THE INFLUENCE

OF

LACORDAIRE

ON THE

CATHOLIC REVIVAL IN FRANCE

1830 to 1861

by

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PREFACE

One of the most remarkable revivals in the long and turbulent history of the Church is that of the nineteenth century in France. This historically Catholic country had temporarily deprived the Church of its rights and robbed it of every earthly possession by the Revolution of 1789. Still living in the spirit of the four Gallican Articles that were formulated in 1682, the Roman Catholic Church had been further disabled by its strong attachment to the unstable and unpopular governments of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. State protection enveloped the Church to such an extent that it all but smothered the little life that remained. Some Frenchmen, even certain members of the French clergy, clung to this protection as their last and only hope of survival. In the Gallican mind, Church and state were inevitably destined to share a common future.

Religion, in the early nineteenth century, was an unwanted luxury for far too many Frenchmen. Catholicism, so they thought, had had its day. Faith was an unfashionable weakness; devotion was exclusively for the women and children. The intellectual and social elite of France was ready to discard the Church as an old-fashioned and antiquated institution. But the Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of the living Christ, was not to be reckoned with

according to the whims of man. It had withstood the storms of persecution, heresy, and indifference down through the ages. It emerged victorious in nineteenth-century France also, and stood by to pronounce a last blessing on the repentant sons who had ridiculed Catholicism and opposed it so strenuously.

The French nation, nominally Catholic, had relegated its sacred heritage of the Catholic faith to the women and the peasants. Its great intellectuals, its politicians, university professors, generals, and its bourgeoisie, were a generation for whom the last vestiges of Catholicism had died with the victims of the guillotine. They obstinately rejected the Bourbons' efforts to force Catholicism back into the lime-light of public favor. Charles X, if sincere in his own Catholic beliefs, surely was not prudent in his untimely zeal in trying to spread them. His extreme reactionary policy put both the throne and the altar in a disreputable position. When France finally tired of her Bourbon dynasty in 1830, crosses were torn down simultaneously with the fleur-de-lis. Once again the Church met with hostility which bore a frightening similarity to that of 1789. Memories of that revolution, all too realistic for a great number of the older clergy, led them to prefer any state of subjection to a repetition of the orgies of the Revolution of 1789. Many of these were sincere and devout priests who firmly believed it would be better to sacrifice their rights than to fight for them and consequently submit the Church to another explosion of the full-fledged wrath

of angry French mobs.

With a situation of that nature, anyone who would take it upon himself to champion the cause of the Church, to defend its God-given rights, to restore it to a place of honor and respect, of necessity had to contend not only with active opposition from the civil government and hostile public opinion, but also with opposition from the clerics themselves who wished to retain the status quo. Such, however, briefly explains the nature of the task which Lacordaire pursued with his ardent enthusiasm. He and a few of his courageous and liberal-minded Catholic associates dared to suggest an independent existence for the Church. The very thought of this was a daring innovation which took French officials, both clerical and civil, by surprise. The young Catholic liberals and their suggestion were quickly condemned by Church and state alike. Yet, in that very suggestion were sown the seeds that were to produce a new life for the Church, a life that was to flourish and gain strength while the civil government continued to flounder.

Surely there are many factors which contributed to the Catholic revival in France in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is only natural, however, that among the manifold causes, some should enjoy more predominance than others. The purpose of this study is to investigate the degree of influence exerted on the revival by Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire. A convert, a priest, a religious, and a liberal until the day he died, the Abbé Lacordaire reached out to countless souls through his journalism. Others were

drawn by his magnificent oratory and his public defense of liberalism. His eloquence attracted even the godless unbelievers and scoffers of his time. If not converted, they were at least forced to admire the Church which before they had contemptuously regarded as an object of ridicule. Even today it is difficult to read Lacordaire's works without feeling the effects of that same dynamism that so completely won over his contemporaries.

The scope of this thesis covers the period from 1830 to 1861. Although the real work of the revival was at an end by 1850, the remaining years of Lacordaire's life have been included in order to give a better idea of the permanence of his influence on the Catholics of France. Lacordaire himself, disturbed by the hostility and division within the Catholic party after 1850, withdrew from an active public life. His last years were still devoted to the apostolate, but on a much smaller scale.

The preparation of this paper has been based on a careful study of Lacordaire's own works and of contemporary writings, such as significant memoirs, journals, and correspondence. Over 120 of Lacordaire's letters have been collected and published in the work entitled Letters to Young Men. The first 150 pages of Pages Choisies are devoted to the correspondence of Lacordaire. Still other letters of his are quoted freely and at considerable length by Chocarne, Foisset, and Montalembert, three of Lacordaire's intimate friends and personal recipients of his letters. Periodicals of the last half of the nineteenth century, as

well as those of the present century have been consulted in order to provide information on the duration of Lacordaire's contribution to the Catholic revival in France. French periodical literature for Lacordaire's time is unavailable, but the published works of his contemporaries in France seem to cover the period satisfactorily.

The religious and political background of the period has been summarized briefly in the first chapter. Chapter two provides the biographical background. Lacordaire's role in the nineteenth-century Catholic revival in France forms the substance of the remaining chapters.

Many people have truly merited my appreciation by their kindness while I was preparing this thesis, but my gratitude extends first and foremost to Dr. Robert W. Reichert for his guidance and helpful suggestions. His sustained interest and enthusiasm have been most encouraging. Sincere thanks are also due to Reverend Francis P. Prucha, S.J., and Dr. Leo J. Wearing for their reading of this manuscript. Many others, to whom I am very grateful, have given generously of their time and energy to help me in gathering my materials. Finally, I would like to thank my Community, the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity, for making my studies at Marquette University possible.

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CHAPTER I

THE RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire's great work in the Catholic revival in France can be accurately understood and appreciated only when viewed against the religious and political scene of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The turn of the century saw the Church suffering from discord within its own ranks and oppression from outside forces. The bitter fruits of the Revolution of 1789 were still being gathered.

Catholicism had suffered intensely during the years of the revolutionary period. Decadence within the Church had left it too weak to defend itself against the sweeping destruction that started in 1789. As so often happens, so here, the innocent had to share in the blame of the guilty, and the French Church, while acknowledging her share of those labeled "guilty," could also boast of many saintly members. There were, for example, many curés who not only offered the blessings of religion to their parishioners, but also were willing to share the burdens, the miseries, and even the poverty of their flocks. These holy men were loved and revered. The frenzied revolutionary mobs, however, had no time to debate the virtues of an individual victim.

Anyone or anything that smacked of Catholicism was hated with the same fervor.

The ranks of the higher clergy, unfortunately, included some members wholly unfit for ecclesiastical life. For one thing, participation in the social affairs of the royal court was neither conducive to the priestly life nor helpful in gaining the respect of the people. The taxpayers, almost exclusively of the third estate, had to bear the financial burden of this extravagance for royalty and religion. These worldly prelates who resided at the palace, together with those who had little reason for their choice of religious life other than a desire to share in ecclesiastical power and wealth, helped to call down on the Church the same wrath that caused royal heads to roll.

Philosophers and writers of the eighteenth century had long been busy at undermining religion, and their efforts were not in vain. Religious scepticism was generated in the minds of many.[1] A stream of disbelief, originating with the "ruinous irony of Voltaire and the sentimental utopia of Rousseau," corrupted the last years of the ancien régime.[2] The godless influence and example of the great "thinkers" and leaders of France could not fail to affect

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[1] James MacCaffrey, History of the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1909), I, 6.

[2] Fernand Mourret, S.S., A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1955), VII, 483.

the masses. Catholicism lost ground steadily, until by 1789 public opinion had labeled it as undesirable.

The privileged Church of the ancien régime suffered great privation during the Revolution of 1789. On November 2, 1789, the Church was dispossessed and deprived of every means of income. All of her property was confiscated. The ecclesiastics, due to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, became mere salaried servants of the state. The government henceforth paid its priests as it did its soldiers, and found that it could use both to "administer and fetter the people."[3] By February, 1790, religious orders were suppressed, since monastic vows, in the opinion of the members of the National Constituent Assembly, were contrary to the spirit of liberty and individual freedom.

The Civil Constitution of the Clergy, which, in July, 1790, made the Church a mere department of the state, was another severe blow.[4] The wretched condition of the clergy was somewhat improved with the Concordat of 1801. Napoleon, with his political astuteness, foresaw the difficulty, if not the impossibility of running the government without religion. Furthermore, he was desirous of the support of that vast body of French Catholics. Anxious as he was to settle the question of Church-state relations, Napoleon wanted it settled in only one way, his own. He was angry

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[3]"Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII (October, 1870), 363.

[4]Charles Stanley Phillips, The Church in France, 1848-1907 (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1936), p. 4.

when, in the process of negotiating, he had to make concessions against his will, but by means of the Organic Articles, which he appended to the Concordat, he regained all that he had given up. Through the Concordat and Organic Articles Napoleon handed over the lower clergy, "bound hand and foot," to the control of the bishops, but the bishops, in turn, were under Napoleon's control.[5]

Napoleon continued his efforts to pacify the French Catholics for some time after the conclusion of the Concordat. He increased salaries of the cardinals and the clergy, helped the seminaries, and even permitted the return of some of the religious orders. Napoleon himself had little love for monastic congregations. He merely tolerated those which he felt could serve the state. The mighty emperor found it difficult to understand or appreciate "monkish humility."[6] But with or without his appreciation, it was under his early toleration that the tide of faith slowly began to return to France.

In dealing with something as sacred as the religious rights of his subjects, Napoleon at times encountered the unpredictable. Even his well planned Concordat with its accompanying Organic Articles produced unanticipated results. The Catholic Church in France drew closer together in the face of obstacles and presented a united front. At variance

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[5] Ibid., p. 9.

[6] Jean Canu, Religious Orders of Men, trans. P.J. Hepburn-Scott (New York: Hawthorne Books, 1960), p. 121.

with the French government and Napoleon, the bishops turned more and more to Rome. Ultramontanism, a looking "beyond the mountains" to Rome and the Vicar of Christ as the center of spiritual unity, grew in popularity and opposed the strong Gallican mentality.[7] The bishops were beginning to realize that with Napoleon the "protection of the state was the hug of a bear, not the support of a brave and gentle arm."[8]

With the Bourbon restoration of 1814, royal favor smiled once more on the Catholic Church. The monarchs of the restoration completely reversed the scene, and instead of having the Church serve the state, they endeavored to make the state serve the Church.[9] Catholicism was again recognized as the official state religion. The bishops joyfully rallied around the Most Christian King in the hope of regaining some of the privileges previously enjoyed under Bourbon rule. The eager prelates cherished three main ideas: union of throne and altar, hatred of the Revolution of 1789, and the defense of Gallicanism.[10] Union of throne and altar seemed to them indispensable to the existence of the mon-

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[7]Kenneth Scott Latourette, The Nineteenth Century in Europe: Background and the Roman Catholic Phase (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), I, 144.

[8]"Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII, 364.

[9]Ross William Collins, Catholicism and the Second French Republic, 1848-1852 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923), p. 15.

[10]Georges Jacques Weill, Histoire du Catholicisme Libéral en France, 1828-1908 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1909), p. 3.

archy and of the nation itself. Hatred of the revolution and everything born of the revolution presented no problem to a group of clerics who had been dispossessed, persecuted and exiled by it. Their Gallicanism was moderate, they claimed, but it would not allow them to appreciate or approve the Concordat of 1801 which had been signed by a usurping government.

Ecclesiastical hopes and loyalties grew stronger as Louis XVIII, though anything but a zealous Catholic himself, hastened to suppress the Napoleonic festivals and catechism. He dispensed the ecclesiastical students from attendance at the lycées, and permitted the bishops to open free collèges. Some of the clergy were offered and accepted very high places in the government.[11] Catholicism once again enjoyed a few of the long denied privileges. Prolonged deprivation made even small concessions seem like great gains. Louis XVIII, himself indifferent to religion, tried to keep the clergy in hand by these small privileges, but at the same time he withheld all real liberty from the Church.[12] The awakening of a renewed vitality in the Church had already started, however, and Louis XVIII found that he was powerless to halt it.

It is difficult to know exactly what Louis XVIII believed in as far as religion was concerned, but as the Most Christian King he had to keep any inclination to scepticism

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[11] MacCaffrey, History of the Church, I, 56.

[12] Ibid., I, 57.

to himself. Charles X was different. His austere and bigoted pietism resulted in an almost fanatic devotion to the Church, which he hoped would atone for the vices and follies of his youth. In a benevolent gesture he declared "that he wished to heal the last wounds left by the revolution, and announced his intention of renewing, by the ancient ceremony of coronation, the intimate alliance of the throne with religion."[13] Laws against sacrilege were passed; the Blessed Sacrament was again carried about in solemn procession. Charles X further intended to treat France to the "spectacle of a king anointed in truly mediaeval fashion at Rheims and piously walking in religious procession through the streets of Paris."[14] The clergy, mindful of the royal benefactions, threw the weight of their influence into the political scale and preached passive obedience to the crown.[15]

Unfortunately, Charles X failed to temper his zeal with prudence. Soon after his coronation public opinion began to turn against him. His obstinate determination allowed neither liberal anger nor liberal ridicule to stop him. However, forces beyond royal control tended to interfere. True religion, necessitating a free relationship with the Creator, cannot be forced either on an individual or on

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[13] Collins, Catholicism, 1848-1852, p. 16.

[14] Ibid.

[15] "Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864), 59.

a nation. France, suddenly faced with a new clerical regime, reacted by turning in the opposite direction. Once again the Voltairian spirit was resurrected. Cheap editions of the sceptical literature of the eighteenth century flooded the country. Religion again was the victim of systematic hostility and ridicule. The king's reactionary policy reached full fruition in the revolt of 1830 when the crown fell. The Church, which had enjoyed the crown's favor, was now forced to share its humiliation. Old accusations against the clergy were revived and bitter sentiments of religious hatred once more swept through France. "Religious processions were halted and crosses overturned, and the era of the Great Revolution seemed to have returned."[16] Yet strangely enough, the very year that witnessed such a severe attack on Catholicism also marked the opening of the most intensified and fruitful period of the Catholic revival.

The prelude of that revival was very evident during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. During those years religious orders began to reappear on French soil. Eighteenth-century philosophy was challenged and partially counteracted by the works of great Catholic authors such as François Chateaubriand, Louis de Bonald, Joseph de Maistre, and Félicité de Lamennais. Catholic periodicals and journals appeared and competed with the secular press in molding public opinion. Signs of the religious revival were numerous.

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[16] Charles Poulet, A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Sidney A. Raemers (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1935), II, 394.

One of the most positive indications of changing times was the restoration of many religious orders that had been suppressed during the Revolution of 1789. In addition to these, many and various new orders were founded to supply the needs of French Catholics. Even before the Hundred Days an ordinance of March 2, 1815, re-established the Seminary of the Foreign Missions and the Seminaries of the Fathers of the Holy Ghost. The Jesuits, although not legally authorized, returned once more to France.[17] They accomplished much for the revival of the faith and refused to be deterred by attacks repeatedly made against them. The field of education was for the Jesuits an area of great success; unfortunately, it also subjected them to severe attacks from all sides.[18] Their high standards were recognized by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and soon students were leaving the state schools to attend those conducted by the Jesuits. Other great orders also began to reappear. By the close of the nineteenth century almost all the orders in existence at the time of the Revolution of 1789 had been reconstituted in France.[19] They returned with a new vigor and spirit of religious life and discipline.

New religious foundations, however, were even more

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[17]Mourret, History of the Church, VII, 468.

[18]Martin Patrick Harney, S.J., The Jesuits in History (New York: The American Press, 1941), p. 380.

[19]Canu, Religious Orders, p. 127.

manifold than the restored orders. The new orders were founded to perform definite, specialized action, which would give immediate and measurable results. Their founders, faced with the particular problems of the times, were eager to resolve those problems without delay. In general, the new foundations could be divided into three broad classifications: educational, missionary, and charitable.[20]

The need of teaching orders was great. Before 1789 the bulk of the work of education was the responsibility of the Church and religious orders. When the Revolution of 1789 destroyed the religious orders, it thereby destroyed the educational system. There was nothing to replace the services previously rendered by the Church. In 1806 Napoleon established the Imperial University, thus climaxing earlier attempts to reorganize a satisfactory educational system. The organization of the University placed all education under state control. It was far from satisfactory for the Catholics, who had no choice other than to leave their children ignorant or expose them to the contagion of anti-Christianity, so prevalent in the state schools.[21] With the restoration in 1814 the Church regained at least a share in the education of youth. But even this small share was beyond the physical ability of the depleted number of priests and religious who survived the Revolution of 1789. An urgent need of the

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[20] Ibid.

[21] Théophile Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Jacques Lecoffre, 1870), I, 14.

Church, therefore, was satisfied with the founding of new teaching orders.

The missionary orders were also needed. While many of the members were sent to various parts of the world, a large number was needed for missionary work right in France. The missionaries preached in hundreds of French cities and endeavored to uproot the rationalistic philosophy embedded in the minds of so many. They tried to impart a new insight into the Christian principles of the Gospel.[22] They helped to restore a Christian atmosphere to their own belle patrie.

Charitable institutions attempted to alleviate the miseries of the neglected and forgotten victims of the Industrial Revolution. The working classes were inhumanly exploited. A laboring man could live only if his wife and children also worked, often toiling twelve to fourteen hours daily, under unhealthy and often immoral conditions.[23] By combining the family earnings, he might manage to meet the cost of living. But the frequent industrial crises, accidents, or sickness often plunged a family into destitution, which meant "starvation, or pauperism, or crime, or, sometimes all three."[24] The sad plight of those unfortunate people inspired Frédéric Ozanam to found his famous Society

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[22]Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 38.

[23]Parker T. Moon, The Labor Problem and the Social Catholic Movement in France (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1921), p. 1.

[24]Ibid., p. 8.

of St. Vincent de Paul, which brought into active service more laymen than any other movement in the Catholic Church up to that time.[25] Many other charitable institutions also directed their energies to the care of the poor and of the sick.

All opposition to religious orders did not subside with the restoration of the Bourbons, but monastic life expanded in spite of the difficulties. The time had not yet come for the Church to enjoy any real peace. An ultra-Catholic party, formed largely of émigrés, clashed continuously with the growing liberal party. An attempt to remedy some of the dissatisfaction was made in 1817 when a new concordat was drawn up to replace that of 1801 and abolish the Organic Articles. A satisfactory version was finally agreed upon and signed by both the pope and the king, only to have the liberal party in the French government defeat it.[26] The liberals feared a strengthening of the papal "yoke." Louis XVIII had no choice but to inform Pope Pius VII that France could not enforce the concordat. He refused to risk a breach in the government for the sake of the Church.

Influential writers of the early 1800's served as literary precursors of this grand regeneration. Their literature helped to counteract the eighteenth-century philosophy by exposing its errors and superficiality. François de Chateaubriand (1768-1848) wrote Le Génie du

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[25]Latourette, Nineteenth Century, I, 354.

[26]Poulet, History of the Church, II, 393.

Christianisme in 1802. In this famous work, which deeply impressed the French people, Chateaubriand upheld Christianity as something beautiful and therefore desirable. He appealed to the enchanting powers of the imagination with an eloquence like that of Rousseau, and proceeded to apply romanticism to the sphere of religion. He silenced the Voltairian cynicism and Christianized the sentimentality of Rousseau. Intellectually, Le Génie du Christianisme was weak in reasoning and without much intrinsic value, but France was surprisingly receptive to its emotional appeal and brilliant imagery. Nerves frayed by years of religious persecution and oppression were soothed by this poetic and artistic exposition of Christianity.[27] The influence of this book spread throughout the whole of Europe.

With less brilliance and less clarity of thought, but not without importance, Louis de Bonald (1754-1840) also contributed to the work of religious restoration. His most influential books, Essai analytique sur les lois naturelles de l'ordre social, Le Divorce, and La Législation primitive, were published at the turn of the century. In these he stressed the dignity of man. For De Bonald, religion was important as a guarantee of order. It helped to keep the poor content by promise of a better lot in the

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[27] William Raymond Corrigan, S.J., The Church and the Nineteenth Century (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1938), pp. 123-24; Charles Stanley Phillips, The Church in France, 1789-1848: A Study in Revival (Milwaukee: The Morehouse Co., 1929), p. 50; Poulet, History of the Church, II, 391.

world to come.[28] He denounced as satanic the spirit of the eighteenth century and of the Revolution of 1789. He constantly insisted that while the revolution had started with asserting the rights of man, it would end only when men would assert the rights of God.[29]

Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821) also contributed his literary talents to the attack against eighteenth-century philosophy. Condemning the deists and their false idea of God, he stressed the truth of an ever-watchful divine providence. His most famous publications, including Du Pape and L'Église Gallicane, appeared between 1817 and his death in 1821. De Maistre maintained that a sovereignty superior to all others should guard nations against the abuse of ruling powers. That sovereignty he identified with the papacy. De Maistre was the true father of modern ultramontanism.[30]

In 1817 the first volume of Essai sur l'indifférence en matière de religion came forth from the French press. Its author, the brilliant and capable Félicité de Lamennais (1782-1854), fought vigorously for the Catholic cause. Basically he agreed with De Maistre's idea of the papacy, and together with his devoted group of ultramontanes, believed in the necessity of reasserting papal supremacy. With convictions

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[28] Phillips, Church in France, 1789-1848, p. 214.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Latourette, Nineteenth Century, I, 238; Phillips, Church in France, 1789-1848, p. 208.

of that nature, he consequently was a strong adversary of Gallicanism.

Lamennais made wide use of the Catholic press to convey his ideas, at once liberal and ultramontane, to the public of France. The press was becoming an effective instrument in the hands of the Catholics. New Catholic journals, such as Ami de la religion et du roi, the Mémorial Catholique, and Le Correspondant appeared and assumed the task of defending religion. The first of these was founded as early as 1814. The Mémorial Catholique appeared in 1824. By 1829 Le Correspondant was added to the list of Catholic journals.[31] These newspapers fearlessly voiced the opinions of the Catholic movement which was rapidly gaining momentum.

By the time Louis Philippe ascended the throne of France the Church was strong enough to take a firm stand against any oppression. The years of his reign were years of great change for the Catholics, who had begun to fight their own battles in the Chambers, in the press, and above all, at that highly important bar of public opinion.[32] Montalembert defended the Church in his speeches from the floor of Parliament. Lacordaire inspired admiration for Catholicism from the pulpit of Notre Dame. Dom Guéranger did his part by initiating a liturgical revival in France, thus helping to reduce the spirit of Gallicanism. Two great

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[31] Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 279-80.

[32] "The Liberalism of Lacordaire," The Month, XII (June, 1870), 658.

orders, those of St. Dominic and of St. Benedict were re-established in France. Many Catholic journalists used their talents to further Catholic interests. Frédéric Ozanam contributed his Society of St. Vincent de Paul to relieve the sufferings of the poor. L'abbé Félix Dupanloup added his influential voice to the struggle for freedom of education. Père Gustave Ravignan, the noted Jesuit, used his eloquence as a preacher to direct souls to a more perfect Christian life. The work of each of these great men had its place in the Catholic revival that started in 1830 and continued throughout the reign of Louis Philippe.

The beginning of the July Monarchy was marked by violent attacks on religion, although Louis Philippe hesitated to inaugurate a policy openly hostile to the Church. He recognized the danger of alienating the clergy and disturbing the Catholic conscience. In this area of Church affairs, as in international politics, he would have preferred to follow a policy of non-intervention. The throne of the Citizen King was unstable. Louis Philippe hesitated to interfere unduly with his ministers until his position was secure. Within a space of eight months his ministry had been headed successively by Dupont de l'Eure, Laffitte, and Périer. Louis Philippe allowed the government officials, ministers and magistrates, to permit and even incite popular uprisings against the "priests' party."[33] The clergy

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[33]MacCaffrey, History of the Church, I, 59; Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 275.

could not appear in the streets without being insulted by the mobs. Churches were seized. The palace of the archbishop was sacked. The open attacks roused the Catholics to join forces in self-defense.

The revolution of 1830 dealt a new blow to Gallicanism, which had been so pronounced during the restoration government. French Catholics, unquestionably estranged from the favor of the state, were drawn closer to Rome. The cause of the ultramontanes was strengthened. Rome's attitude toward the July revolution undoubtedly came as a surprise to many, and especially to Louis Philippe himself. After a mere two months, the pope recognized the new monarch, styling him as his predecessors, "His Most Christian Majesty."[34] Pius VIII added further that the French clergy should take the oath of allegiance to the new king. Louis Philippe was delighted. He could hardly have hoped for such good fortune.

The violent demonstrations of the July revolution were of brief duration. The Catholic resistance was growing constantly stronger. It made its enemies halt in their tyrannical career to count the cost of conflict and recoil before such vigorous opposition. Catholic journalists cried out in protest against every act of oppression. The Catholic party was becoming a formidable foe to be treated with caution. Louis Philippe was more than ready to settle down to his religious scepticism and indifference.

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[34]Edward E.Y. Hales, The Catholic Church in the Modern World (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 85. This recognition by Rome was all the more welcome, since it came in advance of that of the great European powers.

By 1835 all signs of the bitter sentiments of the July revolution had disappeared. Irreligious publications were extremely rare. Priests and religious subjects no longer appeared in caricatures. Hostile discourses about the clergy or Christian doctrine also were a thing of the past.[35] The number of priests began to increase at this time, with the result that more souls were receiving the consolation and guidance of religion. The bourgeoisie were gradually pulling away from the critical and sceptical spirit of the previous century, but they needed guidance before any real awakening of religious faith could take place.[36] This task of winning the bourgeoisie back to the faith challenged the efforts of forty thousand priests under the direction of eighty bishops, a remarkable increase in personnel since the Revolution of 1789.[37] Their work was not in vain. "In the very midst of the corruption of Paris we are told that fifty thousand converts, the pure gold of the Church, exist as a centre which is ever drawing more around them."[38]

Religion is contagious. Those who have really

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[35] S. Charlety, La Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1848), Vol. V of Histoire de France contemporaine, ed. Ernest Lavisse (10 vols.; Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1921), 108.

[36] Emile Bourgeois, History of Modern France, 1815-1913 (Cambridge: University Press, 1919), I, 338.

[37] Thomas William Allies, Journal in France in 1845 and 1848 with Letters from Italy in 1847, of Things and Persons Concerning the Church and Education (Brussels: J. B. de Mortier, 1850), p. 355.

[38] Ibid.

caught its spirit are imbued with an ardent desire to share it with others. The Church was singularly blessed during the July Monarchy with youthful, energetic leaders who eagerly championed the Catholic cause. They desired nothing less than complete liberty of worship. Their goal was a "free Church in a free state," possible, so they thought, only in complete separation of Church and state. The higher clergy were suspicious of such fiery enthusiasm. With conditions in France comparatively calm, their policy was to let well enough alone, and above all to do nothing new that might attract and disturb the public mind.[39] It is a matter of small wonder then, that they were horrified and frightened by the defiant and fearless language of men such as Charles de Montalembert, who in addressing the House of Peers boldly exclaimed:

> Gentlemen, among you a generation of men has sprung up whom you do not know. Whether you call them neo-Catholics, sacristans, or ultramontanes, as you choose, the name is of no moment; the thing exists. . . . In the midst of a free people, we do not wish to be islets. We are the successors of the martyrs, and we do not tremble before the successors of Julian the Apostate. We are the sons of the Crusaders, and we do not recoil before the sons of Voltaire.[40]

Little by little Catholics gained their long sought liberties. Gradually they loosened the tight grip which the state had maintained on the Church. By 1848 the battle was sufficiently won that when France rose up against Louis

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[39]Kathleen O'Meara, Frédéric Ozanam: His Life and Works (New York: Christian Press Association, 1878), p. 92.

[40]Cited in Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 274.

Philippe the Church was undisturbed. In fact, respect for religion was a noticeable characteristic of the February revolution. The Paris mob that invaded the Tuileries stopped to bow before the crucifix in the queen's chamber, and then carried the cross in procession to the church of St. Roch. Cries of "Vive le Christ" were heard on all sides. Great gains had been made since the Revolution of 1830.

Although much still remained to be done before the Church and state finally worked out a satisfactory relationship, the battle had been carried on valiantly during the July Monarchy. The fruits of victory were evident in the Revolution of 1848. The glory and respect shown for religion, however, would have been considerably dimmed in 1848 had it not been for the untiring efforts of one whose public career opened in the same year as the July Monarchy. For it was in 1830 that Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire had taken up the banner of Catholicism and carried it dauntlessly until his death. His influence was so great and so widespread that the story of the Catholic revival in France after 1830 is largely the story of l'abbé Lacordaire.[41]

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[41] The title of "l'abbé" is properly given to secular priests; "le père" is reserved for religious priests.

CHAPTER II

EARLY TRAINING AND PREPARATION

The French village of Recey-sur-Ource provided the humble birthplace of Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire. There, in the early morning of May 12, 1802, the future conférencier of Notre Dame was born.[1] His father, Nicolas Lacordaire, was the village doctor of Recey. Madame Lacordaire, nee Anna Maria Dugied, was the daughter of an advocate in the Parlement of Burgundy.

Lacordaire was born in the same year in which the churches throughout France were once again re-opening after the turbulence of revolutionary days. The parish church of Recey, however, was still closed. For that reason, Lacordaire was baptised in the neighboring village of Lucey.[2] There was nothing to indicate at that time what tremendous good he would one day accomplish for the Church.

Many of the gifts of body and soul that Lacordaire used so advantageously in later life were passed on to him

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[1] An extract from the Recey Register of Births officially states: "Du vingt-deuxième du mois de floréal, l'an dix de la République française, acte de naissance de Jean-Baptiste-Henri Lacordaire, né à Recey, le vingt-deuxième jour de floréal, l'an dix, à sept heures du matin, fils de Nicolas Lacordaire, officier de santé, demeurant à Recey, et d'Anne-Marie Dugied, mariés à Recey au mois de ventôse an huit." Reprinted in Théophile Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Jacques Lecoffre, 1870), I, 542.

[2] Ibid., p. 29.

by his parents. From his father, to whom he bore a remarkable resemblance in features, Lacordaire inherited his intellectual gifts and fluency of speech. From his mother he received such characteristics as strength of will, austerity, and love of a simple and regular life. Above all, Lacordaire received from his mother a deep and lasting impression of the faith.[3]

Lacordaire was the second of four sons. When only four years old he lost his father who died of a chest complaint. Madame Lacordaire, putting her trust in God, courageously took up the care of her children's education and Christian training. The moderate fortune lift her was far from sufficient, but somehow she managed. Her efforts were not to go unrewarded. Although all four of her sons were to lose the faith for a time, they were given the grace of regaining it. Success was theirs in other ways also. The oldest became well-known as a traveler and naturalist. The second was the celebrated preacher of Notre Dame. The third reached success as an architect and civil engineer. The youngest rose to high rank in the French army.[4]

After the death of Nicolas Lacordaire the widowed mother sold the family home and moved back to her native village of Dijon. Henri spent the next three years with

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[3]Chocarne, O.P., The Inner Life of the Very Reverend Père Lacordaire, trans. from the French (Dublin: William B. Kelley, 1867), p. 5.

[4]"Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864), 60.

his uncle at Bussières. In 1809 Madame Lacordaire brought him home to begin his schooling.[5]

At the age of ten Lacordaire was introduced to life and education at the imperial lycée of Dijon. His first experiences there were anything but pleasant. Fellow students succeeded in making life quite miserable for him. For several weeks they forcefully deprived him of all nourishment other than soup and bread.[6] It was also during these first weeks that Lacordaire tried to escape his tantalizers by hiding under a bench in the study room during recreation.

> There, alone, without protection, abandoned by all, I shed before God some religious tears, offering my sufferings to Him as a sacrifice, praying and lifting myself toward the Cross of His Son by a tender union that perhaps I have never since experienced in the same degree.[7]

Even in his childhood Lacordaire was not raised up by God until he had been abased. Already at Dijon he knew glory, but not until he had paid the price of humiliation and disappointment. This was frequently the case in Lacordaire's later life.

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[5]Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 30.

[6]Ibid., I, 32.

[7]Henri Lacordaire, Le Testament du P. Lacordaire, ed. Charles de Montalembert (Paris: Charles Douniel, 1870), p. 34. This is Lacordaire's autobiography, dictated from his death-bed, at the urging of his close friend, Montalembert. This Testament goes only up to the year 1854. At this point Lacordaire's death interrupted his dictation. The book is at times referred to as Notice sur le rétablissement en France de l'Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs.

Three months after Lacordaire entered the lycée of Dijon, a young professor from the école normale, M. Delahaye, joined the faculty. From the very first, M. Delahaye was attracted to Lacordaire, and a close friendship resulted. Under the guidance of this young master, Lacordaire's literary tendencies were given full sway. Henri committed to memory verses of Fontaine, Racine, and the famous works of Voltaire. M. Delahaye was completely charmed with his young student; Lacordaire felt he had found a "second father and true master."[8]

The subject of religion never formed the topic of conversation between M. Delahaye and Lacordaire. During the three years they spent together at Dijon, however, M. Delahaye inspired in Lacordaire a love of literature and of honor, as well as a desire to be gentle, chaste, sincere and generous. He tried to instill in this young man the principles that had guided his own life. In the plan of divine providence, though, Lacordaire was permitted to stray along with his fellow-students away from all religious faith. Because of his own floundering he was at a later day better able to sympathize with the unbelieving youth of France and lead them back to the true faith.

There seemed to be nothing remarkable about Lacordaire as a student during his first years at Dijon. He was a good student, but no more. Gradually, though, the seeds

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[8]Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 11.

sown in that young mind by M. Delahaye began to germinate. In rhetoric especially Lacordaire suddenly excelled. "From that moment, not only did he surpass, but he eclipsed all his fellow students."[9] His reputation as an excelling and brilliant scholar was echoed throughout the province of Burgundy. It preceded him when he applied at the law school of Dijon in November of 1819.

Already as a young man Lacordaire found in himself many striking characteristics. By nature he was energetic and yet patient. He was both gentle and vivacious. His lively imagination and promptness of views were balanced by cool, deliberate reflection. His conviviality was tempered by a deep love of solitude.[10] Lacordaire learned to use these qualities advantageously. By submitting his ideas and yearnings to the test of cold reason, he became complete master of himself. It was a long, hard struggle, however, and victory was won only at a price. It was not easy for him to control his ardent imagination with its various and conflicting ideas.

> One minute he longed for glory; the next for a quiet life. He would pursue a career at the hub of events; he would settle as a farmer in a Swiss valley; he would travel -- how the mere words la Grande Grece brought tears to his eyes! -- to the four corners of the world; he would -- he, a sceptic -- become a country priest.[11]

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[9] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 35.

[10] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, pp. 15-16.

[11] Philip Herbert Spencer, Politics of Belief in Nineteenth-Century France (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954), p. 35.

Perseverance was crowned with success. This ability to submit to his reason rather than to his heart was a saving factor in Lacordaire's later life. Without a spirit of submission he could well have followed in the unfortunate footsteps of Lamennais.

Another notable characteristic of Lacordaire was his religious nature. He never lost this, not even in the years when he strayed from the faith. His first impressions of faith and religion were received from his mother. They were lasting impressions. His religious tendencies were already evident at a very early age. Even as a small child one of his favorite recreations was to preach some juvenile attempts at sermons.[12] His congregation was composed of his nurse and his playmates. When Lacordaire reached the age of seven his mother took him to St. Michel, his parish church, to make his first confession. Lacordaire never forgot this first interview between his soul and the representative of God, who in this case was the kind, white-haired l'abbé Deschamps. First Communion followed in 1814, five years later. Lacordaire called it his "last religious joy" before his descent into the shadows of doubt.[13]

Continued contact with the irreligious forces of the state universities produced in Lacordaire the same effects produced in nearly all the young men of that day. Absorbed

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[12]Reuben Parsons, Studies in Church History (New York: Pustet, 1898), V, 273-74.

[13]Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 11.

in the study of ancient heroism and the masterpieces of antiquity, Lacordaire saw the light of his faith grow vague and indistinct. There was no one to support it or to lend it eloquence. Lacordaire

> did not renounce his faith, it rather died within him. He drank, like so many others of his generation, at the poisoned sources of the preceding age, but he was not intoxicated by them. His incredulous mind took pleasure in objections, but hatred was foreign to his soul.[14]

Like his professors and fellow-students, Lacordaire held to the vague beliefs of Deism. He breathed the air of the sceptics. Yet he always retained his love of the gospel and deeply admired its incomparable morality. He could not destroy his basically religious nature.

Lacordaire left collège when he was seventeen, his faith destroyed. With no definite plans for the future, he started his study of law, the obvious career for a Frenchman who had no particular vocation.[15] He entered the Faculty of Law at the University of Dijon in November of 1819, but he was never thoroughly interested in his legal studies. The science of law at that time had lost its grandeur. It had lost its perspective of the past and neglected to give insight into the true basis of all law. "Should one be astonished that an intellect as elevated as that of Lacordaire had a mediocre estimate of a science thus mutilated?"[16]

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[14] Ibid., p. 16.

[15] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 35.

[16] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 37.

In spite of a lack of real interest, Lacordaire still excelled in his work. His fellow-students thought him incapable of mediocre work.

Of far greater interest to Lacordaire than his legal studies was his attachment to a society of young Catholic men, known as the Dijon Society of Studies. The companionship, the higher intellectual interests of the group, the lively discussions that took place, greatly intrigued him. Lacordaire always treasured the memories of those days. Even while in Paris he would often allow his thoughts to return and dwell upon the subjects of their discussions. But if Lacordaire was impressed, so much greater was the impression left by him on the rest of the members. Foisset, a member of the Society of Studies and intimate friend of Lacordaire, has described the effect produced by the first reading Lacordaire made before the group. Such was the splendor of the performance that "from that day forth, we felt that his thoughts dwelt in a sphere superior to ours."[17] Years later his audience still recalled the deep impression that he had made. They had seen in budding form the dynamic powers of oratory that Lacordaire later developed. Slowly but steadily the great leader of the revival was being molded.

After three years at law school Lacordaire, then a young man of twenty, proceeded to Paris in the autumn of 1822, ready to begin his legal career in the office of an

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[17] Ibid., I, 41.

advocate of the Cour de Cassation.[18] Lacordaire took his new work seriously, giving himself without reserve to his new life. He gave up his literary reading and restricted himself entirely to his juridical studies. He knew that his sojourn at Paris meant a heavy financial burden for his mother, and he fully intended to repay that sacrifice by becoming a successful lawyer.

Lacordaire appeared before the tribunal many times, and just as often met with success. He was heard and admired by the famous orator and lawyer, Antoine Berryer, who was the "pride and honor of the French bar."[19] Berryer saw in Lacordaire enough talent to put him in the front ranks of the legal profession. At the same time, however, he cautioned Lacordaire not to abuse his fluency of speech.[20]

In spite of such a successful beginning with every reason to expect a brilliant future, Lacordaire was disinterested and consequently dissatisfied in his work. His mind was absorbed in higher intellectual pursuits. Without faith he had found life empty and completely meaningless. He was groping to find the light of truth. His own inner struggles and search for happiness demanded greater attention at that time than his legal career. His search was not fruitless. Darkness of soul ended when Lacordaire discovered the splendor of Christ, the Light of the World.

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[18] "Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI, 61.

[19] The Times (London), November 25, 1861, p. 8.

[20] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 35.

With this discovery he realized that his true vocation was not to seek fame at the bar. His dreams of glory and worldly ambition faded into oblivion as he set his hopes on a higher plane.[21] True to his nature, he could do nothing only half-way. His decision to quit the bar went hand in hand with his determination to become a priest. He announced the two decisions simultaneously. Lacordaire referred to his conversion as "the sudden and unlooked-for change which snatched me, without transition, from the laxities of civil life, and placed me within the shades of sacerdotal initiation."[22]

Lacordaire's conversion was as sudden and complete as the struggle had been long and difficult. In his own mind liberalism and Catholicism were wholly incompatible. Yet liberalism was too deeply imbedded in Lacordaire to simply put it aside. In his Testament Lacordaire reveals the strong liberal tendencies of his youth.

> Having become an unbeliever at collège, I had become likewise a liberal in the school of law, though my mother was devoted to the Bourbons, and had given me in baptism the name of Henry, in memory of Henry IV, the dearest idol of her political faith. But all the rest of my family were liberals. I was so myself by natural instinct, and scarcely had I caught the echoes of public affairs than I belonged to the age by my love of liberty, as entirely as I did by my ignorance of God and of the gospel.[23]

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[21] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 13.

[22] "Seventy-third Conference of Notre Dame," in Thoughts and Teachings of Lacordaire (New and enl. ed.; London: Art and Book Company, 1902), p. 275.

[23] Henri Lacordaire, Le Testament du P. Lacordaire, ed. Charles de Montalembert (Paris: Charles Douniol, 1870), p. 40.

When Lacordaire once realized that the ideals of Catholicism and liberalism could be reconciled, and were actually complementary, his conversion was an accomplished fact. In later life Lacordaire described the true Catholic liberal as "neither Bourbon, nor Orleanist, nor Napoleonist; he is above all a friend of liberty, civil, political, and religious; he wishes it for itself."[24] Lacordaire loved liberty as a moral beauty such as truth and justice. He loved it because it gave dignity to human life. He considered liberty to be a necessity for man as a moral creature, but he also understood the necessity of obedience. Equality was indispensable, but there was also a need for hierarchy.[25] His love for liberty was never diminished. Rather, it grew constantly stronger. Even as a seminarian he never tried to hide or excuse his liberal opinions.

Paris, then, which had served to alienate so many others from Catholicism, was indirectly the cause of Lacordaire's return to the Catholic faith. Isolated in the midst of strangers, his affectionate heart yearned for an intimate friend and companion. Finding none, he was forced to withdraw within himself. Once more, as he had done as a forlorn child at Dijon, he turned to God, and the truth was suddenly unveiled before him. He found his long-sought friend in the

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[24]Letter to A.M. Sabatier, Avocat à Paris, July 4, 1861, in Henri Lacordaire, Pages Choisies (Paris: Artheme Fayard, 1921), p. 98.

[25]"Cinquante et unième conférence de Notre Dame," in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), III, 603.

person of his Savior.[26] Neither man nor book had been instrumental in his conversion. Lacordaire attributed it completely to a sudden and secret stroke of grace. In a single day he became a believer, and once a believer he wished to become a priest.[27] In this role he would one day lead back, by the same road which he himself had followed, countless souls wandering and wounded like his own.

Although Lacordaire had decided to enter the Seminary of St. Sulpice, he wished to first gain his mother's consent. Madame Lacordaire was torn between the joy of the "conversion of her Augustine" and the sadness of losing him. She had great ambitions for her son and little relished the idea of having him abandon such a promising career for a life of poverty and obscurity. For five weeks she struggled with herself and resisted his requests. Fearful, however, of resisting the call of providence, she finally conceded to his wishes.[28] On May 12, 1824, Lacordaire entered the Sulpician seminary at Issy. There he found peace, and his soul awakened to a new life.

Issy offered opportunities for solitude as well as companionship. Lacordaire delighted in both. He was charmed by the union of strict rule with liberty. The professed objective of St. Sulpice was to form the priest, the pastor

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[26]"Father Lacordaire," Catholic World, VI (February, 1868), 691.

[27]Charles de Montalembert, Memoir of the Abbé Lacordaire, authorized trans. (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), p.19.

[28]Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 65.

of souls, rather than the learned doctor and eloquent preacher.[29] Lacordaire accepted whole-heartedly the discipline of Issy, but troubles soon began to appear. His gaity and love of excitement during recreation were little appreciated by the masters of St. Sulpice. His brilliant argumentation and questions during classes amazed the students and left the professors embarrassed.

In January of 1826 l'abbé Garnier, the Superior General, transferred Lacordaire to the great seminary at Paris. There l'abbé Garnier intended to judge the soundness of Lacordaire's vocation for himself.[30] Subdued by his unhappy experience at Issy, Lacordaire attempted, although without complete success, to restrain his natural impetuosity. His vocation was tested and tried to the utmost, but it still remained suspect. A decision was reached only after Lacordaire requested of Archbishop de Quélen permission to enter the Jesuit novitiate at Montrouge. The archbishop, aware of Lacordaire's great talent and the possible great honor he might bring to the episcopate, refused Lacordaire's request.[31] L'abbé Garnier finally put an end to all further hesitation, and on Christmas Eve, 1826, Lacordaire received the sub-diaconate. On September 22, 1827, he was ordained by Mgr. de Quélen in his private chapel.

Although l'abbé Boyer, a Sulpician, offered Lacor-

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[29] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 55.

[30] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 76.

[31] Ibid., I, 82.

daire a high position in Rome as Auditor of the Rota,[32] Lacordaire refused, wishing to avoid the lime-light. He waited for an appointment from the archbishop who, having ordained him now seemed at a loss as to where to place him. It seems rather strange that at a time when France was still suffering severely from a shortage of priests, Lacordaire was made to wait over four months for an appointment. Even after the long delay, the archbishop found nothing better for this twenty-five year old priest than to bury him in a convent of the Visitation, lost in the extremities of Paris.[33] There his duties as chaplain consisted mainly in teaching catechism to about thirty young girls and hearing their confessions. His priestly life could hardly have had a more humble beginning. Lacordaire accepted the assignment willingly and humbly, already practicing the submission that would make such demands on him in the future years. He used his leisure time to study and supplement his three years' course in theology.

In 1828 he was appointed an assistant chaplain to the Collège Henri IV. Although his duties there were better suited to his temperament, he still continued his life of study and retreat which was preparing him for the years ahead. Already at that time he knew his real mission was

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[32] In that position Lacordaire would have represented France at the Court of Rome. It would have eventually led to high ecclesiastical office.

[33] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 84.

Christian apologetics.[34] All his powers seemed to converge on that central point.

Lacordaire's love of liberty gave him a deep admiration for the freedom practiced in the United States. The thought of going there as a missionary became more and more attractive. Finally, Lacordaire asked and received permission from Mgr. de Quélen to go to New York where he was offered the vicar-generalship by Mgr. Dubois. Lacordaire was already bidding his last farewells when divine providence intercepted. A letter was forwarded to him, offering him an associate editorship on L'Avenir, a daily newspaper just founded by Lamennais. The new journal had as its motto, "God and Liberty." With an opportunity to fight for liberty in his own beloved France, every yearning for a foreign mission was banished from Lacordaire's mind.[35]

The period of preparation had been completed. First-hand experience with a godless age, law school, seminary discipline and training, study and retreat, all combined to prepare him for the task ahead. His real work was about to begin. When Henri Lacordaire associated himself with L'Avenir he stepped into public life, ready to lead the struggle for a free Church in a free state. All his energies henceforth were concentrated on restoring to France an awareness and love of the beauties of the religion that had rejuvenated his own life.

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[34] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 72.

[35] Parsons, Studies in Church History, V, 276.

CHAPTER III

JOURNALISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS

The Avenir movement of 1830, although destined for condemnation by Rome and disgraced by Lamennais's later apostacy, actually marked the beginning of the most intense period of the Catholic revival in France. L'Avenir, a daily journal founded just a few months after the July Monarchy, proved a powerful tool for the growing party of Catholic liberals. Under Louis Philippe the press was recognized as the most effective means of action for any man or party.[1] Lacordaire and his fellow Catholic journalists used it to the fullest.

The original idea of starting a Catholic daily newspaper came from Harel du Tancrel, a Parisian journalist. He conveyed his plans to a devoted liberal, l'abbé Gerbet, who in turn secured the cooperation of Félicité de Lamennais. Lamennais needed no coaxing. Already an illustrious writer and recognized liberal leader, he eagerly assumed direction of the proposed journal. With what better kind of organ could he desire to spread the policies of the Catholic liberals?

Gerbet next sought the aid of Lacordaire, also a

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[1] Georges Jacques Weill, Histoire de Catholicisme Libéral en France, 1828-1908 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1909), p. 66.

devoted liberal. Gerbet made the request by means of a letter. It was that letter which reached Lacordaire at Dijon as he was bidding farewell to his family and friends before his intended departure for America. Lacordaire's response was immediate. The chance to serve both Catholicism and liberalism at one and the same time was more than he had hoped for. The very motto of the journal, "Dieu et la liberté," was indicative of the theme that was to be carried out in every issue. The password was "emancipation of the people, and Christian emancipation of all nations."[2] The job to be done necessitated making a public spectacle of the arbitrary acts of certain functionaries against religion, then instructing the Catholics to look to liberal institutions and ideas as weapons to fight their oppressors.[3]

The title, L'Avenir (The Future), was the choice of Lamennais. It was chosen with care and constituted for him a profession of faith in the future. He believed the future would belong to democracy. He invited the Church to ally herself with democracy and join in a common dedication to liberty.[4] The stage was set. The campaign started with a burst of enthusiasm.

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[2]Charles Poulet, A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Sidney A. Raemers (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1935), II, 397-98.

[3]Charles de Montalembert, Memoir of the Abbé Lacordaire, authorized trans. (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), pp. 21-22.

[4]L'Avenir, October 16, 1830.

By August 20, 1830, Gerbet had written the prospectus of L'Avenir and had it ready for distribution.[5] In it he spoke of the old liberalism with its hatred of Christianity and its intolerance and oppression. The old, he said, would be supplanted by a new liberalism which would stand for complete separation of Church and state, a necessary measure if the Church was to enjoy liberty.[6] L'Avenir was to strive for unity between the young liberals and the "enlightened" Catholics.

If any question still remained as to what L'Avenir would try to accomplish, the answer should have been obvious with the appearance of the first issue on October 16, 1830. The program of L'Avenir was once more outlined, this time by Lamennais, in an article entitled "Considérations sur l'époque actuelle."

Although Lamennais was nominally the director of L'Avenir, in reality he was not the dominant leader of its policies. He made very little effort to control the writings of the associate editors and he himself wrote surprisingly few articles.[7] Lacordaire was soon recognized as the chief contributor. His work eclipsed that of the elder and more

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[5]Alec R. Vidler, Prophecy and Papacy: A Study of Lamennais, the Church and the Revolution (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 161.

[6]L'Avenir, Prospectus of September 7, 1830. A shorter prospectus had already appeared in August.

[7]Peter N. Stearns, "Nature of the Avenir Movement (1830-1831)," American Historical Review, LXV (July, 1960), 838.

distinguished Lamennais.[8] In fact, already in the first sixteen issues of the journal, the principal article was furnished seven times by Lacordaire and only five times by Lamennais.[9]

From the very first, L'Avenir created an unprecedented sensation. The readers were deeply impressed by this completely new and fearless use of the press. Some held the courageous journalists in admiration. Others, however, were thoroughly alarmed at the critical and even revolutionary tone of the journal. Lacordaire spoke very openly when he denounced the civil officials as being unqualified to nominate the bishops of France.

> They are laymen; they may be Protestants, Jews, atheists. Will their consciences be our guarantee? They are chosen from the ranks of a society imbued with an obstinate prejudice against us. Will their prejudice be our guarantee? They have been ruling for four months. Will their past be our guarantee? They have opened their mouths only to threaten us; they have stretched out their hands only to strike down our crosses; they have signed ecclesiastical ordinances only to sanction arbitrary acts of which we were the victims; they have left untouched agents who violated our sanctuaries; . . . they have not once protected us in any part of France; they have offered us as a premature holocaust to every passion; these are the grounds of security that they offer us! These are the men from whom you would consent to receive your colleagues![10]

About a month after the first issue appeared the young Charles de Montalembert wrote from Ireland, requesting

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[8]Orestes A. Brownson, "Lacordaire and Catholic Progress," in The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, ed. Henry F. Brownson, XX (Detroit: T. Nourse, 1887), 259.

[9]Théophile Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Jacques Lecoffre, 1870), I, 163.

[10]L'Avenir, November 25, 1830.

to join the editors of L'Avenir. Next to Lacordaire, with whom he formed a most intimate friendship, Montalembert was the leading figure. Charles de Coux ranked next in importance among the editors of L'Avenir. Lamennais withdrew more and more from the responsibility of writing. When he did write, he prepared the leading article.[11]

The major work of the journal fell to Lacordaire, Montalembert, and De Coux. Lacordaire himself never retreated from attacking the oppressors. Many of the most condemnatory articles were written by him. He continuously urged the clergy to throw off the tyrannical oppression of the state, reminding them of the numerous grievances. "Crosses, churches, persons, have been insulted in many places; teaching has been hindered by new measures; a thousand subordinate despots have set up a tyranny over us in the name of liberty."[12] The slightest hint of government coercion or interference in Church affairs sufficed to instigate a new stream of angry and animated rhetoric from his pen.

Lacordaire used the ordinary facts of current politics as the theme of his articles. They provided ample material to carry on the controversy daily. Any incident seemed to serve Lacordaire's purpose. He used it as he liked, drawing from it arguments to further his own the-

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[11] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 165.

[12] L'Avenir, Supplement to February 9, 1831, issue.

sis.[13] Each new issue brought some fresh attack, some new exposure of tyranny and oppression. The unsatisfactory relations between the clergy and the new government provided Lacordaire with innumerable examples to prove his point. Thus the parish priest of Aubusson was commended when he refused to bury a man who had died without asking for the last sacraments. The sub-prefect of that city had paid no heed to the priest's refusal, however, and used armed force to get the man's remains into the church for burial services. Condemnation was severe. The private homes of ordinary French citizens were protected, said Lacordaire, while the house of God was allowed to be violated.[14] Lacordaire continuously urged the clergy to resist state control and oppression.

> Have men ever treated anyone with more contempt? They mock your prayers and yet order you to say them. If you do not obey, you are seditious men to whom the treasury will be closed; if you do obey, you become so vile to them that there are no words in their vocabularies to express what they think of you.[15]

In style and form L'Avenir was similar to other journals of that time. It was a four-page newspaper, principally dedicated to items of political, religious, or literary interest. It briefly gave the news of foreign countries and discussed some points of local and general concern. One or several articles each day were devoted to

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[13] Count D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, trans. A.W. Evans (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1913), p. 34.

[14] L'Avenir, November 5, 1830.

[15] Ibid., October 30, 1830.

lively complaints against abuses of authority. A persistent plea was made for freedom of worship and separation from the "slavery" of state control. Lacordaire pointed out that

> in no sense is it true that evil is stronger than good, and that truth is struggling upon earth with arms whose weakness must be made up for by the help of some absolute power. If this were true, truth would be a sorry plight; for absolute power has always worked only for its own interests. Was it by the help of absolute power that Christianity was founded? Were the heresies of the Eastern empire overthrown by the aid of absolute power? Did absolute power convert the Arian peoples of the West? Is it by the help of absolute power that the philosophy of the eighteenth century is crumbling today? Persecuted truth has always triumphed over protected and powerful error. That is the lesson of history.[16]

Lacordaire was convinced that much of the problem of state control would be eliminated if the budget or state salary of the clergy were discontinued. He tried to show that poverty was preferable to a dependency on the state. "We are as poor as you," Lacordaire told the priests. "Our only salary is our independence."[17]

Many of the articles in L'Avenir were printed anonymously, although the most vehement condemnations usually had a signature affixed. The signature in many cases was none other than that of H. Lacordaire.

Another interesting feature of L'Avenir was its policy of reprinting and publicly examining the attitudes and opinions of other publications toward current happen-

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[16] Ibid., June 12, 1831.

[17] Ibid., October 30, 1830.

ings. Correspondance to the editors was also published and often answered. Parliamentary and legal reports found space in the paper, too. When these reports were too lengthy, supplements were added to the paper. Reports of lawsuits or cases involving L'Avenir were printed in their entirety, including complete text of the defense.[18] Lacordaire, well-trained as a Parisian lawyer, did not hesitate to take the opportunity of pleading his own cases. The publicity in court was just one more way to spread his liberal and Catholic ideals. His ability as a lawyer often made his defense even abler than the offensive articles, for although he possessed great literary talent, his oratorical ability was still greater.[19]

The primary purpose of L'Avenir was never forgotten or minimized. While at times disagreeing on means and methods, all the editors were adamant in insisting on religious liberty. That, in their estimation, implied complete separation of Church and state. The principles of liberty were applied to other areas as well. Some of the most irritating restrictions placed on Catholics were those regarding the rights of education. Since 1806 the state had controlled the entire educational system. Some private schools

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[18]Two such cases were those resulting from the article in L'Avenir on the nomination of the French bishops (Supplement to issue of February 9, 1831), and the setting up of a free school without government approval (Supplement to issue of September 23, 1831).

[19]"Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864), 64.

were authorized by the Imperial University, but they had to submit to inspection and pay dues to the University. Students at private schools had to attend some classes at the state institutions. All degrees were conferred by the University. The restrictions placed on ecclesiastical schools were at times increased or diminished with the change in governments. Thus a greater leniency was permitted during the restoration years. By 1828, however, more stringent measures were again introduced. One of these strictly limited the number of pupils admitted to ecclesiastical institutions.[20] Lacordaire knew only too well how tragic and numerous were the losses of faith for students at the state schools.[21] His efforts through L'Avenir to obtain freedom of education were untiring. They continued long after the short duration of the journal.

Complete religious liberty required a free and uncensored press. Faith was to be placed in truth and its eternal power. Freedom of association was essential. L'Avenir boldly publicized the injustice and unreasonableness of the legislation restricting religious communities. Lacordaire, as well as the other contributing editors, openly advocated the repeal of such laws. The mistreatment of the Trappists of Bellevaux provided one example to illustrate

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[20] Ross William Collins, Catholicism and the Second French Republic, 1848-1852 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923), pp. 38-41.

[21] In June, 1830, while chaplain at the Collège Henri IV, Lacordaire was chosen to prepare a report for the archbishop of Paris on the religious and moral conditions of the royal collèges of Paris. His study showed that an average of only eight out of every four hundred who passed through

the injustice of such laws. L'Avenir pointed out that during the Revolution of 1789 the Trappists of France had found asylum in Protestant England, where they lived in peace and enjoyed English protection and hospitality. The English king, "that Protestant persecutor of Catholicism," left them in peace and solitude.

> It was reserved to the ministers of France, to the ministers of a nation that pretends to be free, and of which the majority of the citizens profess the Catholic religion, to act in a manner that would make the Protestant governments blush. Their agents have violated the cloister of the monastery at Bellevaux; they have threatened to set fire to the place, and constrained the peace-loving religious who wished to flee in order to seek at the home of foreigners the asylum and peace that they could not find in their own country, enslaved in the name of liberty by ridiculous despots.[22]

The Trappists had also been required to pay excessively high dues to the state after the government had paralyzed their means of income.

The enthusiasm of L'Avenir editors for liberty was not confined by national boundaries. Freedom was not a privilege reserved to Frenchmen. All nations in bondage were to be set free. The ideal would be one vast Christian republic under the fatherly guidance of Christ's Vicar.[23]

Such were the liberal ideals which L'Avenir upheld

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the royal colleges came through with their faith preserved. This report, or Memoire, is reprinted in full in Poisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 86-92. It also appeared in L'Avenir, November 29, 1830.

[22] L'Avenir, November 7, 1831.

[23] Charles Stanley Phillips, The Church in France, 1789-1848: A Study in Revival (Milwaukee: The Morehouse Co., 1929), p. 239.

and defended with unceasing efforts. The scope of the program was tremendous. It was, however, quite accurately summarized by the two words contained in the motto, "God and liberty." Unfortunately, both God and liberty were still quite foreign to the France of 1830. L'Avenir called for nothing less than a complete rupture with the past.[24]

Considering the above, it is no small wonder that L'Avenir met with opposition from the very beginning. The clergy grew suspicious of doctrines as well as of suggested methods. Government officials squirmed uneasily under the fiery attacks. During the first five weeks two different issues of L'Avenir were seized by the police. Prosecutions were not unusual. The outcome, whether it meant acquittal, defeat, or fines, was always favorable at least in regard to publicity. Fearless and daring, the editors of L'Avenir lived precariously from one day to another. Time did not ease the tension. Opposition waxed rather than waned.

The circulation of L'Avenir was never very extensive. In the early nineteenth century there were far fewer newspapers and far fewer readers than today. The number of subscribers to L'Avenir, even when the journal was at the height of its popularity, never amounted to 3000.[25] The

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[24]Jean LeFlon, La Crise Révolutionnaire, 1789-1846, Vol. XX of Histoire de L'Eglise, depris les origines jusqu'à nos jours, ed Augustin Fliche et Victor Martin (Paris: Bloud and Gay, 1949), 433.

[25]Montalembert, Memoir of Lacordaire, p. 52; Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 44, states that subscriptions never exceeded 2000; D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, p. 49, says that the number never had risen above 1200.

number of subscriptions tended to decrease as opposition grew stronger.

In 1830 and 1831 France was not ready for the heated campaign of L'Avenir. As praiseworthy as the zeal of its editors might have been, the ideas were thrust too suddenly at the public. Violent language and even doctrinal exaggerations aroused the suspicion of both civil and religious authority.[26] Lamennais possessed genius but lacked solid theological training.[27] That fact was already noticeable in previous publications of Lamennais.[28] The bishops were wary of his eloquence. They shunned the stirring appeals and ready arguments of L'Avenir's editors, who, though zealous sons of the Church, failed to temper their enthusiasm with prudence. L'Avenir was a new venture. There were no precedents to follow. Mistakes were part of the experimental stage.

Lacordaire himself admitted in later life the excesses of that first step into public life. He could then see that L'Avenir was critical of everything. It separated itself from the past but failed to unite with anything of the present. It struck down everything: the old monarchy and the new, the University and the seminaries, the episco-

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[26]Fernand Mourret, S.S., A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1955), VII, 284.

[27]LeFlon, La Crise Révolutionnaire, p. 433.

[28]This was particularly true with the second volume of Essai sur l'indifférence.

pate and the clergy.[29] "In eloquence, nothing was lacking; in sagesse, nearly everything was lacking."[30] In more mature reflection, Lacordaire looked back to the editorial staff of that small journal as a "group of lost children, without ancestors and without posterity. It [L'Avenir] was the storm coming from the desert, not the fruitful rain which refreshes the air and blesses the woods."[31]

Nevertheless, in 1830 nothing could put a damper on Lacordaire's ardour. Resistance simply served to rouse his combative spirit. Every morning the charge was sounded. "The clergy were addressed as an army drawn up in battle array. . . . The chiefs of the party were harangued, the plan of campaign indicated beforehand, the enemy pointed out and pursued to death."[32]

"Aux Évêques de France," one of the most unnerving articles of Lacordaire for both the state and the bishops, appeared on November 25, 1830. In it he begged the bishops to free themselves from state salary and reject state nomination of bishops. After an angry tirade against the civil officials, he again pleaded with the bishops to reconsider before accepting state nominations. Were the bishops really

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[29] L. Baunard, Un Siècle de l'église de France, 1800-1900 (Paris: Librairie Ch. Poussielgue, 1901), p. 58.

[30] Ibid., p. 59.

[31] Cited in Baunard, L'Église de France, p. 58.

[32] Chocarne, O.P., The Inner Life of the Very Reverend Père Lacordaire, trans. from the French (Dublin: William B. Kelley, 1867), pp. 82-83.

to be nominated by men who threaten the Catholics and strike down the cross, who sanction arbitrary acts of which Catholics are the victims? Lacordaire gave the bishops a choice to leave to posterity "an episcopate rich and corrupt or an episcopate poor and worthy of your successors."[33]

The article was so provocative that the police detained the issue of November 25, 1830, at the post office and threatened prosecution. Lacordaire was not the type of man to be intimidated by such actions. On November 27 he published another article, answering the objections to the first. He once again asked the bishops to reject state nominations of the new bishops. He begged them "to forget the displeasure we [editors of L'Avenir] may have caused, and take pity on the Church in France, which is menaced in her hierarchy."[34] Lacordaire then gave a concise résumé of grievances against the state oppressors. Before concluding the article he asked the subscribers for information on any arbitrary acts to which they had been eye witnesses. He wished to use it in preparing his defense in court. The article was boldly signed: "H. Lacordaire: priest, author of the incriminated article." His signature was followed by those of all the co-editors.[35]

Two days later, Lacordaire wrote a lengthy answer to the Courrier Français, a Paris journal that was very

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[33] L'Avenir, November 25, 1830.

[34] Ibid., November 27, 1830.

[35] Ibid.

critical of L'Avenir.[36] Lacordaire said the editors simply did not understand the purpose of L'Avenir, so he laboriously restated all the things for which L'Avenir stood. "This is what we demand: absolute separation of Church and state, as it exists in the United States, . . . in Ireland, . . . in Belgium; above all, as it exists in the Charter."[37] Point by point Lacordaire listed other demands, such as the abolition of the budget, the right of keeping their churches inviolate, the right to nominate bishops, to enjoy liberty of instruction and the right of association. "We still demand these things, just as we have daily demanded them in the past."[38] In the same issue he published the report he had prepared earlier on the religious and moral state of the royal colleges of Paris. From beginning to end, the report was a daring exposure of the godless and irreligious atmosphere in the schools.

After the first few months of publication L'Avenir announced the formation of the "General Agency for the Defense of Religious Liberty," a new weapon to be used in the cause of the revival. Lamennais was named honorary president but had very little to do with the General Agency, either in setting it up or in controlling it. Once again leadership fell to the willing and capable hands of Lacor-

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[36] Ibid., November 29, 1830.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

daire and Montalembert.[39] The objectives of the General Agency were published in L'Avenir on December 18, 1830. The Agency was to be financed by membership dues. Any member then had the right to ask the Agency for help or protection against any interference with his religious rights. The Agency was very anxious to protect religious orders from persecution by the government. It was equally concerned with the right to establish Catholic schools free of government control.

Requests for advice and help from the Agency were subjected to consideration by a council of seven who then decided what could be done.[40] Many cases were taken to the courts. In general, requests from the dioceses of the North and East became the responsibility of Lacordaire. Montalembert took charge of those of the South, and De Coux helped out with those of the West and center.[41] Correspondence with foreign countries was portioned out among the same three, to whom national boundaries made little difference as long as liberty was at stake.

While the editors of L'Avenir carried on the relentless battle, opposition forces were gaining strength. Hostility was felt from the royalists, who could not forgive the editors for wanting to separate the cause of the Church from that of the throne. Even the liberal party doubted

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[39] Stearns, American Historical Review, LXV, 845.

[40] L'Avenir, December 18, 1830.

[41] Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 166.

the sincerity of the liberalism of L'Avenir group.[42] The ministers of Louis Philippe, first Dupont de l'Eure, then Laffitte and his successor, Périer, each in turn had struggled desperately to build up a durable government. They were increasingly more annoyed with the radical ideas set forth in L'Avenir. The July revolution had been a triumph for the bourgeoisie, the least Catholic section of the French nation, and the section most deeply penetrated with Voltairian ideas. Obviously the thought of a regeneration of the Church as outlined by L'Avenir would be very undesirable. The task of the government, then, would be to restrain the journal within the narrowest possible limits.[43]

Yet, if the journal caused annoyance to the government, the disturbance was mild, indeed, compared to the furor created within the Church itself. The principal readers and supporters of L'Avenir were found among the ranks of the clergy, but even they were not too numerous.[44] Their enthusiasm, though, was great, too great, in fact, to satisfy the strong Gallican and legitimist element among the clergy and bishops, most of whom still fondly imagined that the new regime could not last. The French bishops were sufficiently alarmed to resort to drastic measures of repressing the ideas of L'Avenir. Some of the bishops

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[42] D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, p. 49.

[43] Phillips, The Church in France, 1789-1848, p. 241.

[44] Philip Herbert Spencer, Politics of Belief in Nineteenth-Century France (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954), p. 45.

denounced L'Avenir in their pastoral letters. Some would not allow their parish priests to read it. Priests who did were dismissed. Seminarians who sympathized with L'Avenir doctrines were refused Holy Orders. Letters to Rome pleaded with the pope to censure the "heretics and schismatics" who were causing such trouble and scandal in France.[45]

Such strong and wide-spread resistance to L'Avenir made things very difficult for the young editors. Though never objecting to combat, they could not endure the suspicion raised against their orthodoxy. The boycot and public denunciation by members of the French hierarchy resulted in a serious drop in subscriptions as the year 1831 progressed.[46] That did not help their financial situation which was already in trouble due to the continued and frequent expense of court cases. Financially embarrassed, their loyalty to Rome under suspicion, opposed by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, condemned by both state and Church officials, Lacordaire and his fellow-journalists had no choice but to face the inevitable. On November 15, 1831, the final issue of L'Avenir appeared, announcing the suspension of the journal. Three hundred ninety-four issues had preceded it during the past thirteen months, each issue defending the cause of "la religion et la liberté." The

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[45] Vidler, Prophecy and Papacy, pp. 187-88.

[46] J.B. Morrall, "Lamennais: A Liberal Catholic," History Today, VIII (December, 1958), 825.

final issue gave a résumé of the work and the principles followed by L'Avenir. It listed the criticisms and accusations brought against the journal, but the editors were by no means ready to admit defeat.[47] They had every intention of resuming publication as soon as they had obtained the approbation of Rome.

The idea of appealing directly to Rome came from Lacordaire who was still fully convinced of the worth of L'Avenir campaign. His loyalty and submission to the Vicar of Christ was complete, and when the critics bluntly stated that the zealous journalists had already been condemned at Rome, Lacordaire responded, "It is to Rome that we shall go to hear our sentence, prostrate before the Chair of Peter."[48] The three "Pilgrims of God," Lacordaire, Lamennais, and Montalembert started on their journey.

The decision to go to Rome was as lacking in prudence as many of the ideas proposed and upheld by L'Avenir. How was Gregory XVI to put his stamp of approval on a journal that had made such bitter attacks on both the ecclesiastical and civil authorities in France? How was he to publicly uphold what a large body of the French episcopate had censured? On the other hand, Gregory had no desire to condemn the men who had done so much to weaken the influences of Gallicanism and strengthen the claims of Rome. The pope received the three men kindly, but refused to

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[47] L'Avenir, November 15, 1831.

[48] Ibid.

speak of L'Avenir, and refrained from giving a definite decision.[49] Cardinal Pacca tried to convince the liberal editors to return to France, but Lamennais was determined to remain until Gregory XVI gave him the answer he wanted.

Lacordaire was quick to see his error in the decision to seek Rome's support. He regretted the hasty move and tried without success to convince Lamennais and Montalembert to follow Cardinal Pacca's advice. It was at Rome that the real contrast between Lamennais and Lacordaire became obvious. The brilliant, capable Lamennais had never acquired the art of bowing his head in submission. Unfortunately, some considerable theologians of the Holy City continuously encouraged Lamennais during his stay at Rome. They told him that his doctrines were irreproachable and would never be condemned. They expressed regret that he had interrupted even for that short time the publication of L'Avenir.[50] Lamennais daily grew more determined and more impatient.

Lacordaire found himself in a very difficult position. Although he had accepted Lamennais as his master, Lacordaire could not agree with him on his lack of submission to the Vicar of Christ. Nor was it easy to disagree with a man as gifted as Lamennais, and twenty years his senior. Moreover, Montalembert was determined to stay close

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[49]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 63; Montalembert, Memoir of Lacordaire, p. 58.

[50]Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 214.

to the master. Lacordaire was consequently alone, with absolutely no one to whom he could turn for advice. His character was sufficiently strong to enable him to follow the dictates of his conscience, the only guide that remained for him. In March, 1832, he decided to return to France alone.[51] His submission had required a heavy price.

Lamennais and Montalembert waited in Rome four months longer without getting any satisfaction. Lamennais, exasperated and highly indignant, publicly announced his intention of returning to France to continue the publication of L'Avenir.[52] His announcement forced action from Rome before he reached France.

Lacordaire soon learned of the intentions of his former companions to resume publication of L'Avenir. His conscience would not allow him to work with them, and yet he wished to avoid a public break with Lamennais. Lacordaire consequently set out for Germany, not because he had abandoned his former master, but simply because he did not want to combat him.[53] Voluntary exile was preferable even if it meant trying to provide for himself in a country where he did not even know the language. He put his trust in divine providence and set out for Munich, a Catholic city with a low cost of living.

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[51] Lacordaire, Testament, p. 65.

[52] Montalembert, Memoir of Lacordaire, pp. 63-64.

[53] Letter to Madame Swetchine, September 15, 1835, in Henri Lacordaire, Pages Choisies (Paris: Artheme Fayard, 1921), p. 35.

By a strange coincidence, Lamennais and Montalembert had chosen Munich as a stopping place enroute to France. It was a custom at that time for the German newspapers to publish the names and addresses of all newcomers. Montalembert accidently discovered Lacordaire's presence in Munich and, calling on him, convinced him to see Lamennais. Lacordaire agreed, but Lamennais received him with evident resentment. "They argued together for two hours, Lacordaire endeavoring to convince his friend of the folly of the step he was contemplating."[54] It was of no avail.

While at Munich the three distinguished liberals were honored at a banquet. Toward the end of the meal Lamennais was called aside and given a copy of the encyclical, Mirari Vos. A quick scanning revealed the nature of the encyclical. Lamennais returned to his two companions, told them what had happened, and spoke of the need of immediate submission. Their act of submission was written that same night, as soon as the three returned to Lamennais' hotel room.[55] Providence had called them together to receive the condemnation and to sign the sincere adhesion to the judgment of Rome. Lacordaire, Lamennais, and Montalembert quietly retreated to La Chesnaye.

Although Mirari Vos did not, in consideration of the good accomplished, explicitly mention L'Avenir or its editors, there was no doubt about the implications. The

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[54]"Lacordaire," The Month, V (September, 1866), 232.

[55]Lacordaire, Testament, pp. 66-67.

general theme was apparently a lamentation over the evils of the age. The encyclical continued the warning of Leo XII and Pius VIII against the dangers of liberal ideas.[56] Too many people at that time interpreted freedom of conscience as meaning doctrinal indifference. The liberal propositions of L'Avenir were not condemned as heretical, but as dangerous. With proper precaution Lacordaire, Montalembert and their friends found it quite possible to continue in their liberal beliefs and campaign.[57]

Gregory XVI did not try to soften the terms of the condemnation. He spoke very openly against liberty of the press, "the most fatal liberty, an execrable liberty, for which certain men dare so loudly and earnestly to demand and extend everywhere."[58] He also condemned the "perversity and detestable insolence" of those who, under the appearance of liberty, tried to overthrow sovereign authority.

In a letter accompanying the encyclical delivered to Lamennais, Cardinal Pacca specifically noted some of the features of L'Avenir that had displeased Gregory XVI. One objection was to the public discussion and decision on

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[56]Fredrik Nielsen, The History of the Papacy in the XIXth Century, trans. Arthur James Mason (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1906), II, 67.

[57]Edward E. Y. Hales, Pio Nono (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1954), p. 49.

[58]Gregory XVI, Mirari Vos (August 15, 1832), p. 64. The entire text of the encyclical is reprinted in The Lives and Times of the Popes, IX (DeLuxe ed.; New York: Catholic Publication Society of America, 1911).

questions that should be decided by Church government. So much publicity tended to disturb minds, divide the clergy, and even scandalize the faithful. Another objection was to the doctrines on civil and political liberty, as those doctrines tended to incite a spirit of rebellion against sovereigns. Liberty of worship and of press were also mentioned in the letter.[59] France simply was not ready for the ideals set forth by L'Avenir.

Once again back at La Chesnaye, Lamennais began brooding over his fate. Rather than submit, he grew bitter and resentful. It was that type of behavior which showed Lacordaire and Montalembert that they would have to choose between the Church and their old master. Sorrowfully, they bade good-by to La Chesnaye.

The Avenir movement was at an end, but during its brief existence L'Avenir had accomplished much. It had worn away deep inlets into the ancient strong-hold of Gallican royalism. It demonstrated to Catholics the potentialities of the press as well as of the spoken word. It animated the clergy to a defense of their rights. Both in the courts and in the columns of L'Avenir appeared proof that the anticlerical journals of that day could be challenged and even surpassed in their own field.[60]

After his retreat from La Chesnaye, Lacordaire pre-

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[59]Reuben Parsons, "Lacordaire and Lamennais," American Catholic Quarterly Review, XXII (April, 1897), 271.

[60]Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 45.

sented himself once more to his archbishop, Mgr. de Quélen, "who received him with open arms, as a child who had gone through some dangerous adventure, and who had returned wounded to his father's house."[61] The archbishop restored him as chaplain of the Visitation convent, a position in which Lacordaire could again retire to a life of study and preparation. His connection with L'Avenir was not forgotten, though, either by his admirers or by his critics.

Lacordaire did not completely forsake the field of journalism after that first, bold venture. He occasionally wrote articles for some of the Catholic newspapers, such as the Mémorial Catholique, Ami de la religion, Le Correspondant, and L'Univers.[62] His skill had not declined. The demand for his articles was still prevalent. In December of 1833 and again in December of 1835, Lacordaire was offered the direction of the journal, L'Univers. He refused both offers. In July, 1833, Lacordaire wrote to his friend M. Lorain, "I have no desire to return to the career of journalism. I have had my time of service, though short, and I have received enough wounds to be considered an invalid."[63]

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[61]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 72.

[62]These journals kept the Catholic cause constantly before the public. L'Univers, the last of the group to appear, was founded in November, 1833. When Louis Veuillot joined the editors of L'Univers, the journal became extremely important. Veuillot was a born writer. With his entrance into the journalistic world the Catholic press again had an alert and vigorous polemist to defend her cause.

[63]Cited in Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire, I, 286.

As the need arose, Lacordaire used his talent for writing literary works of greater length. His first efforts were put into Considérations sur le système philosophique de M. de la Mennais. The book was published in May, 1834. It was Lacordaire's way of responding to the book of Lamennais entitled, Paroles d'un croyant, a book that showed the finality of Lamennais' separation from the Church. Lacordaire's next book was again indirectly instigated by Lamennais who had just published the Affaires de Rome, a severe and unjust criticism of his treatment in the decision concerning L'Avenir. Wishing to renew his submission to Rome, Lacordaire wrote and published his Lettre sur le Saint-Siège, which was, at the same time, an answer to Lamennais' critical treatise.[64]

By 1839 Lacordaire wished to prepare the French people for his intended restoration of the Order of St. Dominic in France. In March, 1839, the Mémoire pour le rétablissement de l'ordre des frères prêcheurs was published. It was followed by his Vie de saint Dominique in 1840. Toward the end of his life, Lacordaire produced his Sainte Marie Madeleine. It was his last literary work, except for his Testament which he dictated from his death-bed.[65]

After the revolutionary days of 1848 Lacordaire's sense duty led him back into the field of journalism

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[64]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 87

[65]His Testament was published after his death by Count de Montalembert.

in spite of a personal repugnance for such a venture. His friends, Frédéric Ozanam and l'abbé Maret, convinced him of the necessity of a new Catholic journal, and he agreed to the editorship of the proposed L'Ère Nouvelle.

The aim of L'Ère Nouvelle was to "reconcile the Church and democracy." It intended to prove that a republic was the form of government that was best suited to Christianity. Its editors were convinced that political revolution, in order to be permanent, had to be reinforced by social reorganization. L'Ère Nouvelle declared the Revolution of 1848 "not only permitted but willed by God," and called on all Catholics to support it.[66]

Fifty thousand copies of the prospectus for L'Ère Nouvelle were distributed on March 1, 1848. The prospectus contained numerous arguments for upholding the Revolution of 1848 and the newly founded republic. It pointed out the fact that since three monarchies had fallen in the last forty-seven years, it was only reasonable to try another form of public administration that would offer more stability.[67] Among the signatures attached to the prospectus were those of Lacordaire, l'abbé Maret, De Coux, and Sainte-Foi, all former associates of L'Avenir.

The first issue of L'Ère Nouvelle was dated Saturday, April 15, 1848. Its first message was encouraging.

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[66] L'Ère Nouvelle, April 15, 1848.

[67] Ibid., Prospectus of March 1, 1848.

> Confidence and courage! Everyone agrees that never before has the finger of God been more clearly evident in a human event than in the revolution that has just taken place. . . . We will never despair. We believe firmly in the justice of this revolution; we believe that it was not only permitted but willed by God; we believe it to be one of the most honorable and profound movements . . . that the world has ever seen.[68]

L'Ère Nouvelle was a four-page daily journal. Its feature articles were usually printed on the front page. The journal gave a daily report on foreign affairs and, as L'Avenir had formerly done, reprinted noteworthy excerpts from other journals. A keen interest in the working of the new government was reason enough to publish a lengthy report of each day's session of the National Assembly.

Lacordaire was considered to be the inspiring force behind L'Ère Nouvelle, although he wrote very rarely for it. A series of four articles that he wrote on the Budget of Public Worship showed that in 1848 he publicly favored what he had so vehemently denounced in 1830.[69] The budget, he said, was "not a question of life or death, but a question of justice."[70] One of Lacordaire's main reasons for wishing to retain the budget was the fact that religion is a general and social need of everyone and, as such, should be provided by the state as are other needs of society.[71] Lacordaire also wrote on the compatibility of Catholicism and democracy.

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[68] Ibid., April 15, 1848.

[69] The articles appeared in L'Ère Nouvelle on April 18, 20, 26, and 30, 1848.

[70] L'Ère Nouvelle, April 18, 1848.

[71] Ibid., April 20, 1848.

He showed that Catholicism needed the freedom of a democratic state in order to diffuse the Christian spirit and also to strengthen it. He showed that democracy, in turn, needed Catholicism to keep the exercise of freedom within moral bounds. Equality and majority rule, he said, were essential to democracy. Of equal importance to democracy was what Lacordaire called an "instability of government." By that he meant the ability to have a complete change of civil officials by means of election rather than by a coup d'état. Again he stressed the role of religion, immutable in its dogmas and morals, as a stabilizing factor in the midst of changing civil power.[72]

For a time, L'Ère Nouvelle was one of the most wide-circulated and popular journals in Paris. The talent of its editors undoubtedly gave it a certain distinction. The warm support of Archbishop Affre was reassuring to any hesitant Catholic who feared a revival of L'Avenir. When the first publication of April 15, 1848, came out, there were already 1500 subscribers. By the end of May this number had risen to 3200, plus about 1200 copies that were sold on the streets. Subscriptions continued to increase. In June, at the height of its popularity, L'Ère Nouvelle had a daily printing of 20,000 copies. L'Univers, generally considered to be the leading Catholic journal, was selling no more than 6000 copies in 1845, and dropped to 3500 ten

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[72] Ibid., April 28, 1848.

years later.[73] The revolutionary days of June dealt a severe blow to L'Ère Nouvelle. The five days of insurrection that started on June 23, 1848, were sufficient to turn public opinion against the socialists and those who advocated social reform. Subscriptions to L'Ère Nouvelle dropped sharply.

Lacordaire, who had founded L'Ère Nouvelle through a sense of duty, soon felt it equally his duty to retire from the paper. On May 26, 1848, not even six weeks after the first issue appeared, Lacordaire announced his intention of giving up the editorship of L'Ère Nouvelle. At the request of his collaborators, however, he deferred his retirement until September of that same year.

The issue of May 28, 1848, gave a lengthy report of the accomplishments and success that L'Ère Nouvelle had thus far achieved. Much of the credit for the success of the journal was given to Lacordaire. At the same time, however, it was made clear to the subscribers that Lacordaire had accepted the proprietorship and direction of L'Ère Nouvelle, not with the intention of keeping them permanently, "but only as long as the public circumstances lasted that had called him, after so many years, into the ranks of the daily press."[74]

Since its origin, L'Ère Nouvelle had shown vivid interest in social questions. Within a few months, the journal had taken on a decidedly more democratic coloring

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[73] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 124.

[74] L'Ère Nouvelle, May 28, 1848.

and even showed certain socialistic tendencies. Practically every issue contained some reference to social injustice. Distinction was made between the ordinary poor men who either could not or would not work, and the "paupers of industry," the hard-working men with pitifully low salaries. The editors stressed the necessity of "profound reform in the distribution of the fruits of labor."[75] L'Ère Nouvelle became more and more involved in political life. Lacordaire knew his vocation was not a political one, and felt that his own interests, as well as those of his fellow-journalists, required his abandonment of the paper.

In September a stricter enforcement of some of the old legislation on the daily press provided Lacordaire with an opportunity for withdrawal. Henceforth the proprietor had to assume complete responsibility for management. He could not delegate this charge to anyone else.[76] Lacordaire's personal views did not allow him to assume such responsibility. He transferred his proprietorship to one of the collaborators, M. Justin Maurice. L'abbé Maret took over the direction.

The issue of September 1, 1848, announced a considerable change in the policy of L'Ère Nouvelle. Much more regular attention and study was given to questions of social welfare. By January of 1849, in addition to losing the leadership of Lacordaire, L'Ère Nouvelle had lost four other

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[75] Ibid., May 20, 1848.

[76] Ibid., September 1, 1848.

of the original collaborators. One had died; three had been called away by other duties.[77] In April of that same year, 1849, the last of the original editors withdrew from L'Ère Nouvelle, and a new program, basically political, was adopted. L'Ère Nouvelle of earlier days was subsequently referred to as L'Ère Nouvelle, l'ancienne rédaction.[78] The journal, as Lacordaire had founded it, no longer existed.

Journalism had played an important role, both in the beginning and again toward the end of Lacordaire's public life. His Avenir campaign of 1830 and 1831 had championed the Catholic cause. Through L'Avenir a new interest had been awakened in Catholicism. There was no such thing as wholesale conversions due to this publication. In fact, in December of 1833, the British news correspondent in Paris wrote back to his country that according to computations, from 60,000 to 80,000 individuals, chiefly women, or persons of the poorest classes, believed in the Christian religion. The remaining 800,000 made no pretension to such a faith.[79] One journal of a mere thirteen months' duration and of a limited circulation could not completely change the religious beliefs or disbeliefs of France.

The termination of L'Avenir temporarily deprived Lacordaire of his chief means of furthering the Catholic

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[77] Ibid., January 1, 1849.

[78] Ibid., April 5, 1849.

[79] Foreign News Column, Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, XXXIV (December, 1833), 915.

revival, but it had not dimmed his apostolic zeal. Diverting his attention and energy from the press, Lacordaire soon discovered within himself another talent that far surpassed his ability as a journalist. His genius was unquestionably oratorical.

CHAPTER IV

INFLUENCE OF LACORDAIRE'S ORATORY

Henri Lacordaire's first "pulpit," a window in his own home, hardly bears comparison with the vast grandeur that surrounded the pulpit of Notre Dame. Even as a child of eight years, Lacordaire had a desire to "preach" to others. Using his window as a pulpit, he loudly read the sermons of Bourdaloue to anyone passing by, all the while imitating the gestures of the priests he had heard preach.[1] A certain child-like eloquence was noticeable even then.

A more mature opportunity for preaching was presented to Lacordaire during his seminary training at Issy. According to custom, the seminarians would take turns preaching in the refectory during meals. Lacordaire took his turn with the others, but the effects produced by his sermons were noticeably different. While Lacordaire's style greatly excited the enthusiasm of the students, it was "not much relished" by the masters.[2]

As a priest, Lacordaire went to the Church of St. Roch to give his first public sermon in the spring of 1833.

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[1] Théophile Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Jacques Lecoffre, 1870), II, 513-14.

[2] Chocarne, O.P., The Inner Life of the Very Reverend Père Lacordaire, trans. from the French (Dublin: William B. Kelley, 1867), p. 64.

He had prepared well, trying to carry out the age-old traditions and patterns of good pulpit oratory. His rendition, although scholarly, was lifeless.[3] He and his friends agreed that he would never make a preacher.

Toward the close of that same year, 1833, the prefect of studies at the Collège Stanislaus in Paris asked Lacordaire to give a series of conférences on religion to the pupils of that school. The opportunity was welcomed by Lacordaire. Besides bringing him into contact with youthful minds, it would give him a chance to try out apologetic teaching.

The first conférence at the Collège Stanislaus was scheduled for January 19, 1834. Only a few of the students and staff thought it worth disturbing their afternoon to hear Lacordaire, but those who did were startled. On the following Sunday the chapel was filled to capacity. By the third Sunday most of the students were sent away to make room for outside visitors. Within a few weeks, the chapel was packed two hours before the conférence was due to begin.[4]

The lifeless preacher of St. Roch had suddenly grown into a powerful apologist, an orator of power and persuasion. Lacordaire had finally found his true strength.

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[3]"Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864), 68.

[4]Philip Herbert Spencer, Politics of Belief in Nineteenth-Century France (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954), p. 56.

He could not be fettered by manuscripts and set patterns of preaching. Once Lacordaire put those aside and relied on his impulse of the moment, he was free to respond to the stimulus of his audience, which drew from him an eloquence even he did not know he possessed.

> The excitement of responding to a mass of listeners, themselves increasingly excited and moved, drove him on past his immediate goal into a bolder world of high paradox and deep emotion, into which he was carried headlong and carried with him the pliant assembly, till together, exhausted and over-wrought, they reached the climax and the end, and stumbled out into the street, wondering in what experience they had been engulfed.[5]

After the first few Sundays, Lacordaire's audience expanded to include many of the great intellects of Paris. Prominent among his listeners were men like Chateaubriand, Lamartine, and Hugo. The famous lawyer, Berryer, arriving late one Sunday, climbed in through a window rather than go away disappointed.

The success of the conférences at the Collège Stanislaus was a consolation to Lacordaire. Unfortunately, his success also served to awaken a line of critics. If no other account of his discourses existed, the mere history of the disturbance they caused among the old-school clergy would give ample proof that the conférences were both striking and original.[6] Lacordaire's critics were uneasy from the beginning. Their uneasiness grew into absolute terror as they saw all the intellectuals of Paris drawn

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[5] Ibid., p. 57.

[6] "Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII (October, 1870), 371.

to Lacordaire. They said his style was too human and his rhetoric too erratic. They considered his disrespect for the textbooks of the schools of eloquence as positively appalling. They denounced him as a "dangerous man, a fanatic, an innovator, and a corrupter of youth."[7] They could not condemn his orthodoxy in 1834, but they did remind the public of the condemnation he had received for his L'Avenir experience. In 1834 Lacordaire's biggest fault amounted to nothing more than his novelty of style.

Before the end of the series of conférences at the Collège Stanislaus, Lacordaire had received a flood of invitations from curés all over Paris to preach in their churches. Since it was impossible to answer all the invitations favorably, Lacordaire consulted Archbishop Quélen as to which he should accept. The archbishop, much to Lacordaire's dismay, was reluctant to allow him to continue preaching at all.[8] He requested that Lacordaire refrain from preaching anywhere during Lent. The clamor of Lacordaire's critics had finally prevailed. The conférences were suspended.

The religious revival that had started in 1830 had been productive of vague sentiments in the souls of men rather than deep religious convictions. Frédéric Ozanam, the founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, and some

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[7]"Father Lacordaire," Catholic World, VI (February, 1868), 696.

[8]Kathleen O'Meara, Frédéric Ozanam: His Life and Works (New York: Christian Press Association, 1878), p. 92.

of his apostolic-minded friends fully realized that situation. In January, 1834, just before Lacordaire agreed to give the conférences at the Collège Stanislaus, Ozanam and his friends petitioned Archbishop Quélen to have a series of conférences delivered at Notre Dame in order to attract the young men of Paris to the beauty of the truths of the Catholic faith. Ozanam had hoped to have the conférences given by Lacordaire, but instead the archbishop entrusted them to several priests who, though scholarly men, knew no form of preaching other than the traditional mold.[9] It was while these conférences, very poorly attended, were taking place that Lacordaire was drawing such large and divergent crowds to the small chapel at the Collège Stanislaus.

Ozanam did not despair of seeing Lacordaire in the pulpit of Notre Dame. He repeated his request to Archbishop Quélen, but he was still unsuccessful. Mgr. de Quélen was a man who found it difficult to understand his epoch and shied away from disturbances. He was afraid of Lacordaire and of what people said of his style of preaching.[10] He had heard Mgr. Affre praise Lacordaire and plead his cause; he had also heard the bitter tirades of Lacordaire's critics. When Lacordaire presented himself again to get the archbishop's express authorization for continuing his conférences,

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[9] Ibid., p. 70.

[10] "Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII, 371.

the archbishop refused. He did not wish to take upon himself the responsibility of Lacordaire's silence, but he was more fearful yet of bearing the responsibility for Lacordaire's preaching.[11]

Lacordaire, finding himself in an awkward position, was getting more impatient as the weeks passed. One day, as he was crossing the gardens of the Luxembourg, he was stopped by one of his ecclesiastical friends who advised him to go back to the archbishop and inquire once more about his preaching. A few minutes later, another priest, one of slight acquaintance, stopped Lacordaire and told him that he was making a mistake by not returning to the archbishop.[12] The double invitation surprised Lacordaire. He considered it a sign of divine providence, and slowly made his way to the convent of Saint Michel, where the archbishop was then living. The door of the convent was opened by a religious who, feeling sorry for Lacordaire simply because everyone else seemed to be against him, hurried to announce his presence to the archbishop, even though orders had been given that he was absolutely not to be disturbed. Lacordaire was admitted to the prelate's room. He himself related the incident in his Testament.

> On entering the archbishop's room, I found him walking back and forth with a sad, pre-occupied air.

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[11] Henri Lacordaire, Le Testament du P. Lacordaire, ed. Charles de Montalembert (Paris: Charles Douniel, 1870), pp. 79-80.

[12] Ibid., p. 80.

> He gave me a slight sign of welcome, and I turned and walked up and down with him, without his saying a word. After a long interval of silence, he stopped suddenly and, giving me a scrutinizing look, said: "I have the intention of confiding to you the pulpit of Notre Dame; would you accept it?" The sudden overture, the motive of which was entirely unknown to me, left me quite sober. I replied that the time for preparation was short, the theater was very solemn, and that although successful before a small audience, it would be easy to fail before an assembly of four thousand souls. I ended by asking for twenty-four hours to reflect.[13]

Lacordaire later learned the archbishop's reason for the sudden change of heart. It so happened that when Lacordaire's presence was announced to him, the prelate had just completed reading a copy of a manuscript pamphlet that had been circulating among the clergy of Paris for the last few weeks. The pamphlet was sharply critical of the archiepiscopal administration. It charged the archbishop with feebleness and lack of intelligence for silencing Lacordaire. Those were the thoughts that had pre-occupied Archbishop Quélen when Lacordaire was first admitted.[14] The coincidence of having Lacordaire walk in at that precise time inspired the archbishop to offer him the most important pulpit in all France.

After praying to God and consulting with his close friend and adviser, Madame Swetchine, Lacordaire agreed to assume the responsibility of the conférences de Notre Dame.[15]

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[13] Ibid., pp. 80-81.

[14] Ibid., pp. 81-82.

[15] Madame Swetchine, of Russian origin, was a mystic possessing rare spiritual charm. After her arrival in Paris in 1816, she there maintained a salon which became famous for

He fully realized the dangers and difficulties connected with the appointment to Notre Dame, which amounted in reality to his nomination as "public and official apologist of the Catholic Faith in France."[16]

The news of Lacordaire's new position spread rapidly. Archbishop Quélen, expecting strong opposition, found Lacordaire's critics strangely silent. Convinced that Lacordaire possessed neither sufficient theological training nor the required oratorical powers, his enemies hoped that the high position would occasion his fall.[17] They did not realize that for fifteen years Lacordaire had been applying himself to very serious philosophical and theological studies. He had also been called on for public speaking under a great variety of circumstances. His brilliant mind, coupled with natural eloquence, would not, however, suffice to touch the depths of men's hearts and draw them back to the beauty of the truth. Lacordaire realized that his true and only source of strength lay in divine inspiration.

Lacordaire's renowned conférences de Notre Dame were anything but impromptu discourses. True, the great orator did not write out his conférences. It was his custom to think them through and then jot down a few notes indicat-

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its religious atmosphere and for the intellectual brilliance of those who gathered there.

[16]John C. Reville, S.J., "The White-Robed Lyrist of Notre Dame," America, XXV (August 6, 1921), 379.

[17]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 82.

ing the general course of thought.[18] Hours of meditation were spent in preparation for each conférence. In later life, Lacordaire wrote to a young friend who had asked advice on successful preaching. "No degree of fluency," he stated, "will avail without work: that is the key to eloquence and to knowledge, as well as to virtue."[19]

The first conférence de Notre Dame began at two o'clock on March 1, 1835. As early as eight o'clock in the morning, people began to gather in the nave. When Archbishop Quélen, dubious and uneasy, entered in procession at one o'clock, he was noticeably alarmed as he saw the tide of humanity that had swept into his cathedral. The crowd numbered at least five thousand.[20]

It was a strange audience that crowded into Notre Dame that day. To the believers were added in large numbers the curious, the sceptics, the malevolents. While they waited throughout the long hours of the morning, "they argued over places; they read the newspapers; they called to each other from a distance, as in a theater; some completed the repast they had started outdoors."[21]

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[18] R.W. Dale, "Lacordaire: A Study," The Contemporary Review, VIII (May, 1868), 6.

[19] Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, Letters to Young Men, trans. from the French (New ed. rev.; London: Art and Book Company, 1902), p. 95.

[20] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 61.

[21] Pierre de la Gorce, Histoire de la Seconde République Française (7th ed.; Paris: Librairie Plon, 1914), II, 266.

The crowd was composed chiefly of men, including men of mark, such as artists, authors, journalists, preachers, poets, professors, cabinet members, parliamentary orators, diplomats, and crowds of young men from the University of Paris -- all of them thronging to hear the eloquent apologist, the condemned contributor of L'Avenir, the suspended preacher of the Collège Stanislas. If that motley group of unbelievers was not won over from the very beginning, there was good reason to fear some irreverence.

Lacordaire did not fail to recognize the solemnity of the moment. He knew he had to prove himself to Archbishop Quélen. He also had to strike at the very heart of his audience. The vast throng, far from frightening Lacordaire, inspired and thrilled him. He gave them what they wanted: eternal truths in a language they could understand. Their attention was undivided as Lacordaire addressed them. He introduced the first conférence briefly and then suddenly exclaimed: "Assembly, assembly, tell me: What do you ask of me? What do you desire from me? Truth? Then you do not have it in yourselves. . . . You have come here to be taught."[22] Lacordaire's brilliant utterances, bold and impassioned, were marvelously adapted to his eager audience. The people knew only too well what he meant when, in the course of the conférence, he condemned those who oppress the people and prevent the exercise of God-given rights.

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[22]"Première conférence de Notre Dame," in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), II, 14.

"Tyrants change, tyranny changes not," he exclaimed.[23] Lacordaire then gently chided his strange audience, made up of men who gloried in being of their own age. He showed that they were guilty of submitting, in their convictions, to the prejudices of the time. He proceeded to point out the advantages of true, religious convictions and Christian beliefs.

> As for us, Christians, liberated by the Church, we are neither of the present age, nor of the past, nor of the age to come; we are of eternity. We do not wish to submit to the teaching of an age, or of a nation, or of a man; for these teachings are false, because they are variable and contradictory.[24]

The archbishop, so little prepared by temperament and training to enjoy things modern, was completely won over by such eloquence, and called Lacordaire "a new prophet."[25]

To a generation that had long refused to listen to the "antiquated" Catholic teachings, Lacordaire spoke in glowing terms of God and His tremendous love for man.

> God anticipated you with affection from all eternity. You were nothing for Him, nothing for the universe, nothing for yourself; He chose you before you had a being. This body whose grace you profane, He it was who gave it to you as an antique vase all pure from the hand of the sculptor; He opened your eyes that you might see Him in the world before seeing Him in His substance; He formed your ears that you might hear His voice, and designed your lips that you might respond to Him. Within this chef-d'oeuvre of His loving hands, He placed a living light which shines of itself, and whose rays have an

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[23] Ibid., II, 19.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Fernand Mourret, S.S., A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1955), VIII, 308.

> affinity with His own light, that each may seek the other, to be united one day in the ecstasy of the same flame and the same eternity. But you, ungrateful son of so gratuitous a devotion, you fled from the love which asked of you but love. You appropriated to yourself the adoration which you owed to God; you closed your eyes that you might not see Him, your ears that you might not respond to Him, and, lost in the debauch of a base egotism, you preferred to live far away from Him, defiled and unhappy, rather than to await, in a peace without reproach, the hour of His final revelation. God was aggrieved: He feared that He did too little for you, and descending from the obscurity which enveloped Him, He placed before you His person, His voice, His acts, His life, and lest this should still be not enough, He died before your eyes, crucified by your hands. Having done this for all, He arms Himself against each one; He pursues humanity, soul by soul, day by day, and it is only when vanquished and despised to the last hour that at length He takes up His love and departs forever.[26]

During the first two years at Notre Dame, Lacordaire spoke of the Catholic Church and of Catholic doctrine in general. He wanted above all else to inspire in his audience a respect for Catholicism. He stressed the universal authority that was entrusted to the Church. He pointed out that the whole Roman empire had been leagued against the Church, and yet, "in spite of persecution, the Catholic Church, from the earliest times, passed the limits of the Roman empire."[27] He claimed infallibility for the Church, if for no other reason, simply because "in a career of eighteen centuries amid all the mutations of the human mind,

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[26]"Seventy-second Conference of Notre Dame," in Thoughts and Teachings of Lacordaire (New and enl. ed.; London: Art and Book Company, 1902), pp. 271-72. Only selected portions of the conférences are given in this work. Reference is made to this source only for those conférences that are not included in the Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire.

[27]"Première conférence," Oeuvres, II, 23.

she has been firm as a pyramid."[28]

Lacordaire did not hesitate to refer openly and directly to the lack of faith which was so prevalent in France at that time. We believe willingly that which we love, he said, and only rarely what we do not love.[29] Lacordaire often addressed himself directly to the unbelievers in his audience. "You believe not, and you conclude from this that faith is impossible; for my part, I conclude that you do not what is necessary in order to arrive at faith, and I will prove it in a few words."[30] Lacordaire then briefly summarized the procedure of thought which led so many of the young men to decide that religion was an error. As they cast aside childhood, so too did they put aside the unquestioned faith of those early years. Reason and passion replaced the faith of the child and, Lacordaire continued,

> you became ashamed to believe; while at the same time you lost that other shame which is the divine guardian of innocence. Incapable of any act worthy of a man, you passed judgment sovereignly upon God and man; you doubted, denied, apostatized, despised your fathers, accused your masters, summoned before your tribunal the virtues and sorrow of ages; in fine, you transformed your soul into a desert of pride. Then, this ruin completed, you chose for your end one of the ambitions of man, the glory of arms or that of letters, or still less high, as chance led you, and every effort of your faculties was directed towards the idolatry of your future. . . . And never, during this sad and checkered dream did

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[28]"Troisième conférence," Oeuvres, II, 63.

[29]"Douzième conférence," Ibid., II, 219.

[30]"Fifty-eighth Conference," Thoughts and Teachings, p. 200.

> religion appear to you but as a futile souvenir of your early years, a weakness or a hypocrisy of humanity. You did not deign to give to it one hour of study, or one desire; and if sometimes, attracted by a celebrated name, you opened a book or crossed the threshold of a basilica, you did so with the haughtiness of a mind which had judged, and had no idea of reversing its decree. O confidence of youth in error! O security of souls who have yet seen but the early dawn of life! Oh, how good God has been in not calling you away in that hour of ignorance and enchantment.[31]

Throughout the years Lacordaire spoke to the vast throngs of many and varied subjects. He reminded the scoffers that the idea of God "is as potent by negation as by affirmation, living by its enemies as by its adorers."[32] He spoke of the beauty of the pages of the Old Testament, of the Jewish race which "has been the historian, the jurist, the sage, and the poet of humanity."[33] Time and again he defended the Church against those who denied her doctrines and her claim to authority. "You ask her to prove to you her legitimacy! It is for you to prove that you are worthy to comprehend her and be reckoned amongst her children."[34] He emphasized the need of charity, of fraternity, as the common ground upon which to meet the worldly-minded. In this Lacordaire wanted complete generosity. "We have received so much love that it costs us little to give."[35]

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[31] Ibid., pp. 201-202.

[32] "Vingt-sixième conférence," Oeuvres, II, 490.

[33] "Quarante et unième conférence," Ibid., III, 312.

[34] "Sixty-third Conference," Thoughts and Teachings, pp. 220-21.

[35] "Vingt-cinquième conférence," Oeuvres, II, 484-85.

He pleaded for consideration of the poor laborer who had been freed from the observance of the Sunday rest. Sooner or later, Lacordaire said, the poor man will realize that a precious right was taken from him, a right that had protected his health, his mind, and his heart. In desperation, the poor man will turn again to Jesus Christ, "who understood the rights of the poor because He was poor Himself."[36]

Of all the conférences de Notre Dame, some of the most beautiful were those on Jesus Christ, given in the year 1846. Lacordaire opened the series with a stirring supplication that immediately captivated his audience.

> Lord Jesus, during the ten years in which I have spoken of Your Church to this audience, it is really of You that I spoke; but finally today I come more immediately to You, to the divine figure which is daily the object of my contemplation, to Your sacred feet which I have so often kissed, to Your loving hands which have so often blessed me, to Your head crowned with glory and with thorns, to the life of which I breathed the perfume from my birth, which my adolescence disowned, which my youth recaptured, and which my maturity adores and announces to every creature. O Father! Master! Friend! Jesus! help me more than ever since, being nearer to You, it is becoming that men perceive it, and that I speak words which may reflect Your sacred presence![37]

Lacordaire's deep, personal love for his Savior was reflected in each of the conférences. He invited all, believers,and unbelievers, to pay homage to the divinity of Christ. The former were inspired by respect, admiration, faith, and love; the latter, by fear and trembling.[38] The intense love of God

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[36]"Trente-deuxième conférence," Ibid., III, 93-94.

[37]"Trente-septième conférence," Ibid., III, 196-97.

[38]"Quarante et unième conférence," Ibid., III, 334.

for man, as shown in the Redemptive Acts, was often described by Lacordaire. He spoke of Christ as a "man, dead and buried, whose sleeping and waking are watched, whose every word still vibrates and produces more than love; produces virtues bearing fruit in love."[39] The fruits of Christ's love are abundant.

Lacordaire has been called a revolutionary. Some writers still apply the term to him as a stigma and a reproach. In a sense Lacordaire was a revolutionary: he revolutionized pulpit preaching. But the change was only in outward form. The subjects of his conférences that held his audience spell-bound were none other than the same immemorial ones that have been preached from the time of Christ to the present time. His interpretation of the doctrines embodied in each topic was equally traditional. The novelty lay in one thing only: his mode of treatment, "rendered irresistable by the genius of the orator."[40]

Thrusting aside the antiquated pulpit formalities, Lacordaire identified himself with his audience, acknowledging the same problems, sharing their fears, understanding their doubts. He was an apostle, longing to win them to God by the contagion of his own faith. He dropped the archaic "Brethren" and addressed his listeners as "Messieurs." Lacordaire carried romanticism into the pulpit, but in a

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[39]"Trente-neuvième conférence," Ibid., III, 260-61.

[40]O'Meara, Ozanam, p. 78.

manner worthy of an apostle. There remained no set exordiums, formal divisions of thought or oratorical units. There was, however, color and freedom of movement, buoyancy and life. Many in Lacordaire's audience were veterans of the Napoleonic wars. They sat spell-bound as he "fought the enemies of truth as recklessly and as gallantly as they had fought the adversaries of France."[41] If these men could not believe immediately, they at least listened with profound respect to what Lacordaire had to say. After that, they were unable to completely dismiss his impressive words. They found it difficult to be unaffected when, after graphically describing the love which was manifested on Calvary, Lacordaire concluded with this warning: "After that, do you think that you will be permitted to blaspheme and to laugh, and to go without fear to the nuptials of your pleasures? Oh, no, undeceive yourself; love is not play. We are not loved by God with impunity."[42]

Lacordaire spoke from the fullness of an overflowing heart. New acquaintances usually found him cold and unresponsive in private society. He needed the electric shock of several thousand glances fixed on him to change him into an ardent, enthusiastic orator. His whole being preached. His voice rang out natural and unrestrained, at times piercing, then persuasive, sometimes supplicating,

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[41] Reville, America, XXV, 379.

[42] "Seventy-third Conference," Thoughts and Teachings, pp. 272-73.

and again menacing. His sincerity was genuine. He had a consuming desire to make his message so acceptable that it could no longer be resisted.

When Lacordaire ascended the pulpit of Notre Dame for the last time, he solemnly addressed the spacious vaults of that cathedral in a magnificent invocation: "O walls of Notre Dame, sacred vaults which have borne my words to so many intelligences deprived of God, altars which have blessed me, I do not separate myself from you."[43] In spirit, Lacordaire could not separate himself from Notre Dame; it was too much a part of him. In a physical sense, however, Lacordaire knew that his time at Notre Dame was at an end. He bade farewell to his audience and made his final descent from that great pulpit.

The deep sincerity of Lacordaire had made the mass of his audience oblivious to his shortcomings. Lacordaire was "endowed with a comfortable faculty of being certain: objections, exceptions, logical flaws -- his mind passed serenely over them into the oratorical absolute."[44] Only his hostile critics were aware of the flaws in his oratory.

It was one thing to attract each week to Notre Dame great lovers of eloquence; it was quite another thing to lead them to practice in their own lives what they heard in the grand cathedral. Lacordaire's teaching, however,

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[43] Ibid., pp. 278-79.

[44] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 68.

had not been in vain. He substituted in many of his contemporaries an open, militant Catholicism in place of a vague, lukewarm sentiment. He drew into the Church classes of people that had systematically held aloof and led them from the foot of his pulpit to the foot of the altar.[45] Lacordaire had portrayed Catholicism in its true Christian beauty. Men might still attack it, but they could no longer despise it.

Mass conversion was not Lacordaire's objective. He labored at the more fundamental work of making conversions possible. He attempted to "attract the attention and respect of a people who had turned their backs in contempt upon the Catholic Church."[46] It would be difficult to even estimate the number of actual conversions credited to Lacordaire. It should suffice that he converted public opinion.

In reality, far more than public opinion was converted. As long as twenty years after Lacordaire had preached at Bourdeaux, the effects were still very noticeable. Since the time of his preaching, public opinion had changed, the churches were more frequented, and Easter duties were fulfilled.[47] The records of many parishes

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[45] Count de Falloux, Memoirs of the Count de Falloux, ed. C.B. Pitman (London: Chapman and Hall, 1888), I, 155.

[46] "Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII, 387.

[48] Ibid., 386. For further proof of renewed Catholicity, refer to Constantine Kempf, S.J., The Holiness of the Church in the Nineteenth Century, trans. Francis Brey-

of Paris supply ample proof of the effectiveness of Lacordaire's preaching. There was a real increase in the number of practicing Catholics.[48] The vaulted roofs of Notre Dame itself sheltered in each successive year thousands of men kneeling at the Holy Table to fulfill their Easter duties. Many of them had had the first spark of returning faith enkindled by the lightning flash of Lacordaire's eloquence.[49]

The letters received by Lacordaire further revealed the far-reaching effects of his conferences. In response to one of them, Lacordaire wrote:

> Sir,--The sentiments you convey in your letter afford me great consolation. . . . You are good enough to tell me that my conferences helped to bring back your soul into the path of truth, and that you still find them a source of good and pious desires. I rejoice at it, although God is everything, and His ministers are hardly even so much as the tool in His hands, which obey the movement which He gives it.[50]

The human glory and success achieved at Notre Dame did not in the least mar the beauty of Lacordaire's humility. He recognized his powerlessness when he was not sustained by divine strength. Yet he thrilled at the sight of Notre Dame and loved it as the field of his labors in restoring

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mann, S.J. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1916). Father Kempf shows that France as well as other countries produced saintly men and women in the nineteenth century. See also "Religious and Social Conditions of France," The Dublin Review, XVI (March, 1844), 1-36, which is a collection of quotations and extracts that exemplify an all-pervading increase of Catholicity among all classes of people.

[48] Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 74.

[49] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 150.

[50] Lacordaire, Letters to Young Men, p. 58.

Christ to France. In another of his letters he fondly referred to the great cathedral: "It is my great country! I always greet it as soon as I see its towers when coming into Paris."[51]

When the last of the conférences of 1835 was at an end, Archbishop Quélen generously praised the man whose influence he had so mistrusted in the beginning. Rising up to give his episcopal blessing to the vast assembly gathered in Notre Dame, the prelate majestically expressed his thanks to Lacordaire, "on whom God had bestowed piety and eloquence, and, still more, that virtue which constitutes the priest -- obedience!"[52]

It would be naive to suppose that Lacordaire preached at Notre Dame for an entire season without reaping a good share of criticism. His adversaries were busy at work. A Vicar-General of Lyons had extracted no less than twenty-seven propositions from Lacordaire's sermons of 1835 and submitted them to Rome as heterodox. The Bishop of Caryste was helping to prepare two volumes against Lacordaire. Detractors were describing his sermons as the greatest degradation of speech and the fullest anarchy of thought.[53] They could hardly have been more out-spoken. But Lacordaire's popularity was too great at that time to give way

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[51] Ibid., p. 128.

[52] Cited in O'Meara, Ozanam, p. 97.

[53] Count D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, trans. A.W. Evans (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1913), p. 93.

before the onslought of criticism.

A second successful year in the pulpit of Notre Dame terminated for Lacordaire. The generation that he had so captivated, continued to applaud his words and pass lightly over his defects. His mission of apologetic teaching seemed settled and well founded when suddenly Lacordaire resigned the pulpit of Notre Dame and set out for Rome. He felt the necessity of further preparation before continuing his great work in the Catholic revival, and asked for three more years of recollection, study and prayer.[54]

His sojourn at Rome was destined to last more than three years.[55] It was during this period of his life that Lacordaire recognized the divine call to assist in yet another phase of the Catholic revival in France. Lacordaire's liberal ideals led him on to seek complete freedom for Catholics. This, of course, included the free exercise of rights for religious orders. According to law, most orders were still forbidden to exist in France. Lacordaire, already a combination of a liberal, a Catholic, and a priest, was desirous of becoming a religious. His aspirations led

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[54]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 86. Lacordaire also states that probably the real reason why he suddenly desired to retreat to Rome, although he did not realize it at the time, was to provide the occasion for developing his interest in reviving religious orders in France.

[55]Lacordaire returned to France toward the end of 1837, preached at Metz during the winter months, and then went to Paris where he talked over his plans with his friends. He returned to Rome on August 15, 1838, to undertake the work of restoration.

him to the Order of St. Dominic which he hoped in time to re-establish in France.[56]

When Lacordaire returned to France at the end of the year 1841 and, at the request of Archbishop Affre, reascended the pulpit of Notre Dame, he was clothed in the frock of a Dominican friar. The illegal religious habit, sheltered under the popularity of Lacordaire's name and the splendor of his eloquence, nevertheless caused great uneasiness to the government. Prior to Lacordaire's reappearance at Notre Dame, Louis Philippe had sent for Archbishop Affre, successor to Mgr. de Quélen. The king used all his influence to dissuade Archbishop Affre from recalling the great apologist. The archbishop was not to be shaken. Lacordaire appeared at Notre Dame according to schedule.[57] He continued to preach there for the next ten years.

Lacordaire did not limit his preaching to the Cathedral of Notre Dame. Invitations to preach arrived in abundance from all over France. He accepted as many as possible and lavished his eloquence on groups in every province, from one end of France to the other. There were but few of the great towns of France in which Lacordaire did not preach

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[56]In choosing a religious order, Lacordaire took many points into consideration. Having decided on an active rather than a cloistered order, his final choice rested between the Jesuits and the Dominicans, two historically great communities. Since the Jesuits were already in France, there was only one choice possible. Lacordaire describes his serious deliberation in his Testament, pp. 95-97.

[57]"Lacordaire and the Order of St. Dominic," The Month, V (October, 1866), 342.

either during Advent or during Lent.[58]

The political tension in Paris was such by 1851 that Lacordaire withdrew from Notre Dame. In spite of all entreaties, he refused to appear again in the great pulpit. His reason is stated in his Testament: "I understood that in my thought, in my language, in my past, in what remained for me of the future, I myself was also a liberty, and that my time had come to disappear like the other liberties."[59]

Lacordaire mistrusted Louis Philippe. He was opposed to dictatorial power in any form. His ideal was government by the people. He had preached it from the pulpit of Notre Dame. "Do you know the first word which was spoken to you when you came from the hands of God? Do you know what was the first blessing of humanity? Hear it, son of Adam, and learn of your grandeur!"[60] Then, quoting from Genesis, Lacordaire recalled the command of God to the human race to rule over the earth, to govern it as the heavenly spirits "govern the superior sphere."[61] Lacordaire's language and manner of expression were bound to be critical of the new civil power. He did not want to risk having Notre Dame become a meeting place for the friends and enemies of the new government that had been in power since

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[58]"Lacordaire and the Conferences of Notre Dame," The Dublin Review, LXVII, 373-74.

[59]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 150.

[60]"Seizième conférence," Oeuvres, II, 280.

[61]Ibid.

the December coup d'état. Lacordaire continued preaching in the provinces until 1854, but his presence never again graced the pulpit of Notre Dame.

The conférences de Notre Dame have been handed down to posterity as works of literature. Without doubt, they fall far short of the original, for it is impossible to confine to paper the fire and enthusiasm that were present in the actual delivery. Furthermore, since Lacordaire never wrote out his conférences, it was up to stenographers to take down his words as he spoke. Lacordaire himself checked their reports the day after each sermon.[62] That is the form in which the conférences de Notre Dame exist today.

Lacordaire's fame as an orator was recognized by the general public when he began to preach at Notre Dame. His powers of oratory had startled smaller groups long before. As early as 1830, when he first ventured into the world of journalism to fight for a free Church in a free state, Lacordaire took up the cause in the courts as well as in the pulpit. He pleaded his cases with such brilliance that the resulting publicity did as much to further the Catholic cause as a favorable verdict.

> One day, when answering a certain crown-lawyer, who had ventured to say that Roman Catholic priests were ministers of a foreign power, Lacordaire exclaimed, "We are the ministers of One who is a foreigner nowhere -- of God." Upon this the audience, mostly made up of that people of Paris, so hostile to the clergy, began to

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[62] "Lacordaire and the Order of St. Dominic," The Month, V, 347.

cheer, and cried out to him, "Your name, young priest, your name, you are a fine fellow!"[63]

Lacordaire carried his eloquence to the very floor of the National Assembly of France. In 1848, through a sense of duty to his Church and to his country, Lacordaire accepted nomination and election to the National Assembly. Although Lacordaire never hesitated to use bold and fearless statements that drew forth many political repercussions, he was not a politician, and he knew it. After a few weeks' trial, he resigned his seat in the National Assembly.[64] His sense of duty was still as strong as ever, but Lacordaire clearly saw that he could accomplish nothing in that position. His energies were better spent in other fields of activity.

Lacordaire's fluent speech, his brilliant and quick mind, his matchless eloquence, had served France well. He appeared on the scene when France needed him most. The celebrated preacher of Notre Dame is still dear to the hearts of many Catholics, not only in France, but throughout the world.

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[63]Charles de Montalembert, Memoir of the Abbé Lacordaire, authorized trans. (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), pp. 29-30.

[64]Lacordaire, Testament, pp. 140-41.

CHAPTER V

REALIZATION OF LIBERAL IDEALS

Père Lacordaire was a born liberal. He never wavered in his belief in liberal ideals. The Church frowned upon liberalism and openly condemned some of its principles. Yet Lacordaire unflinchingly held to his ideals. In the very last year of his life, the day after his reception into the Académie française, he said to a group of young men, "I hope to die a penitent religious but an impenitent liberal."[1]

By nature inclined toward liberalism, Lacordaire grew in his convictions throughout the years of his formal education. Prior to his return to the Catholic faith, conversion seemed impossible, since, as Lacordaire thought, it would require the denial of liberal ideals. It was only when he found a way to reconcile Catholicism and liberalism that his conversion was accomplished. Catholicism did not demand a renunciation of his belief in liberty. It would simply safeguard him from error and restrain him from carrying his liberal ideals to extreme conclusions.[2]

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[1]Cited in Théophile Foisset, Vie du R. P. Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Jacques Lecoffre, 1870), II, 473.

[2]"Cinquante et unième conférence de Notre Dame," in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), III, 603.

Conversion in Lacordaire's case also meant a priestly vocation. His life as a seminarian was watched and criticized by his superiors because he was a liberal. His very ordination was temporarily with-held for the same reason. When he finally was ordained to the priesthood, the bishop did not know what to do with a liberal priest. After four months of hesitation, Lacordaire was finally "hid" safely away as chaplain in the convent of the Visitation.

Lacordaire made his public appearance when he joined the small group of L'Avenir editors in their fight for "God and Liberty," but after a brief duration, that endeavor also drew criticism -- criticism strong enough to merit papal condemnation. Lacordaire withdrew into seclusion again, but not for long. Once his oratorical powers were discovered, popular demand was too great to give way to those who held him under suspicion.

At first glance it is difficult to understand how such a confirmed liberal as Lacordaire could even consider religious life, but it was as a Dominican friar that Lacordaire won some of his greatest liberal victories. Liberalism was not a free pass to success for Lacordaire; it brought upon him constant criticism and suspicion. Yet Lacordaire was outstanding in his submission and obedience to the Church. His love of God and Church surely took second place to nothing. His deep love of liberalism was simply a part of his devotion to the cause of the Church and of his zeal for souls. In furthering the cause of one,

he aided both.[3]

The term liberalism has had a variety of interpretations. Some nineteenth-century liberals insisted that it meant complete liberty in thought, word, and every type of action. They used the terms freedom and license synonymously, and thrust aside every conceivable restraint. In their deep concern for the freedom of the individual, they strenuously opposed every form of absolute authority, be it civil, religious, or political. Freedom of association was necessary to enable the individual to resist tyranny and injustice. Everyone must enjoy equal rights before the law. Special privileges were condemned in the liberal creed. Civil rights were necessary for everyone. Intellectual freedom demanded complete freedom of thought and the right to express that thought, even though erroneous. Hence, censorship was condemned. The liberal's stress on intellectual freedom was based on his conviction that man is essentially a rational creature. Reason, then, rather than revelation, was the final authority. Religion was merely a personal opinion of each individual. Freedom of nonbelief was advocated as well as freedom of belief.[4]

The nineteenth century was the liberal century.

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[3]"The Liberalism of Lacordaire," The Month, XII (June, 1870), 659.

[4]The ideas expressed in the above paragraph were summarized from J. Salwyn Schapiro, Liberalism: Its Meaning and History (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1958), pp. 9-13.

The liberal's faith gave it guidance; his works gave it substance; his creed dominated its thought.[5] The Church, with good reason, spoke out strongly against liberalism. She could not tolerate such erroneous norms of conduct. The right to go wrong simply does not exist. Liberty will never mean license. The extreme liberals had interpreted the Christian duties of men to God as being the "passive and tacit recognition of the existence of a mechanical Prime Mover."[6] Duties to one's neighbor were discarded as superfluous. The true manner of serving one's fellowman was in the simple, undisguised pursuit of self-interest.[7] Liberalism, carried to its limits, merited condemnation as a modern heresy.

As a Catholic and a priest, Lacordaire with his liberal dogmas "surprised the public, and perplexed the clergy," who could not explain how among their own ranks was to be found one of the most ardent defenders of doctrines not approved at Rome.[8] The explanation was not difficult. Lacordaire and his Catholic liberal friends recognized the dangers of unrestrained liberty. But the dangers involved did not seem to be sufficient reason to condemn liberty itself. Lacordaire believed it better to

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[5]Emmet John Hughes, The Church and the Liberal Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944), p. 145.

[6]Ibid., p. 132.

[7]Ibid.

[8]The Times (London), November 25, 1861, p. 8.

teach the people how to use liberty correctly than to suppress it entirely. "Write above the word liberty," he suggested, "the word obedience; above the word equality the word hierarchy; above the word fraternity the word veneration; above the august symbol of rights the divine symbol of duties."[9] Lacordaire believed in liberty as he believed in reason and science; he considered it a "civilizing power, and not a scourge, -- a happy consequence of the Redemption, not an enemy of the Church."[10] The aim of the small group of Catholic liberals was to Catholicize liberalism.

Adversaries of the Catholic liberals liked to interchange the two words of the party's title, thus forming the title, "Liberal Catholics," similar in sound, but completely different in connotation. "Liberal" Catholicism implied a wavering orthodoxy and a watering down of Catholic principles and practices, rather than the unquestioned doctrinal orthodoxy of Catholic liberalism.[11]

The Catholic liberal movement, which was launched in 1830 and publicized by L'Avenir, was quickly disowned by the Church. Its leader, Lamennais, apostatized. Lacordaire and Montalembert took up the cause in a modified and

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[9]"Cinquante et unième conférence," Oeuvres, III, 603.

[10]Chocarne, O.P., The Inner Life of the Very Reverend Père Lacordaire, trans. from the French (Dublin: William B. Kelley, 1867), p. 554.

[11]Albert Paul Schimberg, The Great Friend: Frederick Ozanam (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1946), pp. 225-26.

chastened form and carried it forward. Opposition within the Catholic camp remained intense and often bitter.[12] From his death-bed Lacordaire recalled some of the difficulties encountered in reaching his liberal goals. "Where ever I looked," he said, "nothing but dangers met my gaze, and less fortunate than Christopher Columbus, I could not descry a single plank to carry me to the shores of liberty."[13] To Lacordaire the union of liberty and Christianity was the only salvation of the future. Christianity alone would be able to give liberty its true character, and liberty alone would give Christianity the necessary means of influence.[14]

Many of the reforms advocated by the Catholic liberals required a change of policy in the administration of the July Monarchy. Lacordaire never spared the government in his open criticism of its arbitrary and oppressive acts. On the whole, however, Lacordaire lived quite peacefully with the public authorities.[15] After a time, he even won them over to his side in his restoration of the Dominicans in France.

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[12]William Raymond Corrigan, S.J., The Church and the Nineteenth Century (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1938), p. 130.

[13]Henri Lacordaire, Le Testament du P. Lacordaire, ed. Charles de Montalembert (Paris: Charles Douniel, 1870), p. 93.

[14]Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, Letters to Young Men, trans. from the French (New ed. rev.; London: Art and Book Company, 1902), p. 213.

[15]Count D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, trans. A. W. Evans (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1913), p. 159.

In 1848 Lacordaire accepted nomination to the National Assembly of the Second Republic. A comparison between the Assemblies of the First and Second Republics brings out well the great strides that had been made in the pursuit of liberty and religious freedom. Although there were some anti-clerics in the Assembly of 1848, the Assembly as a whole was not anti-clerical.[16]

The election was set for April 23, 1848. The electoral campaign had called forth great energy from all parties. L'Univers, an important Catholic conservative journal, advocated support of the new republic but in return wanted the same liberties which the Church in the United States enjoyed.[17] It was during the electoral campaign of 1848 that Lacordaire founded L'Ère Nouvelle to support his dream of an alliance between the Church and democracy. It had worked in America, and Lacordaire was convinced it could work in France. He was grieved to see the cause of freedom estranged from God Who had made man free.[18] To Lacordaire, America was a land of marvels, a place where the people were prosperous, peaceful, and industrious, where they made no distinctions of birth, where they were

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[16]Edward E. Y. Hales, The Catholic Church in the Modern World (New York: Doubleday, 1958), p. 104.

[17]James MacCaffrey, History of the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1909), I, 235.

[18]Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, "Discours de réception à l'académie française," in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), VIII, 327.

"free as the Indian, and civilized as a man of Europe."[19] Religion was free, with no cult excluded, and none favored. Lacordaire always admired the Americans who had realized the liberal ideals that Europe sought in vain through laborious efforts and bloody revolutions.[20] America, he hoped, would set the example for the other nations.

France was making progress, however. The results of the 1848 elections were very favorable to the Catholics. Fourteen ecclesiastics, including three bishops, plus a strong body of Catholic deputies, were elected to the Assembly. Lacordaire had been nominated as a candidate for several of the provinces. He met strong opposition, however, especially from the republicans in Paris, and consequently did not succeed in getting the required number of votes. With good reason, Lacordaire believed he had failed. He did not know that at the last moment he had been placed on the list of candidates for Bouches-du-Rhône. It was that nomination which resulted in Lacordaire's election.[21]

The first meeting of the Assembly took place on May 4, 1848. A great display of enthusiasm broke out as the solemn proclamation of the new republic was made. Lacordaire, who appeared in the white robes of his order,

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[19] Ibid., VIII, 331.

[20] Ibid., VIII, 332.

[21] D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, p. 168.

received a regular ovation from the Paris mob.[22] He was convinced that religion was now secure in France. It was the task of the Assembly of 1848 to establish authority and liberty on a firm basis.

Lacordaire was deeply disappointed in his short career in the Assembly. Ten days had sufficed to show him that his ardent temperament was not suited to parliamentary life and oratory. His love of liberalism and dedication to the Church had inspired him to accept nomination.

> His own generous nature led him to think that he might induce the liberal members there to extend their liberality to the Church, and to countenance liberty of teaching; but he soon found his mistake in this; they were false liberals, ready enough to apply their principles to state matters, but not ready to carry them into the domain of thought. They were liberal <u>against</u> the Church, and despots <u>over</u> it.[23]

During the few days in which Lacordaire served as a member of the Assembly he spoke only twice. The first time he defended the right of the minority groups in the Assembly. At the same time he resisted the motion for the direct nomination of the new ministers by the Assembly.[24] The second time was three days later. One of the representatives made a statement implying that the government was too lenient in tolerating in the Assembly a "habit prohibited

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[22] <u>L'Ère Nouvelle</u>, May 5, 1848.

[23] Thomas William Allies, <u>Journal in France in 1845 and 1848 with Letters from Italy in 1847, of Things and Persons Concerning the Church and Education</u> (Brussels: J. B. de Mortier, 1850), p. 234.

[24] <u>L'Ère Nouvelle</u>, May 10, 1848.

by law."[25] Lacordaire rose immediately to defend his person and his religious garb.

It took only a few days for Lacordaire to perceive that "in a political assembly, impartiality led to impotence and isolation, that it was necessary to choose one's camp and throw oneself into it without any reserve."[26] Lacordaire had no desire to be involved that deeply in politics. He was further disturbed by the invasion of the Assembly on May 15, 1848, by a Parisian mob. Order was restored within a few hours, but the disturbance had been a severe insult to the Assembly. One thought continually presented itself to Lacordaire: "The Republic is lost."[27]

Three days after the invasion of the Assembly, Lacordaire sent in his letter of resignation. The experience proved to him that political life was beyond his power. He did not wish to combine the peaceful duties of religious life with the "difficult and severe duty of representing a people."[28] Lacordaire wrote a letter of apology to the electors of Bouches-du-Rhône, and retired from political life. In his unpublished correspondance, Lacordaire wrote: "I would never have believed that I could have so much horror of political life. I have found myself to be a

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[25] Ibid., May 13, 1848.

[26] Ibid., May 19, 1848.

[27] Ibid., May 16, 1848; Lacordaire, Testament, p. 141.

[28] L'Ère Nouvelle, May 19, 1848.

little monk, and not at all a Richelieu, a little monk loving retirement and peace."[29]

Lacordaire's life-long pursuit of Catholic and liberal ideals was crowned by his election to the Académie française on February 2, 1860, by a majority of twenty-one to fourteen votes.[30] His reception took place almost a year later, on January 24, 1861. It was the highest honor France could bestow on him. Lacordaire accepted the honor as "an extraordinary mark of homage, rendered less to his person than to the civil and religious principles to the maintenance of which he had devoted his life."[31] It was homage extended to religion in the person of a Dominican friar, the very first religious to be elected to the Académie française in the two hundred and more years of its existence.[32]

Lacordaire's liberalism had never allowed him to support the Second Empire. He was one of the few Catholics who raised his voice against the emperor from the very first days after the coup d'état of 1851. Lacordaire was not fooled by the small though numerous concessions made to the Catholics by Napoleon III. He saw in them, not

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[29]Cited in Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 444.

[30]"Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864), 72.

[31]Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 366.

[32]Ibid., p. 367.

rights guaranteed by law, but mere tolerance and favors, revocable by power.[33] It was the liberal faction in the Académie française, led by Frédéric de Falloux, that had wanted Lacordaire's election to that distinguished group. They fully intended the election of such a professed liberal to be another way of showing the emperor their displeasure at his assuming autocratic powers. When Falloux, as director of the Académie française, sought the emperor's approval of the election of Lacordaire, Napoleon III gave his sanction, but also made it clear that he found their choice a little strange and obviously not made with the intention of pleasing him.[34] The occasion of Lacordaire's reception into the Académie française on January 24, 1861, allowed the empress and the Prince Napoleon to hear the repeated applause for the two discourses which brought out facts assuredly disagreeable to the empire.[35]

Understandably, the Catholic liberals were at odds with the Second Empire. From a political stand they were powerless. Their influence on the clergy was very feeble, since most of the bishops were devoted to the government. The pope, nearly all the bishops of France, L'Univers, and even Montalembert, who exercised such great influence over

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[33]Jean Maurain, La Politique Ecclésiastique du Second Empire de 1852 à 1869 (Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1930), pp. 81-82.

[34]Émile Ollivier, L'Empire Libéral (2nd ed.; Paris: Garnier Frères, 1899), IV, 369.

[35]Ibid., V, 119.

the Catholics of France, supported Napoleon III.[36] Catholic support gradually began to wane, however. It took Montalembert but a few months after the coup d'état of 1851 to recognize and admit that he had made a grave error in supporting Louis Napoleon.

Lacordaire, seeing the helpless state of the liberal party, gave his attention more and more to his Dominican family and another subject equally dear to him, the education of youth. He had spent a good portion of his life fighting the monopoly of the University. The campaign for freedom of education was part of the Catholic revival in the nineteenth century. In order to regain the bourgeoisie to the Catholic faith, it was necessary to give their sons a Catholic education.[37] Victory came with the Falloux Law of 1850. The preceding struggle had been long and irksome.

The Charter of 1830 had promised to grant freedom of education. Before the Revolution of 1789, all education had been in the hands of the Church. When the Church was crushed throughout France, so was the educational system. Catholics had been dissatisfied ever since that time. The Constituent Assembly, the Legislative Assembly, the Convention, and the Directory had vainly tried to replace what the revolution had destroyed. The youth of France often

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[36] Maurain, Second Empire, p. 8.

[37] Georges Jacques Weill, Histoire du Catholicisme Libéral en France, 1828-1908 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1909), p. 70.

went without any form of instruction. By the end of the century, the accumulation of ruin in the intellectual order almost equalled the material ruin.[38] In 1806 Napoleon completely reorganized the educational life of France by setting up the Imperial University, a center of control for all teaching bodies of the empire. The University monopoly was never too strictly enforced. Napoleon tried to tighten the control in 1811. With the restoration of 1814, bishops were permitted to open secondary ecclesiastical schools in each department and appoint their own instructors.[39] In 1822 Bishop Frayssinous was appointed grand-master of the University and president of the royal council of public instruction. His influence, nevertheless, was limited.

The Catholic press was a powerful weapon in the struggle for liberty of education. Lamennais published articles revealing numerous scandals in the University establishments.[40] Public opinion was aroused. The campaign for liberty of teaching continued intermittently until the desired freedom was obtained in 1850.

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[38]Pierre de la Gorce, Histoire de la Seconde République Française (7th ed.; Paris: Librairie Plon, 1914), II, 260.

[39]Ross William Collins, Catholicism and the Second French Republic, 1848-1852 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923), p. 40.

[40]Fernand Mourret, S.S., A History of the Catholic Church, trans. Newton Thompson, S.T.D. (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1955), VIII, 51-52.

In 1828 a new head master of the University was appointed. Two new ordinances that sought to protect the University against the clergy appeared on June 16, 1828. In consequence, the Jesuits, who as yet belonged to an unauthorized religious congregation in France, were excluded from the teaching field.[41] In 1828 the Jesuits had twelve houses in France and had been teaching in the little seminaries.[42] Those seminaries were not exclusively for the training of future priests.

The hopes of the Catholics increased with the advent of the July Monarchy and the Charter of 1830. Article sixty-nine promised the promulgation of a law on liberty of instruction as soon as possible, and article seventy declared all contrary laws and dispositions at once abrograted.[43] The Catholics impatiently awaited the desired law. Their attitude toward the repressive education laws was aptly expressed in L'Avenir.

> How is it possible to reconcile the rights of religion with those of the University, of liberty with servitude? Apparently, like Solomon, one must cut the child in two, or make a choice. Solomon gave the child intact to its true mother, and yet the state bequeaths us no part of our children. Strange judgment![44]

At last Lacordaire, Montalembert, and De Coux,

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[41] Collins, Catholicism and the Second Republic, p.41.

[42] S. Charlety, La Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1848), Vol. V of Histoire de France Contemporaine, ed. Ernest Lavisse (10 vols.; Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1921), 326.

[43] Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 318.

[44] L'Avenir, October 17, 1830.

three editors of L'Avenir, decided to test the Charter. The prospectus for a free school of their founding appeared in L'Avenir issue of April 29, 1831. According to the Charter of 1830, stated the prospectus, France had freedom of education. If that were the case, why not use the freedom? The school was to open on Monday, May 9, 1831. It was only for those who already knew how to read and write. The three schoolmasters, as they called themselves, also agreed to take upon themselves all legal responsibilities.[45]

Classes opened as scheduled. By 3:30 P.M. of May 10, 1831, the police appeared in order to close the school. They ordered the children to leave and closed the school in the name of the law. Lacordaire, reminding the children that they were at school under the order of their parents, ordered the children to return the next day.[46] The next morning arrived. So did the children, the teachers, and the police. The children were forced out, and the teachers were ordered to present themselves to le juge d'instruction on the following Wednesday.[47]

Before the case could be tried, Montalembert's father died, and Montalembert succeeded him to the peerage. That gave him, as well as those on trial with him, the right to be tried in the Chamber of Peers, the highest

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[45] Ibid., April 29, 1831.

[46] Ibid., May 11, 1831.

[47] Ibid., May 12, 1831.

tribunal in the land. Montalembert and Lacordaire spoke in their own defense. They created a profound sensation among the audience. Lacordaire started his defense in striking language.

> Noble peers, I look about me and I am astonished. I am astonished at seeing myself on the bench of the accused, while the procurator general is on the bench of the public ministry. With what does he charge me? With having made use of a right written in the Charter and not yet put forth into law. And he recently called for the heads of four ministers by virtue of a right written in the Charter and not yet put forth into law. If he could do that, I can do the same; with this difference, that he asked for blood, and I asked for liberty to give free instruction to the children of the people.[48]

The three teachers lost their case and were forced to pay the minimum fine of one hundred francs each, but they had won a great victory in the eyes of public opinion. They had succeeded in shifting attention to Catholic grievances. The campaign against the University had a brilliant beginning. It received a serious set-back with the condemnation of L'Avenir.

Agitation for freedom of instruction increased after the trial of the three "professors." Eventually it led to the Education Law of 1833, also known as the Guizot Law. Through this law, François Guizot, the minister of public instruction, obtained for the Catholics freedom of instruction in the elementary schools. Guizot tried again in 1836 to obtain similar freedom for the secondary schools, but the bill failed to pass the Chamber of Deputies.

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[48] Ibid., Supplement to issue of September 23, 1831.

A new campaign against the University began in 1841 when Mgr. Parisis, the new archbishop of Paris, spoke very openly in favor of freedom of education, "subject only to the restrictions required by the interest of religion, of morals, and of instruction."[49] Louis Philippe did not approve of the archbishop's open avowal, but he mistrusted a University that would be too powerful. A well regulated rival would keep the University under control.

From 1841 on, the struggle over the secondary schools grew bitter and intense. In that year Villemain, the minister of public instruction, introduced a new bill, granting liberty of instruction to the secondary schools but at the same time requiring that the minor seminaries be subjected to University inspection. Of one accord, the bishops of France rose up in protest against the new invasion of their rights. The journals were filled with their protests. Confronted with such violent opposition, Villemain withdrew his bill. Public opinion remained in the Church's favor.

The Catholics had been sufficiently aroused to keep up the campaign. By 1842 fifty-six bishops of France had thrown themselves into the fight. Some were called before the courts for their attacks on the University, but each new trial only strengthened their cause.[50] Arch-

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[49] Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 321.

[50] MacCaffrey, History of the Church, I, 65.

bishop Parisis published pamphlet after pamphlet, urging the Catholics to continue their demands. He urged the bishops to take part in public and legal agitation. Louis Veuillot, an influential Catholic journalist, issued his vehement pamphlet, Lettre à M. Villemain, of which about 15,000 copies were sold in a few weeks.[51] Montalembert, the recognized leader of the laity, published an appeal on the duties of Catholics. Lacordaire, from the pulpit of Notre Dame, reminded the people of the evil influences to which young minds were subjected in state schools.

> Who was the serpent in your case? Who inflicted the first wound on your soul? Alas! A man whom you admired, perhaps a book. You opened by chance one of those books to which thought imparts its immortality; you read there doubt, mockery, hatred of God disguised as love for man. It was enough; the brilliancy of the style, and all that glory which radiates from a book, dazzled your heart. You consented to despise what your mother adored, to bend the knee before what she despised. Wherefore? Did that book love you? Did it give you proofs that it had your good at heart? No; but it was eloquent, superior to you in age, in science, and in reason. It conquered you. And nevertheless, you and I--for I do not separate myself from you in this sad history--nevertheless, we drew vanity from our defeat, and it seemed to us while surrendering ourselves, body and soul, to the seduction of one unknown, that we were about to become men.[52]

The campaign continued in a spirit of lively determination.

Villemain presented a second bill on February 2, 1844, but it was more unsatisfactory than the first. Moreover, the government tried to win the bishops' cooperation,

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[51] Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 327.

[52] "Sixty-second Conference of Notre Dame," in Thoughts and Teachings of Lacordaire (New and enl. ed.; London: Art and Book Company, 1902), pp. 211-12.

or at least their silence, by increasing the number of burses to the minor seminaries.[53] The Catholics drew closer together and strengthened their determination to obtain the desired liberty. In the early days of 1845 a "Committee for the Defense of Religious Liberty" was formed under the direction of Montalembert and with the high approval of Archbishop Parisis. The new Catholic party employed the services of L'Univers and its editor, Veuillot, to circulate their views.[54] The party was never intended to be a permanent organization. The purpose of its existence would terminate with the granting of freedom of education.

Months and even years of vain waiting wore heavily on initial enthusiasm. The campaign attempted a renewed interest in 1847, but the enthusiasm of 1844 was lacking. Immediate danger was not threatening, and a certain lethargy had overcome many of the French Catholics.[55] It took nothing less than the jolt of 1848 to rouse them to new action in defense of religious liberties.

The June insurrection of 1848 was effective in showing the clergy under a light more and more sympathetic to the people. The bitter opposition to granting the Church the right to teach youth was beginning to disappear. The

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[53]Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 327.

[54]MacCaffrey, History of the Church, I, 66.

[55]Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 420.

Catholics did not demand complete abandonment of the University; their principle objection was to the hated monopoly.[56] In December of 1848, Prince Louis Napoleon, newly elected president of the republic, offered the portfolio of ministry of public instruction to an earnest Catholic, Count Frédéric de Falloux. Falloux started work immediately for a new bill on freedom of education. Prince Napoleon, desiring the support of the Catholics, readily agreed to the proposed bill.[57]

The Falloux Bill was prepared and presented to the Legislative Assembly. Discussion on the bill began on January 14, 1850. The bill was opposed by some members of both the Catholic and non-Catholic parties. Victor Hugo raised a fear of the clerical specter once again. He was not yet willing to entrust the future of France to the clerical party. Even some Catholics protested, arguing that the episcopate and the pope should have been consulted in the preparations. They also objected to bishops sitting in the councils side by side with rabbis and Protestant ministers, fearing it would lead to religious indifference.[58] The split in the Catholic party, slightly noticeable for the last years of the campaign, was quite obvious in 1850. The division of the Catholics at that time was

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[56] L'Ère Nouvelle, July 24, 1848.

[57] Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 430.

[58] Ibid., VIII, 434.

part of the reason for the termination of the twenty years of intensified Catholic revival in France. Lacordaire, wishing to be removed from the internal strife of the Catholic party, remained aloof from the final campaign that resulted in the Falloux Bill of 1850.[59]

The bill adopted on March 15, 1850, by a vote of 399 against 237, proved very favorable to the Catholics, who had groaned for 40 years under the monopoly of lay education. From 1850 to 1852, as many as 257 Catholic establishments of secondary education were founded. In 1854 they numbered 1081, with 21,195 students. As a result, 52 state lycées were closed because of a decrease in attendance.[60] It had been a hard-won victory.

Lacordaire who had devoted so much of his time and energy in gaining liberty of education decided to make use of that freedom in a very real sense. At the age of fifty-one, Lacordaire took over the management of Sorèze. Sorèze had been a famous military collège under Benedictine management during the century preceding the Revolution of 1789. Because it had opposed the restoration government, Sorèze lost its credit and began to decline rapidly after 1830. Secular priests took it over in 1840 to prevent its falling into the hands of the Protestants. They were very happy to hand over its management in August, 1854 to Lacor-

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[59] D'Haussonville, Lacordaire, p. 174.

[60] MacCaffrey, History of the Church, I, 239.

daire and the Dominicans.[61]

Under Lacordaire's direction the school prospered. Not only did the pupils learn the academic material, but they also learned to love their religion. Lacordaire himself preached to the young men every two weeks. He took a just pride in reporting to the boys' parents at one of the annual distribution of prizes that "on their return home, all these children, without exception, will be able to join you in your prayers."[62] How different was the report prepared in earlier years on the religious condition in the state lycées!

Sorèze more than doubled its enrollment in the first few years under the Dominicans. Lacordaire's zeal for souls had diminished in scope, but not in fervor. Through the intimate intercourse of the confessional, he found yet another way to reach the souls of those entrusted to his care. His door was always open to anyone who wished to see him. It was Sorèze that was blessed with the last years of Lacordaire's earthly life.

Freedom of education was but one of the liberal ideals that Lacordaire hoped to see realized. He also campaigned vigorously for free speech and press. He strongly objected to the "slavery" imposed by the government which bound, not his hands, but his lips. In defending

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[61]"Last Days of Lacordaire," The Month, V (December, 1866), 588.

[62]Cited in Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p.499.

himself in court on charge of exciting contempt when Louis Philippe appointed bishops in 1831, Lacordaire noted:

> My hands are free, Mr. Advocate-General; but my hands are not myself. Myself is my thought, my speech, and I tell you I find it oppressed in my country. . . . Yes, you would bind my hands and it would not be of much consequence; for it would be justice or it would be violence; justice would not be oppression, and violence might be met by violence. But, if you do not bind my hands, you bind my thoughts; you do not permit me to teach, me to whom it has been said: Docete. The seal of your laws is upon my lips; when shall it be broken?[63]

Closely connected with free speech is a free press. Typical of Lacordaire's arguments for freedom of press was the article he wrote in L'Avenir on June 12, 1831. In it he pleaded with the Catholics of France to have courage to insist on their rights. He equated the struggle to a fight for truth. Lacordaire fully realized that the press could not be infallible, but he argued that neither were the authors of books, or juries, or those who censor the press.[64] He saw absolutely no justification for civil censure. "Hell exists," he said, "only because censure is impossible even to God, Who found a regime of censure still less desirable than that of hell."[65] He continued his plea to the Catholics of France to resist oppression and carry on the struggle for a free press.

> Catholics, believe me, let us leave to those who have faith only in the princes of the earth, the hopes of servitude. Let us allow them to say that all is lost

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[63] L'Avenir, Supplement to the issue of February 9, 1831.

[64] Ibid., June 12, 1831.

[65] Ibid.

> if the press be free; let them plunge into that lamentable state where they will have to choose between the destruction of order and that of reason. . . . With our crucifix upon our breast, let us pray and struggle. Days cannot undo ages; freedom will never destroy God.[66]

The struggle was carried on valiantly, but France did not gain a free press during Lacordaire's lifetime.

In 1836 Lacordaire's attention was drawn to yet another area in which religious liberty was denied. A great source of strength for the Church was destroyed when religious orders disappeared during the revolutionary era. During Lacordaire's sojourn in Rome after quitting Notre Dame for further study and preparation, he became intensely aware of the service he could perform for Christendom by resurrecting one of the religious orders. The thought left him hesitant and weak. A brief, inward glance sufficed to tell Lacordaire that he did not measure up to his idea of a founder or restorer of an order. "When I looked upon those giants of Christian piety and strength, my soul sank within me. . . . The simple thought of sacrificing my liberty to a rule and to superiors terrified me."[67] Independence had been almost sacred to Lacordaire. It was not easy to start life anew at the age of forty. It meant the sacrifice of a certain present for a future wrapped in darkness and danger. Even if Lacordaire succeeded in restoring religious orders, accusations of ambition could be

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Lacordaire, Testament, p. 91.

made. If he failed, he would pass for a fool.[68]

Lacordaire further considered the internal difficulties he would have to face as a restorer once he had gathered men together. He reflected on the differences of character and personality, of sanctity, of the religious enthusiasm of some and the coldness of others. Bodily needs would also present difficulties. Lacordaire had no financial means of buying large houses for his proposed religious congregation, or of providing for the daily necessities of life. He questioned the reasonableness of entrusting the entire responsibility to divine providence.[69] But that was not all. Exterior obstacles also had to be faced. Rome would hardly assist him in a plan of that nature. To Rome, Lacordaire was a liberal orthodox, but still a liberal, a title customarily including the enemies of Rome. The best Lacordaire could expect of Rome was tolerance. Could he expect even that much of the French government?

Lacordaire fully realized the difficulties that awaited him in France.

> We live in times when the man who wishes to become poor and the servant of all, finds more difficulty in so doing than he would in building up a fortune or acquiring a name. Almost all the powers of Europe, whether they are kings or journalists, partisans of absolute monarchy or of liberty, are leagued against the voluntary sacrifice of self. Never was

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[68]Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, pp. 206-207.

[69]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 91.

> the world in such dread of a bare-footed man with a woolen cassock on his back.[70]

The government of 1830 was evidently very little disposed to allow religious orders to spring up again on French soil. The Jesuits had been permitted to remain, but they led a precarious existence and were constantly at the mercy of public opinion. Public opinion was the last and most difficult obstacle that Lacordaire would have to surmount. It was not easy to convince the people of France that religious orders of the nineteenth century would not be the powerful associations of the eighteenth century. France feared them to such an extent that all right of association had been forbidden.[71] The prospects were not very encouraging to Lacordaire.

The temptation to put the entire idea aside was very strong, but further reflection made Lacordaire wonder if he would not be held culpable for rejecting such ideas through timidity. He postponed a final decision. The next question that presented itself was: if he decided on the work of restoration, which order would he choose? All things seemed to point to the Order of St. Dominic, but Lacordaire hesitated when faced with the austerities of the order. Still undecided, Lacordaire returned to France

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[70]Henri-Dominique Lacordaire, Mémoire pour le rétablissement en France de l'ordre des frères prêcheurs, in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), I, 3.

[71]Lacordaire, Testament, pp. 91-92.

toward the end of 1837, preached at Metz during the winter, and then went to Paris. He revealed his thoughts on religious life to his intimate friends, but received encouragement from no one.[72] Mgr. de Quélen was the first to show a real interest. Grace finally enabled Lacordaire to decide. "I at last made up my mind, but it was a bloody sacrifice. Whilst it had cost me nothing to leave the world to enter the priesthood, it cost me a great deal to add to the priesthood the burden of religious life."[73] Once his consent was given, Lacordaire had no regrets; he boldly faced the trials that awaited him.

During the summer of 1838 Lacordaire spent his time at Solesmes, studying the constitutions of the Order of St. Dominic and making his plans in solitude and prayer. His hope of finding five young men to join him and return with him to Rome by May of 1839 was fulfilled. The little French community made its novitiate at La Quercia. After making their profession of vows on April 12, 1840, the newly professed religious resided at the cloister of St. Sabina.

The time had come for Lacordaire to prepare the French nation for the re-establishment of the Dominicans in France. He left Rome on November 30, 1840, wearing the religious habit that France had not seen for fifty years.

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[72] Ibid., pp. 97-98.

[73] Ibid., p. 98.

He traveled through an astonished but friendly France.[74] He had won his cause before the court of public opinion. The government officials, fearing Lacordaire's popularity, hesitated to enforce the laws prohibiting religious foundations. Nevertheless, trouble came to the new community, but from quite an unexpected source. Lacordaire preached in France throughout the winter of that year, and then returned to Rome, taking with him five new recruits.[75] In all, twelve new members were waiting to receive the habit of St. Dominic. Lacordaire transferred the young community to the cloister of St. Clement in order to make a retreat preparatory to reception of the habit. During the retreat a message was brought to Lacordaire from the papal secretary of state. The community was ordered to disperse. The aspiring young men were told to go to some other place of their choosing if they wished to receive the habit. and make their novitiate. Lacordaire was stunned and deeply disappointed by the harsh, unexpected command. Nevertheless, he immediately arranged to carry out the order on the following day. The next morning, however, a second message arrived. Half of the community was ordered to return to La Quercia; the other half was ordered to go to the convent of Bosco in Piedmont. Lacordaire alone was to remain at Rome. He later learned that calumnious reports from his

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[74]Mourret, History of the Church, VIII, 307.

[75]Lacordaire, Testament, p. 113.

adversaries in France had reached Rome and temporarily put the small community under suspicion. The suggestion had been made that Lacordaire planned to resurrect the teachings of L'Avenir in his religious community. Lacordaire's filial and immediate submission reassured Rome. Community life was not resumed, however, until the members were reunited in their first religious house in France.[76] There, in spite of the forbidding laws, Lacordaire tranquilly re-established his order, first at Nancy in 1843, then at Chalais near Grenoble, and finally at Paris in November of 1849. The prestige of the orator forced the enemies of monasticism to silence.[77]

In 1841 Lacordaire reappeared in the pulpit of Notre Dame with his Dominican garb and shaven head. On his first appearance in that grand pulpit as a religious, Lacordaire spoke on "The Vocation of the French Nation."[78] The civil authorities were uneasy, but Lacordaire's popularity prevailed. He kept his post at Notre Dame for the next ten years, until the coup d'état of 1851.

Lacordaire's work of restoration was gradually assuming a permanent nature. The novitiate had been moved from Rome to France. New houses were opened. On September 15, 1850, Lacordaire signed the act which restored the

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[76] Ibid., p. 114.

[77] Henri Lacordaire, Pages Choisies (Paris: Artheme Fayard, 1921), p. 19 of introduction.

[78] Lacordaire, Testament, p. 112.

French province of the Order of St. Dominic to all its ancient rights and privileges.[79] Père Lacordaire was the first Prior-Provincial.

New challenges were met as administrator of a growing community. Lacordaire was not the most practical administrator but was dearly loved by his subjects who re-elected him in September of 1858. By that time Lacordaire had created the Third Order of St. Dominic. Fasting and perpetual abstinence did not sustain a man in the exhausting labors of the teaching profession. Gathering for prayer at certain fixed times also interferred with the professional duties of those assigned to instruct the young. Teaching was therefore left to the Third Order members who lived under a more flexible rule.[80] Sixteen members of the newly created Third Order gathered with Lacordaire at Sorèze where he labored until his death in 1861.

The work of restoration was complete. In re-establishing the Order of St. Dominic, Lacordaire opened the door to other religious bodies which made use of the toleration he had won.[81] The Church in France again could benefit by the work of religious orders. The right of association was no longer denied. Another liberal victory had been won.

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[79] Chocarne, Inner Life of Lacordaire, p. 465.

[80] Ibid., p. 481.

[81] "Lacordaire and the Order of St. Dominic," The Month, V (October, 1866), 343.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION: AN APPRAISAL AND CRITIQUE OF LACORDAIRE

A life-time of incredible energy had been spent for the Catholic cause. No matter what the cost, Lacordaire had not spared himself in his work in the Catholic revival. When Lacordaire had presented himself to Mgr. de Quélen in 1824 to request admission into the seminary, the prelate reminded the brilliant young lawyer that, whereas he had formerly defended worldly interests at the bar, his job in the future would be to defend eternal interests.[1] Lacordaire devoted the rest of his life to doing just that.

In 1830 the Church in France was still attempting to re-create the close union that had existed between Church and state in 1789. Hopes for such a union were particularly high during the years of the restoration government. But the papal secretary of state, Ercole Cardinal Consalvi, in spite of all his concordats, could not restore the bond. The way of life that had made such unity possible, the manners, the tastes and ideas, no longer existed. A canon lawyer could have resolved a

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[1] Reuben Parsons, Studies in Church History (New York: Pustet, 1898), V, 275.

a political or social breach, but this was essentially a question of a new culture that had replaced the old.[2] The union of 1789 was no longer possible.

The Catholic liberals in France had recognized the dangers inherent in the Church-state relationship of the restoration government. They rightly feared that the Church would pay dearly for the privileges she so eagerly accepted. The bitter attacks on the Church during the Revolution of 1830 instigated in the small group of Catholic liberals a whole-hearted and determined effort to separate the Church from the throne. A few months later, France was stunned by the opening of the spirited and effective L'Avenir movement, a movement that marked the beginning of twenty years of intense Catholic revival.

The story of those twenty years cannot rightly be separated from the story of Lacordaire. His influence on the Catholic interests of that time was larger, more popular, and more decisive than that of any of his contemporaries.[3] Even Lacordaire's critics recognized the impact made by his dynamic personality. But Lacordaire had much more to offer than a magnetic personality, which at best could produce only vague and transitory results. The Church in 1848 was ample proof of a work well done.

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[2] A. Dru, "Two Dimensional History: Lamennais I and Lamennais II," The Tablet, CCXV (July 1, 1961), 626.

[3] G.P. Gooch, "Lacordaire," The Contemporary Review, CXCVII (June, 1960), 310.

The riotous, destructive mobs halted in their pillage of the Tuileries to pay homage to the Crucifix. The scorn and disrespect for religion had disappeared. Priests could again appear in public in their clerical garb without being ridiculed and jeered. The religious habit, after an absence of a half century, was once more a familiar sight. Old prejudices against the clerical party had also disappeared. The Church was recognized as an independent power rather than as a weapon of the state.[4] The common people, who had found the Church sympathetic and interested in their problems, signified their gratitude and trust by choosing fourteen ecclesiastics, and many more lay Catholics, to represent them in the National Assembly of 1848. Public opinion, more sovereign than the king himself,[5] had been won over to the Church's favor. Without the support of public opinion it was futile to attempt any accomplishment in France.

Changes of such scope and magnitude did not all evolve from the activities of one man, even of a man as energetic as Lacordaire. Others, such as Chateaubriand, Lamennais, and De Maistre had prepared the way with their writings. Montalembert worked side by side with Lacordaire much of the time. As a layman he defended the Church in

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[4]Philip Herbert Spencer, Politics of Belief in Nineteenth-Century France (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1954), p. 76.

[5]Adrien Dansette, Histoire religieuse de la France contemporaine (Paris: Flammarion, 1948), I, 326.

civil affairs. Père Gustave Ravignan, S.J., also a notable preacher of Notre Dame, did much to guide souls to a more perfect Christian life. Frédéric Ozanam performed a great service to the Church through his Society of St. Vincent de Paul. A gratifying number of the bishops, priests, and lay Catholics joined in the work of the revival.

Yet Lacordaire remained the central figure. His eloquence was unsurpassed. He instilled an admiration and love for Catholicism in the intellectual classes. His fame travelled abroad. From the United States, a country so dear to Lacordaire because of its liberal ideals, he was regarded as the master-spirit of the great movement in France.[6] He inspired a belief in the possibility of reconciling religion with modern society. Admirers from England also followed Lacordaire's brilliant career. He impressed one of them as a true friar who, garbed in the white Dominican robes, looked like a warrior of the Church, "armed at all points for the encounter with heresy."[7] John Cardinal Newman, too, praised the work of Lacordaire; he admired and shared his liberal ideals.[8]

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[6]Orestes A. Brownson, "Lacordaire and Catholic Progress," in The Works of Orestes A. Brownson, ed. Henry F. Brownson, XX (Detroit: T. Nourse, 1887), 258.

[7]Thomas William Allies, Journal in France in 1845 and 1848 with Letters from Italy in 1847, of Things and Persons Concerning the Church and Education (Brussels: J.B. de Mortier, 1850), p. 74.

[8]John Henry Cardinal Newman, Apologia Pro Vita Sua, Being a History of His Religious Opinions, ed Charles Frederick Harrold (New ed.; New York: Longmans, Green & Co.,

Lacordaire started his work in the Catholic revival as a journalist. His vigorous and picturesque style had great appeal. His fearless exposure of injustice and oppression aroused the Catholics from their lethargy and forced the civil authorities to re-examine the existing laws. One of Lacordaire's major objectives in his literary works was to inspire in his readers a love and respect for the Church. This was particularly true of his more extensive publications. In these his style changes, portraying warmth and deep feeling rather than the combatant spirit that characterized his articles in the daily columns of L'Avenir.

Lacordaire's fame rose to its greatest heights, not as a result of his journalism, but rather, as a result of his conférences de Notre Dame. His eloquence was so captivating that on one occasion the audience spontaneously began to applaud his words. Lacordaire was affected by their response, but nevertheless, he begged them to "obey the constant tradition of Christianity, which is not to reply to the word of God except by the silence of love and the immobility of respect."[9]

Lacordaire's immediate preparation for the con-

1947), pp. 259-60; Henry Tristram, "The Correspondence between J.H. Newman and the Comte de Montalembert," The Dublin Review, CCXXII (Spring, 1949), 118-38.

[9]"Cinquantième conférence de Notre Dame," in Oeuvres de R. P. Henri-Dominique Lacordaire (Paris: Librairie Poussielgue Frères, 1886), III, 561.

férences was solemn but relaxed. He followed a special program on the days of his conférences. His entire mornings were spent in profound meditation. He breakfasted alone. If the weather permitted, he walked for a time in the garden, enjoying nature and contemplating the beautiful works of God. At eleven o'clock he started out for Notre Dame. On his return after the conférence, he was exhausted and fatigued, but his soul was "still burning and overflowing with faith, love,and eloquence."[10] He then retired once more to his room until he had regained his strength. He rarely spoke of his conférences. His fear of becoming proud of his triumphs at Notre Dame often led him to scourge his body and make open avowals of his past faults. Lacordaire was a humble, austere apostle, capable of inspiring in his listeners a new life because he himself was in such close contact with the very Fountain of all Life. From the pulpit he reached out to unknown numbers of souls. He inspired an admiration for the Church in men who before had no use for so archaic an institution. Yet, an orator's fame is essentially of the present. His voice, his character and personal appearance were all part of the sermon. A printed oration has been compared to a dried flower that retains the substance but has lost the perfume and knows only a faded color.[11] The printed texts

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[10] Chocarne, O.P., The Inner Life of the Very Reverend Père Lacordaire, trans. from the French (Dublin: William B. Kelley, 1867), p. 336.

[11] "Lacordaire," Quarterly Review, CXVI (July, 1864),71.

of Lacordaire's conférences have preserved the substance, but the orator's delivery is missing. In spite of that lack, the conférences were published in the contemporary journals of France. They have been translated into other languages. They have passed through numerous editions.[12]

Lacordaire brought to the pulpit of Notre Dame a warmth and sincerity, a brilliance that France had lacked for many years. He also brought his short-comings to the pulpit. Lacordaire had studied a great deal of theology to supplement his seminary training, but he was not a professed theologian. He made use of much rhetoric and an abundance of words.[13] Lacordaire's historical references in his preaching, as well as in his writing, were not flawless. He has been accused of never revising the history he had learned in his early schooling, of using "bogus history for purposes of serious argument or of edification."[14] Yet Lacordaire gave the French people what they needed at that time. They delighted in his virtues and

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[12]Not only the conférences de Notre Dame, but also many of those he gave throughout the rest of France were published widely. The conférences were published in 1857 as a part of the complete works of Lacordaire. They continued to be published independently, with some collections having as many as nine editions. The conférences, as well as his other more important works, were published in so many different forms, and repeated in various collections, that it would be very difficult to state an exact number of editions for any of them.

[13]Lancelot C. Sheppard, "Lacordaire, the Reconciler," The Tablet, CCXV (November 18, 1961), 1100.

[14]Nigel J. Abercrombie, "Lacordaire," The Wiseman Review, CCXXXV (Fall, 1961), 252.

preferred to overlook his defects. Lacordaire never claimed to be an historian. From the vast field of history, Lacordaire borrowed illustrations for his conférences. He was interested only in the great names of history, in the scenes of grandeur, of striking contrasts, in the rise and fall of empires. The details of history did not serve his purpose as an orator who sought less to provide proofs than to create a sympathetic attitude of mind.

Lacordaire accomplished much through his mission of apologetic teaching. His great work as a religious founder and restorer has also been evidenced throughout the years. It was a portion of his work in the revival that received Lacordaire's attention for more than twenty years of his life.

Lacordaire's last years were saddened by a split in the Catholic party in 1850. The united efforts that had been used to fight the oppressors were, after 1850, often directed against the opposing ranks within the Catholic party. The breach in the party came to a climax over the Education Law of 1850. The Catholics were again divided over the question of the coup d'état of 1851.[15] Most of the Catholics supported the new government. The few influential voices that had protested were gradually reduced to silence. Prior to 1850, much had been gained for liberty and for the Church. It was painful for Lacor-

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[15]James MacCaffrey, History of the Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century (St. Louis: B. Herder Co., 1909), I, 241.

daire to see the interests of the Church compromised by the very ones who pretended to defend them. He saw the clergy, in an excessive zeal, increase their demands of the new sovereign, Louis Napoleon, who was willing to concede small favors in order to win the support of the Catholic Church.[16] The Catholics loudly proclaimed the new emperor, secretly hoping for still more favors. Neither the king nor the Catholics were entirely sincere. The emperor, trying to reproduce in himself the popular image of Napoleon I, "would not forget that the head of his dynasty was the restorer of the altars; and he would be unfaithful to the traditions of his family if he would not, at the beginning of his reign, shower the Church with his favors."[17] Once his power was firmly established and Catholic support was no longer essential, Napoleon III quickly dropped the role of a beneficent friend of the Church.

On the other hand, the Catholics, as a measure of expediency, exaggerated their praise and recognition of the king. Undoubtedly, their praise was not all flattery. Some of the Catholics believed that they were witnessing the dawn of a glorious era for the Church. Some years later, Mgr. Pie, a valiant defender of the early days of

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[16] Pierre de La Gorce, Histoire du Second Empire (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1899-1905), II, 132.

[17] Ibid.

the empire, acknowledged the error into which he and his colleagues had fallen. "In 1852 France was in so great need of a Charlemagne that it is possible to pardon her for having wished with all her might to see a Charlemagne in Napoleon."[18] The insincerity on the part of both the Catholics and the emperor could not continue indefinitely. Much of the progress made from 1830 to 1850 was sacrificed, partly because of the dissension among the Catholics, and partly because of the bargaining carried on with the new emperor.[19]

At the beginning of the Second Empire, Lacordaire withdrew from his public career and devoted his time and energy to the religious order he had re-established on French soil. With some of his Third Order members he worked quietly at Sorèze, building up in the youthful minds of his students a deep, sincere love for God and for France.

France gave Lacordaire formal recognition of his greatness by electing him to the Académie française. It was an honor, not sought, but surely merited. His death on November 21, 1861, brought an end to his labors, but the fruits of those labors are still evident today.

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[18]Cited in La Gorce, Second Empire, II, 139.

[19]Spencer, Politics of Belief, p. 110.

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