

**CONVERSATIONS
ON LIBERALISM
AND THE CHURCH**

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Conversations on Liberalism and the Church by O. A. Brownson

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O. A. BROWNSON

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AND THE CHURCH**

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ON
LIBERALISM AND THE CHURCH.

*Open to
All readers* BY
A. BROWNSON, L. L. D.

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L. L. Barber's Request
9-9-33

P R E F A C E .

11-11-33
THIS little volume must speak for itself. The Conversations turn on questions of the day and the hour, and taken as a whole they form a passable defence of the Church against the objections urged in the name of Liberalism and Progress, or so-called Modern Civilization. They are not purely imaginary, but such as I have really had time and again with the enemies of the Church, who object to her principally on political and social grounds.

The form of the work has been adopted for my own convenience and that of the reader, and I hope will not be found objectionable. The doctrine is, I believe, rigidly orthodox. I have sought neither to offend the world nor to con-

ciliate it. I do not believe in making concessions of what is not mine to concede. I have explained the teachings of the Church where they conflict with the spirit of the age, but I have not sought to conform them to that spirit. The Church was instituted by our Lord to govern the world according to the Divine Reason and Will, not to be governed by it. These Conversations are respectfully dedicated to all who have or seek after Christian Truth, by

THE AUTHOR.

ELIZABETH, N. J., April, 1869.

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LIBERALISM AND THE CHURCH.



CHAPTER I.

DURING the intense heat of the summer days of 1868, I was ordered by my physicians to try the virtues of a newly-discovered mineral spring, in a distant State, which was beginning to acquire considerable reputation. The number of visitors was not large, for it had not yet become a fashionable watering-place, and few, except such as were really in pursuit of health, or at least desirous of recruiting their exhausted energies, visited it. They were chiefly overworked lawyers, merchants, traders, editors, and ministers of religion, who required relaxation from labor and rest, with freedom from their ordinary cares and anxieties.

I belonged to none of those classes. I had no profession, no occupation, and, with a moderate but competent estate inherited from my grand-

father, I was free to follow my own tastes and pleasures. I was past middle age, unmarried, and had no near relatives dependent on me for support or protection. I was as free as a man can be in this world; had originally an excellent constitution, which I had not always respected, and was now suffering from early imprudences and ills incident to idleness and good living. My real complaint was, that I had nothing to do, or to take up my attention; so, as I said, my physicians ordered me to try the waters of the new Spa. I cannot say much for the waters, but the journey I was forced to make, the change of scenery, the pure mountain air, and the intellectual and intelligent company I found had their effect, and, after an absence of a few months, I returned to my home completely renovated in body, and with my mind engaged with a subject not unlikely to occupy it the rest of my life.

While at the spring, around which had sprung up a small village called Springdale, consisting of an unfinished meeting-house, one or two boarding-houses, and a large hotel, I formed the acquaintance of several gentlemen whose conversation interested me much. Among them were two who particularly attracted my attention. One, many