

**CATHOLIC REFORM:
LETTERS, FRAGMENTS,
DISCOURSES**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649742790

Catholic Reform: Letters, Fragments, Discourses by Hyacinthe & Madame Hyacinthe-Loyson
& Arthur Penrhyn Stanley

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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**HYACINTHE & MADAME
HYACINTHE-LOYSON & ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY**

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Charles Jean Marie Loyson, known
as Père Hyacinthe.
CATHOLIC REFORM.

LETTERS, FRAGMENTS, DISCOURSES,

BY

FATHER HYACINTHE.

TRANSLATED BY

MADAME HYACINTHE-LOYSON.

WITH A PREFACE

BY

ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY,

DEAN OF WESTMINSTER.

"For a priest, there is nothing so dangerous before God, nothing so shameful before man, as
not to speak out his convictions freely."—SAINT AMBROSE.

London:

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1874.

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P R E F A C E.

IN fulfilling a request to introduce to the English public the English translation of the addresses and letters of the distinguished French preacher, M. Hyacinthe Loyson, still best known by his former name of Père Hyacinthe, I have thought that it might be well to give a general view of the grounds on which even those who may differ from many of the expressions and statements herein contained ought to feel an interest in the movement of which he is, if not the most influential, yet the best known and the most popular representative.¹

That universal ground of interest consists in the deep religious principle which is involved in the Old Catholic struggle. It is this. That the chief call of those in any Church, who disagree with the dominant party, or with any of its specific doctrines or institutions, is not to desert such a Church, but to strive, openly and

¹ The substance of this Preface is contained, more or less, in an address published in 1873 in the *Contemporary Review*.

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(RECAP)

L O R S O

honourably, to realise within it their own ideal of Christianity.

There are two other courses, but only two other courses, open in such cases. One is that each dissentient should found a sect of his own. For educated men—for those who take a serious view of the whole position of Christendom at this time—it is probable that there are few to whom such a step will commend itself. Another course would be¹ that of complete individual isolation from all ecclesiastical organizations whatever. This may possibly be the ultimate issue to which the world is tending. But there are many reasons for regarding such an issue as far distant. And, therefore, in the meantime, the principle on which the Liberal or Old Catholics profess to act has a paramount claim on all reflecting men, and it may be useful to show that their confession of it is not new or solitary.

The struggle of the Old Catholics against the Ultramontanes is virtually the same which in different degrees is maintained against what may be called the Ultramontanes in each of the churches of Christendom, Catholic or Protestant, Conforming or Nonconforming.

It is perhaps necessary, in speaking of Ultramon-

¹ I have not here spoken of the alternative of the dissatisfied members passing over to some other existing Church, which no doubt may in some cases be the easiest solution. But in every mixed Church (and all existing Churches are more or less mixed) occur the same difficulties arising from partial disagreement, as are involved in the case of the Old Catholics.

tanes in this general sense, to make two remarks by way of explanation. The word, as is well known, has now entirely lost its geographical sense, and is used in the Roman Church for those, whether north or south¹ of the Alps, who attach an exclusive and excessive value to the judgment of the Roman Court. But this special application has itself become absorbed in the more general meaning which is symbolized by it, and which may perhaps be rendered (making allowance for the epigrammatic form of the phrase) by a definition given in a recent Parliamentary debate by Dr. Lyon Playfair. "The Ultramontanes are the Ecclesiastical Communists. Communism is the reduction of property to a common level. *Ultramontanism is the reduction of religious spirit and intellectual thought to a common level.*" But, in using the word in this sense, and whilst lamenting the mischievous effect of this tendency on the Church at large, we would gladly acknowledge the many excellent graces that adorn the characters of those who may thus be designated in these several churches. For many of them we ought to entertain a profound respect and regard—and we do not doubt that they perform a useful function, so long as they are not the exclusive rulers.

¹ In earlier times, the word was used from the Italian or southern point of view—and thus in a reverse sense to the modern. Lord Bacon, in speaking of what he calls "*Papable* persons," says that "not more than one *Ultramontane* (*i.e.*, not more than one of the Northern as opposed

Thus the struggle of the Old Catholics is in itself the same struggle which has been maintained in the Church of England by those who, from the time of Lord Falkland down to the present day, have endeavoured to set forth more reasonable views of religion, in distinction from the hierarchical or Puritan views which have alternately been upheld by the fashion of the day or the domination of party.¹ It is the same struggle which, under a somewhat different guise, was sustained by John Wesley. "I vary," he said, "from the Church of England, but I will never leave it." It is also the same principle, under yet another form, which is maintained by what are called the "Liberal Protestants" in the National Protestant Church of France. It is the same principle which is or which might be maintained in each of the Nonconformist communities. It was the struggle of John Bunyan and of Robert Hall in favour of open communion against the rigid rule of the Baptists. It was the struggle of Dr. Davidson against the rulers of the Independents. It is the struggle of those noble-minded Nonconformists who maintain their protest against the watchwords which often govern their churches; who resist the reduc-

to the Southern nations) has been appointed for the last forty years." And in Brande's "Ecclesiastical Dictionary" the word is explained to mean, "those who are *least* favourable to the Papal supremacy."

¹ See Principal Tulloch's excellent work on "Rational Theology in England."

tion of all ecclesiastical institutions to the common level of a uniform sectarianism; who know that the Church cannot wholly be separated from the Christian world, nor religion from the national education of the country. It is the struggle of all those members of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, whether Established, Free, or "United Presbyterian," who, in the presence of the old Calvinistic standards of their Church, maintain what Norman Macleod used to call "the magnificent 'Nevertheless' of Dr. Chalmers."

In all these cases, the cry of the dominant party is the same—not always the same in form, not always couched in the same imperious tone, but the same in substance:—"We do not wish to keep you—you are not of us—we anathematize you—you are traitors within the camp—if you leave us, we will respect you—so long as you remain with us, we hate you, we despise you." The counter-cry of the Old Catholics; of the Anglican representatives of Chillingworth and Tillotson; of the old French Huguenots of the pre-Methodist epoch; of the Open-communion Baptists; of the followers of the fine old Nonconformists of the type of Baxter or Wesley or Robert Hall; of the larger-minded Presbyterians of Scotland; either is, or would be, if they were pushed to extremities, the same also:—"We have no wish to leave you; we maintain our position as