

his continual presence made me doubt my standing as a magistrate, the justice of men, my very self. I asked myself if Legru's intrusion was not a visitation of Providence, for the foreman whom he had assaulted might have well deserved his beating, and I was in the wrong in condemning him and upsetting his life.

'It has shaken me, all this. I find no satisfaction in contemplating my career as a magistrate. I have vegetated, have not sought preferment. Why should I do so? To escape Legru? He would have followed me.

'There were times when I thought of taking him on as a domestic. But he had succumbed to the laziness which attacks those who leave prison. And to see him eternally at hand would have driven me crazy.

'There, dear friend, is the explanation of the unhappy state in which you find me. However, I am soon to retire. I have really decided . . .'

'But Legru?' I questioned.

The old magistrate stammered.

'That's just it. He's dead. And I know you will think this foolish, but — but I miss him terribly.'

[*The Times*]

## CHRISTIANITY AND M. LOISY

RICHARD ROTHE said, 'The ancient world built up the Catholic Church on the foundation of the Gospel, but in doing so it built itself bankrupt.' Pagan philosophy and religious institutions, imperial law and organization made their contribution to the doctrine, the government, the Sacraments of Catholicism. The ancient world lived on in new forms and on a new basis. This basis was the Gospel, a point not always sufficiently emphasized when Rothe's dictum has been under discussion. The sentence is one of Harnack's favorite quotations; it might almost be taken as the motto for much of his *History of Dogma*. It is clear that a problem will arise touching the relation of foundation to superstructure; and Harnack complains that his critics have too often described his views as if he had ignored the basis in his description of the fabric.

But there is a further problem, perhaps even more important, and that

is the definition of the Gospel, a matter on which his critics have also something to say. Is the Gospel limited to the teaching of the Founder or are we at liberty to reconstruct it from the New Testament as a whole? In popular usage it is notorious that the term has been specialized for what used to be called the plan of salvation; and the Epistles, rather than the Synoptic Gospels, were the documents from which it was mainly derived. It is significant that it was just this presentation of Christianity which was commonly described as Evangelical. One of the constant objections to it was that it originated with Paul and had no warrant in the teaching of Jesus. But even if the fact were granted, the inference that the doctrine was an illegitimate intrusion would still remain for discussion.

The question is, indeed, a larger one; for the science of Biblical theology has disclosed the co-existence in the New

Testament not of two types of theology but of several; and it would be premature to decide offhand that the Gospel must be derived exclusively from the teaching of Jesus, or to take it for granted that these different types could not be combined in a higher unity, to which the name of Christianity might be legitimately given. Nor, if we restricted the Gospel to the teaching of Jesus, would our definition of it be a simple matter. For even if we dismissed the Fourth Gospel as irrelevant, we should still have problems enough on our hands. It is very widely held that Mark is our earliest Gospel and that it has been used in the composition of Matthew and Luke. It is also held, not indeed so widely but by a large majority of scholars, that the First and Third Gospels also drew on a lost collection of sayings and addresses of Jesus. But it is not agreed whether this document and Mark were mutually independent, or, if not, what was the relation between them.

The question is also raised whether when we have disengaged our earliest sources, these also have to be analyzed into earlier and later strata. And the ultimate issue has still to be faced, whether with any confidence we can reconstruct from our documents the career and teaching of the Founder. And even if we are assured that we have reached results which stand immovably sure, and others to which a high degree of probability can be assigned, we have still the problem of interpretation. Experts are divided, not simply on details but on fundamentals. They are not agreed as to the view which Jesus took of the Kingdom of God, of His own position in it, of His person, His mission, His death, or on the relation in which the ethical and eschatological elements in His outlook and teaching stood to each other.

On these problems, alike in their critical, their historical, and their theological bearing, M. Loisy has written much, notably in his elaborate and rather prolix commentaries on the Gospels, in his *L'Evangile et l'Eglise*, and the books which he published in consequence of the controversy it aroused. His prolonged critical studies led him to results of a very negative kind. He was the most eminent French Modernist, and, circumstances being what they were, his career in his own church could have ended only in excommunication. On the merits of the case it would be unbecoming to pronounce. But M. Loisy's combination of a very negative criticism with an uncompromising defense of the Roman system naturally could not commend itself to any Christian for whom Christianity was indissolubly associated with a series of historical events and stood or fell with acceptance of the traditional Christology. Since his deposition from the priesthood and expulsion from the Church the real logic of his position has found its clear expression.

His latest book\* deals with several of the problems which have been enumerated. With some of them it deals, it is true, in a cursory way; but that is because in his earlier works, notably those on the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels, he has discussed them at length. On others he has not published to any extent before, except in articles. The book was almost entirely printed before the outbreak of war. An interesting token that it is born, to use his own expression, five years old, is to be found in the fact that, while the title page bears the date 1914, the reproduction of it on the cover gives it as 1919. A few notes are added to bring it down to

\* *Les Mystères Païens et Le Mystère Chrétien.* By Alfred Loisy. Paris: Emile Nourry. 10 francs.

date; but these might well have been extended, and some surprising omissions in the bibliographies might have been made good. We may mention in particular the absence of Professor Lake's *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* and Professor H. A. A. Kennedy's *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, our foremost discussion of the subject.

As the title indicates, the book deals not only with Christianity but with heathen mysteries. Those here described and discussed are the mysteries of Dionysus and Orpheus, the Eleusinian mysteries, the mysteries of Cybele and Attis, of Isis and Osiris, and Mithraism. A general discussion is prefixed on national religions and mystery cults. The mystery religions are characterized by the guaranty of a blessed immortality which they give to their initiates. The votaries are united with the deity who has been slain and restored to life. This union is effected by rites of a secret character. While a man is born into a national religion, he is initiated into the mystery religions of his own free will and by favor of the deity. The rite is one of purification but also of vision, the spectacle repeating in a divine drama the experience of the god. Yet the initiates are not mere spectators of the drama. They are actors in it; they share in the death and resurrection of the god, and thus participate in his immortality. Since the efficacy of the rites rests on the divine fact related in the myth, the initiate is justified by faith in the savior-god, entering through the rite into fellowship with his earthly sorrows and his heavenly bliss. But the rite precedes the myth; the divine fact regarded as the basis of the faith never actually occurs; it is due to the conjecture and creation of the faith itself.

In what relation, then, do the

mystery cults stand to the national religions? They differ from the latter in their concentration on the individual, on inward emotions, on theology, and ethics. The process of transformation is obscure, even in the case of Christianity, and is necessarily much more obscure in the case of the other religions. It is clear, however, on the one hand, that they do not arise by spontaneous generation and are not an absolute novelty; on the other hand, they do not stand in direct immediate sequence to the state religions from which they spring. Their relation to these religions is not simple but complex. Space, unfortunately, will not permit us to follow M. Loisy in his learned and interesting examination of the pagan mysteries. We must turn to his treatment of Early Christianity, in which the questions raised are not merely of academic and historical interest, but momentous in their character and far-reaching in the issues they raise. His position will be stated as fully as space permits, and often in his own words:

The Gospel proclaimed by Jesus was not a mystery religion. But it was as a mystery religion that Christianity conquered the Mediterranean world. The transformation was not made by the original Apostles, though they preached the risen Messiah; yet the Christian mystery came to birth while the memory of Jesus was still fresh, since it was His contemporary, Paul of Tarsus, who was its chief apostle. Jesus remained within the old religion and proclaimed the accomplishment of Israel's hope. Paul broke with Judaism; the Christianity he preached was a new religion. The problem is to account for a transformation so radical, so utterly remote from the intention of the Founder. It was not effected by intentional borrowing from pagan mysteries nor by the slow infil-

tration of their ideas and customs into Jewish Christianity.

In his attempt to solve the problem, M. Loisy sketches briefly the career of Jesus, summarizing the results reached through the elaborate investigations in his earlier works. For him Jesus is a prophet, like John the Baptist, who preached Divine judgment and the need of repentance, but looked forward to a state of blessedness on earth for the Jewish people in which He would be invested with supreme authority in the Kingdom of God as the Messiah. He went to Jerusalem, aware of the risks He ran, reckoning with death as a possibility, but hoping that God would spare Him that supreme trial. Yet even if it came, He was confident that God would not abandon Him; He would rise from the dead and come to reign as Messiah.

A generous soul, an enthusiastic dreamer, limited in horizon to Israel, the victim of a fantastic illusion, He died for the phantom of a Kingdom of God to be realized on earth, which never came and which never will come. But from His tomb the Christian Church arose. For His followers believing Him to be the Messiah attained in Galilee the conviction that He had risen, a conviction buttressed at a later period by the fiction of the empty tomb, in connection with which the belief grew up that the resurrection took place on Easter Sunday. But it was neither the Gospel of Jesus nor the proclamation by His disciples of the Risen One that gained the victory. For the connection with Judaism was too close for the Gentiles ever to have received it; left to develop along its original lines, the movement would have collapsed within a generation. From this fate it was saved by its transformation into a mystery religion.

It was to Paul beyond all others that this transformation was due. Others,

no doubt, shared in the work, but he is the representative personality and much the most important. The Gospel as he preached it has the features of a mystery. The call to salvation is apprehended in it as in the theology and practice of certain pagan mysteries; recruits are enlisted without any distinction of nationality; the principle of salvation is faith in a redemption, in a myth of sacrifice, in the perpetual efficacy of a Divine death and the participation in the very spirit of a Divine Redeemer; baptism has become a rite of initiation, the Lord's Supper a rite for initiates, and by both is realized the possession of the Spirit, the identification of the faithful with the Saviour Christ, by means of which, as in the mysteries, a happy immortality is guaranteed.

The Christ whom Paul proclaimed is not the Christ of the primitive community. He repudiates all interest in this Christ after the flesh — in other words, Jesus as He really was. His conception of His person as that of a Heavenly Being who, like the gods of mythology, became man by metamorphosis is itself purely mythological. His theory of salvation is a myth, and the complex of ideas which it contains is logically not much better constructed than the myths of Osiris and Attis. But if salvation came in this way, the law was clearly superfluous; and Paul, on becoming a Christian, drew the inference that it was abrogated. Salvation, as he understood it, could be obtained only by faith in the myth of redemption and by the mystical assimilation of the believer to the Saviour who alone was qualified to initiate His followers into immortality. The basis of his Christianity is clearly expressed in his own words, 'It is no longer I who live, it is Christ who lives in me.' This is one of the essential points which affiliate Christianity to

the mysteries and differentiate it from Judaism and the Gospel preached by Jesus.

But how are we to explain a transformation so radical and so swift? Judaism did not suggest the elements of the theory. It knew the expiatory value attached to the sufferings of the righteous. But Paul is not concerned with the moral value of expiation. He lays the stress on a mystical virtue inherent in the death of a divine human being, who, in virtue of His double nature and His representative character, takes away in His death the sin of mankind and raises with Him into glory the humanity. He has thus redeemed. Judaism neither knew nor could know any tradition of this kind. It is the pagan myth of the sacrificed god as we find it in the Mysteries of Dionysus. And similarly Paul did not derive the myth from Jesus or from His disciples. He emphatically claimed independence for his Gospel. He receives it not by tradition, but by revelation. Christ was at once its author and its object when, in suddenly apprehending the persecutor of His followers, He flooded his soul with light. His Gospel drew its mythical character from a pagan source. This was not Greek philosophy, to which he apparently attached little importance, because he knew little of it.

But he was better acquainted with the religious doctrines of paganism, especially those of the mystery religions. For he had grown up in an environment in which he must have become familiar with the leading ideas. Indeed, it is not too fanciful to imagine that he had worked among the Gentiles as an apostle of Judaism before he became a Christian. And thus in discussion he had learned to understand the mystery cults more intimately, while he realized how inaccessible to Jewish propaganda the Gentiles were. M.

Loisy entirely dissents from Reitzenstein's view that Paul had not simply read, but studied, the Hellenistic religious literature. He thinks that he probably paid little attention to these religions, which from first to last he regarded as doctrines, of demons revealed by the demons to the adepts. He would not feel curiosity enough about them to study them.

Such appropriation of the technical terms as we find need not have been derived from books, and he nowhere exhibits special knowledge of any pagan cult. Yet, like other Jews, especially those of the Dispersion, he came into contact with paganism in his everyday life, he became familiar with its spirit, and, without realizing it, was unconsciously penetrated by it. One of his most prominent characteristics was a singular aptitude to appropriate the ideas which he opposed. Thus, on his conversion, he was prepared to recognize in Christianity the true mystery of God, of which the pagan cults were but demoniacally inspired caricatures.

This was all the easier that the Christianity he knew and persecuted was not the religion of Jesus or the Apostles. It was the Gospel preached by propagandists in the Dispersion, not in its pure primitive form, but already somewhat tinged with Hellenism. What specially excited Paul's anger was the presentation to Gentiles of this form of Messianic Judaism. He would not have been so roused by the doctrines of Peter or James. His conversion was sudden, but not without unconscious preparation. This, however, had not been on the lines of any uneasiness as to his ability to achieve the righteousness of the law. It is entirely gratuitous to read his experience in the light of Luther's. His anxiety on the problem of salvation had not been of a personal character, it was

bound up with the difficulties he encountered in his Jewish propaganda. His debates with the Christians profoundly agitated him. Their ideas combined with those he had learned from the pagans; and the question pressed upon him not so much whether Jesus was the Messiah as whether He might not be the Divine Victim chosen to effect the salvation of the world by dying for the sins of men.

Had Paul been in full possession of himself he would have said: 'No'; but this did not prevent a vision created by his disordered spirit from answering 'Yes.' The vision, of course, had no objective reality, and we cannot analyze its details; but physiological and psychological factors combined to create it. He believed Jesus had appeared to him; he felt himself in that moment called to be an apostle. He apprehended Him as the Divine Saviour preëxistent from eternity, Divinely predestined to the work of human redemption, whose death, followed by the Resurrection, attested that He was the Master of immortality. True, his faith rested on the immovable rock of Jewish monotheism, and his religion was not syncretistic. He adopted no foreign element as such into his religion; but he elaborated Christianity on the analogy of pagan conceptions, thus giving the Gospel the form it needed to spread and take root in the Græco-Roman world. And while his doctrine developed, especially in contrast with Judaism and in controversy with Jewish Christians, it could not undergo any essential transformation. And in particular he did not consciously adapt it to the standpoint of the heathen.

It was Christianity in this form which prevailed and survived, pre-

vailed so effectively that Jewish Christianity, that is essentially the Christianity of Jesus, came to be treated by Greek Christianity as a heresy. It received in the Fourth Gospel a form much better balanced than Paul had given it. Thus the mystery was rounded out to perfection, and Christianity was well equipped to conquer the ancient world.

For we ought not to say, as is too often said, that the mystery changed the Gospel; it saved it rather by making it a universal religion. It enlarged the idea of God, it enlarged the conception of Christ, making of the Jewish Messiah the divine type of humanity, expanding the deliverer of Israel into the Saviour of the world. It moderated apocalyptic illusions and substituted for the phantom of a Messianic kingdom, restricted to Jews, a divine communion, realized in this life for the blessing of all believers, whoever they might be.

But, on the other hand, the mystery owed to the Gospel those elements which constituted its superiority to pagan history. Its monotheism and its conception of God were immeasurably superior, while the figure of Jesus was far more concrete and historical than that of the mystery deities, and His ethical teaching, at the level of which His own life had been lived, imparted a moral depth which would be sought in the rival religions in vain.

Such is M. Loisy's theory as to the origin of Christianity, stated largely in his own words. Naturally, much has been omitted, especially in the discussion of the Sacraments, but the main lines have, it is hoped, been faithfully reproduced with the necessary qualifications.



## THE ARTS AND LETTERS

### 'THE YOUNG VISITERS' ON THE STAGE—A NEW BERLIN SUCCESS—FRENCH DRAMA IN AMERICA

LONDON reviews of the opening performance of Mr. George Norman's and Miss Margaret Mackenzie's dramatization of the immortal *Young Visitors* have just arrived. The production has been favorably received; we read that 'the house was in a ripple of laughter throughout the seventeen preposterous scenes,' and that 'the work gave the impression of being scrupulously faithful to the original. The scenery, by Mr. J. V. Bryant, done in a childlike vein was voted a particular success. The Victorian dresses and the Victorian music were also found very pleasing. To quote from the *Telegraph*:

'Miss Daisy Ashford has already captivated a section of the reading public with *The Young Visitors*, and, if the unusually warm reception given to the stage version of her book at the Court last night may be trusted, there is equal popularity awaiting that at the hands of playgoers. To appreciate the simple humors of the piece you must, of course, judge it from the standpoint of an imaginative little girl who has peopled a world of her own making with the most extraordinary characters. Of her perfect sincerity there can be no possible doubt, and it is in the same spirit of absolute seriousness that the play must be acted if success is to be achieved. Happily—the artists entrusted with the exposition of her ideas realized to the full their responsibility, and while solemnity ruled on their side of the curtain, laughter uncontrolled prevailed on the other.

'The adapters have done their work skillfully, reproducing all the principal incidents to be found in the original. No fewer than seventeen scenes are required for the development of the story, but by dispensing with anything in the shape of elaborate "sets" the action is carried on without halt or pause. It is all of a primitive simplicity, but none the less highly effective. You start with Mr. Salteena and Miss Monticue partaking of breakfast and discussing the advisability of accepting Bernard Clark's invitation to pay him a visit. Presently a cab is requisitioned and off they go on their adventurous journey to Bernard's ancestral mansion. There they are received by their genial host, attired in plum-colored dinner jacket, ornate shirt, heavily ruffled, and striped trousers of a particularly striking description. Excellent fun comes of the introduction of his guests to the gallery of family portraits, among them that of a great uncle, reputed to be "a sinister son of Queen Victoria." Nor is the scene over the dinner table less entertaining, while Ethel Monticue's performance at the piano and Bernard Clark's singing of a sentimental ballad once more rouse the audience to uproarious merriment.

'Next comes the assembling of the various characters at the Crystal Palace, where Mr. Salteena makes the acquaintance of that extremely affable and high-born young gentleman, the Earl of Clincham, by whom he is confided to the charge of an immaculate valet to be suitably arrayed, after an