
A CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT THE JEWISH QUESTION

BY

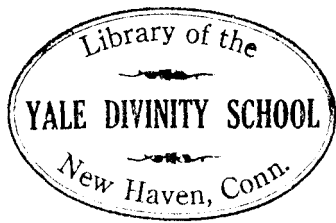
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FOREWORD

This essay is the development of a lecture given in Paris on February 5, 1938, at the *Théâtre des Ambassadeurs*, under the auspices of the *Groupes Chrétienté*, and afterwards delivered by the author, with some additions which new events required, before the American public in New York, on December 14, 1938, at the Cosmopolitan Club, under the auspices of the National Conference of Jews and Christians.

I am indebted to Mr. A. S. Oko, Dr. Emmanuel Chapman and Dr. Harry McNeill, for the revision they have made of the English text, and I here express my sincere gratitude to them, as well as to the publishers, who have been kind enough to publish this small book, revised and augmented according to a situation which is still in a state of flux.

PARIS, April 5, 1939

A CHRISTIAN LOOKS AT THE JEWISH QUESTION

I should like to speak, in this short essay, of the Jewish question and the situation of the Jews in the world of today. I shall treat this vast and distressing topic, conscious of my own inadequacy, but at least with all the insight which my reason and my faith can convey, and I shall treat it with that spirit of independence which we are determined to defend as our last possession.

I shall speak first of the special problems connected with situations in certain countries, out of which anti-Semitism is making capital; then of the dispersion of Israel from the viewpoint of its divine significance, and at the same time, of the problem of anti-Semitism considered in its spiritual essence.

In a third section, I shall deal briefly with factual questions of particularly grave urgency, that is to say, of the tragic situation in which the Jews at present find themselves in certain parts of Europe.

I

SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM

Let us consider, as briefly as possible, the concrete problems which make the Jewish question particularly acute, not so much among us, but in those countries which may be put into one of two categories: countries with a Jewish minority of considerable size, and countries, like Germany, where the great catastrophe following the war has been primarily diverted onto the heads of the Jews.

Countries with a Large Jewish National Minority

In countries with a large Jewish national minority, it is obvious that the presence of an ethnic mass with its own traditions, schools and tongue, creates a special problem concerning civil life and the general welfare of the State. This is true even in a country like Poland, which formerly welcomed the Jews with respect, and on several occasions invited them to furnish it with a middle class of artisans and traders, and in whose national culture the Jewish rôle has been considerable. And this problem is more or less seriously complicated when, to the

long-established Jewish population of a country, is added a wave of more recent immigrants. As a matter of fact, the figures of Polish and Rumanian anti-Semites regarding these more recent immigrations seem considerably exaggerated. Nevertheless, the problem exists, simply as a particular case of the problem of national minorities, whose fate in contemporary Europe is often so cruel. In certain circumstances, especially where the Jews do not fit into the political scheme of the community, it can become extremely irritating.

But I maintain that anti-Semitism *makes impossible* any solution of the concrete difficulties encountered in such cases. Not only does it falsify by exaggeration the factual data, but it removes the preliminary conditions required for any practical solution. For specific solutions are conceivable only in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and collaboration, and the disease of anti-Semitism destroys the state of mind necessary in the very first place for such understanding on both sides; on the one, directly, and on the other by the passions of protest and resentment which it provokes in response, so that exasperation and misunderstand-

ing, like reciprocal evils, grow irremediably in the minds of both parties.

Instead of offering proper political solutions to problems of a political order, anti-Semitism, even that so-called political anti-Semitism of which I am speaking at the moment, brings to bear on these problems already falsified beyond recognition, solutions that are themselves false: laws of discrimination and measures of persecution inducing or designed to induce total emigration, which is, moreover, impossible.

It is not simply a confession of low vitality for a State to resort to the extermination of certain levels of its population which it deems itself incapable of adapting to the service of the commonwealth. It means also the preparation of future hardships because it signifies the lowering, by just so much, of internal energies, whose positive expression might have overcome those crises which receive only an apparent cure from a surgical operation not even aseptic but, in fact, infected with hate and injustice.

For the justification of such false or illusory solutions, so-called political anti-Semitism employs a

set of arguments which have no rational validity, but which have great emotional force, and which slip furtively over into racial anti-Semitism. Indeed, from recent Jewish immigrants whom alone it first pretends to attack, it extends little by little to Jews long established in the land, and to assimilated Jews, even to converted Jews; in short, to Jews as such, against whom it finally raises the racial myth. Let us say a few words about these arguments, which anti-Semitic propaganda is trying to popularize universally.

The Jews, it is said, crowd into a certain number of lucrative professions, notably the so-called liberal professions. Let them be driven out! That will mean a certain percentage of competitors out of the way. There is the danger, however, that they will be replaced by other competitors, springing from the undesirable multiplication of humanity — even of non-Jewish humanity — who will thus threaten, dear anti-Semites, by their baneful existence, not only your honest livelihood but also your innate sense of justice and of unselfish, spiritual, Western values. Into the bargain, it is plain that the Jews, unless one wants them all to die of

hunger, must earn their living in some calling, and naturally they will be more numerous in those which suit them best. The world will forgive a natural irritation with successful competitors, provided it stays within reason; but what arises here is clan hatred. Wherever the Jews are they will be considered superfluous. What is really being denied them is purely and simply the right to exist.

Let us pass by those voluntary agreements which, in a really organic (pluralist) régime, could be reached with the Jewish community.* If you want to free certain professions of the Jewish influx, the best thing would be to endeavor to man them yourselves by demonstrating more working intelligence and diligence than the Jews, and by fighting, through legitimate professional organization, the abuses of free competition, whatever their source.

In this way competition between Jews and non-Jews would stimulate a raising of the cultural level, whereas recourse to the brutal practice of the *numerus clausus*, let alone the *numerus nullus*, equally humiliating for non-Jews and for Jews, tends in itself to lower the level.

* See further pages 34-35.

It is also said that Jews are given to usury, monopoly, white slavery, and pornographic literature. Thus they appear to be the pernicious tempters of native populations, whose Christian ardor and virtues are painted for us by our novelists, newspaper gossip columns, and police-court reports. Because of their press and publications, the Jews are responsible for the immorality sweeping over the populace. The Jews go in for dishonest political activities; they are, of course, Communists, their extensive rôle in the ranks of ultra-right terrorist organizations not yet having been exposed.

“The Jews” — it is very natural for a man, especially some literary man or businessman on whom one or two Jews have played a shabby trick, or who has noticed among the large number of questionable personalities which life has placed upon his path, a few with Semitic profiles among the many unclassifiable — it is so natural for a man to say, not “*a Jew*,” or “*three Jews*,” or “*ten Jews*” with whom I have had dealings are this or that, but “*the Jews*” (of whom there are 16 million in the world), “*the Jews*” are this or that. It is so natural, — but it is hardly rational.

These summary turns of speech lead naturally to the worst of sophistries. "The Jews," runs the anti-Semitic contention, commit such and such crimes. What sense is there in attributing to an entire community the individual faults of *some* of its members? If, moreover, certain social evils, such as usury in some agricultural countries, are, as a result of national historical conditions, attributable especially to the Jews, in the case of other social evils which the anti-Semitic argument blames on "the Jews," non-Jews have revealed themselves as brilliant competitors, not to speak of still further categories of social evils (such as alcoholism, crimes of violence, etc.), in which non-Jews clearly eclipse the Jews. Evil is done not by "*the Jews*," but by *some* Jews, and also by *some* non-Jews. What is the use of burdening one's conscience by transgressing, in the case of the Jews, the elementary rules of law and of civilized life? The social body must defend itself energetically against evils facing it, against a slanderous and corrupt press, against degrading publications, yes! The only effective way is to crush, if necessary by Draconian laws, all offenses and abuses, no matter

who has committed them; but not to strike a mass of innocents for the offenses and abuses committed by some of their brethren, and by others than their brethren, and which would always find votaries even if all the Jews were exterminated.

Finally, as for the propagation of false ideas and false moral maxims, there would be reason to praise heaven if "*the Jews*" (*some Jews*) were the only ones responsible! We know very well that this is not the case, and that in the grand total the contribution made by non-Jews is far greater than that of the Jews. Mr. Julius Streicher and the instigators of pogroms are not Jews, and thus they spoil a powerful confirmation of their own argument, which imputes to the Jewish race all the scourges of humanity. Messrs. Rosenberg, Goebbels, and Hitler, and the other armed disrupters of Western civilization are not Jews; Lenin was not one, nor is Stalin; and even our vociferous French novelist, Mr. Céline, who before massacring people in bad books, wrote long ago *Voyage au bout de la Nuit*, is no Jew, although he seems to have journeyed to the end of the night only to find there the Protocols of Zion which awaited him, deposited in

those filthy shadows by the former Tsarist police.

I just spoke of the Protocols of Zion. Everybody is aware that in Germany the Hitler propaganda machine makes systematic use of this alleged document; everybody also knows that this is the most impudent of forgeries, as has been proved by all those who have seriously studied the question, among others the prominent Jesuit, Father Pierre Charles. If there remain orators and publicists who still dare to call upon this forgery to spread anti-Semitic legends, one must believe that they have lost respect for their own intelligence and that of those who listen to them.

To charge the Jews with the sins of Bolshevism, to identify Judaism and Communism, is a classic theme of Hitlerite propaganda, which sometimes throws in Catholicism for good measure. The theme is echoed with admirable discipline by the anti-Semites of all lands. I do not believe that in general the Jewish spirit, which the same mighty brains reproach with bearing an anarchic fever for liberty, easily adapts itself to Communist conformism. What is true is that in some countries a section of Jewish youth may find itself driven to rev-

olutionary extremism by the force of persecution. Those primarily responsible, in such cases, are those who make their life unbearable. Thus, in a general way, those primarily responsible for supreme disorder are the false men of order, Jews and non-Jews, who, uniformly preferring injustice to disorder, base order on a fundamental, though at first concealed, disorder, thus offending the very principle of order and the Author of all nature.

We, as much, or more than the anti-Semites (whose fury generally vents itself only on poor Jews), detest the hegemony of banks and finance, whether Jewish or non-Jewish, and no less the rule of money in any form. And here it is the materialistic structure and spirit of the modern world which horrifies us, whoever the individuals, Jews or non-Jews, who find themselves, generally without personal fault, involved in this inhuman structure. We know, moreover, that the great mass of Jews is made up neither of bankers nor of financiers, but of a population struggling against every form of urban poverty.

We do not underestimate the gravity of the great economic difficulties of our epoch and of the general

economic crisis of civilization. We say that it is not by hounding the Jews, but by transforming the economic and social structures, which are the real cause of those difficulties and of that crisis, that we can effectively remedy them. Anti-Semitism diverts men from the real tasks confronting them. It diverts them from the true causes of their woes — which lie simultaneously in our egoistic and hypocritical hearts and in the social structures causally interrelated to our moral wretchedness — anti-Semitism diverts men from the true causes of their sufferings to throw them against an innocent multitude, like a worthless crew which, instead of combatting the tempest, would throw overboard some of their companions, until finally they all are attempting to choke each other and set fire to the vessel on which humanity lost in dreams has taken passage.

The German Drama

I have spoken of so-called political anti-Semitism and of the soil on which it falls in some countries with a large Jewish national minority. As a matter of fact, it is the example and contagion of German racism which for several years has distorted and

aggravated, *bewitched* as it were, the conflict in such countries.

A pathetic and unfortunate nation, longing to feel itself possessed of a common soul, the German people is also cast in a historic drama to which nobody with a sense of human solidarity can remain indifferent. Why must it, drawn by one of those magic melodies against which it has no power of resistance, today seek self-realization by trampling on Jews and Christians, — self-realization, and doom? This is not the place in which to expatiate on this drama. I will mention here only what relates to the Jews: if it be true, as the Jewish sociologist, Mr. Arthur Ruppin, says, and as Karl Marx said with greater violence, that there is a sort of affinity and interrelation between the Jewish spirit of adventure and the capitalist spirit of adventure, and if it be true that nowhere is Jewry more at home than in a capitalist civilization; * if, on the other hand, it be true that Germany, and above all post-war Ger-

* Whether we consider free competition, or interest paid on money loans, or price conceived as the result of discussion rather than as the expression of the objective value of a commodity ("just price"), we see ideas related to Jewish (and more generally to Oriental) economic conceptions, which the change from the mediæval guild régime to the capitalist régime rendered predominant.

many, is the European country which has best known the wretched euphoria and the spiritual vertigo of a disoriented capitalism, one is less astonished by the paradox that, in Germany, an unprecedented tempest of hate has suddenly risen against the Jews, not to the extent that the Jews remained aloof but, on the contrary, to the extent that they became assimilated, substantially assimilated to the German community to the point of playing a major rôle in German culture and literature as such, and of sometimes forgetting the Jewish people and the woes of Israel. It is as though modern Germany sought, in her innermost being, to punish her own bad conscience in the person of the Jews, a stupefied scapegoat who cried out in vain: "But I live only for the power and glory of Germany; I worship you alone, German greatness and German force in the service of a civilization entirely dedicated to the conquest of power."

The intensely and morbidly industrialized German civilization, deeply penetrated by the spirit of modern capitalism, after a crushing military defeat, arrived at general moral bankruptcy together with frightful material misery of the poor classes.

In this people the poisons of humiliation have been nurtured and stored up. This civilization, neither finding nor even seeking an inner creative principle of a fundamentally new order, chose, instead of the Communist revolutionary catastrophe toward which its internal logic drove it, another revolutionary catastrophe which at least saved the State while losing everything else. It is not at all surprising that, entering thereafter upon a general régime in which illusion, myth and prestige replace and devour, as in an operation of black magic, the forms and functioning of real causes, this régime should instinctively give a special place to the anti-Jewish myth, which endows any fool with a means of explaining the misfortunes of history and of shifting on to somebody *guilty of everything*, the burden of his anguish and of his unhappy memories.

But if what I have just said is accurate, there is reason to believe that the relations between Germany and her Jews are more complex than appears. For neither the former nor the latter has changed — I mean really and basically. However persecuted, however humiliated, however abominably trodden under foot they may be, the majority of German

Jews continues to cherish Germany, at least the Germany of the 19th century. As they weep by the waters of Babylon, it is not Zion which they recall, but pre-Führer Berlin, the Berlin of great capitalist adventure, of sublime intercourse with a worldly prince who had not yet donned the brown shirt of racial austerity. And, on the other hand, the Germany of Hitler, in seeking to reject Israel, has embraced the very worst of Israel. I mean that sentiment of racial pride which is, in some carnal Jews, the naturalistic corruption of the supernatural idea of divine election. The racists are indebted to the Old Testament, as the Communists are to the New. It is the Scriptures of the Jews from which the former drew, only to corrupt it, the idea of a chosen people, a people of God; it is the Gospel from which the latter received, only to denature it, the idea of universal salvation and human brotherhood.

What I have just said must be well understood. I do not reproach the German Jews, as some have so inopportunately, because they have not profited by Nazi persecution to be converted to Christianity. I realize that they have not emulated their ancestors

of the time of the prophets, have not sufficiently understood the cry of their suffering to turn toward *their God*, and to remember *their origins*, which were in Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Whether in Germany or out of it, they seem to have offered as a response to the terrible scourge which German racism has brought on the Jews, nothing but quite justifiable complaints and justifiable indignation, supplemented only by a call for an American boycott of German products and an appeal to international humanitarian literature. But that impulse of the heart which penetrates to the secret roots of history, that resurrection of spiritual forces in the face of which persecutors cannot stand and always end by admitting what they are, a bit of straw and blood-stained mud, can it be that Israel, surprised and perhaps paralyzed by its rationalism, no longer knows how to, or dares to put its trust in such a power?

Jews and Christians are curiously at one here. When they think of the state of affairs in Germany before 1933, are they not led to ask whether here, as in other lands, but with more immediately tragic consequences, there was not in too many of them

a lack of a certain humbly human compassion regarding those elementary realities whose terrible importance for our times has recently been indicated? Each in their respective way privileged by divine adoption, did they not both too tranquilly carry on *their business*, their business of earth and their business of heaven? Did they not fail to observe with sufficient sorrow the countenance of men and of the world degenerating before their very eyes, did they not fail to live close enough to the misery of men and of the world?

It is, after all, a new face, the somberly ardent face of pagan might which is revealing itself in men. I do not wish to speak of these matters without paying tribute of admiration and brotherly love to the Christians of Germany, Catholics and Protestants alike, who suffer persecution like the Jews, and who are defying all dangers to defend against blasphemous rage both the Gospel and the Old Testament. Perhaps it is not commonly known, but the fact is that a great many priests are now suffering — and frightfully — in concentration camps. The bond of suffering in persecution has led both Christians and Jews to a consciousness of the fun-

damental bond uniting men, if not in their doctrine and rule of life, at least in that single origin which fashions them all in the image of God. The future will show what human history has been able to gain from such an experience.

But this essay is concerned particularly with the Jews. It is against them that racist neo-paganism first tried its strength. Its profound desire is undoubtedly, if that be possible, to drive every Jew out of the country. But since this cannot be done, the solution has been decided upon of depriving them of political existence and of walling them up in a ghetto certainly more cruel than the ghetto of the Middle Ages, since men are now confined not because of a difference of faith and religion, against which human will and the grace of God always have recourse, but because of an irremediable difference of blood. Here we have racial anti-Semitism. To justify itself, it is not content to regard the Jews as a people, or as a race in the ethico-historical sense. They must be a race in the biological and anthropological sense of the word, and, at the same time, racism must become an ideology, a science, and a religion.

The truth is that the Jews are not a race in the biological sense of the word. We know that in man's present stage of development, there is no group of any importance, even that most favored in this respect, which is pure in race. The Jews are far from being an exception as mixtures of blood have in the course of history been as significant among them as among other human groups. Eminent scientists have concluded that in man's present historic stage, the idea of race corresponds to no anatomical-physiological reality, to no unity of "blood," but merely to types of "mentalities" produced by historic and social conditions. Its significance rests on extremely complex historical factors (of a psycho-ethico-sociological character), formed in the course of time rather than on hereditary characteristics transmitted by blood.

Not that one need deny the existence of such characteristics, nor the importance of such a science as genetics, and of such a psycho-physical basis as blood. But these biological characteristics have been strongly intermixed in the ethnic brews compounded in the course of centuries, and in any case they are only a material element absolutely unqual-

ified to constitute by itself a criterion of human value and sufficient to rupture the rigorous unity of the human family.

Scientifically, racism seems chiefly a sort of political misappropriation of anthropology, mobilized to furnish a practical criterion of the German national community.

Philosophically and religiously speaking, it is difficult not to see in this one of the worst materialistic mockeries of man. To claim, as was done at Nuremberg in 1933, that there is "a greater gap between the lowest forms which are still called human and our superior races, than between the lowest of men and the highest of monkeys," is not simply a philosophical absurdity. It is also an insult to the Christian faith which, in affirming the spirituality and the immortality of the human soul, in preaching brotherly love for men of all races and all conditions, in teaching that Christ died for the salvation of all, affirms at the same time the natural unity of the human species, its essential distinction from other species of animals, and the equal claim of all men to the title of children of God.

It is sometimes said, and I just used the word

myself, that racism is neo-paganism: this is an insult to the pagans, who never lapsed into such brutish materialism. The cult of so-called predestined animal blood (in reality the vehicle of original sin and all those divisions among men of which this sin is the principle) is the cult most fundamentally opposed to the Christian cult of the redeeming and vivifying blood of the Word Incarnate, by means of which all who do not reject divine grace are brought into the supernatural unity of the "race" of God and the Sons of God.

From a social and cultural viewpoint, racism degrades and humiliates to an unimaginable degree reason, thought, science and art, which are thenceforth subordinated to flesh and blood and divested of their natural "catholicity." It brings to men, among all the modes of barbarism which threaten them today, a mode in itself the most inhuman and the most desperate of all. For, as I have just observed, it rivets them to biological categories and fatalities from which no exercise of their freedom will enable them to escape.

II

THE DIVINE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DISPERSION
OF ISRAEL

Let us take up the question of the dispersion of Israel, understood in its ultimate significance. As I wrote in a recent study * from which I am here borrowing several pages, whatever the economic, political or cultural forms which cloak the problem of the dispersion of Israel among the nations, this problem is and remains in truth a mystery, sacred in character, of which St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, gives us the principal elements in his sublime summary.

If there are Jews among the readers of this essay, they will understand, I am sure, that as a Christian I try to understand something of the history of their people from a Christian viewpoint. They know that according to St. Paul, we gentile Christians have been grafted onto the predestined olive tree of Israel in place of the branches which did not recognize the Messiah foretold by the prophets. Thus

* "L'Impossible Antisémitisme," appeared first in *Les Juifs* (Plon, 1937), and later in our *Questions de Conscience* (Desclée De Brouwer, 1938).

we are converts to the God of Israel who is the true God, to the Father whom Israel recognized, to the Son whom it rejected. Christianity, then, is the overflowing fulness and the supernatural realization of Judaism.

The Vocation of Israel

Referring to the Jews, his brothers in the flesh to whom he expected to be anathema, St. Paul had such a profound and tender love for them "who are Israelites, to whom belongeth the adoption as of children, and the glory, and the testament, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom Christ came according to the flesh," * that he wrote that "if the loss of them be the reconciliation of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" † "For," continues the apostle, "I would not have you ignorant, brethren, of this mystery (lest you should be wise in your own conceits), that a blindness in part has happened in Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles come in.

* 9 Rom. 4.

† 11 Rom. 15.

And so all Israel should be saved . . . As concerning the Gospel, indeed they are enemies for your sake: but as touching the election they are most dear for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance. For as you also in times past did not believe God, but now have obtained mercy, through their unbelief; so these also now have not believed, for your mercy, that they also may now obtain mercy. For God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He may have mercy on all." *

Thus from the first Israel appears to us a mystery; of the same order as the mystery of the world and the mystery of the Church. Like them it is a mystery lying at the very core of redemption. And we must say that, if St. Paul be right, what is called the *Jewish problem* is an *insoluble* problem, that is, one without *definitive* solution until the great reconciliation foretold by the apostle, which will resemble a resurrection from among the dead.

Between Israel and the world, as between the Church and the world, there is a suprahuman relation. It is only by considering this triad, that one

* 11 Rom. 25, 26, 28-32.

can grasp even an enigmatic idea of the mystery of Israel. It seems to me that we have here as our sole guiding thread a sort of inverted analogy with the Church. We realize that the Church is not a mere administrative organization dispensing religion. According to its own teaching about itself, it is a mysterious body in which living bonds, in order to accomplish a divine task, unite souls with one another, and with God. The Church is the mystical body of Christ. Indeed, Jewish thought is itself aware that in a quite different sense and in its own way, Israel is a *corpus mysticum*, a mystical body. A recent work by Erich Kahler, *Israel unter den Volkern* emphasizes this point particularly. The bond which unifies Israel is not simply the bond of flesh and blood, or that of an ethico-historical community. A sacred and suprahistorical bond, it is one of promise and yearning rather than of possession. In the eyes of a Christian who remembers that the promises of God are irrevocable and without repentance, Israel continues its sacred mission but in the darkness of the world, preferred, on so unforgettable an occasion, to the darkness of God. Israel, like the Church, is in the world and not of the

world. But since the day when, because its leaders chose the world, it stumbled, it is bound to the world, prisoner and victim of that world which it loves, but *of which* it is not, shall not be, and never can be. Thus is the mystery of Israel understood from a Christian viewpoint.

The communion of this mystical body is the communion of mundane hope. Israel passionately hopes, waits, yearns for the coming of God on earth, the kingdom of *God here below*. With an eternal will, a supernatural and non-rational will, it desires justice in time, in nature, and in the city of man.

So, like the world and its history, Israel and its action in the world are ambivalent realities; because the longing for the absolute in the world can take all forms, some good, others evil. Hence the fact that, in the astonishing complexity of the forms it assumes, simultaneously pregnant with good and evil, there will always be found something to glorify and something to degrade Israel. "Anti-Semites speak of Jews," said Péguy. "I am aware that I am about to speak paradoxically: the anti-Semites do not know the Jews at all." Again, he said: "I know this people well. It bears on its skin no single

spot which is not painful, where there is not some old bruise, some ancient contusion, some secret woe, the memory of a secret woe, a scar, a wound, a laceration of the Orient or of the Occident.”

It is not a question of deciding whether you find Jews attractive or repulsive; that is a matter of temperament. But have they a right to common justice and the common brotherhood of man? If men could tolerate each other only on condition of having no complaint against each other, all the provinces of every country would constantly be at war. The most curious fact, moreover, is that many anti-Semites declare that they have only praise for Jews they have known personally, but nevertheless feel hatred for the Jews as a sacred obligation. Which is one way, among others, of paying tribute to the mystery of Israel we are considering.

But what, then, is that vocation of Israel which persists in darkness, and of which we were just speaking? First of all, there is its vocation as a witness to the Scriptures. But more, while the Church is assigned the labor of supernatural and supratemporal redemption of the world, Israel, we believe, is assigned, on the plane and within the

limits of secular history, a task of *earthly activization* of the mass of the world. Israel, which is not of the world, is to be found at the very heart of the world's structure, stimulating it, exasperating it, moving it. Like an alien body, like an activating ferment injected into the mass, it gives the world no peace, it bars slumber, it teaches the world to be discontented and restless as long as the world has not God, it stimulates the movement of history.

The Spiritual Essence of Anti-Semitism

It seems to me that these considerations explain something of the spiritual essence of anti-Semitism.

The diverse specific causes which the observer may assign to anti-Semitism, all the way from the feeling of hate for the foreigner natural to any social group, down to religious hatreds — alas! that these two words may be coupled — and to the manifold inconveniences produced by some waves of immigration, mask an underlying spring of hatred deeper down. If the world hates the Jews, it is because the world clearly senses that they will always be outsiders in a supernatural sense, it is because the world detests their passion for the ab-

solute and the unbearable stimulus which it inflicts. It is the vocation of Israel which the world execrates. To be hated by the world is their glory, as it is also the glory of Christians who live by faith. But Christians know that the Messiah has already conquered the world.

Thus hatred of Jews and hatred of Christians spring from a common source, from the same recalcitrance of the world, which desires to be wounded neither with the wounds of Adam nor with the wounds of the Savior, neither by the goad of Israel for its movement in time, nor by the cross of Jesus for eternal life. We are good enough as we are, says the world, we have no need of grace or transfiguration, we ourselves will accomplish our own happiness in our own nature. This is neither Christian hope in a helping God, nor Jewish hope for a God on earth. It is the hope of animal life and its power, deep and, in a sense, sacred, demonic, when it masters the human being who thinks himself deceived by the emissaries of the absolute.

Racial tellurianism is anti-Semitic and anti-Christian. Communist atheism is not anti-Semitic: it is satisfied in being against God universally. In

one as in the other, the same absolute naturalism, the same abhorrence for all asceticism and all transcendence, is to be found at work. The mystical life of the world itself aims to blossom heroically, as it were; every mystical body constituted apart from the world must be rejected as such.

The French are not inclined to prostrate themselves before the earth; even when they lose their heads, it is in order to worship the goddess of Reason. That is why it seems to me that they will never be deeply anti-Semitic. They make fun of Jews as they do of "les curés," but among them genuine anti-Semitic mania never goes beyond the limits of a glorified petty bourgeois ideology. I do not overlook the violent propaganda being spread today in certain circles, I think artificially and sometimes venally. Those who know the French youth well, particularly the French Catholic youth, are confident that it will never march except in the name of liberty, generosity and intelligence.

Jews and Christians

Have I succeeded in giving some idea of the pathos of the situation of the Jewish people? In

explaining how, often despite itself, and while manifesting, sometimes in contrasting forms, a materialistic messianism which is the dark face of its vocation to the absolute, but manifesting also admirable ardor, intelligence and dynamism, the Jewish people bears witness to the divine in human history? Thence come the conflicts and the tension which, under all sorts of masks, necessarily prevail between Israel and the nations.

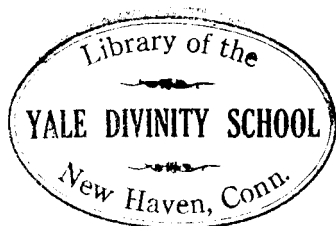
It is an illusion to believe that such tension can completely vanish. To desire to put an end to the problem by anti-Semitic violence, openly persecutory or politically mitigated, is villainy, one of those villainies natural to the human animal (whether he be an Arab and himself the descendant of Shem, or a Slav, a Latin or a German), and from which only Christianity, to the extent that it is really lived, can deliver the nations. The sole road is to accept the state of tension and to face it in each specific case, not with hatred, but with that concrete intelligence which love demands from each, so that one may come to an early understanding with one's adversary while traveling together, and in the consciousness that "all have sinned and need the

glory of God," *omnes quidem peccaverunt, et egent gloria Dei*. "The history of the Jews," said Léon Bloy, "thwarts the history of the human race as a dike thwarts the flood, to raise its level."

On the spiritual plane, the drama of love between Israel and its God, if we are to believe St. Paul, will reach a *dénouement* only with the reconciliation of the Synagogue and the Church. If there is to be no earlier truly definitive solution to the problem of Israel, there are nevertheless some partial or provisional solutions, specific responses whose discovery is the task of political wisdom and which each historic age must seek.

The historic age in which we live is a period of accumulated difficulties for the Jewish people. In the economic field the renunciation of free competition, the rise of autarchical and state capitalist régimes, deal a body blow to Jewish economic pursuits. Recently published studies of the economic situation of world Jewry indicate the growing pauperization of the Jewish masses.

In the political and moral fields, the development of various types of totalitarianism, all of which regard the non-conformist as a biological



enemy of the secular community, menaces the natural attachment of the Jews to independence and liberty.

In the spiritual field, the upsurge of unprecedentedly ferocious forms of paganism signifies an inevitable conflict, already terribly begun, with that people who, surrounded by the pagans of another age, knew how to pay heroic tribute to the sanctity of the personal and transcendent God.

I have come to believe that if the world should triumph over the errors and evils oppressing it today and should contrive to establish the rule of a civilization, new and more consonant with human dignity, the solutions at once pluralist and personalist which would have to prevail generally in such a régime, will likewise characterize those efforts to regulate the Jewish question which such an historic climate must inspire. As I tried to explain elsewhere,* a pluralism founded on the dignity of the human person, and established on the basis of complete equality of civic rights, and effective respect for the liberties of the person in his individual and

* Cf. "L'Impossible Antisémitisme," in *Questions de Conscience*, Paris, 1938, pages 86-89.

social life, would then recognize in certain determined matters, an ethico-juridical status proper to various spiritual families, or even, sometimes, to various national communities which enter into the *convivium* of the temporal city. But such solutions, which though far removed from the old Liberalism, are thoroughly opposed to the ignominious medievalist Hitlerian parody, and which tend to strengthen the bonds of justice and brotherly friendship between the various elements of the same civil society, could only be considered in a general new régime of civilization, freed from the ills of capitalistic materialism as well as from the even greater ills of Fascism, Racism and Communism. Those who at present suggest a special status for the Jews are actually thinking of measures of discrimination against them. They are the victims of the absurd illusion, according to which the Jewish question, poisoned as are all the questions of today by the general crisis suffered by a civilization which is sick and in a state of transformation, is the only or the principal cause of this crisis; they imagine that the "solution" which consists of sacrificing the Jews would end the evils whose roots plunge, in fact, into

the very depths of the economic, moral, spiritual and political structures of our civilization. Infected by the contagion of the errors propagated by the racist mentality, they serve this mentality, whether they wish to or not. Some of them are fierce anti-Semites who pretend to be good apostles. Others protest that they are not anti-Semites, and consider themselves as dispassionate *realists*: they are Mr. Hitler's messengers, who have *not even* the excuse of passion.

Strictly speaking, the only suitable "realism" here would be the one which understands the reality of the horror whereby the cult of hatred and the rejection of all human sentiment threaten the universe; the only realism which a Christian has the right to profess in such a matter is the one that warns us that the least word which might convey the merest shadow of an indulgence or concession toward racism, runs the risk of bearing an ugly complicity, and of dripping with innocent blood.

If we now turn more particularly toward the Christians, it appears, that being themselves grafted

onto the olive tree of Israel, they must look on the men involved in the Jewish tragedy with a brotherly eye and, as the apostle Paul teaches them, not without trembling for themselves. It is certainly possible for Christians to be anti-Semites, since one observes the phenomenon frequently enough. But it is possible for them only when they obey the spirit of the world rather than the spirit of Christianity.

Strangely enough certain Christians are heard to remark: "Has the world been moved (they say) by the massacres of so many Christians in Russia, Spain, and Mexico? We will be stirred by the Jewish persecutions when the world will be stirred by the sufferings of our own."

When I hear this manner of reasoning, I wonder how it is that from one day to the next, and without even telling me anything about it, my religion has been changed. Does the Gospel teach that if a brother has sinned against me, by omission or otherwise, it is justifiable to sin against him in the same fashion? Jesus said: "These things you ought to have done, and not to leave those undone." Now it is said: "Because these things have been left un-

done, you ought not to do those." Because certain people have been lacking in justice and in love, others must be similarly deficient. . .

It is not exact to say that the world remained indifferent to the suffering of Christians in Russia, Spain and Mexico.* It is, however, exact that many who today are full of indignation because of Racism remained quite cold regarding the discriminatory laws enacted by certain governments against religious Orders, and regarding the anti-Christian persecutions which have raged or are raging in so many countries. I object to such unjust indifference and such one-eyed pity. But I do not want to lay myself open to the same objection.

Among careless or partisan writers many historic confusions arise from the fact of the commingling in medieval civilization of the affairs of the Church and the affairs of a secular commonwealth religiously organized, where mundane interests and both the good and evil of human social life were steeped in religion. If one makes the proper dis-

* Notably, various rabbinical organizations in the United States and France protested against the persecutions of Christians, as was revealed in a news release of the *Catholic Worker*, December 5, 1938.

tinctions, one can see that, in a temporal civilization where the régime of the ghetto — not to speak of the drama of the Marranos and the Spanish Inquisition — lent itself to the worst anti-Semitic passions and excesses, the Church itself and as such, was not responsible for the excesses, even if some of its ministers were.* It is well enough known that the Popes repeatedly defended the Jews, notably against the absurd charge of ritual murder, and that all in all the Jews were generally less unhappy and less badly treated in the Papal States than elsewhere.

Western civilization, emerging from the Holy Roman Empire and the medieval régime, while in jeopardy of collapsing in other respects, as we know, freed itself from the strong impurities which this régime entailed. And it would be a singular aberration if Christians wished to return to those impurities at the moment when they have lost their

* If a unilateral selection of texts were not made, and if there were sufficient acquaintance with the philosophy of history, it would be understood that neither the policy adopted at certain periods regarding the Jews by medieval Christendom, nor the supervening mistakes and abuses which may have happened, prove that the Catholic Church is bound to anti-Semitism. I mention this for the benefit of certain Italian Fascist writers, as well as for certain American anti-Fascist writers. . .

historic reason for existing. Today anti-Semitism is no longer one of those accidental blemishes of a secular Christendom in which evil was mixed with the good. It contaminates Christians like an error of the spirit. I recall to the reader's mind that in a document of the Holy Office dated September 5, 1928, which was directed against the mistakes of a too zealous "Association of the Friends of Israel," the Catholic Church has explicitly condemned this error of anti-Semitism. Racist errors were again condemned, April 13, 1938, in a pontifical document (letter of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities).

It is well known that Pope Pius XI spoke out vigorously against the racist campaign and racist measures inaugurated by the Italian government in imitation of the German government. To the concept and word *race*, figuring in the theories imported from Germany, he opposed magnificently the ancient Latin idea of *gens* and *populus*, the connotation of which belong much more to the moral than to the biological order.

The following passages of a discourse pronounced in September 1938, before the directors of the Bel-

gian Catholic Radio Agency, are also to be noted. Commenting upon the words of the Canon of the Mass *sacrificium Patriarchae nostri Abrahæ*, the sacrifice of our father Abraham, the Pope said, "Notice that Abraham is called our Patriarch, our ancestor. Anti-Semitism is incompatible with the thought and sublime reality expressed in this text. It is a movement in which we Christians can have no part whatsoever. . . Anti-Semitism is unacceptable. Spiritually we are Semites."

Spiritually we are Semites. No stronger word has been spoken by a Christian against anti-Semitism, and this Christian is the successor of the apostle Peter.

As for its moral characterization from the Catholic viewpoint, anti-Semitism, if it spreads among those calling themselves disciples of Jesus Christ, seems to be a pathological phenomenon which indicates a deterioration of Christian conscience when it becomes incapable of accepting its own historic responsibilities and of remaining existentially faithful to the high exigencies of Christian truth. Then, instead of recognizing the trials and shocks of history as the visitations of God, and instead of assum-

ing those burdens of justice and charity demanded by that fact, it turns aside to substitute phantoms relating to an entire race, phantoms which derive a certain consistency from various real or fancied pretexts. And in giving free rein to feelings of hate which it believes justified by religion, it seeks for itself a sort of alibi.

It is no little matter, however, for a Christian to hate or to despise or to wish to treat degradingly the race from which sprung his God and the Immaculate Mother of his God. That is why the bitter zeal of anti-Semitism always turns in the end into a bitter zeal against Christianity itself.

“Imagine,” wrote Léon Bloy, “that people about you were to speak continually of your father and your mother with the greatest contempt, and to have for them only insults or outrageous sarcasm. What would be your sentiments? Well, that is exactly what is happening to Our Lord Jesus Christ. We forget, or rather we do not wish to know, that as a man Our Lord was a Jew, the epitomé par excellence of the Jewish nature, the Lion of Judah; that His Mother was a Jewess, the flower of the Jewish

race; that the apostles were Jews, along with all the prophets; finally, that our whole liturgy is based on Jewish books. How, then, express the enormity of the outrage and the blasphemy involved in vilifying the Jewish race?"

III

THE PRESENT TRAGEDY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Everybody knows that the Jews miss no opportunity for lamentation. If they so well understand weeping, it is because they have a sempiternal habit of sorrowing and because they are disarmed. To-day, in any case, it may be said that, when it comes to persecutions, they are plentifully supplied.

The third part of this essay, in which I shall speak of matters of fact concerning the actual situation of the Jews in various countries, will obviously be but a brief summary. If one were to enumerate in detail all the types of oppression involved, one could never conclude.

Before examining briefly the effects of anti-

Semitism in Germany, Rumania and Poland, let us say a few words about the situation of the Jews in Russia.

The Jews in Russia

Perhaps some people will be surprised: does not the U.S.S.R. make a boast, and justifiably, of having officially proscribed anti-Semitism? Has it not given the Jews, as it has members of other ethnic groups, equality in law and free access to schools and universities? Yes, that is true. Nevertheless, Russia is one of the countries of the world in which Israel is most threatened.

I do not here speak simply of the economic ruin which the Soviet régime brought on the Jewish masses. Ninety percent of the Jews of Russia lived from trade, industry and crafts. Their means of livelihood have been harder hit than those of the peasant masses, because the new régime no longer tolerates merchants or independent craftsmen. For them, the economic disaster is thoroughgoing.

No, what I want to point out above all is that, if *the Jews* can live, however miserably, in Russia, *Jewry* and *Judaism* are condemned to death. Their

assimilation, forced assimilation, is succeeding only *too well*.

The struggle has not been and is not being carried on against the Jewish race, but against the Jewish religion, as against all religions. Violent persecution, conducted by atheistic Jews, has burst on religious Jews. "Here," one Jewish author writes, "it is the Jew who is the Jew's worst enemy." Finally, the great mass of Jewish youth is cut off from religion. Only the older generation perseveres, but "in the face of the hostility of the governing classes, it dare not move, and religion is doomed."

"In this country," writes the same author, "where the Jews twenty years ago were still the most solid bulwark of Judaism, the Jewish religion is about to be destroyed." *

And, by the same token, Jewish culture is doomed. Rabbinical schools and almost all synagogues are closed. Teaching in the Hebrew tongue, folkways, religious holidays, circumcision, the rites of the Mosaic code, all are practically forbidden. A

* Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews in the Modern World*, New York, 1934.

mighty state pressure works, on the other hand, in favor of mixed marriages, with the result that the Jewish ethnic and cultural entity is rapidly vanishing.* Likewise, Zionism, regarded as an "imperialist" movement, is rigorously repressed, and every attempt at Zionist propaganda becomes the object of immediate arrest and exile.†

It was recently said of Yiddish literature that its force and originality "come from *its impotence not to be religious.*" ‡ In a general sense, there is no Jewish people without the God of the Scriptures, if His presence be only in the dead bones of a tradition devoid of faith, such as Zionism, at least, respects and collects.

It is a remarkably significant phenomenon and one which confirms our earlier reflections, that everything proceeds as though a profound hatred of the Scriptures, wherein God testifies to Himself, rebounds on Israel itself as a mystical body, and Israel, the mystical body, is never afflicted but Israel, the people, feels the same blow.

* In the Jewish state — that is to say, in the region populated by Jews — which the Soviets have tried to create in Birobidjan, specifically Jewish culture is not in the best of shape.

† Olav Leroi, *La Croix*, January 30-31, 1938.

‡ Paul Fierens, *Revue des poètes catholiques*, no. 1, 1937.

The Jews in Germany

We have dealt with German racism chiefly from the viewpoint of principles. Is it really necessary to recall now how it works out in practice?

According to the law of April 7, 1933 (that with the famous *Aryan clause*), supplemented by other legislative acts of the same year, all non-Aryans, that is to say, all human beings who bear in their veins 100 percent or 50 percent or — when they have had a single Jewish grandfather or grandmother — 25 percent of Jewish blood, are barred from public posts as well as, directly or indirectly and by means of provocations, from the liberal and “cultural” professions.

Jews have been forbidden to participate in the world of the theatre, the press, literature, music destined for the Aryan masses, or to become teachers or students in German universities. They are the objects of special laws, not to unite them to the life of the commonwealth, but to segregate them as an inferior and noxious race.* Let them work out a

* It is notable that the Jews form but a small proportion of the German population. Before Hitler came to power, there were in Germany about 550,000 Jews. From 1933 to the end of 1937, according to the careful statistical studies of Dr. Kurt Zielenziger of

ghetto culture? Even if they were to be encouraged to do so, it would be as slaves are encouraged to sing their songs to themselves before death comes. Let them be economically productive? Even if some of them may hold important positions, in many sectors of economic life they are dispossessed for the benefit of Aryans. Jewish shops are boycotted. Aryans guilty of buying from Jewish merchants are threatened and molested. Jewish origin becomes a valid reason for the discharge of any employee.

Blood dominates everything, dominates intelligence and good will, grace, and baptism. The children of a baptized Jew must be taught in a Jewish, not in a Christian school.

We know that in September, 1935, the Nuremberg laws, those "laws for the protection of German blood and honor," deprived the Jews of the title of citizen and of political rights. We know that the same laws forbid marriage (as well as extra-marital sexual relations) between Jews and non-Jews under penalty of prison and hard labor.* These punishments hav-

Amsterdam, published in the review *Population*, about 135,000 Jews left Germany. Some 30,000 went to other European countries, the rest to Palestine, South America, the United States and South Africa.

* See page 49.

ing proven insufficiently efficacious, some anti-Semites propose now to institute capital punishment for the crime of what they call *race shame* or *racial pollution*.

Let us cite here, as an example, certain facts which were collected by Louis Roubaud, a French journalist endowed with great objectivity, during an inquiry recently made by him in Germany, and which he published in the *Petit Parisien* (March, 1939):

Posters warn imprudent citizens: "Every girl so forgetful of her race as to visit a Jew or to receive him in her house, or to go for a walk with him, will be shaved and exposed in the public square. We invite the Germans conscious of their dignity to watch over Christian women who cultivate a Jew, to give us their addresses, and to inform us of their behaviour."

Such punitive exhibitions are a current spectacle for citizens of large and small towns.

I passed but one day in Nuremberg, Emil told me . . . the inhabitants did not look surprised! they did not react. I was coming out of my hotel, when the procession passed before me. . . I first beheld six soldiers in arms, pushing in front of them a young boy in women's clothes . . . it was not a boy, but a girl, completely bald, and yet pretty, with blue eyes bright with tears, and so thin and fragile! After having shaved her head, the soldiers had hung round her neck a sign: "I HAVE GIVEN MYSELF TO A JEW." She was exhausted, stumbling. Having arrived before the

hotel, she let herself fall on the greasy pavement, pretending to have fainted. They kicked her to make her get up, and one of the kicks marked her delicate face with blood and mud. . . I had the courage to join the loiterers who were following. When she was really unable to walk any more, the soldiers lifted her on their shoulders to show her to the distant spectators. . .

The Fritsche trial is not an exceptional case. M. Fritsche, a widower of 45, is the father of a boy of 18, a "boy in uniform," like many others, and who is undergoing training in a camp with others. M. Fritsche, sober, fond of sport, is not an old man. Sarah was his wife's friend. She is 35 and pretty. The honest affection which he felt for her before becoming a widower, transformed itself into love. He commits the "crime." And immediately, the "accomplices" are frightened, they try to cross the French frontier. His "son in uniform" denounces him, bears testimony against him during the trial. Fifteen months of hard labour.

A sentence of the Tribunal of the Empire dated January 18, 1938, condemns to ten months of hard labour, young F . . . , who is not a Jew, but who thought that he was one, when he committed the crime of letting himself be seduced by a fair German. This young man, who was legally the posthumous son of a Jew, married to a Christian, learnt during the trial that his mother, long before his birth, was the mistress of a pure Aryan, Dr. G. . . "Your father was for more than a year in the hospital, where he was to die," the mother tearfully told him. "I only saw him once a week in a common ward. My affair with Dr. G . . . dates from that time."

The accused asks for his mother's and Dr. G's testimony. But according to jurisprudence, the intention suffices for the crime of "rassenchande" (race shame) to be committed. Not even the intention! . . . The simple appearances, a beginning of presumption! . . . If the Jew is at the same time a former social-democrat, the police enters arbitrarily the undesirable into the category of "rassenchande."

Thus, M. Samter, a Hindenburg (Upper Silesia) merchant, before the suppression of Jewish shops. He ought to be careful with that lady-client who, notwithstanding the bill "Jude" in evidence in the shop-window, did not hesitate to bargain over a radio-set. This happened in the evening, just before the closing of the shop. And Samter was alone! He should have found out about the lady's religion. She was a Miss Martha Waldbrun, who made him test several radio-sets, not being able to make up her mind, leaning over the merchant's shoulder, under the excuse to make him explain a detail. . . The policeman arrived. . . During the trial, Miss Waldbrun, seized with remorse, admits that she had been paid by the police. Samter, entirely absorbed by the sale of the set, did not make a single gesture, had not the slightest thought tinged with gallantry. . . Notwithstanding this fact, he is ruthlessly condemned to *six years* of hard labour. Horrified by the consequence of her act, Miss Waldbrun commits suicide. "She did not want to survive her blemish," the newspapers declare.

One could cite endless facts. . . Not only must the Jews not run the risk of giving life outside their race, they are also forbidden to save life. Before committing suicide, the famous specialist of children's diseases, Professor

Knoepfelmacher of Vienna, wrote the following words: "I have saved the lives of 60,000 children; today, I am obliged to take my own life."

. . . This sectarianism does not only concern the doctor, it also forbids medicines of Jewish origin, even those whose benefits have been long known all over the world.

Serotherapy, which saves thousands of children from diphtheria, was introduced in Germany by Von Behrend. Let German babies die rather than be healed by a Jew! In two years the number of child victims of croup has risen from 3992 in 1932 to 6372 in 1934. . . The parents of the tiny creature condemned to die, implore the Christian doctor to inject the salutary serum . . . the doctor trembles, for he remembers the terrible condemnation pronounced by Streicher: "Serotherapy represents the specifically Jewish idea of soiling German blood with the blood of animals different from the human race."

The imagination can picture but a small part of what these manifold legal provisions, with the accompanying illegal excesses — ignoble parades of wretched men carrying mocking placards, Jewish cemeteries profaned by the hundreds, violence and humiliations of all sorts, confiscations of property, denunciations and travesties of justice — produce in the way of suffering and anguish, misery and dishonor for unfortunate human beings. Naturally, suicide thrives. The labor of teachers and propa-

gandists poisons the hearts of the common people, of children, of the poor, with hate and contempt for Jews and other victims of persecution. But wait! Worst of all is the degradation of human dignity among the persecuted. Not alone are there in some Berlin public squares yellow benches reserved for Jews. The worst is the fact that one may see Jews, sad weary Jews, sitting on these benches. And there have been families of a Jewish father and an Aryan mother in which children have extracted from the mother a confession of adultery in order to prove that they were born of pure Aryan blood and had a right to civic life.

But is there ever an end to lust and cruelty? These augment *ad infinitum*. New means of oppression are invented each day. Even the name of Jehovah has been proscribed. The racist persecution in the course of the year 1938 has produced spectacles which show that it is always possible to dishonor human nature *still further*.*

I know that Germany and racism are not necessarily identified and although such matters "go without saying," I must nevertheless note here that hate

* See pages 69 *et seq.*

for a whole people would be a great madness, and that despite racism and the anti-Christianity which are ravaging German hearts, the human reserves of Germanic culture are not exhausted. But if the moral cataclysms sweeping a country cannot prevent those who hope to secure thereby the peace of the world from desiring international agreements, those same desires, in turn, do not prevent the truth from being uttered. The example of German anti-Semitism, which the National Socialist leaders conjured up and continue violently to provoke, and which they simultaneously are trying to regularize, while welding it into a favored instrument of foreign influence, the example of this anti-Semitism and its propaganda which is being furthered everywhere, in America as in Europe, is a bad omen for such civilization as remains to us. Italy, for political reasons, has begun to cultivate anti-Semitic sentiments, a novelty for her. Since the summer of 1938, Italian Fascism has become deliberately racist (I will return to this matter in a further section). Under moral and cultural forms, without overt brutality or legislative trappings, there was rather severe anti-Semitism in Austria before the *Anschluss*.

Now the native country of the child Mozart is no more. The new events which in recent months have changed the face of Central Europe, and to which I shall refer later, have been accompanied in these lands by a general and implacable surge of anti-Semitism.

Previously, other countries were already affected, Poland, of which I shall speak shortly, and also, to a lesser degree, Lithuania, and Yugoslavia. Anti-Semitic propaganda, supported by Germany, is attempting to trouble many countries in South America.

In Rumania a wave of terror broke forth in the beginning of the year 1938.

The Jews in Rumania

The Jews of Rumania have long been treated as legal inferiors. Despite the promises made at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, it was only with the Treaty of 1919, following the World War, and with the Constitution of the enlarged Rumanian state, that the equality of all Rumanian citizens before the law, "without distinction of race, language or religion," was proclaimed. In annexing Bessarabia, Buko-

wina, Transylvania, the Banat and Maramuresh, with some 9,000,000 inhabitants, Rumania undertook, in accord with a quite obvious rule of international public law, to recognize as entitled to the benefits of Rumanian law all the Jews, some 600,000, living in those territories.

I have but limited confidence in statistics, particularly the demographic statistics of countries subject to nationality conflicts and disputes. Relying, however, on the official data of the Rumanian statistical bureau, and rounding off figures upward rather than downward, it would seem reasonable to draw the following conclusions. Old Rumania counted some 250,000 Jews, long assimilated. Adding this figure to that which I just gave for the territories newly annexed, we see that before the war there were 850,000 Jews in the present domain of the kingdom of Rumania. Today there are a few more or less, less rather than more,* that is, about four and one half percent of the total population. Of

* According to the figures of the Bucharest Demographic Institute, the figure would be 760,000 to 765,000. Of these some 30,000 have, since 1920, been refused naturalization; these have only duties, and no rights as Rumanian subjects. Their number is augmented by some thousands of others, whom the liberal cabinet of Mr. Tataresco, which preceded the anti-Semitic government of Mr. Goga, deprived arbitrarily of their Rumanian citizenship.

this number, it is estimated that some 10,000 are Jews who fled from Russia since the war and settled in Rumania "fraudulently."¹

Nevertheless, in January and February 1938 the officials in power announced the intention of withdrawing Rumanian nationality and the right of settlement and residence in the kingdom, from 500,000 Jews, accused by Mr. Goga of having entered the country by fraud, although King Carol would reckon the number at half this figure. The cry of reprobation was being raised not against 10,000 Jews, but against 500,000.

Thus, even for the best statistical sleight-of-hand artists, it was difficult to reconcile this project with the solemn obligation of the treaty of December 9, 1919. Moreover, for what purpose? The truth is that racism, of which the pledges of treaties mean very little, has sown a whirlwind in Rumania, and wanted to settle in the most rapid and brutal way not only with 10,000 or 250,000 or 500,000 Jews, but with the entire Jewish population of the country.

¹ After the establishment of Nazism in Germany, a great number of German Jewish families *crossed* Rumania, which admitted them only in transit. Very few remained. The proportion of German Jews settled in the country since 1933 is insignificant.

All Jewish citizens were barred from public posts. It was decided to close to Jews certain professions and businesses, to expropriate their agricultural enterprises, to exclude them from the theatre and motion pictures, to take away from a large number of Jewish doctors, engineers, architects and lawyers, the right to practice their professions. It did not matter that the country districts suffered from a terrible shortage of doctors. The Jewish doctors must first be crushed. The Iron Guard organized a terror against Jewish students in the professional schools and against Jewish attorneys. The Blue-shirts inspired hatred against the Jews among the rural masses, hounded Jewish peasants by the hundreds, compelled them to flee wretchedly from their farms. And all this seemed a beginning only. The worst threats, a mortal terror, hung over hundreds of thousands of human beings for several weeks.

“Well,” Mr. Octavian Goga told the Tharaud brothers, “couldn’t we send them far away . . . somewhere . . . to some island which they could never leave? . . . Warships of all countries could cruise around it. . .” (The Goga government was short-lived. It fell quickly; and not long after-

wards, the newspapers announced the death of Mr. Goga himself.)

It seems that in Rumania, Church and State collaborated in this new style of government, if one may rely on the declarations of the late Patriarch of the Orthodox Rumanian Church, Miron Cristea, published in a Bucharest newspaper.* There he expressed the opinion that Jews had "bled white" the Rumanian people, and would soon force the Rumanians to "abandon their homes and their hearths and wander through the world," and that there must be somewhere on the face of the globe, "in Africa, in Australia, in Asia, in the islands," some free land to which the Jews could be relegated. "I do not know enough about world geography to tell you where this country is," added this minister of the Gospel. He was to succeed Mr. Goga at the head of the Rumanian government, and was obliged by political necessities to renounce that useful geographical inquiry, as well as the legal realization of his feelings.

Let us recall the declaration adopted in 1931 by the Catholic Union of International Studies: "The

* *Curentul*, August 19, 1937.

members of a national group (that is, of a minority) are bound to all those duties and obligations toward the state in which they are subjects, that Christian morality and politics impose on the conscience of citizens. They enjoy all the rights which both accord to man and to the citizen." Monseigneur Beaupin recently wrote: "To reaffirm such principles, applicable to all lands and to all times, is not to intervene in the internal politics of any particular State." Moreover, Rumania had the wisdom to reject the racist madness of the Goga government. The Iron Guard, whose plots, inspired by Nazism, were threatening the Crown, was dissolved; and severe judiciary sanctions were taken against its leader, who was later killed, according to the police report, while trying to escape from prison. The anti-Semitic mood remains very strong in this country, but the projects of legal persecution were abandoned.

The Jews in Poland

In Germany anti-Semitism has taken an anti-Christian form; in Rumania it has taken an Ortho-

dox form, strongly tinged with anti-Catholicism: at the Congress of the "Orthodox Brotherhood" held in November, 1937, speakers put Catholicism on a plane with Communism; the Congress demanded the denunciation of the Papal Concordat, and denounced the Vatican's "aggressive and denationalizing proselytism." Rumanian Catholics complain of being the object of calumnies and of campaigns of hatred which lead to religious war.

In Poland, although the heads of the Catholic Church, notably Cardinal Hlond, have repudiated "systematic and unconditional hostility toward the Jews," anti-Semitism has taken a Catholic form, from the fact that, sociologically, it is natural, all too natural, that passions, however misleading, which claim to defend a country's national interests, should claim also support from its traditional religion.

I am aware that in general Poland has rejected the doctrine of pagan racism and that its government would like to limit the conflict to the economic field. I am aware that there are in Poland three to three and one-half million Jews, a little more than ten percent of the total population, so that the problems which I discussed at the beginning of this essay and

which concern countries with a large Jewish national minority, are more real for Poland than for any other country. Nevertheless, it remains a fact that intense anti-Semitism persists there, further stimulated by German influence and by the bad national economic situation. By exalting, on the one hand, shadowy national susceptibilities, and, on the other, aggravated sufferings and claims, this anti-Semitism risks leading to quite insoluble difficulties. In recent years, particularly in 1937, the Polish Jews have suffered a persecution which, although not legally organized as in Germany, nevertheless tends to render life entirely impossible for them.

I hastily record — alas, it is always that same litany — the extensive boycott of Jewish merchants and artisans (what is called “dry” anti-Semitism) ¹ the frightful multiplication of brawls, pillagings,

¹ Those who preach this mass boycott as an economic remedy for the atrophy of non-Jewish trade, forget that, however desirable it may be to replace the régime of free competition by one of organized communal labor, the operation of any given régime cannot be violently disturbed. In fact, the boycott in question is part of a scheme to reduce Jewish traders and artisans to famine, in order to force them to emigrate. (As though the Jews, especially those of Poland, were not predisposed to furnish a great quota of emigrants, *if only they could!* If only other countries would open their frontiers!) Such a boycott adds a spice of cruelty to a situation already deplorable enough for all. And what it certainly contrives to do, is to develop evil passions without restraint.

pogroms with casualties of dead and wounded, systematic travesties of justice, a tragic increase in violence, blind popular hatreds. By setting upon the Jews, peasants dying of hunger are induced to believe that they will thus find a solution to the agrarian question and to rural pauperism. A just redistribution of land, such as other States effected in order to head off worse developments, is just what the great landowners wish to avoid at any price, and that is why they strive to turn the anger of the poor against the Jews. The most odious events are those which occur in circles that, presumably reserved to science and culture, transform themselves into the vehicles of racist influence, and provokers of passions. In January 1937, there were university troubles on which I prefer, for the sake of the good name of the students of Warsaw, not to dwell at length. We know that recently, giving in to anti-Semitic pressure, the Polish university authorities have installed separate benches for Jewish students, thus creating ghettos in classrooms. Numerous Polish professors have protested against this measure, and some of them — like those Jewish students who, rather than sit on such benches, stand during lec-

