

Why Cardinal O'Connell is Wrong!¹

Earl C. Davis

Pittsfield, MA

No Date²

Out of the shell of medieval feudalism, during a period of several hundred years, society has been developing with ever increasing clearness toward democracy. Long and arduous have been the labors of destroying a social order built upon the basis of economic privilege and authority. No less difficult have been the tasks of reconstructing the social order in terms of equality, fraternity and cooperation. To be sure the principle of democracy is by no means fully applied in modern society, but we have developed far enough from medievalism, with its divine right of kings, and its implicit obedience of the lower classes, to gain some fairly clear ideas as to what the application of the principles of democracy mean in society today. None of democracy's valiant supporters are so blinded by their devotion to her principles that they do not see the limitations and dangers involved both in the principles of democracy, and in the methods of the establishment. In fact, just because the principles of democracy involve so much the greater responsibility among men, do those who believe in her cherish her the more. It, therefore, tests the metal in us when we read such an address as that delivered by Cardinal O'Connell before the Holy Name Society at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston a few Sundays ago. A local paper, in editorial comment, described the address as "a rebuke and a challenge." To which it may be said that the devotees of the principles of democracy never accept a rebuke, and are perfectly willing to receive the challenge. But it must be confessed that the address in question is hardly worthy of a Prince of the Catholic Church,

¹ Two copies of this manuscript were back-to-back in this Three-Top-Brad collection. The first included hand-edits, while the second did not. This transcription includes the hand edits.

² This manuscript is undated, and despite numerous good clues in the text—Cardinal O'Connell's talk at the Cathedral of the Holy Cross—I cannot positively date it. Clearly it was written after William Henry O'Connell (1859-1944) was made Cardinal in 1911. With no reference to the First World War, I would also date it prior to 1914.

for it betrayed all-together too clearly an animus which rouses the suspicion that he is speaking not because of the evils which he sees in the world outside, but because of the weakness which he feels in his own institution in facing the problems and the possibilities of the rapidly spreading democratic spirit of our times.

In fact this recent utterance is quite in keeping with a statement in a paper prepared by Archbishop O'Connell and read by a priest before the Unitarian Women's Alliance in Boston in 1909. In that paper he says,

Already the battle is on, and it rages far more fiercely than surface appearances would indicate. It is no longer a question of particular doctrine, but of the acceptation or rejection of Christianity itself. The war now is against the whole scheme of Christian belief and conduct. And it is easy to see why the enemies of religion and of the existing order should concentrate their attack upon the Church of Christ.³

Indeed, Pope Pius X, in his encyclical letter of 1907 dealing with the doctrines of modernism within the Catholic Church handles this very question with a thoroughness and decision that indicate a keen appreciation of the character of the developments of modern thought. In the opening paragraph of this now famous letter His Highness says,

It must, however, be confessed that these latter days have witnessed a notable increase in the number of the enemies of the Cross of Christ, who, by arts entirely new and full of deceit are trying to destroy the energy of the Church, and, as far as in them lies utterly to subvert the very Kingdom of Christ.⁴

³ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell*, Archbishop of Boston, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 202. The material as printed in this volume differs from the quotation in Earl Davis' paper. As printed: "The war now is against the whole Christian scheme of belief and conduct. And it is easy to see why the enemies of religion and of the existing order should concentrate their attack upon the Church of Christ."

⁴ Pope Pius X's Encyclical Letter is reprinted in Paul Sabatier's *Modernism: The Jowett Lectures*, 1908. New York: Charles

Again in the second paragraph he says,

That we should act without delay in this matter is made imperative, especially by the fact that the partisans of error are to be sought, not only among the Church's open enemies; but, what is to be most dreaded and deplored, in her very bosom, and are the more mischievous the less they keep in the open. We allude, venerable brethren, to many who belong to the Catholic Laity, and, what is much more sad, to the ranks of the priesthood itself, who, animated by a false zeal for the Church, lacking the solid safeguard of philosophy and theology, nay, more, thoroughly imbued by the poisonous doctrines taught by the enemies of the Church, and lost to all sense of modesty, put themselves forward as reformers of the Church; and, forming more boldly into line of attack, assail all that is most sacred in the word of Christ, not sparing even the Person of the Divine Redeemer, who, with sacrilegious audacity, they degrade to the condition of a simple man.⁵

Such, in the words of the Papacy, is the serious fact of modernism which the Catholic Church is fighting both within and without its ranks. In this fact may be found the impetus which give the color and tone to the recent utterance of Cardinal O'Connell.

At this point it is well to make clear just what the Catholic Church means by the Christian religion, which, it asserts, the enemies of Christ are seeking to overthrow. The eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden caused Adam and Eve to forfeit for themselves and their descendants sanctifying grace, and their supernatural gifts and wounded even their natural powers.

And though we are all today through Adam's sin, born "Children of Wrath," God, in his infinite love gives

Scribner's Sons, 1909, pages 231-346; this quotation is from pp. 232-3.

⁵ Pope Pius X's Encyclical Letter is reprinted in Paul Sabatier's *Modernism: The Jowett Lectures*, 1908. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909, pages 231-346; this quotation is from p. 232.

everyone ample opportunity to gain the grace his only son died on the cross to merit.⁶

The son of God came to earth to bring to the darkened intellect of men the fullness of truth, and to their starved and impoverished souls the fullness of life.⁷

To propagate the truth and the life thus brought to earth, Christ "established an agency" "with definite powers and functions" in the form of a society which we call a church. This church is the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church maintains that she alone is the true Church; that she alone has received her doctrine, her orders and her missions from Christ.⁸

And that the church Christ provided for an infallible authority in the matter of morals and faith and the right of supreme government of the church. This function of infallible authority and supreme power in administration of the church is vested in the Pope.

All authority and all power in the church are from above. ... Christ is the One Prophet who has given men the revelation of truth; He is the One Priest and mediator ever making intercession for us; He is the One King, who, through His Providence rules His kingdom on earth. And if He wills to exercise His three-fold office through earthly representatives, it is He alone, who can give to men the right to speak as His ambassadors, to administer His Sacraments, and to govern in His name a supernatural society, whose purpose is to lead mankind to a supernatural end.⁹

⁶ I cannot find the source of this quotation. Perhaps Davis meant the quote mark to be understood as a "scare quote."

⁷ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston*, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 204.

⁸ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston*, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 201.

⁹ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence*

Such is Cardinal O'Connell's conception of the Catholic Church. And speaking of the relationship of this Catholic Church to American society, he says,

Here in this great republic, which molds into the unity of one citizenship the diverse elements of the globe, the Catholic Church finds herself at home. She is here with all her elements of strength; with her 19 centuries of experience; with the same forces that conquered paganism; that civilized the barbarians, that preserved learning; that watched at the birth, the nourished the growth of the modern nations. She is here to stand by the whole truth of Christ, without fear, and without compromise.¹⁰

Such, then, is what the Catholic Church means by the Christian religion. We respect the Catholic for his faith in his religious principles, and for the zeal and fidelity and integrity with which he seeks to spread what he believes to be the truth and the true interpretation of religion. But for reasons which may be suggested later, it must be noted that his conception of truth does not appeal to all men, nor do the claims of the Catholic Church to be the infallible deposit of truth strike all men as true. Pius X, in his encyclical defended this supernatural religion of the Catholic Church in the face of what he declared to be the "synthesis of all Heresies." He says "And now with our eyes fixed upon the whole system, no one will be surprised that we define it to be 'the synthesis of Heresies.'"¹¹ But the essence of all this difference of opinion between the devout Catholic and the equally devout Modernist is again succinctly stated in these words, "And all who believe that Christ is the son of God will soon be called to a positive

William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 217.

¹⁰ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 222.*

¹¹ Pope Pius X's Encyclical Letter is reprinted in Paul Sabatier's *Modernism: The Jowett Lectures, 1908. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909.* The section of the letter with this heading, "Modernism the Synthesis of all the Heresies," begins on page 309.

defense of their position."¹² Stripped of all terms and side issues, this is the essence of that which Cardinal O'Connell is pleased to call "The war that is now being waged against the scheme of Christian belief and conduct."¹³ Over against this attitude of the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches for that matter, let me quote the words of a Baptist theologian who is professor of the philosophy of religion in a Baptist University

Time was when at the mention of the name of Jesus, many thought of Church doctrine, of Christology, dogma, the old creed, which lay like a veil upon the personality of Jesus; they thought of the veil, of the wrapping woven by speculation, of the deity; of the "Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary;" of resurrection, of the descent into hell, ascent into heaven; of return on the clouds; of miracle upon miracle; of the whole church belief in its massive formation with its materialism and its magic! Today we live in a world characterized by nothing so much as by the absence of any psychological soil in which these fantasies can find nourishment. If these things constitute the Christian religion, that religion is already an antiquated affair, a relic that is worthless to the cultivated classes. Christological dogmas really signify for many children of our time a sarcophagus of the personality of Jesus and his religion, and are responsible for the sad ignorance concerning Jesus and the essence of his religion. One casts aside the gold with the dross. One flees from Christology, as from a ghost, without ever having seen Jesus.¹⁴

¹² William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston*, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 203.

¹³ William O'Connell, "The Church's Stand," a paper read before the Women's Alliance of the Second Church in Copley Hall, Boston, 1909. Reprinted in *Sermons and Addresses of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell, Archbishop of Boston*, Boston: The Pilot Publishing Company, 1911, Vol. 3, p. 202.

¹⁴ George Burman Foster, *The Finality of the Christian Religion*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906, pp. 406-7. George

This is the point to which, having denied first the authority of the Church in matters of morals and faith, the logic of five hundred years of experience and development have brought us. Once we accept the principle of external authority in any form, and it leads logically and inevitably into the Catholic Church, with its logical doctrine of infallibility vested in the Papacy. It is consistent and true to its first principles. But just as soon as one deviates from that principle of authority, and takes a step in the direction of freedom, the equally logical and inevitable result must follow, namely the elimination of all infallible external authority, whether vested in book, creed, or ecclesiastical organization, and calmly claiming the prerogative of judging for one's self even as to the essence of Christianity, and the worth of religion itself. Either authority or freedom. The entire history of Protestantism is a confirmation of the truth of this assertion. In the beginning of Protestantism the authority of the Bible was set up as against the authority of the Catholic Church. But no sooner was this authority set up, than there began to be differences of opinion as to what the Bible taught. There were divisions and sub-divisions of Protestantism until finally the idea that the Bible is a self-interpreting authority became a lost cause. Verbal inspiration melted before the search for authority in the Bible as the fog disappears before the morning sun. Then the "authoritative Protestants" fell back upon the authority of Jesus Christ. But the result was the same. The life of Christ, the teaching of Christ as embedded in the New Testament, is not a self-interpreting standard. Then came a flood of "lives of Christ," each man presenting Christ as he saw him. Again division, and again sub-divisions. If any Protestant Church ever had a clear idea of what they meant by "The Christian Religion" as an authoritative deposit of truth, true to the exclusion of all other interpretations, it is impossible in the present state of affairs to determine just what that measure of orthodoxy now is. Protestantism as authority religion is a lost cause. The feeble attempts to reunite the scattered protestant forces today upon the basis of an objective statement of faith, however feeble and emaciated that statement may be, is the last confirmation of the hopeless attempt to perform the impossible. Once admit the subjective element into the judgement of values

Burman Foster (1858-1918) was a faculty member in the Divinity School (Baptist) of the University of Chicago.

of faith and morals, and the inevitable outcome is the disappearance of an absolute and unchanging measure of such faith and morals. It is either freedom or authority. If I believed in the principle of eternal authority, such as is contemplated in the creeds of Protestantism, I would follow the whole length as did Cardinal Newman, and submit my faith, my mind, my soul to the authority of an institution that claims to provide for the exigences of life.

But the whole temper of the modern world is taking the other horn of the dilemma. We are socializing or democratizing the doctrine of the Incarnation, just as we have democratized, in theory at least, the doctrine of the divine right of government. The function of government was once regarded as a right divinely entrusted into the hands of a monarch or a class. Today, in America at least, that idea has no standing. The right of government rests in the consent of the governed. We govern ourselves as a collective community by ourselves and for ourselves. The final authority rests in the governed. That is democracy. Imperfectly we have attained to the high standard that the principle of democracy demands, but we understand the principle, and we seek its extension just as fast as the developments of life permit. In precisely the same way, we seek to democratize the doctrine of the Incarnation. According to the principles of the Catholic Church, The Word, the truth of faith and morals, became flesh in Christ, and by Christ is transmitted to the infallible institution which he founded. Through no other channel can the saving faith come to man. But this is the very assertion which the whole spirit of modern life denies, realizing full well the significance and the implications of the denial. In opposition to this exclusive doctrine of the Incarnation of God in Christ, the whole spirit of modern life asserts the incarnation of God in every human life. In Christ, in Buddha, in Pius X, and in the broken outcast on the street. The spirit of modern life asserts also that through the experiences of human beings in the common life among their fellow men, they achieve a knowledge and consciousness of a living, indwelling God who is a constant companion throughout life. Such people believe that the wisdom gleaned by the ages, whether moral or purely intellectual, is the product of all the efforts of human life. Imperfect though we are, brutal and uncivilized though we are, ignorant and limited though we are, we are bold enough to stand squarely on our feet, and assert the

spirit of the living God dwells even in us, and that we come without mediator, into the very presence of the living God.

But there must be some valid reasons why the modern world is clinging so tenaciously to this "synthesis of all Heresies." The reasons are many. In the first place, we have discovered that we can do fairly well in the task of self-government, and that our greatest difficulty in the task of self-government is to avert the inroads of privilege and authority. This partial success in democratic government has given us confidence in our own worth as men. We have come to the conclusion that we are not totally depraved creatures, nor even creatures who have fallen from a state of perfection in the past. But that we are just evolving towards a higher state of development than we have ever known. Then again, we have travelled around the world some, and we have found that men in other countries have had religions, in many respects similar to some of the Christian ideas. We have found that among other people are institutions that claim to be infallible, the sole guardians of faith and morals, receiving their direct deposit from god in some supernatural way. We have studied these religions comparatively, and weighed their merits and their demerits. We have found other books than the Bible that claimed to be inspired. These we have compared. We have studied the history of our own institutions with a searching criticism. We have studied the history of the churches of all ages. We have studied the origin of the Bibles in all places. We have compared them with ours. What is the result?

The first result is the discovery that religion is as natural a function of human life as breath itself. That all people are in some measure religious. They have such experiences as we may call religious experiences. These experiences they try to interpret into some kind of an intellectual system. They try to account for their origin, and forecast their destiny. They try to explain their relations with the Universe in which they live. Such explanations constitute their religious systems. Whether in India, or China, or Japan, Ancient Egypt, or ancient Israel, this process is going on, always, everywhere. In short, as a matter of experience and fact we find the benign influence of the life spirit, whom we call God, is working everywhere. We have no monopoly.

Second, we find that the particular manner in which any given people interpret these great religious experiences, and the sort

of an institution that they formulate for their common religious experiences, reflect in general, and pretty much in detail, the general order of society at the time of their organization. We find that the key to an intelligent explanation of essential dogmas, and customs, is to be found in an understanding of the social order in the midst of which the institutions grew up. The dogmas of Judaism become clear when we know the nature of Jewish society. The dogmas of the various branches of the Christian churches, and their form of organization into an ecclesiastical body reflect the social order of the period in which they developed and established themselves. In other words, the dogmas and organizations are variations in the religious expression of humanity in its evolutionary process.

This brings us to the third observed fact, namely that in the interpretation of religion there is to be observed a gradual process of evolution. A very good illustration of this is to be found in the bible where we may trace a clear-cut evolution of religions, in which under successive ages in human history mankind has attempted to explain and express his religious nature. Mankind is incorrigibly religious. Religion is not a supernatural deposit, but a natural function. It does not exist in man upon the foundations of a religious institution, but rather the religious institutions are created and sustained by the natural religious character of man. As fast as one interpretation of religion serves its end, and dies away, another interpretation is brought to the front. If all the religious institutions now extant were to be blotted out of our lives today, we would begin tomorrow to construct new ones to express our religious ideals in terms of life today. In fact, that is what is actually taking place in modern society at the present moment. The old are gradually being blotted out as vital factors. They are cherished for what they have been, and revered as the expression of man's interpretation of the highest values of human life, but in spite of that, we are building anew the temples of our worship, and the expressions of our faith, and in the handiwork of our craft is our prayer.

All this interchange of thought and experience, all this investigation of the past and the present, are a part of the very atmosphere of modern life. Among other claims and institutions that have been searched by this strange creature, the man who is bold enough to claim that he must judge even the claims of infallibility, are the claims of the various authority

religions, like the Catholic, and the various orthodox Protestant systems of thought. One or two illustrations will suffice to show that there have been serious mistakes made by both these final authorities in matters of supreme importance in life. For example, when the questions arose as a result of the investigation of such men as Galileo and Copernicus into the questions of shape and movement of the earth, both the Protestant and the Catholic churches brought the whole force of their organized powers into action to condemn these new ideas of science as contrary to the teachings of the bible and the churches. It is not possible to go into the detail of this interesting story, but it may be noted that both Protestant and Catholic organizations condemned the teachings of these scientists. In 1615, Galileo was summoned before the Inquisition at Rome. After a solemn examination, that body of men representing in the eyes of the world the infallible Church, rendered its decision as follows,

The first proposition, that the sun is the center and does not revolve about the earth, is foolish, absurd, false in theology, and heretical, because expressly contrary to Holy Scripture. ...

The second proposition, that the earth is not the center but revolves about the sun, is absurd, false in philosophy, and, from a theological point of view, at least, opposed to the true faith.¹⁵

Galileo was treated as the heretics of those days were treated, and no effort was made to examine the facts, and investigate the grounds upon which Galileo and his supporters based their assertions. Upon the same subject, the pronouncement of Martin Luther is quite as illuminating as the attitude of the Catholic Church.

People gave ear to an upstart astrologer who strove to show that the earth revolves, not the heavens or the firmament, the sun and the moon. Whoever wishes to appear clever, must devise some new system, which of all systems is of course the very best. This fool wishes to reverse the entire science of astronomy; but sacred Scripture tells us that Joshua commanded the sun to stand still and not the earth.¹⁶

¹⁵ The verdict of Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino delivered on February 26, 1616.

¹⁶ Martin Luther in one of his "Table Talks" in 1539.

Calvin also clinched his tirade against the Copernican system by these words which sound so familiar that they might have been uttered yesterday.

Who will venture to place the authority of Copernicus above that of the Holy Scripture?¹⁷

In this first real royal battle of authority religion with the method and results of modern science, the Church was in [the] wrong, and ever since, has been fighting the advances of science with all the strength that her decreasing vitality had. This battle between authority and science, [that] began in the 16th century, is not settled yet. It was not until September 1822 that the Holy Inquisition

decided that the printing and publications of books treating of the motion of the earth and the stability of the sun, in accordance with the general opinion of astronomers, is permitted at Rome.¹⁸

Not until 1835 were such books omitted from the list of the condemned books on the Index. In some of the Protestant Churches there are still such antiquated minds as to hold to the old notion.

But these are not isolated instances of the attitude of the authority churches towards science and scientific investigations, it is quite characteristic. Witness the opposition to evolution and Darwinism, so-called as a phase in the development of modern ideas of evolution in a pamphlet published in the *Catholic Mind* in 1909. The article was written as a result of the various forms in which the fiftieth

¹⁷ In searching for the source for this quotation I found an article by Peter Barnes, "Calvin's Science: The Bible tell of what is visible, not as a science manual," *Australian Presbyterian*, 2011. The fourth paragraph reads, "It has been often assumed that Calvin's attitude was similar, and a number of hostile authorities—notably Andrew Dickson White and Bertrand Russell—claim, without citation, that Calvin quoted the text '*The world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved*' (Psalm 93:1), and concluded: '*Who will venture to place the authority of Copernicus above that of the Holy Spirit?*' Edward Rosen was unable to trace the source of Calvin's supposed comment, and concluded that '*never having heard of him, Calvin had no attitude toward Copernicus*'."

¹⁸ The change came from the Inquisitor-General under the sanction of Pope Leo XII.

anniversary of the enunciation of the doctrine of evolution through natural selection. In the introduction it declares
That false science may affect to disregard and ban the teachings of Christian philosophy, but time and the dissolvent force of analysis eventually show the scientific inanity of the new theories so lightly set up in its place.¹⁹

In the concluding pages of the article he says,
Darwinism thus lost credit, while all the philosophic and religious truths it had assailed triumphed; among them Biblical chronology, too had its share in the triumph, so that the six or the eight thousand years which it gives as the age of mankind from the creation of Adam down to us, continue to remain like the Pillars of Hercules which it is temerity to pass.²⁰

Thus it has happened that in the defense of some dogma or other, all the authority religions have fought every single step in the progress of scientific development during the past five hundred years. Whether they were acting in their official and infallible capacity or not, does not matter. In so doing they have acted as representatives of the churches to which they belonged. I make this assertion not in criticism of individuals or persons, but in criticism of the basic principle of an artificial external authority in matter of faith, intellect and morals. I care not whether the authority be the infallible Church, or the infallible Bible, or the infallible Christ. The sun shines inside the garden fence of the Church establishment, but it shines on the outside also, and to deny it, is to fly in the face of every page of human history, and every experience of life today.

But let me recall one other illustration to show how these authority religions have met with defeat at the hands of historical development. A very pointed question today in the field of economics is the right of money to earn interest. It is accepted as a general custom in modern business that money may be paid for the use of money. We do protest when the rate runs too high. To be sure, the socialist asserts that interest is an immoral thing. He goes back to the dictum of Aristotle that

¹⁹ I cannot locate the reference for this quotation from the *Catholic Mind* for 1909.

²⁰ I cannot locate the reference for this quotation from the *Catholic Mind* for 1909.

money is barren, and that the birth of money from money is unnatural. But we do not hear very strong protests from the churches who have vested interests. We do not hear very rugged denunciations from the priests and the clergymen about the great sin of accepting interest of money loaned. Did you ever know of a clergyman or a priest refusing to accept interest on money placed in the banks? Yet in all the categories or sins, hardly one has been more widely, more systematically, more authoritatively condemned in the authority churches than the sin of taking interest. If there is one doctrine in the whole category of dogmas that has the benediction of apostolic blessing, it is the doctrine that the taking of interest is a sin, and a very serious sin at that. As early as 314 the Council of Arles condemned lending money at interest. In the ninth century the opposition was carried so far as to confiscate the property of persons lending money for interest, and denying burial in consecrated ground. St. Anselm proved from the scripture that the taking of interest on money is a breach of the ten commandments. Pope Gregory X forbade Christian burial to those guilty of lending money on interest for maritime trade. The Council of Vincenne, presided over by Pope Clement V, declared that "if anyone shall pertinaciously presume to affirm that the taking of interest for money is not a sin, we decree him to be heretic, fit for punishment." In the fifteenth century, throughout Germany anyone who took interest for money lended was excluded from communion and burial. In some cases Jews were allowed to take interest, for they were to be damned in any case, and they might as well be doubly damned as singly. The protestants were not far behind the Catholics on this subject. Luther says,

To exchange anything with anyone and gain by the exchange is not to do a charity, but to steal. Every usurer is a thief worthy of the gibbet. I call those usurers who lend money at five or six percent.

We do not hear much of that talk now. Yet at one time that doctrine was backed by all the infallible machinery of Protestantism, and it must be confessed that it has very much sounder scriptural backing than any other doctrine in the orthodox Christian code of ethics.

These two illustrations point out at one and the same time two things. First, they point out the fact that the so-called authoritative utterances of divine revelation in authority are but the current customs of the times clothed in theological

utterances. The Church takes for granted what the intelligent people of its time take for granted. They have no deeper, and no higher wisdom than that. They are led by the logical development of history just as every other institution is. When Cardinal O'Connell or any Protestant divine or assembly declares that it is the sole channel of Truth, and condemns these new developments of modern times as the works of the ignorant and the irreligious, and describes them as people without religion, one has but to turn a few pages of history to find that this is precisely what they have been saying right straight along for 1800 years. For the first thousand of those years they were riding upon the tide of growing feudalism, to which their doctrines, their organization, their methods of discipline, are akin, and out of which they grew. But for the past eight hundred years they have been saying these things in the face of a losing game. Before the facts of modern science the authority Churches of Christendom, both Catholic and Protestant, have had to yield in defeat, in battle after battle. Those things which Pius X calls "the synthesis of all Heresies" are but the natural mental, moral, intellectual and social atmosphere of the democracy into which we are growing. Every day that the sun rises it finds them becoming more firmly established in the habits, and customs of the growing generations. Every day the sun rises to find the old systems of thought and government of Medieval feudalism which has survived to this age less strong, less powerful, less equipped to meet the demands of the times. We are witnessing now in the very fact which Cardinal O'Connell throws into the faces of the Protestants, and which by the way is equally applicable to the Catholic Churches, the loss of influence and leadership, repetition of the change that has taken place many times before. In the midst of a multiplicity of religions, people leave them all behind, re-interpret in terms almost entirely new. Thus old religions die, and new ones are born. That is how Judaism grew out of the ancient Semitic cults. That is how Christianity grew out of the various cults that found expression in Palestine and the Roman Empire two thousand years ago. That is what is taking place today. The old cults are dying slowly and certainly. In their very midst there is developing a new interpretation of the religious experience of man which shall accept without any reservation the fundamental assumptions of the developing social order, the democracy of God and the democracy of truth. In the methods of science, the method of free, fearless and open-minded search for truth, and in a spirit of cooperative good-will, we are slowly gleaning the

wisdom from the experiences of the past, and the elimination from our social economy all forms of privilege, whether political, ecclesiastical, or economic.

I come now to the statement that I want to make in concluding what I have to say upon this subject. I have a great respect for the Catholic Church, for its historic contribution to the past. My respect still exists in spite of the many serious and cruel criticisms that may be justly made of it. I have the most profound respect for the Catholic Church in so far as it ministers to the needs of the people today. The same may be said of the Protestant churches. Furthermore, I resent with a vigorous resentment the attacks of a scurrilous nature that are being made on the followers of the Roman Catholic Church today. I hope that what I have said will not be understood as an attack. It is not an attack. I have stated what seems to me to be the fundamental differences of conviction between people who believe in the Catholic or the Protestant systems of external authority, and those who believe in the open recognition of the principles of free thought. I have given my reason for the same, and called to bear upon certain facts of history. In the years that are before us, we have to face and settle this question between authority and freedom. Does truth in the matters of faith and morals come from Infinity through a special channel, as the Catholic Church claims, or does it come through a wide and almost infinite number of channels? Are we to be democratic in religion, in politics, and in industry, or are we to revert to the old idea of monarch, which, in matters of religion and ethics, the Catholic still holds to? I honor the Catholic prelate for his fidelity to his religious principles, and for the zeal with which he seeks to extend them. I am not disturbed when he declares that he hopes to see America a Catholic country. But out of the very principles which compel me to respect the man who differs from me in these important matters, there also arises the necessity of respecting my own principles, my own hopes, and my own faith. I also hope to see the time when the principles that are dear to me, and to many thousands, will pervade the whole country, and I hope [for] the day when artificial authority, or supernatural authority, of every kind and description, shall have perished from the earth forever. Moreover, I believe that such a time is coming, when neither in Rome nor yet in Boston, nor in St. Petersburg, nor in Chicago will men worship God. For God is spirit, is life, and the true

worshippers will worship him in life and in reality, to give the essential meaning to that phrase of the great mystic John.

Back of all the turmoil and the uncertainty, the unrest, and the disintegration of modern life, with its wonderful developments and possibilities, there lurks again this old conflict between freedom and Authority, between religion of authority, and the religion of the spirit. Mind you, it is not a conflict between Protestantism and Catholicism, but between the elements in both of these that believe in democracy, and those that believe in Freedom. It is not an easy problem to decide. I would not presume to tell anyone, not even my own child, how he should decide. But if the decision is to be made intelligently, and without dangerous bitterness, it must be brought out into the open.