

¶Germany's anti-religious policy.

WILL THE CATHOLIC CHURCH BE HITLER'S WATERLOO?

HITLER has proclaimed that Germany is a "Christian state," but has entrusted its intellectual and cultural life to Dr. Alfred Rosenberg, whose books are banned by the Pope as anti-Christian. Hitler himself was baptized a Catholic. Goebbels received his training at the hands of the Jesuits. But Hitler has not protected the church from insult, and Goebbels has inveighed against his teachers. The Nazis point out that Germany was almost destroyed in the Thirty Years' War by the conflict between Protestants and Catholics; they contend that the totalitarian state cannot permit history to repeat itself.

Hitler made a treaty or "Concordat" with the church under the persuasion of von Papen. But almost from the beginning there were disputes. The Nazis did not, at least in the beginning, interfere directly with Catholic organizations, but they succeeded in starving them out. No teacher could belong to both the Catholic Teachers' Society and a similar Nazi association. No worker could join the German Workers' Front and the Catholic Workers' Society. But if they did

not belong to the Nazi organization they could neither teach nor work in Germany and were suspected. Pressure was used to make parents withdraw their children from parochial schools.

At times the relation of the church and the state seemed to run smoothly. Eminent Catholic prelates pledged their support to the National Socialist Government. But they had overlooked certain passages in Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. Cardinal Faulhaber, the redoubtable Archbishop of Munich, did not share the illusions of his colleagues. He finally refused to compromise with an ideology which places the demands of the state above those of God. The situation is complicated by the fact that in Germany both the Protestant and the Catholic churches are supported by taxes.

A totalitarian state based on race must necessarily clash with a universal church which embraces all races. Germany, like Italy, forbids marriages between Aryan and non-Aryan Christians. The church does not encourage such marriages, but cannot forbid them without questioning the validity of its own sacraments. It can make no dis-

inction on racial grounds between those who have received its baptism. The bitterness of the church was accentuated after the annexation of Austria. In Austria a church marriage was essential. In Germany no marriage was recognized as valid without a civil ceremony. When the German law was extended to Austria, Cardinal Innitzer, who had voted for the annexation, protested violently. Nevertheless, a working agreement between church and state could be established. But there are certain cardinal points upon which the church cannot compromise. It cannot surrender its right to teach the young, and it cannot surrender its claim to universality without betraying its divine commission.

Certain radical factions among the Nazis welcome a split between the church and the state. They advocate the creation of a national "German Church," embracing, if possible, all Christian confessions. One leading Catholic suggested, in conversation with me, the nomination by the Pope of a "Patriarch" for all Germany. This German "Patriarch" was to appoint all German bishops and priests, eliminating the Papal Nuncio and the Pope. This compromise was intended as a sop to Nationalism. However, the overwhelming majority of German Catholics rejects this

solution. The Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, repudiated any such suggestion with scorn. His celebrated encyclical, *Mit Brennender Sorge*, issued on Passion Sunday, March 14, 1937, emphasized the indivisibility of the Roman Church.

Six days later secret messengers distributed his message among all parish priests in Germany. The next morning it was read from every pulpit, but no German paper was permitted to print the text.

The Nazis have never forgiven the church for a time when members of their party were denied the sacraments and Christian burial. This accounts for the absurd claim that the church encourages Bolshevism. To break the hold of the church, the Nazis have instituted a number of sensational trials against priests and lay brothers on the ground of "immorality." Only six out of one thousand priests were found guilty.

Pope Pius XI pointed out in his encyclical that he had sought at all times peace with Germany. He accused the Nazis of violating the "natural law," the law "written by the hand of the Creator on the tablet of the heart." It is difficult, in view of recent events in Germany, to deny this.

Following the broadcast of the Holy Father, the German

bishops issued a pastoral letter, never printed in Germany, accusing the Nazis of desiring "to destroy the Catholic Church" and "to root out Christianity." They reiterate their fidelity to their country, and declare that "for the wrong which some in our own people and our own country inflict upon us, the Fatherland must not suffer."

Since then Cardinal Innitzer has been attacked in his palace, Catholic feasts have been disturbed by hooligans, Cardinal Faulhaber has been insulted publicly. The persecution of the Jews and of outstanding Protestants, like Pastor Niemöller, and constant attacks upon the Holy See are creating a common front against the neopagans. Tension against the neopagans increases throughout the world. Cardinal Mundelein did not mince words in his attack on Hitler. More recently the Most Rev. Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore, said:

"I denounce the madness that has taken possession of the Nazis of Germany in these days of persecution of helpless, innocent Jews . . . The mobs in Germany are headed and dominated by a madman, Hitler, who was baptized a Catholic, but who has proven false to all the teachings of that church—false to the teachings of Jesus, our Saviour I denounce and

condemn the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, the cripple-minded Goebbels . . . Long after Hitler is dead and forgotten the Jews will still be living in Germany. At least I know the Catholic Church will be . . ."

That is pretty strong language from a bishop. Is it a declaration of war? For as yet neither the Pope nor the Fuehrer has denounced the Concordat. The Papal Nuncio is still in Berlin; the German ambassador has not been recalled from the Vatican. However, open war may ensue.

"My only hope," a German bishop remarked to me in Rome, "is this: One of those sudden inspirations that enabled Hitler to make peace with England, France, and Poland may enable him to make his peace with the church."

It will not be enough for Hitler to make his peace with Rome; he must also reconcile the Protestants and the Jews. It will take a great deal to erase from the memory of the world the inhuman vengeance wrought upon Germany's helpless and hapless Jews for the deed of one senseless boy. Unless Germany has the courage to repair these wrongs, she may find herself morally isolated. Hitler is a shrewd psychologist, with his ear to the ground. Is it possible that he will be deaf to the advice of Germany's

friends, just as Napoleon refused to heed his most loyal advisers before embarking upon his doom?

Every Napoleon meets his Waterloo. The church may be Hitler's! — *Donald Furthman Wickets, condensed from Liberty.*

* * *

Writing is Magic

WRITING is a sort of magic. You have a thought. It flits through your mind without form. Sometimes it has no words—no voice. Still it charms you and you wish to keep it. Write it down. Watch the magic begin to work. There is a host of words that cluster about every thought. Which will you use? They must be as good as words can be. They must shimmer and glow and sparkle. They must have strength and meaning. They must clothe your thought in beauty. Carefully you pick your way. You choose the words that please you, the ones that fit your thought. A strong word there, a stirring phrase there, a sharp hard line, and the magic stands clear. Thought and word and beauty have become one.

Writing is a magic that you learn from the great masters. Live with their books. Read the bits that please you again and again. Let them seep into your mind and give it quality. To know what is good and to aspire to do as well are one and the same thing.

When you have a thought write it down. Write it as well as you know how. Write it for others. Write it for yourself. It is a way of growth.—*Angelo Patri, from Youth.*

* * *

Just Flying Low

WHILE DRIVING through a town at high speed, a man was stopped by a motorcycle policeman.

"What!" cried the driver. "Was I going too fast?"

"Nope," replied the cop. "Just flying too low."—*Successful Farming.*