I, whom they call “the bitterest enemy” of the Church, am a Catholic. Hoodwinked as they are, they do not see that the real purpose of the Church in laying down this seemingly extravagant proposition is so that when a country which had disowned the Church and has been reduced by violence, as so often happened in the 19th Century and has happened in a score of countries today, it can break the rebels by jail, torture, or execution. They are its subjects. We do not blame Catholics for not knowing that, but at least we can expect them to say, when they boast that there are 20,000,000 Catholics in America and 300,000,000 in the world, that they include tens of millions who though baptized in infancy, rejected the creed when they grew to manhood or womanhood. We shall see presently cases in which Catholic American bishops and canonists have incited priests deliberately to include these seceders in their statistics.

The general public, in short, is grossly deceived, and is meant to be deceived. In common honesty and common sense "members of a Church" means men, women, and children who accept its creed, are in touch with its local organization, and more or less regularly attend its services. What I have said in earlier books—what I have proved by official statistics—about the spread, for instance, of atheistic Communism and Socialism in the last 20 years shows that at least 50,000,000 adults who are included in the figure of 300,000,000 loathed and despised the Church and creed as long as they were free to express their sentiments. But apart from these there are, especially in America, millions of others who have thought their way out of the creed and quietly severed their connection with the Church.

The only real test is attendance at church. There are two vital differences to bear in mind in comparing Protestant and Catholic statistics. Many Churches do not baptize children and by "members" they mean the adolescent and adult, but the Church of Rome counts babies a week old. The second difference is that a man may be a genuine member of a Protestant Church yet attend the services very irregularly. A Catholic cannot. He is, unless there is "grave reason" (illness, etc., not a social engagement or tiredness), bound to attend every Sunday morning as stringently as he is prohibited adultery and much more stringently than he is forbidden to lie, get drunk, be cruel, or rob his neighbor. It is only a rare and abnormal type of mind that, holding this belief, can miss Mass Sunday after Sunday—hell every time, though the sentences run concurrently since they are eternal—for frivolous reasons; and to question the law is to question the authority of the Church or the whole distinctive structure of Catholic teaching. Thus the distinction between "practicing" and "non-practicing" (or floating") Catholics is a mere trick of apologists to excuse dishonest statistics.

Now take the various national constituents of the grand total of 300,000,000 or 350,000,000; and, as all these figures refer to the period before Papal-Fascism destroyed freedom in a score of countries, we need not worry about the obscure situation in France, Spain, etc., today. France is, in all these totals, credited with 39,000,000 or 40,000,000 Catholics in a total population of 41,000,000. It is amazing how American Catholics swallow this. Until the political alliance of the Vatican and the French government began in 1919, on the Church's promise to curb rebellion in Alsace-Lorraine, Rome had thundered against that "government of Jews and Freemasons" for 50 years. It had ruined the Church in France and defied the Popes. And it had the vast majority of the people with it, since, in free elections, the Catholics could hardly get a deputy, much less a statesman, in Congress. French culture was solidly anti-Roman. Its hundreds of scientific men were nearly all Atheists—even Pasteur, Fabre, and Bernard were not Catholics—and of its leading writers nine-tenths were anti-Roman.

But I need not labor the point. Reviewing the position carefully in 1937, after 18 years of the Catholic influence of Alsace-Lorraine and the government's encouragement of the Church, I found French Catholic writers agreed with me. Andre Goddard (*Le surnaturel contemporain*, 1922) described his country as overwhelmingly irreligious and said that in no other age had French-

men been "so little interested in the truth." Georges Goyau (*L'effort catholique dans la France d'aujourd'hui*, 1922) gave an account of all the supposed triumphs of his Church in France since 1919 (so much admired in the American Catholic press) and finally left it open "whether there are in France today ten million practicing Catholics, as some say, or only five million, as others say." Denis Gwynn, a strictly orthodox Irish writer and, as an important foreign correspondent in Paris a high authority, agreed with Goyau and distrusted the higher figure of 10,000,000. This agrees with my finding after a severe analysis of the evidence in my *Decay of the Church of Rome* (1909). I said that there were 5,000,000 to 6,000,000 Catholics in France. The eminent French authority on religion P. Sabatier insists that I was too generous: that the figure was 4,000,000. The incorporation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1919 raised my figure to 7,000,000, and this is supported by the Catholics Goyau and Gwynn. Now that Alsace and Lorraine have gone the figure drops again to between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000. Take the more generous figure. We strike off, with the leading Catholic experts in agreement, 33,000,000 from the number of French Catholics in the world-total.

Of Germany I have written so much recently that I will be brief. There never were in Germany the 24,000,000 Catholics claimed in *Orbis Catholicus* and the *Americana*. The election-figures and explanations which I gave in the First Series of these booklets proved that beyond question Catholics were one-seventh, not one-third, of the adult community or, including children a little more generously, about 10,000,000 to 12,000,000. Catholic papers which I quoted admit that they are far less today, but we will avoid the present compared period. The 24,000,000 German Catholics included in a world-total of 300,000,000 or more were not in reality more than 12,000,000. We strike off a further 12,000,000, or, if the biggest Catholic figure is pressed upon us, we strike off 20,000,000 on the ground of indisputable facts and statistics.

The Italians (42,000,000) are "practically all Catholics," says the *Orbis*, though the *Americana* claims only 32,000,000. Strange how these mighty Catholic majorities are so helpless politically until some Nazi or Fascist thug is called in! Italy had for 50 years (from 1870 onward) a government and a monarchy which were under the ban of excommunication. I traveled all over Italy in 1904 as a delegate to a Congress of Freethinkers, and my yellow ticket evoked friendly smiles and reductions of price everywhere: except, I regret to say, at the Vatican. Nine-tenths of the leading novelists, poets, and dramatists as well as the scientists were as in France, Freethinkers. . . . But enough. The electoral figures I gave in No. 1 of the Appeal to Reason prove that at the time when innocent foreigners were talking about 40,000,000 Catholic Italians they were not more than a third of the population. Strike off at least 20,000,000 (Liberals, Socialists, and Communists) from the grand total.

The case of Spain ought to be still easier, but when a non-Catholic writer like Seldes assures America that all are Catholics in Spain except 100,000 we wonder. At the time when Seldes said this (*The Catholic Crisis*, 1939) an anti-ecclesiastical government, established at one free election after another in spite of the hysterical

curse of the hierarchy, had ruled Spain and defied the Pope and Church for five years, and it took the sweepings of Europe, assisted by a British Society for Non-Intervention (or for Protecting Intervention) and an American Embargo, to put Humpty Dumpty back on the wall, where he wobbles until the day of freedom returns. The Irish Jesuit—and if you know anything more orthodox come up and see me some time—Fr. Gannon said in the *Irish Times*, January 23, 1937, that there are in Spain “ten or fifteen million Catholics.” Split the difference and say 12,000,000, mostly belonging to the illiterate 40 percent of the nation, and strike another 15,000,000 off the Catholic total for Europe.

In that total the *Americana* counts 26,000,000 for Austria and 13,000,000 for Hungary. The Catholic writer is, of course, aware that this is a reference—and not accurate even as such—to the population of Austria-Hungary before 1919. Nearly 20 years before he wrote this article Austria had been reduced to a population of 7,000,000 and Hungary to one of 9,000,000. In Austria, moreover, the Socialists had been in the majority and held power in Vienna and several other cities for years, so that the Catholics, mostly peasants, were not 93 percent (*Orbis*) of the population but certainly not more than two-thirds. In Hungary, which recoiled into Fascism after the unfortunate Communist episode, they are not 13,000,000 but are officially returned as 65 percent of the actual population or 6,000,000. Deduct a further 12,000,000.

In Russia, which the *Orbis* significantly overlooks, the *Americana* audaciously claims 11,000,000 Roman Catholics! How the, you ask . . . It is like so many frauds, simple. The Catholic writer refers—and again inaccurately—to the Russia of more than 20 years earlier, when it ruled Poland. Well, you may say, any man of common sense will allow for that, but you do not see the point. The *Americana* says that Catholics number 294,000,000 today and through this geographical shuffle is able to count many twice. We shall see a very pretty specimen of this pious work presently.

Belgium (population 8,000,000) is credited with 7,000,000 Catholics (*Americana*) or “most of the people” (*Orbis*). I lived (as a monk) for a year there, and the Belgian friars forbade me to appear in my robes on the streets of Brussels as the ensuing blasphemy would be painful. This was 45 years ago, and the Catholics have waged an even battle with the contemptuously anti-Catholic Liberals and Socialists ever since until the devout Hitler murdered the Church’s critics for it. Portugal (7,000,000) is said to be “mostly” Catholic. As it is still 50 percent illiterate I would not mind much, but the fact is that it kicked out its Catholic king 32 years ago and kept its angry Church to heel until the butcher Salazar joined the Butchers Union of Europe. Czecho-Slovakia (15,000,000 until 1939) is described in the *Orbis* as 80 percent Catholic. Turn over No. 5 of the last series and see how the leading Catholic weekly in Britain acknowledged a loss of 2,000,000 in five years after 1919. The Church was in ruins until Hitler’s salvage Corps set it up again in Slovakia, one of the most illiterate regions of Europe.

But we need not run over all these smaller countries. The *Americana* says that there are 183,000,000 Catholics in Europe. How consoling to Americans! But on the safest of grounds—full particulars and authorities in earlier numbers—we have had to

strike off something like 100,000,000 of these and in the next chapter we shall see the quality of what is left. Let us first get the number.

We turn to America, and here the writers in the *Americana* ought to be careful and conscientious because, while the Encyclopedia is weak culturally, it is great on American statistics. He says that there are 50,000,000 Catholics in North America and 44,000,000 in the South. Not being an American I have to be modest, but as the population of South America is about 90,000,000 and half its inhabitants are illiterate, I should be inclined to grant it at least 50,000,000 Catholics. On the other hand, even if we grant the 20,000,000 Catholics demanded in the States and the 4,500,000 claimed in Canada, and the 14,000,000 claimed in Mexico, I hardly see how they amount, even in Catholic arithmetic, to 50,000,000. Pray do not be impatient with my little jokes. I am showing you how the Catholic total is made up.

To claim 90 percent (*Orbis*) of the Mexicans is, in view of the notorious political development of recent years, so fatuous that I won't linger over it. Yes, I am quite aware that any sensible Catholic will admit that, but does he realize that the grand Catholic total which he flourishes is based upon such tricks? South America, on the other hand, is too big a field to cover here. I will be content to claim that in earlier booklets I have shown that the middle-class is substantially skeptical though outwardly more reverent to the Black International since it entered into a definite and highly respectable alliance with Fascism; and that the very rapid spread of Communism after 1920 took some tens of millions of the urban and industrial workers out of the Church. Nine-tenths of the population of 90,000,000 are usually claimed in the Catholic total, and at least 20,000,000 must be subtracted.

It is of greater interest here to examine the situation in the United States. Let us first get a clear general idea what Catholicism in America means. It consists of immigrants from Europe (and partly from Quebec and Mexico) and their descendants. And in this connection I have to notice the funny and learned book of Father Professor Shaugnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?* (1925). The zealous priest had noticed that a dozen Catholic authorities asserted that there has been a monstrous secession—their estimates vary from 15,000,000 to 25,000,000—from the Church of these immigrants and their descendants, and he sets out to rebuke all this nonsense by a "scientific" analysis of the official statistics. He does not condescend to notice that I published a severe analysis of these figures in 1909 and proved that there was a leakage of over 15,000,000. Even in his lengthy and learned-looking bibliography my book is not mentioned. That is how Catholics are treated even by their "professors." But I will not imitate his rudeness by ignoring his book.

He proves triumphantly that the immigrants have kept the faith and that there has been no serious leakage, but one illustration of his method will suffice here. In a final summary table he gives the number of immigrants between 1820 and 1920 as 14,592,613 from "Catholic countries" and 19,062,190 from "non-Catholic countries." You at once notice something peculiar. In the former category he includes only 165,000 Poles, and he must have known that in 1920

there were, according to the official census, 284,000 persons in New York and Chicago alone who had been actually born in Poland! Surely, you will say, everybody knows that there have been millions of Catholic Polish immigrants. Observe the cleverness of Catholic science. Before 1920 there was no Poland. The country was mainly under Russia, and Russia is a "non-Catholic" country, so the immigrants are all put under Russia. Germany again, which sent nearly a fourth of the immigrants, is a "non-Catholic" country. But during that period it was one-third Catholic, and its immigrants came predominantly from Catholic provinces. In fine, if you add the millions of Catholic German and Polish immigrants to the total from Catholic countries (taking off a small percentage for non-Catholics) you get well over 20,000,000 Catholic immigrants; and since the majority of these came in between 50 and 100 years ago they ought now to number between 40,000,000 and 50,000,000! "Where are the snows of yesteryear?"

Apart from these little oddities of apologetic literature American Catholic statistics are weird and wonderful. In the last edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which was revised by Catholics in order to secure accuracy about their Church, it is said that the "official figure" for the year 1928 was 19,689,049—the *Catholic Press Directory* said 21,453,928—the "generally accepted" figure, 22,733,254, and the "true" figure 25,000,000. Observe the accuracy down to a unit of most of these figures, though they differ from each other by millions. However, the "official" figure in the latest census of religions, after ten years of glorious fertility of Irish, Polish, Italian, and German Catholic families, a fair amount of further immigration, and half a million converts, is 19,914,937, and the *Orbis Catholicus*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, and *Catholic Directory* are content with 20,000,000. Catholic statistics in America are farcical and their "remarkable growth," as Catholic officials in the Census Bureau are allowed to call it, is a myth. Even their own figures do not show the Church growing, in spite of its higher birth rate, at the same pace as the general population.

How many really are there? They do not know themselves. The official (Census) figure is made up of claims by the priests and the bishops. The egregious Fr. Shaugnessy goes so far as to say that the parish priests often deliberately understate (which means lie about) the number of their parishioners so that the bishop will not be tempted to split the parish (and—the apologist does not say this—halve the income of the priest). What a disreputable suggestion! I mean, the priests do notoriously lie, or inflate the numbers, but it is for the glory of the Church and is covered by the canonical principle that a seceder is still a Catholic.

I made a very thorough study of the matter, following upon the analysis of official statistics in my *Decay of the Church of Rome* (1909), in No. 1 of the *Appeal to Reason Library* (ch. 5, 1925). There I give Catholic evidence, largely taken from J. F. Moore's useful book *Will America Become Catholic?* (1931), that priests do in fact, and are sometimes so advised by the bishops, deceive the public by counting lapsed as actual Catholics. A check on their figures in Milwaukee showed that they claimed 10,000 Italians and only 1,000 of them attended church. In another city 28 percent of the supposed Catholics never went to church: in a third city

42 percent: in a fourth 38 percent. There is abundant evidence that at least one-third must be deducted from official figures. The number of children in Catholic primary schools confirms this. The Black International may object that they have not schools for all their children, but this weakness is offset by the fact that in the cities very large numbers quit the Church during the post-school years. The main fact to bear in mind is, however, the emphatic Catholic law and teaching that baptized persons whether they profess to have rejected the creed or not, **are members of the Church and must be entered in its statistics.**

Let us still be generous and take off only one-quarter: a very modest deduction when we remember that the claims of these priests for other countries are as we saw, exaggerated by from 100 to 600 percent. There are not more than 15,000,000 genuine Catholics in America. There are possibly not more than 13,000,000 or one-tenth of the population. The world-total of Catholics is not 390,000,000 or 290,000,000. It is not 200,000,000 and is probably round about 180,000,000. These are the contributing members of an economic corporation the governing caucus of which at Rome, apart from the national branches, gets something like a billion dollars a year, and largely in American money, for its international plotting and for the comfort of the Italian hierarchy.

Chapter II

THE MINIMUM OF SCHOLARSHIP AND THE MAXIMUM OF CRIME

My London papers report today (March 13) that "Washington has protested to the Vatican 'because it is encouraging' a Jap Bid to Stir up Trouble." What precisely the State Department objects to is not clear but the public is informed that it is to "the establishment of relations between Japan and the Holy See, as asked for by Tokio." Those relations were, as I have repeatedly explained, established years ago. Five years ago I told how the Vatican entered into friendly relations with Japan after the Manchurian outrage (1931), when it was vital to the future of civilization that the bandits should be condemned and punished by the whole world, and how the friendship ripened into a cordial diplomatic alliance (1935) with exchange of ambassadors and the most graceful courtesies, exactly in proportion as the Japs sank deeper into crime and corruption. In booklets (No. 2 and No. 4) of the first series on the Black International I traced the whole story and told from the Pope's own newspaper, how one of the vilest of Japanese agents Matsuoka, fresh from the final meeting of the bloody conspirators in Berlin (1941), was received with special honor and warmth at the Vatican and granted a gold medal by the Pope.

And the press would now like us to believe that after ten years

of this unconcealed courtship Washington has just discovered, presumably through its Secret Service, that the Japs have approached the Vatican! What is really wrong about the matter? Very certainly Washington knew every step in the development of the relations of the Vatican and the Japs, and there must have been few editorial offices of any importance in the United States in which they were not known. Why were they concealed from the public or mentioned only in obscure paragraphs as items of little significance?

We are not fanatical and do not ascribe every evil of our time to the Black International. The interests of trade had a good deal to do with the suppression of discussion as far as Japan is concerned. But there was little to discuss in Japan seeking an ally in Europe. The monstrous thing was the closer and closer approach of the Vatican to Japan as it strode foully and bloodily from one province of China to another. Can there be the slightest doubt that one of the advantages the Japs sought in the alliance was that the Catholic influence should counteract in all countries, and particularly in America, the growing concern of serious people at their aggressions! That, at all events, is what happened.

It is one illustration of the evil that is done by the Black International in America in putting its own interests before national interests or those of the race. The aspect of this that concerns us here is that press and politicians say that the Church of Rome is so important an institution in America that they are bound to consult its wishes and are naturally reluctant to see anything wrong in its proceedings. Most of us will not accept the apology. Many American papers told in 1935 how the Vatican and Tokyo were arranging an alliance; and many others told in the same year how Japan seethed with patriotic societies, some of them two to three million strong, which demanded the expulsion of all Americans and Europeans from Asia, and how tableaux depicting just such a destruction of part of the American fleet as occurred recently in Pearl Harbor were publicly exhibited to jubilant crowds in the chief streets of the cities. But there were no editorials or feature articles pointing out the connection such as there were denouncing Russia. The world-press bears a terrible share of the responsibility for the world-tragedy; and one reason is that it is to a lamentable extent under the influence of the Catholic Church.

One of the chief aims of the present series of booklets is to show that in submitting to this influence the press took the Church at its own valuation yet could, if it had taken half the trouble it takes over an obscure murder, have discovered that the valuation is monstrously false. We have now seen this as far as the size of the Church is concerned. There are not 25,000,000, not 20,000,000, but something less than 15,000,000 Catholics in America. The Pope has not 390,000,000 but less than 200,000,000 subjects. Seeing, however, that the chief excuse given for subservience to the Roman Church is that it contributes materially to American civilization, it is still more important to examine the quality of the Pope's subjects.

We have already seen the hypocrisy of the Roman claim of moral influence. The priests are very eloquent about sex-matters, in regard to which Catholics do not appear to be different from

other folk, while the theories of ancient history with which they try to prove a connection between sexual freedom and the decay of civilization ought not to impress even a politician. Of the evils which do deeply affect the social welfare—crime, corruption, and greed—they take no effective notice. They are, in fact, amongst the stoutest defenders of the greed which forbids the full development of our resources and the betterment of the condition of the mass of the people.

But the cultural pretensions of the Roman Church are even worse. It puts, and has always put, a blight on the higher culture which assuredly is a valuable element of civilization, and at every level it restricts the mental development of the people in its own interest. There is a well-known analysis of the religious "preferences" of the 40,000 Americans, presumably of distinction, in *Who's Who in America*. We recognize the limitations of the work. Whether or no it is true that any clergyman or any nun who has written a book or two can get into that Valhalla of the living by pledging himself to buy a copy of the book every year, as is the case with some books of reference, it is obvious that the business of the work is to supply information about any man or woman who at the time is in the public eye or ear, whether they be singled out for skill in literature, sport, the cinema, church-organization, banking, or striptease.

With this qualification we see a pregnant significance in the analysis of the names which Professors Huntington and Whitney published in their *Builders of America* a few years ago. They found that Catholics are represented in *Who's Who* by only 7.4 per 100,000 of their body (7 men and 0.4 women), and these are very largely—but the professors do not point out this—ecclesiastics. You will gather what this means when I add that even the Mormons, with 11 men and 5 women to the 100,000, outshine them; while the Methodists have 18 men and 0.6 women. The Episcopalians have 156 men and 18 women: the Unitarians (who are largely freethinkers in America) have 1,185 men and 103 women per 100,000. In other words, the farther a Church is removed from the Roman—belonging to the Episcopalian is, of course, a matter of respectability—the higher its cultural distinction.

What do the Catholics say to that? They say that it merely shows the snobbishness of non-Catholics and the manly modesty of Catholics! I should like these Catholic writers who have this fine American contempt for snobbery to study the *British Catholic Who's Who*. It is, at least, published in London, but Al Smith and other "great Americans" figure in it. In discussing this cultural poverty of the Roman Church in America, to which he quotes several Catholic witnesses, J. F. Moore (*Will America Become Catholic?*) speaks of Romanism in Britain as more distinguished. There are, he says, no Catholic writers in America to compare with Chesterton, Noyes, Shane Leslie, Benson, (Father) Martindale, (Father) Knox, and Sheila Kaye-Smith. If you have read these you will reflect that the American Catholic body must be very poor indeed, in illumination if it is outshone by that galaxy: especially as Chesterton's brilliance—if you care to use the word—was increasingly dimmed and his influence increasingly more mischievous after he joined the Church of Rome and became a sort of pensioner

of it. The "brilliance" of Father Martindale and Father R. Knox must be a little joke of Mr. Moore's, as he is usually judicious. However, against these British giants of the pen American Catholics can, he says, put only Joyce Kilmer—what a pity he died nearly a quarter of a century ago—though he elsewhere adds Carlton Hayes, Michael Williams, G. W. Schuster, Kathleen Norris, and Agnes Repplier. You will have heard of some of them. He adds that American Catholicism is still poorer in science. A score of American physicists have an international reputation, and none of them are Catholics, while on the biological side the Church is still poorer.

We will return presently to the question of distinction in science. It is much easier for an artist to be a Catholic. He has none of these intellectual prejudices about truth and reality and is as ready to embrace any creed that is prettily dressed as anything that is pretty undressed. So we do not wonder at the number of artists. To the literary artists (British Catholics) given above add Belloc, Sir P. Gibbs, Compton Mackenzie, W. Meynell, Christopher Dawson, and a few other good second-raters. Then there are devout artists like Sir Seymour and Lady Hicks, Charles Laughton, Sir F. Brangwyn, Sir John Lavery, and Sir G. G. Scott.

But the chief reason why I recommend you to see this **Catholic Who's Who** is because you will find it the most amusing Book of Snobs on the market. I should explain that, although it is published in England it has no patriotic limitations. Chiefly, I imagine, because the compilers felt that there are a few scurvey folk who would count how many real intellectuals there are amongst the thousand names and all that they could find in Great Britain were three or four teachers of chemistry or mathematics at minor universities, they searched the whole Empire on which the sun never sets and the whole English-speaking world, ransacked Eire and Malta (which are as full of titles as fleas), and dipped into France, Belgium, Italy, and a few other countries. So they got together a body of Catholic scientists, with your American Dr. J. J. Walsh as the supreme representative, who would almost fill a Junker plane. I forgot how many laborious days it took me to collect from the book just as many Catholic teachers of science in the area covered (total population about 250,000,000) as I can count on the fingers of two hands.

But that is incidental. The chief purpose of the book is to give the cream—and it is very rich cream—of Catholicism in Britain, Eire, Malta, etc.: the aristocratic and semi-aristocratic families down to junior lieutenants of the army and navy provided they belong to families which never sank to the level of earning their own living. These and the clergy nearly fill the book. Titles, diamonds, and gold glitter on every page. The book seems to cry at you: Look whom you may hope to meet if you join the Catholic Church. Next in importance are the diplomats—the gentlemen who kept the blinds down at Paris, Brussels, Vienna, Rome, Madrid, and Lisbon while the bandits armed and the traitors said their prayers—the naval and military commanders, and the high civil servants and legal officials, who are all of great service to the Church. After that you will surely not be disgruntled because the men of intellectual distinction, if you grant that description to

ordinary university professors, are less than a dozen out of the thousands of professors in the area covered.

Some Catholics meet this by saying that it is a vulgar business counting heads (unless they bear coronets), or that they prefer to think about the really great men of science of earlier times; especially, it seems, of the time when in the eyes of the Church the only good scientist was a dead scientist. We will return to that in a later book. These pleas are, in any case, frivolous. The compilers of the book ranged from California to New Zealand in search of scientists or other men of intellectual as opposed to artistic or social distinction and they did not find enough to make a football-team. There is another, a very impartial and objective, way of proving this.

I suppose the Nazis have included in their monumental thefts the seizure of the fund which Alfred Nobel left in Sweden to provide five rich prizes every year for the world's most distinguished workers in physics, chemistry, medicine, literature, and the cause of peace. However, the prizes have been awarded for nearly 40 years and apart from a little patriotic bias in favor of Scandinavian and the little nations, the awards, based upon the reports of competent committees in every country, are the safest possible indication of distinction. The Nobel Prize is the greatest and most coveted in the world, and the award is the most impartial, yet I doubt if five out of the whole 200 winners are or were Catholics. It is significant that the *Catholic Encyclopedia* never mentions the prize. Naturally the scientific recipients, the great majority, have never written on religion, but after a careful analysis I can find only Alexis Carrel who is recognizably a Catholic.

It is different with the 37 recipients of the literary prize. Here we should understand that the judges stipulate for "an idealist tendency" in the works and are themselves religious, so large numbers of the greater writers of modern times (Wells, Conrad, Zola, D'Annunzio, Sudermann, Capek, Galdos, Ibanez, Gorki, Tolstoy, Santayana, etc.) have been excluded because they were freethinkers, while a few sentimental writers belonging to small countries and hardly known outside these countries have been included. Yet only 4 or 5 out of the 37 could be claimed as Catholics of a sort, and the one writer amongst them who definitely claims to be a convert to the faith, Mrs. Sigfrid Undset, has had her novels chastized in the American Catholic press for their "vileness."

The awarding of the Peace Prize is not so significant because it is sometimes given to politicians or societies and does not in any case imply any distinction in the subject except a zeal for peace. Nevertheless, although the award of it was loose and in some cases frankly ridiculous, I cannot trace more than one dubious Catholic in the whole 38 recipients. In short, this supreme and impartial tribunal, basing its judgment upon annual reports from important committees in every country, for detecting the highest distinction in science and letters has in 40 years been able to give its award to only about half a dozen nominal (and mostly dubious) Catholics, or to only 3 who definitely claimed to be orthodox Catholics. In *Who's Who* Catholics are represented by 7.04 per 100,000 of their number: in this select gallery of men of real cultural distinction they are represented by 1 in 100,000,000.

American Catholics despise and jibe at freethinkers as a rare and negligible species. Well, of the 37 winners of the literary prize, the only section in which you can look for public expressions of opinion about religion, no less than 27 were avowed freethinkers (and more than half of them Atheists). In the peace section 13 out of the 29 selected individuals were avowed freethinkers, and most of the others are not declared. One only was in some sense a Catholic. In the scientific section few have given a clue to their creed, as is the way of scientific men today, but the great majority of those who have expressed themselves on religion were freethinkers—even Mme. Curie and her daughter openly declared their secession from the Church—and only one is clearly a Catholic.

To put it differently, Catholics claim that they are a fifth of the race, and if we grant them five Nobel Prize winners (though some are doubtful) they are one-fortieth of the world's leading men and women of intellectual distinction. But this is still too flattering to Catholics. They profess to number more than 300,000,000 of the white race, from which the culturally distinguished are almost entirely selected. In this sense they profess to be one-third of the race yet are only one-fortieth of its more distinguished stratum. And this agrees with what we found from other sources and is fully confirmed by apologetic lists of "great Catholic scientists." The names, when they are not fraudulent, almost all belong to the past. Let them attempt to draw up a list for this century. Professors of and original workers in science are now ten times as numerous as ever but the Catholic proportion of them shrinks into invisibility.

Hilaire Belloc said to me (with his characteristic thump of the table) some years ago: "I don't care what you say, McCabe, the intellect of Europe has been warped ever since the 16th Century." It is one of his favorite themes that his Church alone develops the intellect on sound lines or teaches folk to think clearly. In one form or other it is a common plea of Catholic apologists. Well, there is the answer in facts. The Church of Rome puts a blight on culture and intellect. There is no other possible explanation of the facts. Of adolescent and adult Catholics (about 100,000,000 in the world) about one-half are illiterate, as I will show in the next chapter, and half the remaining have only that paltry degree of literacy which makes their creed or opinions of no particular interest. The cultural value of the remainder you can judge by the number of distinguished men who emerge from the body. When you are considering a body of tens of millions of men and women, of a score of races and different environments, the number of them that rise to the top is a sure indication of the cultural quality of the body.

All of which points infallibly to the conclusion that the Church itself is responsible. One of those fine-natured writers who are always trying to say a good word for Catholicism, which they never study, asks all sweetly reasonable folk to see that mental concern about religion **must** help to develop the mind and promote thinking. We might admit this on one condition: that the man or woman does really think about religion by reading both sides and conscientiously weighing their arguments. That is just what the Roman Church uses its heaviest weapons to prevent. The

Catholic book is a holy book: the critical book is a "bad" book and is on the same level as the kind of book you cannot buy openly. If we are agreed that democracy is the ideal political form, we agree also that to teach all people to think critically and inquire without restriction is the only way to get it to work satisfactorily. The law of the Roman Church is just the opposite. You must not inquire outside your own creed and you must not think critically even within its range.

The second source of blight is that Catholic doctrine is so really absurd that it repels the properly developed intellect. You read of 40,000 converts a year—about one to every priest in the United States—but you rarely hear much about their mental quality. They are mostly either people with money and not much brain, or artistic people who do not take creeds literally, or men and women who pass over for social reasons (marriage, etc.). And while you hear a lot about the 40,000 a year who go in you hear nothing about the 100,000 a year who drop out, though even the figures given in the official decennial census show such a lapse. All sorts of motives draw people in, but it is always the falseness or absurdity of the creed that drives them out.

Catholics with considerable general knowledge and mental vitality will generally be found to take the creed with great license. Pope Pius X, the peasant-Pope, in his blundering campaign against Modernism was at least honest in trying to drive all these people—the real "bad Catholics"—out of the Church, and there was a notable exodus of cultivated people. Unlike the American apologist the Pope did not care two pins about cultural quality. He wanted folk who recited the creed every Sunday to mean what they said. But every history of that campaign will tell you that while a few conscientious men like Tyrell walked out the great majority protected themselves by silence or, if they were in official positions, foreswore the truth. "The great advantage of the Catholic Church is the freedom it allows you," said a leading Catholic writer and scholar to me. When I retorted, "Yes, if you'll keep your mouth closed," he was silent. Most of the literary men and artists who adorn the Catholic list never defend Catholic doctrines (hell, original sin, etc.) in detail. You never know what they really believe. As one of them said to me, they admire the Church "as a whole." But the man whose main interest in life is intellectual, the man who dislikes feudal systems for the mind, despises this attitude. Hence that appalling poverty of the Church in the higher culture which infallibly betrays that it puts a blight on thinking. And this is the Church that demands privileges in America because it contributes so materially to the higher life of American civilization: the Church that keeps a staff in Washington (as well as boon companions in the White House) to give the government the profound advantage of "the Catholic view."

Below the college-trained—let us say Catholic-college-trained, as this is a very different matter—stratum is the thick stratum of the illiterate and semi-illiterate. I doubt if many realize the importance of this in the Catholic Church, and I leave it for adequate treatment in the next chapter. Here let us make clear one of the most startling facts about the Church. It is very poor in

cultural distinction but exceptionally well represented in the criminal class.

I have recently examined a dozen up-to-date American manuals of sociology and penology. Crime, naturally, is discussed at great length in them. Not only have the adventures of the G Men caught the imagination of the nation but experts have worked out the cost of the total volume of crime and shown folk that it is an intolerable species of parasitism on the industrious community. One result has been that in the last ten years much has been done to create a real criminological literature in America. The division of functions between Federal and State governments and corruption in high places left America with the poorest criminal statistics in the civilized world, but sociologists are steadily improving the situation. We get not only gross totals but analyses which show the incidence of crime as regards sex, age, environment, etc. But I have not found one single sociologist who discusses, and illustrates by statistics, the relation of crime to the religion or irreligion of the criminals. It is left to journalists, essayists, and apologists to stamp it upon the public mind that religion is the great corrective. But whether it is so in fact they are incapable of studying, and the scientific experts will not help them. Because the Churches, and very particularly the Roman Church, do not want the facts known. The whole of American literature is not available to me but the more important works are, and when not only these but such works as the *Encyclopedia of Education*, the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, and the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, which ought to give the facts on this important social-moral issue, are completely silent, I look for the clerical censor. To adapt a phrase of Huxley's, there is a barricade to sociological research with the notice: "No Road, by Order of the Pope."

A few sets of figures have got out. In 1932 an Irish chaplain at Sing Sing made an inquiry into the religion of the prisoners and in the warmth of his indignation he sent the figures to be published in *The Commonweal* (Dec. 14). He had found that 855 out of 1,581 prisoners described themselves as Catholics and were accepted as such by him. This could be checked by a similar inquiry in the jails of Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, and Philadelphia, but, of course, no such inquiry was made. In D. C. Culver's exhaustive two-volume *Bibliography of Crime and Criminal Justice* (1934 and 1939), with about a thousand pages of literature, works on "Crime and Religion" fill a few lines and list one paltry Catholic book and a few apologetic articles. It is so much easier to talk rhetorically about how Catholic training must help to keep down crime and dismiss these prisoners as "not real Catholics"; though as baptized persons they help to swell Catholic statistics.

But experience in other countries shows that the Sing Sing statistics are normal and reliable. In Great Britain the religion of prisoners is no longer published. The clergy do not approve of the practice. But I find in a government publication of 30 years ago when the religious analysis was still published, that in the jails of Great Britain on March 28, 1906, there were 5,378 Roman Catholic prisoners in a total of about 25,000, and it is stated that this means that the Roman Catholics were represented in the criminal population by 247 per 100,000 of their body. Even the Church

of England, to which large numbers of convicts profess to belong (since officials insist on some creed) whether they do or not, had only 118 per 100,000. The Methodists had 10, the Baptists 9, per 100,000.

In 1913 I discussed the subject in his office with my friend Sir Robert Stout, Chief Justice of New Zealand, and he got his staff to work out for me the figures for that Dominion. It transpired that while Catholics were only 14.07 percent of the total population, they were 41.74 percent of the prison population. In the same year a leading government official at Melbourne gave me the figures for Victoria, and they told just the same story. But Australia continues to publish this religious analysis, and anybody may see the figures. The Victorian government reported in 1936 that Catholics were 18 percent of the population of the province but 29.61 percent of the criminal population. The government of New South Wales reported (*Statistical Register*, p. 216) that 505 prisoners out of 1,330 in its jails were Catholics, though Catholics are less than one-fifth of the total population of the province.

And if any man still hesitates to see that these figures mean that the Irish, with Roman Catholic training, are more apt to become criminals than the English, Welsh, and Scottish—the English figures given above include a strong Irish element in London, Liverpool, Newcastle, etc.—let him study the statistics of crime in Catholic countries. It is impossible to get complete figures, as Catholic countries, being less efficient in such matters than Protestant countries, rarely gave reliable statistics until recently (if at all), but the data in Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics* for the last century and Webb's continuation of the same work for the first decade of this century fully confirm the truth as far as they go. Whatever allowance you make for different standards of classification and degrees of police efficiency, the more criminal status of Catholic countries and the far greater success in reducing crime of non-Catholic countries leap to the eye, as the French say.

One requires great caution in handling criminal statistics, particularly in the relation of crime to religion. Countries like Spain and Portugal, for instance, and especially the Latin-American Republics had far more crime than the figures published by the inefficient police. I will return to the subject in the last book, but certain undisputed facts may be given here.

Great Britain, in which the Catholics (mostly Irish) are less than one-twentieth of the population and have no influence whatever on the formation of the national character (except to swell the criminal statistics) has the finest record in the modern world in reducing every class of crime and delinquency. The few figures given in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (which has not dared to touch the question of crime and religion) are confused, but Mulhall gives authoritative tables. From these we learn that since 1840 grave crime has been reduced to one-third of what it used to be though the population has nearly trebled. Other social offences have been reduced in the same proportion. France has the next best record in Europe, especially since 1880, when education was taken out of the hands of the clergy, the Church was shut out of public life, and Catholics fell to one-sixth or one-seventh of the population. Germany, where until the last few years Catholics

claimed to be a third, and were at all events more than a fourth, of the population, has a less flattering record; but it is better in Protestant Prussia than in the Catholic provinces. Italy had one of the worst crime records in Europe until the Papacy was deprived of secular rule in 1870, and it fell back—as any person can see by the official Italian figures in the *Statesman's Year Book*—into a terrible increase of crime when Mussolini handed back the schools to the clergy.

But we have to consider crime and vice in Catholic countries in the last book of this series—we shall find that the reproach extends to drunkenness, bastardy, etc.—and I will there give the available figures. I have established the second point of the present book. The government of the United States is confronted with a claim that it must pay special heed to a Pope who has 300,000,000 subjects and a national Catholic Church which is not only the largest religious body but the finest educational and moral agency in America. Well, the Pope has not 300,000,000 subjects unless you care to count the millions who rot in the jails or cower under the spiritual police in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France, and South America. The Roman Church in America compiles its total of 20,000,000 by the same dishonest method and is neither an educational nor a moral force. Its priesthood so confines the intelligence that few men and women of real intellectual power associate with it, and its religious-moral education is of such a nature that it actually supplies more to the criminal class than any other Church does. It is the poorest in the kind of higher culture which is a real factor in the advance of a civilization and the richest in criminal or potentially criminal elements.

Chapter III

ROME LOVES THE POOR ILLITERATE

Just as I write my mail brings me a letter in which an estimable lady, one who is eager to have the truth about the Roman Church known, gently chides me for the "brutality" of the way in which I put that truth before the public. She sends me authentic information about life today in a Catholic country, a country whose ruler is always treated with great respect in the British and American press, which, when I hand it on—probably in the next book—will make your hair stand on end. But I am urged to put it more courteously. "Brutality" is, of course, a friendly exaggeration, and I gather that the idea is that it would be more effective to "let the facts speak for themselves."

I occasionally get such letters. A few weeks ago a university professor argued with me in the same vein. I "defeat my own end" and so forth. And to all of it I reply that 45 years of experience in such work, not bad temper, dictate the tone of my writings on the

Roman Church. Forty years ago I wrote a little work on the Church of Rome which so astonished Hilaire Belloc, to whom a friend lent it, that he thought, that in view of its extreme moderation, it must be a forgery. It was a more dismal failure than any other book I have ever written, whereas books in which my pen was allowed to take its natural caustic course have had numbers of Catholic readers and hundreds of thousands of others. Most people don't want appeasement. When facts are brutal and doctrines are stupid say so. Although this information which just reaches me is startlingly picturesque and largely relevant to issues of the day no newspaper in London would admit it, and no publisher would accept a book on it. That goes also for America. They must not "offend Catholics." And you will not alter that by simply telling facts. You need to kindle indignation and resentment in your readers and persuade them to pass on the facts to others. Courteous talk about Catholic matters is so often merely a sign of prudence and calculation in the writers that the kind of man or woman I want to read me resents or suspects it.

If I so often blame the press I shall not be misunderstood. No one expects a paper to defy a Catholic threat to injure its circulation or cut off its Catholic advertisers. I have worked on several papers, as an outside member of the staff, and we understand each other. I attack the system which imposes this humiliating subservience on them, and more than one journalist or publisher has wished me more power to my elbow.

And one of the most important moves in the attack on the system is to expose the fraud of the Black International in representing that the Church is far larger and more useful than it is. Fraud? There you have at once an illustration of what I have been saying about "strong" and "tactful" language. The Catholic representation is fraudulent, and you do not tell half the truth unless you say so. Every Catholic writer knows as well as I do that his figure of 300,000,000 includes the 100,000,000 who, as I showed, have left the Church, and he knows that the general public does not suspect this. He knows as well as I do the cultural poverty of the Church and its richness in crime, and he tries to confuse the public mind about these facts by rhetoric and sophistry. He knows, while he represents the Church as the mother of education, the patroness of learning, the inspiration of clear and honest thinking, that, as I will now show, it prefers people who do not think at all, and the majority of its actual 180,000,000 subjects are either children or illiterate.

Practically all statistics that would give us sound material for settling such a question as the social value of religion are either fantastic or gravely defective. Our sociologists continue to include religion amongst the factors of civilization, and our politicians, journalists, and essayists are quite sure of it. But in an age in which most other statistics are precise to a decimal point the statistics which bear upon this question are grossly neglected. We saw this in regard to the number of Catholics and the relation of Catholicism to crime. It is the same in regard to Catholicism and illiteracy; and, I might add, in regard to Catholicism and drink, illegitimacy, and other relevant matters.

Statistics of illiteracy are in any case poor. Most countries do not require a declaration in the census. They may report the num-

ber of recruits when they are called up for military service or the partners to a marriage who cannot sign their names, but the backward countries are more apt today, when a high percentage of illiteracy is a reproach, to give a false or arbitrary figure. Some countries again include infants among the illiterate, some only citizens over the age of 5, 10, or 15. With an allowance for their difficulties I reproduce the table from the Columbia University **Encyclopedia of Education** (article "Illiteracy") which is the most reliable authority and the most recent, fairly full list I can find. It has the advantage also that in nearly every case the percentage of the population means over the age of ten. The list is in alphabetical order, but the point we are considering will be clearer if I re-arrange the items in the order of educational efficiency.

One other caution is necessary. There are no annual reports on this point. The leading civilizations boast of their very low percentage of illiterates, but backward nations are coy, and you get little help from the usual year-books such as the **Statesman's Year Book and World Almanac**. This list therefore relates to the situation in the first decade of the present century. That has its advantages, and I will point out presently the immense alterations which have to be made today in some cases (Russia, Mexico, Spain, etc.). But first let me give this impartially compiled list:

| Country | Illiterates percent of population | Country | Illiterates percent of population |
|---|---|---------------------------|---|
| Germany (over 20) | 0.03 | Serbia (over 20) | 36 |
| Denmark | 0.2 | Hungary | 40 |
| Sweden (over 20) | 0.3 | Italy | 48 |
| Switzerland (over 20) | 0.5 | Argentina | 54 |
| Holland (over 20) | 1.4 | Greece | 57 |
| Finland | 1.5 | Spain | 58 |
| Scotland (over 20) | 1.6 | Poland | 59 |
| England and Wales | 1.7 | Rumania | 61 |
| United States (negroes and immigrants) | 7.7 | Bulgaria | 65 |
| France | 14 | Russia | 70 |
| Ireland | 17 | Portugal | 73 |
| Belgium | 18 | Bolivia | 82 |
| Austria | 26 | Brazil (total population) | 85 |

It need not be said that the countries—nearly all non-Catholic—in which the percentage is only of the adult population have slightly better records than they appear to have, and that the quickening of educational work since 1900 by the pressure of world-opinion and the rise to power of Liberal governments has greatly lowered the worse figures. From the scattered data in the **Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences** for 1920-1925, moreover, I find that still all countries with less than 1 percent illiteracy (Denmark, Sweden, England, Holland, Scotland, and Switzerland) are non-Catholic, all countries with 5 to 25 percent are non-Catholic with a very high proportion of Catholics and were formerly under Catholic rule, and all countries with 30 percent or over illiterate are solidly Catholic. It further appears that Poland had still 32.8 per-

cent, Chile 40.8 percent, Mexico 62.2 percent, and Brazil 71.2 (and probably higher) percent in 1920-1925.

In discussing social questions, such as the genuine social value of an institution, an ounce of fact is worth a ton of rhetoric. In the foregoing table, the items of which are not selected by men but by the highest educational authority in the United States, you have the facts, and they make a mockery of the claim that the Roman Church is the mother or inspiration of education. They show that it is, on the contrary, the enemy of education. It professes a zeal for it only when a large non-Catholic majority watches it critically. In the Columbia table all countries with less than 2 percent had small Catholic minorities of no public influence in 1900. Germany is an exception but, notoriously, it was Protestant Prussia that forced the educational development. On the other hand all countries with over 30 percent illiterates had in 1900 Catholic (Roman or Greek) governments and majorities; and the higher the figure of illiterates the higher the Catholic majority. The intermediate countries had smaller Catholic majorities or (as in France) had recently secularized education.

If I were able to give the full figures for all countries of Europe and America they would be in harmony with the above. Norway has little illiteracy: the Latin-American Republics generally have a high percentage. So the plain teaching of facts is that where the clergy have, or until recently had, great influence on the government through a Catholic majority, education is bad.

And the deeper we go into the situation the worse we find it. Thirty years ago I had occasion to study the situation in Spain, where an occasional rise to power of the Liberals had at least done more for education than was done in more priest-ridden Portugal. I found that the real proportion of illiterates was said by eminent educationists to be 68 percent (78 in Portugal), not 58 as reported by Columbia, but what was called "literacy" was often so ridiculous an accomplishment that the figure of percentage meant little. Teachers received—when they were paid—\$100 per year, but the state would not pay it, and the parents generally refused. A law was passed that there should be no bull-fights where people would not pay for a teacher, so in some places they gaily drove the master to the ring and baited him instead of a bull. The schools were barns, and the teachers had to do other work to get a living of \$3 a week. All the summer the children were wanted for agricultural work. In short, until the Socialist-Liberal government of 1932-36, which the Church ruined, began real education, half the supposed literate one-third of the nation might be dismissed as illiterate. That is true of Portugal and, apart from Mexico and Argentina, of Spanish and Portuguese America today. In Spain itself Franco and the hierarchy have demolished the splendid school-system which the wicked Reds (with the cordial cooperation of most of the university professors) had set up.

But all the figures I have given relate to the present century, and by 1900 the Church had been compelled by the advance of civilization to dissemble its hostility to the education of the workers. What it did or did not do for education when it had supreme power in the Middle Ages we will briefly consider in the next chapter. All that concerns us in this book is the quality of the 180,000,000

actual subjects of the Pope. It is, however, necessary to be quite clear that the reduction of illiteracy in Catholic countries points to no zeal on the part of the Church but to the pressure of critics. Study the language used by the Vichy group of pious traitors today. Petain is honest, if senile, and must embarrass the Darlans and Laval, if not the Vatican. He sees a monstrous evil in the industrial development, the growth of a large educated urban population that very soon sees through the imposture of the priests. The world must return to the placid, bovine, agricultural life, so that it can be more easily ruled by the priests and squires.

We must make short work of this point, and fortunately it is easy to do so. Glance at Europe in 1800, or at the date of the French Revolution. I have shown elsewhere that except in three countries 95 percent at least of the workers were illiterate and incredibly ignorant. The three countries of which I make an exception were Protestant Prussia, Holland, and Switzerland. Great Britain was the next to become civilized in this respect, but its clergy had been little better than the Roman priests, and in 1800 certainly more than 90 percent of the workers were illiterate. In France, too, the anti-clerical, the Revolutionaries and Napoleon, had made a beginning of education, though this was lost in the Catholic reaction after Waterloo.

Catholic countries did not for many decades, and only then under anti-clerical pressure, show any sympathy with this zeal for educating the workers. The leaders in the reform—Frederic the Great, Tallyrand, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Robert Owen, Bentham, etc.—were all skeptics. Once the Holy Alliance and the true Reds or Anti-Bolsheviks of those days, had extinguished idealism for the Papacy in Southern Europe all this itching to educate the workers was destroyed and the priests settled down everywhere to a renewed lease, as they thought, of their medieval power and exploitation of the people. It will be enough to consider the case of Italy, one-third of which was ruled by the Popes and administered almost exclusively by priests, while the southern section in addition was in the closest touch with and subservient to the Vatican.

The southern part of Italy, the kingdom of Naples, is as conspicuous a monument of the real Roman spirit as the Statue of Liberty is of American ideals. Before the French Revolution Voltairean statesmen and a liberal-minded monarch had made it one of the most progressive areas in Europe. The troops of the Revolution overran all Italy and strengthened the anti-clerical humanitarianism of Naples. But when they were forced to withdraw, the royalty and clergy, acting in the closest collaboration, had a fearful revenge. Neapolitan historians of the time, the chief of whom was a Catholic and royalist, insist that in the course of the next 40 years the reactionaries slew 250,000 men, women, and children of the reform party, and tens of thousands were in each decade packed in the horrible jails. All educational and social work was, of course, extinguished. The party which had advocated such work and had had even in so small a kingdom at least half a million followers also was extinguished, and the region became one of the most backward in Europe. And our elegant essayists, instead of looking up this bloody story of the extinction of sound stocks, which our manuals of history will not

tell today from fear of offending Catholics, talk in their charming way about the Neapolitan and Sicilian character with its "dolce far niente." its amiable laziness and impenetrability to modern ideas as if it were as normal a feature of the sunny land as the olives and roses. It is, on the contrary, the work of priests.

The kingdom of the Popes in Central Italy was just as bad. It was, according to all authorities, one of the foulest areas in Europe from the moral-social angle. It will be enough to quote the official figures for 1901, when the national government had been conducting for 30 years such educational work as the poor resources permitted. Still 44 percent of Italians over the age of 20 were illiterate, but it is the distribution of the illiteracy that is most significant. In the north (Piedmont), where the Austrians had not entirely neglected education when they ruled it and the Sardinian government which succeeded them had done more, the illiterates were 28.3 percent; and the statesmen who had thus reduced illiteracy were under the Pope's ban of excommunication. In the central and formerly Papal provinces (including Rome) the illiterates were 51.5 percent, and in the southern provinces they were 69.7 percent. In Piedmont, the old center of the damned Italians and very anti-clerical, the illiterates were 17.69 percent: in Calabria, which was solidly Catholic, they were 78.70 percent.

Well, there's the real Rome for you. That is what the Catholic Church does for education, when it runs a state or has, as in Naples, absolute power over the kingdom. You will find these figures in any of the older works of reference—the Columbia Encyclopedia, we saw, gives 48 percent for the whole country—and the facts about the condition of the Pope's own kingdom are in every older historian, even in the standard Cambridge Modern History (Vol XI). Your historians and sociologists of today won't tell them. It would hurt the feelings of our Catholic fellow-citizens—to say nothing of hurting the circulation of the book. So the Catholic apologists break into raptures about the Church's zeal for education, about the way in which this misguided modern world thwarts its noble efforts to teach folk to think clearly, about the fearlessness with which it confronts all facts and all truth. . . . It appears that some people expect me to talk politely about these matters.

South America is notoriously worse than Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and the more solidly Catholic the Republic the more ignorant it is. Perhaps we shall be reminded of their poverty. Brazil, with a capital which is a paradise of millionaires and its vast hinterland which is described by experts as one huge, squalid hospital, has the most illiteracy. Is it poor? Then find out, why a country with such stupendous resources can be poor, and you will come back to the refusal to educate; and Brazil is today the worst area on the American Continent for the Catholic persecution of idealists. Add the Philippines and the French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies. Notice how the little states which Hitler is permitting the Vatican to set up in the wilderness his troops make—Slovakia, Croatia, etc.—are patches of deep Catholicism and dense illiteracy. Read how the moment a state falls back under priestly domination after a spell of anti-clerical control its educational system is destroyed or eviscerated. Ten years or less ago American

and international paedagogists were talking with great admiration of the fine educational work at Madrid, Prague, and Vienna. They are now silent. The cultural blight spreads from Spain and Austria to France, Belgium, the Catholic provinces of Holland, Czecho-Slovakia, and wherever the Butchers smirkingly lead back their friends the priests to power. Rome loves the illiterate. They are so easily persuaded to burn heretics and kiss bogus relics.

Above all examine carefully this sacred fury of the Vatican against Reds, Communists, or Bolsheviks. As I have earlier pointed out, the Vatican dare not say that its anger is kindled by the political and economic theory of the Marxists; nor can we suppose it to be particularly interested in their choice of a color. The bitter hostility to them which was roused by the Popes throughout the Catholic world was based upon a tissue of lies about outrages and one admitted fact—that wherever Communism spread the Roman Church lost millions of followers. And the reason why people fell away from the Church in such crowds was that for the first time their eyes had been opened—by formal education in the school (child and adult) followed up by special enlightenment on religion.

Is this a coincidence? When, as I told in an earlier booklet, the Pope opened his campaign, he said that Bolshevism must be destroyed in Russia, China, Spain, and Mexico; and at that time the educational world everywhere was discussing with lively interest the remarkable progress in education that was taking place in Russia, Spain, Mexico, and the Communist provinces of China! The Pope would have added Austria but he had already got his agents in Vienna and their Fascist allies to destroy that great social enterprise. He could count upon his "chivalrous" Japanese friends to undo the work in China, and he blessed the savage vandalism of his allies in Spain, where for three years educational progress had commanded the respect of all experts. There remained two countries in which education was making rapid progress, Mexico and Russia, and the Vatican and the whole Roman Church continued to shriek for the blood of these.

It is not a point on which I can linger here, but I say, and have proved in earlier works (especially in the **Appeal to Reason Library**), that the most rapid and devoted work in the world in educating the workers was found ten years ago in Austria, Spain, Mexico, and China, and that there is no dispute on that point in paedagogical literature. We have seen what the Vatican did in Spain and Austria and tried to get done in Mexico. I say again that the most wonderful educational work in all history was being done in Russia, as leading educationists in America admitted, and the Roman Church was one of the guiltiest agencies in the world in slandering Russia and calling upon Germany and Japan to annihilate the government and all its work. On the other hand, the vilest prostitution of education in modern history was at the same time proceeding in Japan, Germany, and Italy. And the Pope pressed his affection upon the Nazis, cooperated in education in Italy, and gave gold medals and paternal blessings to the Japanese. But I remember my manners and will just conclude politely that I really do not think that the Church of Rome is a friend of education.

Chapter IV

THE MYTH OF ITS PATRONAGE OF LEARNING

We are now in a position to reply to the question which I put on an earlier page of this book: Who are these Roman Catholics? They claim a privileged position in America on the ground that they are the largest religious body in the country and their Church is the largest and most important in the world. On the first point we reflect that the fact that Catholics form one-eighth—it is probably nearer one-tenth—of the population of the United States seems an amazing reason for seeking, as they do, to interfere with the lives and literature of the non-Catholic seven-eighths and for thinking that they ought to be consulted by the head of the state. That they do so interfere we have seen in every chapter. They dictated policy on the Civil War in Spain and attempted to dictate it in regard to Mexico and the European War. They fly at medical and civic authorities who would relieve non-Catholic mothers of excessive child-bearing, take the lead in fomenting racial bitterness against the Jews, dominate the school-system (even non-Catholic) in some cities, arrogate a most insolent control of public instruction by newspapers, books, and libraries, impose their narrow-minded views on all theaters and cinemas, and so on. It is really extraordinary how the American who boasts of his freedom and independence submits to this sort of feudal insolence.

Back of it all, apparently, is respect for the larger claim, that the Church of Rome really is unique in its colossal membership, its world-wide organization, and its massive service. In this book I am exposing the fallacy of this idea. On the face of it there is a monstrous deception of the public because priests know, and are aware that the public does not know, that the total of 300,000,000 Catholics contains at least 100,000,000 who have left the Church. The simplest analysis of the figures at once shows that, as we saw. It is reasonable to put the genuine total at something like 180,000,000.

Of these 180,000,000 a little over one-fourth are children under the age of 10. The official American census gives that as the proportion. As Catholics generally leave the Church after that age and many seceded parents let their women-folk or relatives have the infants baptized—a good booze hallows every cause, to paraphrase Nietzsche—the proportion of children under ten is probably higher in the Roman Church, with its high fertility-rate in backward countries. However, we will, as usual, be moderate and say that about 50,000,000 of the 180,000,000 are children under 10 whose allegiance to the Pope is not very clearly a thing to boast about.

This applies also to many millions over the age of 10 and under 20, but what we learned in the last chapter opens up a different perspective. The fact is, apparently, that of the 130,000,000 subjects of the Pope over the age of 10 at least 90,000,000 are

totally illiterate. Turn back to the table I gave. Taking one Latin-American Republic with another the gross illiteracy of the whole 80,000,000 people is over 60 percent. The *Encyclopedia Americana* gives Columbia 68, Nicaragua 60, and so on. For the whole, 60 percent is moderate, and it will hardly be disputed that these illiterates are not the millions of workers who, joined by many men of a middle-class which has a long tradition of anti-clericalism, made the Vatican shudder 10 years ago. You can very safely say that 50,000,000 adult Catholics from Mexico to Patagonia are as illiterate as babies of a weird and wonderful ignorance. The state of Portugal and the Portuguese possessions is as bad, and particularly all the illiterates of Spain and Italy are good Catholics. Add the millions of the Philippine Islands, the West Indies, Croatia, Slovakia, Poland, Eire, and the foreign missions. The grand total of illiterate subjects of the Pope must approach 100,000,000. Add these to the 50,000,000 under the age of ten.

Pray do not think me as snobbish as the Catholics who write glittering *Who's Whos*. I have had many a friendly talk with these folk in Mexico and Cuba, in Spain and Italy. But when your Catholic friend throws his 300,000,000 at your head you would like to know just how significant the number is. Perhaps between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 of them could sign their names or read a newspaper. I am sorry if I am wasting your time but I fancy that that is news to you. Yet it follows inexorably from the facts I have given in this book. The Pope has certainly not 50,000,000 subjects who could write their own names. And, not to put too fine a point on it, what is the value or significance of the beliefs of most of the "literate" 30,000,000 or (if you prefer) 40,000,000? The majority in Catholic countries—and even in Germany—are peasants; and you probably know more than I do about the majority of the Irish, Polish, Italian, etc., Catholic workers of America.

In short, in how many cases is the faith of even a literate Catholic intellectually impressive? I described the work of the school; and very few of those who pass through it have the courage in later years to defy the prohibition under pain of hell or read a book that tells them the truth about their creed and Popes. Their colleges and academies are just as narrow, and the youths and young women in their Normal Schools naturally learn history only as they have to teach it. The kind of lecture on science, history, or philosophy that is delivered in the Catholic University you can judge at any time by the publications of the professors and by the articles in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. The upshot of it all is plainly seen in the miserable representation of Catholics in higher culture which I described. There is a blight on the whole system.

I sometimes imagine myself getting an American statesman in a quiet corner and putting these things to him. I fancy he would nod and listen and then say: "You damned fool, they have 10,000,000 votes and those are worth more than a hundred scientists and philosophers." If I tried an editor he would point out that they have rich advertisers and a shocking power to shift a body of readers from any paper they denounced to one that plays up to them. If I turn to a publisher he reminds me, regretfully, that Catholics forbid the press to bring my name or my works to the

notice of the public. And this pernicious system will explain to you the vague reputation which the Church has for learning and the patronage of learning. Its apologists can say what they like with little fear of contradiction.

Their case, when they go into detail, is the usual mixture of mendacity and sophistry. First, it was the Church of Rome that, when it emerged from the catacombs, "gave the world schools." And since there is not a manual of the history of education, not an encyclopedic article, published in the last 50 or more years that does not describe how the pagan Roman Empire had a system of universal and free schools for the people, "mendacity" is the only word to use here. The few paltry schools which the Church opened in one or two cities, were, of course, like the Catholic schools today, to prevent their own children from going to the pagan schools. And there is no more dispute about the fact that the Roman school system was entirely destroyed when the Roman Church obtained power over Europe, and that during the next five centuries you could count on your fingers the schools existing at any time.

Next is the hoary old untruth that after all the monks of the Dark Age "preserved the classics for us." It took Italian scholars nearly two centuries to dig up such Latin classics as we have, and some of these and all the Greek classics were not preserved at all in Europe. The leaders of this enterprise—Petrarch, Boccaccio, etc.—despised the Popes, and the work was nearly complete when the first Pope to take an interest in it, the not very religious Eugenius IV, mounted the Papal throne.

Well, says the apologist, these classics were in very large part, if not for the most part, erotic poetry and comedy—the works of Aristotle were got from the Arabs and those of Plato from the Greeks—and the revival led to a terrible lot of immorality. Was that why the good monks preserved them? Never mind that, says, your apologist, but think of the zeal for schools and learning which beyond any question swept Europe (except Rome, let me interject) from the 11th Century onward.

As my Peter Abelard (1901) is one of the chief studies of the movement in its first stage and was for years on the reading list of the historical section of American universities—I suppose Catholics got it struck off—I know rather more than the apologist about this medieval scholastic movement. But I have written all about it elsewhere. I will just make three points. First, it was admittedly inspired by the Arabs of Spain and Sicily, not by the Church. Secondly, it was at first and for about a century a splendid if turbulent and frothy free and independent movement, and most of its more brilliant leaders were condemned by the Church. Thirdly, when heresy spread to whole provinces in the wake of the school-movement, the Church destroyed its freedom of speculation and its incipient teaching of Arab science and turned the new universities, except a few that remained more or less independent and trained lawyers and medical men, into schools of theology for clerics and monks: who reads today the works of the greatest masters of these schools? Very few priests even.

There, says the apologist, you betray your senility and out-of-dateness. There is a remarkable revival of interest in the schoolmen, as it has been discovered that the inspirational ideas of the

American Revolution and Constitution came from them. Yes—discovered by Catholic apologists. I confess that it always puzzled me why they could not fake a better mare's nest to discover for this purpose than the works by Cardinal Bellarmine until I learned that the chief reason was that one of Bellarmine's books was found in Jefferson's library. My godfathers! When I die, in a few years, they will find in my little library many works of Catholic or Protestant piety, some on Hindu metaphysics or Theosophy, the Little Flower of St. Francis, the Bible in three or four languages, Rabelais, Mark Twain's description of conversation at the Court of Queen Elizabeth. . . . I will take up the point seriously in the fifth book. The few ideas that do not seem quite mildewed in Thomas Aquinas were borrowed from Aristotle and the Arabs. He was educated within a few miles of Arab-Norman Sicily and all his life he read translations of Aristotle and Ibn Roshd (Averroes):

For the rest, if you want to make a substantial test of this claim of Catholic scholarship without having to wade through a vast library of trash dip into any impartial histories of literature, philosophy, and science. To begin with you may care to know that practically all Catholic works written from the 2nd Century to the 13th Century are contained in the immense Migne Collection. I should say that the only work in that collection of 1,000 years of Catholic learning that anybody reads today, in translation, is Augustine's *City of God*, and very few read that. Few literary men would shed a tear if the rest were burned.

Anyhow, take a good short history of literature; and literary men, as I said, accept or profess Catholic doctrines more easily than others. It will tell you of a vast and valuable literature, only partially preserved, of the Greeks and the Romans. It may then mention Augustine, but from the 4th Century to the 14th Century it will give ten pages to Arab and Persian literature for any ten lines it may give to Catholic works. Then names like Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio—all very independent of the Popes and the Schoolmen—perhaps Jehan le Meung, Margaret of Navarre, and Villon—a very naughty trio—Chaucer (a skeptic), and a few others will represent what are called the palmy days of Roman Catholicism. Cervantes (clearly not under Church inspiration), the monk Rabelais (not "for maids and youths"), Montaigne (a skeptic), Galileo (hounded by the Pope), and a lot of French writers who were mostly skeptics like Moliere and Boileau shine in the period of transition, and the gloom settles again over Catholic lands until you come to the Joyce Kilmers and G. K. Chestertons of modern times. For the last 100 years the great majority of the leading Italian, French, and Spanish writers have been skeptics, not Catholics.

Philosophy you need not read up. Until some recent American professors began to flatter the Church a history of philosophy consisted to the extent of 49 percent of an account of Greek, Hindu, and Arab speculations and 49 percent of an account of the systems of modern thinkers. Catholic "thinking" occupied about 1 percent of the space between the two. What would you expect when Catholic philosophy, of which I was once a professor, described itself from the start and still describes itself as "the handmaid of theology"—or the slave of dogma.

For science take, if you like, the most learned American history, that of Dr. G. Sarton. It is so little prejudiced against Catholics that it notices science in the Christian Fathers, which no one ever discovered before, yet it cannot make out a case for the Catholic period (400 to 1550). Its best selections are monks like Roger Bacon and Albert who simply tried to popularize Arab science until the Church snuffed them out. The work is, like a history of literature, really divided into three parts: Greek, Arab-Persian, and Modern Science. As to the pioneers of the modern development—Vesalius and Pare, Galileo and Torricelli, Volta and Galvani, etc.—no one really knows what most of them thought about Popery. They lived in an age when men of science adapted the counsel of St. Paul and said: It is better to go to church than to be burned.

I have before me one of the longest lists I can find of "great Catholic scientists." Most of them lived before the middle of the 18th Century, when science, rudimentary as it was, did not clearly conflict with religion and when a student of science who lived in a Catholic country was haunted by a smell of sulphur. What Copernicus (converted by these writers into a "devout priest" when he was neither a priest nor devout, and in any case he merely discovered that the Greeks had discovered the centrality of the sun), thought about religion we know no more than what Galileo thought. But let Catholics have their names before 1750. You might as well boast that all the writers of Spain today are orthodox Catholics. After that date the apologists have to use their usual trickery. Spain and Italy, and Portugal produced no "great scientists" until in recent times the Liberals broke the power of the Inquisition. France had a splendid series from Buffon and D'Alembert (both skeptics), onward, and 9 out of 10 were skeptics. But I have gone through the list elsewhere. It is enough that when the arc-lamp was invented "Catholic scientists" became as rare as haunted houses. Today the Catholic who boasts that his Church commands the allegiance of half the white race claims only J. J. Walsh, of whom the science-reading public would never have heard if it were not for his position in the Church, in America, one or two minor chemists and mathematicians in Britain, none in Russia, France, Germany. . . . They have to claim, against the testimony of the most authoritative biographers, men like Pasteur, Fabre, Mendel, and Marconi.

But did not the Vatican welcome science by founding a great astronomical observatory? Yes, in the days when it was still understood that "the heavens proclaim the glory of God." At all events the observatory, of which you do not hear much today, proclaims the glory of the Vatican. Was not Leo XIII enthusiastic for historical science, in spite of his ignorance in it, and did he not throw open the Secret Archives of the Vatican to the world's scholars? Yes, after—as the Catholic historian Dr. Pastor tells us—removing the more compromising documents. Doesn't the Church in America spend hundreds of millions on education? Yes, in its own interest and to give instruction that defies every sound principle of paedagogy.

But let the apologists speak. One of their chief propaganda-bodies in America is the Calvert Association, and Dr. N. Murray Butler of Columbia and other American scholars generously spon-

sor it. Its chief publication is **The Calvert Handbook of Catholic Facts**. This has a section titled "Great Catholics." You will hardly believe me when I say that besides a few army officers it lists only Lafayette (notoriously a "Deist, though it calls him "a pervert Catholic"), Marshal Foch, and Charlie Schwab and eight other rich business-bandits!

But it refers the readers to a previous section titled "Civilization and Catholicism." Ignoring the writers stroll through the Middle Ages in search of great men (Ferdinand of Spain, etc.) I find it lists as great Americans who were Catholics only Thomas, Lloyd, J. J. Montgomery, and Holland. What, you never heard of them? For the last 200 years of world-science it gives Volta, Galvani, Ampere (who vacillated all his life between skepticism and Catholicism), and Morgagni (doubtful). It is painful to add that it claims also Jenner (of smallpox fame) and Roentgen: on what amazing grounds even the bold **Catholic Encyclopedia** does not seem to have discovered. And of course it claims Fabre and Pasteur, both apostates, and the devout Abbot Mendel, who is described as a skeptic in the only authoritative biography.

This list covers 250 years—the most recent man on it died nearly 100 years ago—and ranges over the whole imperial Church on which the sun never sets. Of the 300,000,000 Catholics of today it names none. Do people expect me to write about this sort of thing without irony and contempt? Or do you agree with me that the only uniqueness about the Church of Rome is that it is the most amazingly successful imposture in history?

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