EDGAR QUINET: A STUDY IN
ANTI-CLERICAL AND NATIONALISTIC ASPECTS OF
FRENCH LIBERALISM

DISSertation

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I

VIEWS ON THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF QUINET'S CAREER

As it had been said of the French that no other nationality (save, perhaps, the English) possesses a common consciousness more deeply rooted or more stubbornly enduring,1 so it has been said of Edgar Quinet that in all of French literature there exists no other author whose books teach the fatherland and nationality with a more persuasive force.2 A patriot, a publicist, a philosopher, a poet and an historian; the consensus concludes that justice is done Quinet in so ordering his activities.

Edgar Quinet was born at Bourg en Bresse in the department of Ain on February 17, 1803; he died at


Versailles on March 27, 1875. The aftermath of Austerlitz was his earliest memory, Sedan the realization of a prophecy frequently repeated. For the French patriot the contrast between these events was a painful one. The reality which found its most shocking material expression in the debacle of 1870, but which had confronted France since 1815, was decline of national influence. For many a patriot no other hurt could have engendered the distress which accompanied this ever more apparent fact. One may, as did Heine, attribute the restlessness and impatience so marked in the period between these dates to the suspicion of Frenchmen generally that the twilight of their greatness was upon them.3

Certainly, things had gone miserably wrong; but was Waterloo accidental and transitory, or was it conclusive? After the Grand Monarch, the Enlightenment, the Revolution, the Empire had the curtain fallen? Quinet, at least, could never accept the pronouncement of Providence at Waterloo as final; he believed only that it could be explained. Error brought to light could be corrected. At first, however, the suspicion that France suffered more than a

temporary military defeat in 1815 did not seem really convincing. For many the full implication of Waterloo did not become apparent until after July 1830, and not persuasive until after February 1848. Only after 1830 did Quinet the patriot emerge, and it was after 1848 that he turned all of his attention to explaining the reason for failure in the past and outlining the only hope for the future.

The prejudice which damned, that which would honor; the half-truth based upon careless investigation; the evaluation rooted in limited understanding or partial familiarity; these have characterized much of the historical commentary on Edgar Quinet. There have been good reasons for this, as well as notable exceptions to it. First, he was an impassioned spokesman on one side of a debate which continues to divide Frenchmen into bitter factions, and it has been, in the main, Frenchmen who have treated him historically. Secondly, Quinet was prolific; more than forty years separated his first from his last major work, and during the interval his thought went through a rather complex development.

The man was an intense patriot; there has been no disagreement here. Among admirers this has never appeared to be a source of embarrassment, though frequently it is taken for granted rather than stressed
in their commentary. Detractors, being French, have been as little critical on this score, more often willing to consign the devil his due, or to pass in silence a virtue they admire in an adversary they detest. Love of fatherland in France has never been so much a monopoly of party, however, that Quinet may be said to be very adequately characterized, even circumstantially, when he has been charged with that passion.

His place was in the Revolutionary tradition, in so saying one approaches unfirm but more solid ground. A leading spokesman of that tradition, Gambetta, said, in March 1875, that Quinet was

one of the fathers of contemporary democracy,
one of those who has done the most, by the spoken and written word and by his actions, to assure this democracy which surrounds me. 4

The funeral orator was echoed at the time of the centennial commemoration of Quinet's birth, by a spokes-
man who typically refused the adjective "French" to Catholic France when he wrote of Quinet's influence:

Depuis 1870 on peut dire que la pensée française est toute possédée de la sienne.... Nous vivons en lui et par lui nous sommes. 5

In spite of a deepening ignorance of what he wrote the place assigned Quinet by friends of Revolutionary France has not been reduced in importance with the passage of time. Roger Soltau also bespeaks the warm sympathy and epitomizes the viewpoint of this school in his interpretation of Quinet's role.

To spend twenty years in exile, to have the courage to stay out voluntarily, not to return as long as despotism was on the throne, to have had enough disciples in France to establish the Republic of 1870, all this meant something akin, not to political thought but to religious fervor....

...Michelet and Quinet did a great work in their college pulpit, and their so-called "lectures" were a real factor in the great élan of 1848 and in the formation of the ideal which has been the inspiration of generation after generation of the rank and file...of French Radicalism....

The most valuable critical evaluation of a rather extended period of Quinet's life is to be found in Gabriel Monod's masterful study of Jules Michelet. A discussion of Quinet's thought was only interjected into this work in so far as it related to Michelet, but the extensive consideration which Monod did give to Quinet was based upon a more thorough investigation,


and particularly a more complete command of the materials, than that to be found in any study devoted exclusively to Quinet himself. Monod concluded that Quinet, even in his own day, had a reputation inferior to his merit; and of course it was greater then than it has ever been since. Sainte-Beuve, like others who made similar comment, enjoyed repeating that Quinet was one of those poor souls who could never quite disentangle their thought. Monod replied to this by stating that Quinet was neither confused nor befuddled, but that he saw things too large: he inherited from French classicism the habit of expressing ideas in the most general terms possible. Sainte-Beuve, on the other hand, did recognize, that if Quinet was often incomprehensible, he was upon occasion gifted with prophetic vision.

Monod was able to put into brief terms his understanding of the essential meaning of Quinet's career. Like Michelet, with all of the reformers of that time (the early 1840's), Quinet saw in a religious reform the condition and the necessary point of departure for


social reform. A religious renovation, a democratic revolution, or at least evolution, and reassertion by France of the democratic apostleship which she had assumed by the Revolution were the essential elements of Quinet's teaching and of his writing during all of his life. This, assuredly, is the manner in which Quinet himself would have liked to have had it expressed. True, Monod seems here not to have escaped the influence of that inheritance from which he rightly believed Quinet suffered.

Émile Faguet, and his frequently clever and arresting synthesis allows one to partially forgive a certain carelessness with respect to elements in the factual record disturbing to his generalizations, had both shrewd and untrue things to say about Quinet. An exclusive preoccupation with religion made Quinet seem to him an anachronism, "profoundly marked by the seal of the past." Therefore, only a religious revival could bring about a renewal of interest in his work. A half-century has seen but little in the way of a revival of such curiosity, and Quinet has

10 Monod, op. cit., II, 102.

remained possibly the most neglected figure among those who played an equally important role in nineteenth century thought, or in events. However, if anachronistic in his preoccupation, Quinet had much contemporary company, and Faguet himself devoted much attention to similarly minded men.

Moving from the premise that the eighteenth century was destructive of authority, and uncreative in its accomplishment, Faguet placed de Maistre, Bonald, Lamennais, Ballanche and Cousin in the category of those who strove, in various fashions, to restore authority. Saint-Simon, Fourier, Comte, and Quinet, equally moved by the conviction of humanity's requirement for a moral purpose, strove to replace the authority which had crumbled. Faguet concluded that the nineteenth century was cruel for both groups, in as much as they were correct in their belief that humanity needs a moral purpose, but only correct as regarded the past and the future. They were not prophets of the present, and thus all failed. Faguet saw in Quinet a Protestant de Maistre, less the wit, having none; or a Protestant Bonald, without the logic, being less than

12 Ibid., II, xi.
sure in this regard. De Maistre's wit and Bonald's logic are both a sectarian prejudice rather than a universal conviction. But the charge is important because friends have never been willing to admit that the necessity for intolerance was deeply rooted in Quinet's message.

Faguet reached the conclusion that although a religious revival, when it dawned, would bring a resurrection of Quinet's thought and would make him appear to have been a prophet, in the meantime his influence had contributed to the making of a France which was anti-religious. The author may here be pardoned for having in mind his own rather than Quinet's definition of religion.

Banal rather than anachronistic is the opinion of Adrian Dansette, who suggests that Quinet's thought seems banal to Frenchmen precisely because during the Third Republic it penetrated everywhere. In making this pronouncement Dansette would reduce Quinet's thought to a Protestantism without dogma or ecclesiastical organization which, lacking the power to suppress Catholicism, ultimately aimed at an insistence upon separating the Catholic Church from the state in

13 Ibid., II, 199.
14 Ibid., II, 227.
This is equivalent to saying that "anti-clerical" embraces the essence of Quinet, a judgment that is close kin to Faguet's conclusion that his influence was to help make France anti-religious. Both are essentially Catholic judgments, and are based upon Catholic definition.

These summations serve to show where emphasis has been placed in almost all discussion relating to Quinet, but for one factor, a factor they too stress. There are three important biographies. The first was prepared to accompany the 1857 edition of Quinet's collected works. Its author, Chassin, was a disciple. The work is given over largely to a discussion of each of the volumes in the collected works which the biography was to supplement. Chassin was a representative of that segment of a generation which looked to Quinet as a prophet; it is he, who like Michel, puts first the factor others stress but rather take for granted. We are told that the man Quinet had never forgotten for


a single instant what the boy had felt, experienced and understood: the debasement and soiling of the fatherland in 1814 and 1815. His entire life had been consecrated to keeping alive that memory. The sinister flames of the campfires of the foreign invaders were always before his eyes. In all of Edgar Quinet's political and literary works Chassin found that flame kept alive, that vengeance which demanded consummation. Man's sole hope lay in the reestablishment of the hegemony of the French spirit. The necessary first step in the reconquest of her destined role was for France to efface every material and spiritual consequence of 1814 and 1815.18

The second Mme. Quinet published a two volume biography of her husband some years after his death.19 This work is of quite different importance than that of Chassin. Possessing many faults and containing many inaccuracies, not a few of them deliberate, it is invaluable for the many citations from unpublished correspondance, and for the personal portrait it contains. The distortions of the record are most flagrant with respect to details which have little to do with Quinet's opinions. A fair example of her

18 Ibid., p.262.

19 Mme. Quinet, Edgar Quinet avant l'Exil (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1887); Edgar Quinet depuis l'Exil (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1889).
methods and her motivation is the attempt to hide that the young Edgar received financial help from a young man of the working class (the relative of a former family servant) to publish his first literary effort. Rather than having this, to her, degrading circumstance, live in history, Mme. Quinet propagated the more romantic story of a young writer, cut off by an impatient father (another untruth), selling his meagre furnishings in order to make his appearance into the literary world. No truth which any of her numerous petty prejudices allowed her to think might cast an unfavorable light upon her husband was permitted to go into the record; her indulgence in untruths which projected a "truer" picture than the actual record depended upon the seriousness of the issue at hand.

The most recent biography appeared in 1936, although, but for minor additions and changes, it had been completed in manuscript before the first World War. Albert Valès, long a close friend, gave Quinet's widow valuable assistance in the preparation of her husband's correspondence for publication. Manuscript material in Mme. Quinet's possession passed

into his hands upon her death, to be utilized by him in preparing a definitive life. In progress almost forty years, this work was a disappointment, although a competent and accurate account of Quinet's career. Vales made a studious and conscientious effort to correct the errors in fact perpetuated by Mme. Quinet, and to deal with his subject objectively. The degree to which he failed in the more ambitious project of dealing with Quinet's thought and its significance resulted largely from his apparent conviction that by projecting his own opinions, temperament, and virtues into the past he was recreating an authentic Edgar Quinet.

The Vales interpretation was that the essential note of Quinet's career was his constant speaking out against the attenuation and abstraction of the individual, and he placed Quinet among the greatest nineteenth century individualists, ranking him with Carlyle and Emerson. This is of interest, although much exaggerated, because in spite of the degree of truth it contains, that side of Quinet has been little noted by his usual admirer. Henry Michel's brilliant *l'Idée de l'État* omits mention of him, although Michel was an admirer; this is notable because what Vales credited to Quinet is what Michel regarded as the greatest of needs. The latter's omission is also interesting as possible
evidence that Michel sensed the inconsistency of his admiration for Quinet the patriot.

The great need, as Michel saw it, was to somehow reestablish the natural rights doctrine of eighteenth-century individualism within what he termed a socialistic synthesis, and thus avoid the materialism and the negation of the individual within the State of latter day authoritarian socialism. In this manner he believed one might reestablish a true liberalism, in the place of one which had been impoverished by the negative State and the materialistic egoism posited by nineteenth-century bourgeois liberals in their panic stricken defense against radical democracy. Socialism in Michel's sense meant merely the frank acceptance on the part of the State of its moral and economic functions. The eighteenth century had recognized that function, without, he thought, giving it a solid enough philosophical foundation. On the other hand Michel attacked the latter day socialists, were they democratic or Marxist in their orientation, for being too little defiant of the State, for their unmeasured willingness to call the State to the assistance of the fuller individual development of the economically weak, for their blindness to the peril that the State follow its own development to the eventual prejudice of all individual rights.

The firm reestablishment of individual rights
possessed independent of any social and political authority was to him as necessary as was the fulfillment by the State of its economic and moral responsibilities. The failure to accomplish the first represented the greatest danger, for if this were not done something not unlike medieval realism seemed likely to prevail. Hegel was made responsible for all of those false creeds which propagated the idea that the State had a mission to fulfill, in the mystic sense of the word....They had undermined the notion if not the sentiment of individual rights. 21

How correct was it for Valès to define Quinet's message in terms which well described that of Michel? Not very, must be the answer. Michel was a liberal who refused to capitulate; Quinet took one of the several and well travelled roads to surrender. Valès was correct that Quinet did not sacrifice the individual to democracy, or to bourgeois or proletarian materialism, and that in his frequent refusal to compromise his idealism with any of these powerful currents he spoke like Michel, Quinet's executioner served national interest, a more uncompromising and insistent authority than those Quinet had flaunted.

We associate with the eighteenth century the diffusion of confidence in a new Heavenly City. Because he possessed reason and a free will man was perfectible; the study of past mistakes, and the observance of the natural laws by which they were punished made their repetition avoidable. Thus knowledge had a mundanely useful application: life here below could be made a progressively more pleasant experience. The presumption upon which this optimism was based was that natural man is good. The conservative (the epithet is used broadly to name the individual who believed that the irrational factor was decisive in activating man, a creature whom evil dominated) never ceased to point to the horror and the tragedy which he was certain had been the logical result of these vanities, or for the orthodox, these heresies. The liberal (the individual optimistic about the nature of man), on the other hand, cried out that once necessary institutions and environment had been created, enabling man's reasonableness to find expression and to give it authority, all would then soon be well, or much better.

Edgar Quinet grew out of the eighteenth century. Heir to the faith that man was master of his destiny, could remake the world nearer to the image of his ideal, the event, experience, seemed to heap denial after denial upon that inheritance. Believing in the
attainability of Fraternity, that key of the liberal arch, he observed the domination of an unalloyed bourgeois materialism and the insidious growth of a bitterly class conscious proletariat. The development of his thought is in part the record of his adjustment of received theory to experimental fact.

By unanimous consent Quinet occupies a high place in the hierarchy of heroes of the French democratic liberal tradition. The more carefully his thought is examined the more strange this fact appears. That Quinet has been so honored reveals that much which was incongruous with the reiterated slogan of "liberty" made a significant appeal to Revolutionary France. No one thinks of drawing solely upon Ernest Renan's *Avenir de la Science* to explain his place or his importance in nineteenth-century French thought; to do so would result in an almost completely false evaluation. In choosing to leave in partial obscurity Quinet's mature conclusions men friendly to his side of the longstanding French debate have perpetuated a distorted and misleading legend.

The effort will be made in the chapters following this one to relate Quinet to French liberalism, and to suggest, at least, the degree to which that movement may be implicated in the illiberal and undemocratic
turn which Quinet himself took. Greatest concern, however, will be with matters not primarily related to traditional French liberalism. Machiavelli may be said to be nearer to the twentieth century than are the important intellectual figures of Restoration France. Possibly men of no age are essentially more self sufficient than are those of another, but certainly the conscious need or desire for some transcendental faith was a marked characteristic of Quinet's early environment. Thus the Florentine humanist may seem nearer to us today than a group still obviously haunted by the memory of a universal authority.

The young Quinet sought a firmer philosophical or religious base for the optimism he had inherited. The year 1830 was one of crisis and disillusion which narrowed his horizons; humanity and his own personal salvation gave way to France as Quinet's first preoccupation, briefly after 1830, then finally in the 1840's. The acceptance of a common fund of ideas and values by a large enough proportion of the members of a society to allow that body to live together in peace and harmony is a problem, the solution of which, even in the most relative fashion, would end what some have been pleased to call the search for authority. When Quinet turned his attention to the social regeneration
of France his real interest as an instructive example begins. The faith he found for himself he wished to impose upon all Frenchmen. The examination of history and his own experience taught him the necessity for intolerance.

This study will follow Quinet to the Revolution of 1848, and will consider that part of his later work which resulted directly from the failure of that event to result in anything but a new reaction against all that February 24, 1848 had seemed to him to promise. Late in life Quinet came to believe that the greatest tragedy in the history of France had been the failure of the Reformation to succeed there as it had in countries which became Protestant. The reason for his conviction was that having failed to break the bonds of an obscurantist religion in the sixteenth century, the French spirit had been buried two centuries deeper in the Catholic tradition, its very bloodstream was contaminated. Quinet gave a personal example of the difficulty, in his case the impossibility, to escape that tradition.

A description of the course of any man's thought presents many a difficulty. Rousseau suggested one of them when he asked where the philosopher might be found, who, for his own glory, would not willingly deceive humanity: what philosopher in the secret of his heart
proposed anything but to distinguish himself: the essential matter was to think differently than others.\textsuperscript{22} This pronouncement is easy to remember when dealing with Quinet.

II

EARLY ENVIRONMENT

The Quinet family settled in Bresse sometime before that area passed from Savoy to France in 1601. Edgar's immediate forebears were cultivated bourgeoisie of moderate fortune. His paternal ancestors had been magistrates in Lyon and Bourg, his grandfather the mayor of the latter city in 1791. The boy's mother came from a French-speaking Swiss Calvinist family; her father had been mayor of Versoix, her natal village.¹

Edgar's father, Jerome Quinet, served with the Republican armies as a War Commissary. In spite of his hatred for Napoleon his tour of duty continued into the Empire, and he was with the Army of the Rhine until 1807. In the spring of that year the Quinet family established itself in the country near Bourg, at Certines, a property which had been in the family for some three centuries.² Jerome Quinet, who later evidenced little sympathy for his romantically minded and undependable son, left Edgar's early upbringing to the mother, while himself

² Quinet, Histoire de mes Idées, pp.20-22.
pursuing the solitary study of mathematics. The
mother dominated the boy's early development.

In due time, after he had attended the colleges
at Bourg and Lyon, Edgar was sent to Paris to study
law. Now seventeen, he was averse to any of the
occupations which might have assured a livelihood,
but was nevertheless placed in the home of wealthy
relatives in the expectation that he would eventually
be launched in a business career. Such a plan was the
result of a family compromise. The father had hoped
that Edgar would prepare himself for an army career;
serving under the white flag is said to have seemed
impossible to the boy, and an introduction into the
banking world was the adjustment reached. The son
soon withdrew from his part of the bargain.3

Within a year Edgar had deserted his patrons,
but continued to live in Paris on a more or less
meagre allowance from his father, ostensibly in order
that he might continue his law studies. Family
connections provided him with entrance into the
fashionable bourgeois world, and he steadily enlarged
the number of acquaintanceships which he had formed in
intellectual and literary circles. One month before

3 Chassin, op. cit., pp. 23-24, and Mme. Edgar
Quinet, Edgar Quinet avant l'Exil, p. 32.
his twentieth birthday, in January 1823, he had printed at his own expense his first literary creation, a pamphlet-length satire aimed at the current Catholic idealization of the Middle Ages.

Quinet was a boy and became a man in Restoration France. In time his lot fell with that party for whom the return of the Bourbons had been the darkest hour in the life of the nation; in time he became possibly the most passionate spokesman among those who made that interpretation part of a tradition. One need not accept, and one can go far in repudiating, the portrait the mature Quinet drew of his own youth; what is more important is that what he later depicted as having been his own personal experience had been a common one. He appropriated it when he wished to reach an audience which would be moved by the recital of an experience they had themselves deeply felt.

The novelist Musset projects a countryside covered by slow moving pale black-robed phantoms. Seeming strangers knocked upon the doors of dwellings. Still trembling with a fear which had seized them, now a generation ago, they presented the inhabitants with great parchment documents. With these creased and

tattered records they dispossessed the unfortunate usurpers. One was astonished that a single corpse had been able to attract so many vultures. This was France after Waterloo, Restoration France, "one of the most striking reversals of modern history." From Saint Helena Napoleon pronounced that the battle of Waterloo had been as fatal to the liberties of Europe as the battle of Philippi had been fatal to those of Rome, and Quinet one day wrote that victorious with France, the Revolution, and peoples everywhere, were conquered by its defeat. "The Revolution surrendered its sword in 1815." The Revolution, which, as Victor Hugo expressed it, is in the service of mankind, is a battle perpetually waged for what is just, perpetually won for what is true. Justice is the essence of man; truth the essence of God.

For France defeat was not all: a nation was

shamed. Foreign occupation gave force and a durable violence to this sentiment of shame; foreign uniforms clothed brutal masters, permanent pillagers.\footnote{S. Charléty, \textit{La Restauration: 1815-1830} \textit{Histoire de France contemporaine depuis la Révolution jusqu'à la Paix de 1919} (ed. Ernest Lavisse, Paris: Hachette, 1921), IV, 76.}

Quinet recalled, at least, that as a youth he had found an historical parallel in Tacitus: the fall of another empire, the invasion of other barbarians. The Prussian of 1815 was the clearly distinguishable descendant of the brutal tribal warrior of a previous millennium.\footnote{Quinet, \textit{Histoire de mes Idées}, p.200 and \textit{Histoire de la Campagne de 1815} (Paris: Germer-Baillièere, n.d.), p.66.}

Throne and altar joined in sharing the first fruits of Waterloo.\footnote{See Artz, \textit{op. cit.}, p.22.} In that unhappy hour youth observed and listened, thinking always "the shadow of Ceasar would debark at Cannes and breathe life into the still form; but the silence was uninterrupted, the only banner aloft, the pale lilies." When youths spoke of glory, of ambition, of hope, of love, of life a single dinning response was answer: "Become priests."\footnote{Musset, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.6-10.} Julian Sorel memorized the New Testament in Latin, then
de Maistre's du Pape, but he believed in one as little as in the other, and in the early days of the Restoration ceased to speak of Napoleon and announced his intention to become a priest. Laughing like Mephistopheles he told himself: "Well enough, I know how to choose the uniform of my century....How many are the cardinals of meaner birth than myself who have ruled."  

The theoretical role of the divine right monarch, that of being "a full-dress political image of God," was, writes Jacques Maritan, "a royal privilege which became rather detrimental to God in the sequel."  

Divine right monarchy was not restored to France in 1815, but if clericalism means the utilization of the spiritual power for the benefit of the temporal power the Restoration offered the exemplary image of such a regime. There were 80,000 paschal communications in Paris in 1815, 20,000 in 1830. France "vomissait le cléricalisme" in July 1830; one may say, the sequel. The act

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consistent with the ideal Quinet wished to instill in all men, but he could not fail to note that the very sincerity of the passions of the Restoration had been a cause for its weakness. Few governments had, he thought, put so much good faith and frankness into its hatreds; but in fighting the new age openly the regime had been as far as possible from the political spirit that finally prevailed. The Restoration never learned that by according men the shadow the substance could be taken from them. When the people had wished to deceive themselves they had not been permitted to do so.17

The nobility of the ancien régime returned to France after twenty-two years of exile, having forgotten nothing, having learned nothing; so at least has their frame of mind frequently been described. This judgment is too simple, writes Adrian Dansette. They had forgotten the philosophical prejudices of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment; they had learned religion, at least religion as it had been understood by believers under the ancien régime.18 The France to which they returned to rule was, except for the peasantry, predominantly irreligious. At the beginning of the

18 Dansette, *op. cit.*, I, 235.
Restoration even youth was abandoned to the influence of parents and teachers hostile to Catholicism. A report prepared by the young Lacordaire showed that of the 7 or 8 per cent who had partaken of paschal communions at the time of their entrance but 1 per cent of those leaving the royal colleges at Paris had retained their faith. At Saint-Cyr cadets who attended communion in uniform risked provoking duels with their comrades for so dishonoring the School.\(^{19}\)

From the nobility came seventy of the ninety bishops appointed during the fifteen year reign of Louis XVIII and Charles X, and these headed a clergy almost exclusively royalist. The political standard was the religious one. The Bishop of Troyes expressed the near unanimous opinion of the upper clergy in affirming the principle that there existed an eternal contract between throne and altar, one of which could not exist without the other.\(^{20}\) Nationalism, so bruised and sensitive before a regime installed and protected by the victorious enemy, could respond in only one fashion toward the altar bound and delivered to that throne. The issue, however, was a deeper one.

The French Revolution, wrote Renan, was the first

\(^{19}\) *Ibid.*, I, 261-262.

attempt on the part of humanity to take over its own reins and direct itself. 21 Here we need not examine the claim to originality; the faith of Revolutionary France in man's reason, in science, and thus in progress was its essential characteristic. In 1815 the Vatican ordered the prohibition of illumination by gas and vaccination for small pox within the Papal territories. During the Church attack upon the University the clerical organ Mémorial Catholique launched a furious offensive against the theories which prevailed in the philosophy courses at that institution: here the student heard of the indefinite perfectibility of the human spirit, whereas religion teaches one to shudder at the consciousness of our degraded nature. 22 The cleavage extended to the bowels of the earth.

Success in two matters embodying the Church viewpoint serves to clarify the implacable enmity of the Catholic and the Revolutionary tradition. The law of sacrilege, providing for the death penalty, was promulgated on April 20, 1825. In its principal dispositions the law was never applied, though through no


22 Henri Tronchon, Romantisme et Préromantisme (Strasbourg: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de Strasbourg, 1930), pp.54-55.
fault of the authors of the law. Taking the lives, in the name of the absolute right of truth, of those who committed sacrilege, Bonald insisted, did no more than send the criminals before their natural judge. Not so well remembered is the strong protest of another prominent Catholic, Lamennais, that the law was atheistic because it did not protect Catholicism exclusively. Dansette concludes that the law did have one victim: the regime which had the madness to assume responsibility for it. The other Ultra victory particularly to be noted was that over the University. Attacks, vigorously led by Lamennais and Chateaubriand, ended in success for the Church when, in February 1821, the University monopoly was broken and secondary education placed under the surveillance of the clergy. At the end of the Restoration two-thirds of the professors of philosophy within the secondary system were priests. The fight to control education was the bitterest and the longest between the two Frances throughout the nineteenth century, and will be treated in some detail in a later chapter.

25 See Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 163
26 Dansette, op. cit., I, 266.
It was to the king of England, after God, to whom Louis XVIII owed his throne. The Ultras looked to Wellington to assist them in replacing that too moderate monarch with the future Charles X, and pleaded with the Allies not to withdraw the occupying troops whose presence was necessary to the success of their plots. Hatred for England was as old as French national feeling, and now the intensification of the one accompanied the intensification of the other.

A definition of a nation well suited to the conception of France held by men of the Revolution is that of Renan:

To have common glories in the past, a common will in the present; to have done great things together; to wish to do greater....In the past, an inheritance of glories and regrets; in the future, one and the same program to carry out.

The common glory in the past was the Revolution. The common will in the present was to reverse the temporary defeats of 1814 and 1815. As for the future this statement, although of later date, expressed a general feeling always large in the Revolutionary viewpoint. At the College of France, in February 1844, the Polish

27 Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 33.

28 Ibid., IV, 127-130.

poet Mickiewicz damned the error of those who in France concerned themselves with Utopian schemes of material betterment, or primarily with French social problems. The time was not yet for the sword to be exchanged for the plowshare. No, the armies, the fleet, the arsenals of France belonged to humanity. On them reposed the possibility of true progress.  

Baneful gift, that crown received without intermediary from the hands of Blücher and of Wellington; Wellington whom Chateaubriand then called "our new Turenne." That crown signified civilization's sorrow. This association of France with civilization was referred to by Soltau as

that identification of the destinies of political France with democracy and civilization, which has led to such a crippling of the French mind.  

The judgment was stern, but how just was his description of the phenomenon! Whereas during the Restoration men like Armand Carrel thought in terms of France heading a warrior democracy formed into a Holy Alliance against monarchy the Bourbons made their use of French armies.

30 Monod, op. cit., II, 89.
31 Quinet, Histoire de la Campagne de 1815, p.415.
32 Soltau, op. cit., p.xxiv.
33 See Lavisse, op. cit., S. Charlety, La Monarchie de Juillet (1830-1848), V, 9.
Intervention in Spain in 1822 was termed by Quinet the giving of aid to the "crucification of a nation." The blood of a nation divinely appointed to lead humanity forward and onward into light was perversely spent as an instrument of darkness.34

Although intense nationalism and anti-Catholicism are conspicuously absent in his correspondance and other writings which date from the Restoration, the autobiography of Quinet's first twenty years, written in 1857, in which he projected backward many of his later attitudes, is an important record. He evoked 1815 in these terms. One night and the world seemed over­turned; what had been virtue became crime. Condemnation did not stop at things: first the master of his school, a former captain of the dragoons, was proscribed; then the police overran his parent's home, displacing objects even in the boy's room, searching for Baudot, a former member of the Convention and a frequent visitor of his family.35 In the change of temperament of a whole nation, each person was forced of necessity to give a new direction to his thought, to destroy his past

education, to create for himself another nature; it seemed to the boy as if in a moment, not only the climate, but the atmosphere in which men lived had been changed. Even the benefits intermixed in the deluge of misfortune angered and irritated youth.36

If the nation may be said to have accepted the Restoration as an imposition of the peace treaty, "without passion, with indifference and resignation," priests, nobles, and the wealthy bourgeoisie thought and felt in a different manner. For them the Restoration was the beginning of a revenge to be taken "for old humiliations and a long period of defeats."37 Within a matter of months the bourgeoisie had been disillusioned by the regime they had welcomed, but for the nation in a larger sense it was the execution of Ney, the massacre of Protestants in the Midi,38 the public butchering of a live eagle by an hysterical royalist mob at Carcassonne39 that inflamed in many a French heart a hatred which would never forgive.

36 Ibid., pp.165-166.
37 Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 28.
38 See Guizot, Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire de mon Temps (3rd ed.; 8 vols.; Paris: Michel Lévy, 1861), I,106-107, for an account of how d'Argenson was called to order in the Chamber of Deputies for making mention of these incidents.
39 See Artz, op. cit., p.130 for this and similar incidents.
Quinet would have it that similar incidents affected his own development. The trial, conviction, and execution of one of the most popular persons in his department, for having plotted "the assassination of all nobles and all of the wealthy proprietors of the department", in having gone over to Napoleon during the Hundred Days, marked the commencement of his hatred for the Bourbons. Also, it had revived his Bonapartism.

On the night of March 19, the eve of Napoleon's arrival in Paris on his return from Elba, the grandfather of Ernest Renan told his wife to rise early the following morning and to look toward the steeple of the village church. When morning came the tri-color war flying there. Twenty times risking their necks the grandfather, with several other "patriots," had raised "the national flag" during the night. When several months later the Bourbon flag replaced it the grandfather went out of his mind. If more able to bear his sorrow, Ernest's father shared these feelings, a patriotic attitude which came to be associated with the name Napoleon.

The author who wrote that there is no force in


history more powerful than sentiment will rouse as much debate as consent; he used understatement when he added that defeat at Waterloo strengthened the sentiment of France for Napoleon. The Quinet household was but an example. The implacable hatred of Jerome Quinet for the Emperor was only disarmed when fortune changed, when the disaster was consumated; then came the day when he could be heard to defend the traitor of the 18 Brumaire, of the Concordat, of the coronation at Notre Dame. The mortal hatred of Edgar's mother for the tyrant who had exiled Mme. de Staël did not halt tears she shed, "for him as well as for France," when disaster struck. A legend grew, for better or worse the nature of Napoleon suffered distortion; the projection and the original differed much. The offspring later reminded Marx of that section of the Napoleonic code which forbade investigation into the question of paternity.

Quinet made an important contribution to that legend during the July Monarchy, which history revenged. The reaction he recorded as having been his upon the

42 Fisher, op. cit., p.113.
43 Quinet, Histoire de mes Idées, p.90.
44 Marx, Le 18-Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1949), p.98. This remark related to both the legend and to Napoleon III.
death of Napoleon has been said to describe "the feeling with which the news...was generally received in France." This is, in part, legend becoming part of the history of a legend. In his measured confession of error Quinet recalled that during the seven years of exile the name of Napoleon had daily descended into silence, almost into forgetfulness. Then death suddenly revived forever his empire over men's minds. This, he wrote, had been his own experience. Mme. de Staël, for whom his admiration had been so great, caused him to doubt, but in 1821 the hero prevailed. Between 1815 and 1821 he made no positive choice between liberty and Napoleon; he did not believe he must sacrifice one to the other, but as liberty was a growing preoccupation Napoleon faded from his mind. But the formidable news of 1821 caused a new eruption of enthusiasm. The hero returned to haunt his intelligence, no longer as his emperor, but as a specter which death had almost entirely transformed.

Quinet now saw in him a being entirely different than that which the world had known:

That ideology which he had disdained, henceforth he must serve it, because he was now no more than an idea....He himself had ended by being conquered by those notions of

45 Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 175.
liberty and justice. What greater demonstration of their truth, of their power! He had wished to crush them, but had himself been forced to submit. Was this not proof that they were invincible.

An accommodation was made between an irreconcilable cult for liberty and one for Napoleon. Quinet and others did not go to Napoleon, Napoleon returned to them. It had been well understood, so he believed, that the reconciliation took place in the clouds, with a phantom, not a monarch who had escaped from the tomb.

When Quinet looked back and then wrote in these terms in 1857 he was in exile and a republican, immensely proud of his consistancy in thought and action. The close union of Bonapartists and Republicans had been a feature of the Left opposition during the Restoration. One of the most promising of later Republican leaders, Armand Carrel, permitted himself to take up the thesis of Napoleon's liberalism. As a liberal and a friend of the people the Emperor was celebrated in a hundred songs.


47 Ibid., pp.169-176 for this and the preceding paragraph.

December 3, 1851, which found Hugo, like Quinet, crushed by the monster both had done their share to create, revealed the former compelled to write, in his vain appeal to the army that it resist the coup d'etat:

This man says that his name is Bonaparte. He lies, for Bonaparte is a word which means glory. This man says that his name is Napoleon. He lies, for Napoleon is a word which means genius.

Almost at once Proudhon, after this event, showed the way to the Left in reevaluating the legendary Napoleon, by writing that the series of battles which had brought trophies, at so much cost in treasure and in blood, could be reduced to a military trilogy, "of which the first act is Aboukir, the second Trafalgar, the last Waterloo." The time came when Quinet characterized Napoleon as the "great Italian who had made use of the arm of France," as damning a pronouncement as he could make, in a work which was his contribution to what by then would be a growing republican-inspired anti-Napoleon literature. Hugo must have felt in that early December of 1851 the time was too short to

49 Hugo, op. cit., II, 265.


51 Quinet, Histoire de la campagne de 1815, p. 18.
explain, to re-educate.

The enemies of reaction had glorified what the Restoration had proscribed. At hand seemed a mighty weapon, somewhat carelessly it was chosen. Wellington the new Turenne of the most lionized and eloquent of Catholic lay spokesman; the Englishman Burke author of reaction's bible; a complacent government turned its back as heroes of France were torn from their graves to have their remains dragged through filth, to be dumped into rivers; a Catholic clergy incited and fed the flames of a searing national humiliation -- a bitterly intensified anti-clericalism and the cult of Napoleon were natural avenues for discontent to take. Intense patriotism, the cult of the strong man, the military hero, the constant appeal to the authority of national interest, how false it is to associate these exclusively with those who wish to preserve the status quo, or with the political Right. Under the Restoration, as under the July Monarchy, the democratic tradition in France clothed its demands for social change in a jingo nationalism, in an attack upon peaceful foreign policy, upon cosmopolitanism, and a Church headed by a "foreign" Pope.

Assessment of the Napoleonic legend should include Heine's commentary. In May 1840 Lamartine rose in the Chamber of Deputies to speak against the
government on the question of returning Napoleon's remains to France. He spoke with eloquence and with all the semblance of reason, expressing his lack of admiration for those who had for official doctrine liberty, legality and progress and who now took the sword and despotism for their symbol. The oration aroused the warm enthusiasm of the extreme Right, a faction by then antipathetic to the poet-politician. Heine found the speech disagreeable in spite of the truth it contained; for the speaker's mental reservations were dishonorable and the truth was spoken in the interest of falsehood. Although a thousand times true that Napoleon had been the enemy of freedom, a despot and a crowned egotist, and that his glorification was a sinful and dangerous example, it was not this tyrant, not the hero of the 18 Brumaire, not the thunder god covetous of glory, whom Frenchmen wished to honor in memorial ceremony.

No, he is the man who represents young France against old Europe...in his person the French people had been victorious, in his person debased, in his person they honor and celebrate themselves -- and every Frenchman feels this. This is the person whose glorification is debated. Thus one forgets the dark side of the deceased and pays him homage, quand meme; the Chamber commits a grave error through its un-

timely higgling. The speech of Lamartine was a masterstroke, full of pernicious blossoms whose delicate poison addles many of the weak minded; but its lack of honor is but poorly masked by lovely phrases, and the Ministry may be pleased rather than disturbed that its enemies have so clumsily betrayed their anti-national feelings.

The perpetuators of the legend may be put in no better light than this.

The expression "the two Frances" has come into such general usage, and the interpretation which it represents so warped and bent by recent application, that it may be restated here. Renan is indirectly responsible for the term, saying upon one occasion that "in the womb of our country, as in Rebecca's two people are struggling to be born, each of which wants to smother the other." Paul Seippel, in 1905, took this as text for a study of the "eternal dualism between the France of the Church and the France of the Revolution," and noted the extraordinary likeness between the two opponents -- twins really.

Each believes in a moral unity of France which he identifies with his own creed, and which he seeks to impose by means fair and foul...neither in fact really believes in liberty at all, but is at heart a dogmatic authoritarian.

53 Heine, op. cit., VI, 179-180.
54 Soltau, op. cit., p. 486.
Soltau, in a work which in English stands by itself, accepted the interpretation and concluded that the root cause of this dualism was

...the policy of religious unity typified in the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the identification of all religion with Catholic orthodoxy of the strictest kind, and of the Church with political despotism; so that no political or social emancipation became possible without war against the Church, dogma being met with dogma, persecution with intolerance, one vision of unity with another. In all this turmoil there was no room for freedom.

Keeping two things in mind this may serve as a valuable guide: many a French figure cannot fairly be placed in either camp, and the struggle is not quite one between unsullied virtue and unmitigated evil.

Revolutionary France, in the sense of this definition, was hardly represented in the Chamber of Deputies during the Restoration. At that time, it should be remembered, there were ten million taxpayers in France; less than one-tenth of these were electors and frequently only one-half of these exercised their franchise. The Doctrinaires, headed by Guizot and Royer-Collard, and the Liberals, most ably and most generously represented by Constant,

55 Ibid., pp. 487-488.
formed an official opposition to the policies of the returned Bourbons. The first had welcomed the re-turning monarchy but were soon dissatisfied with the result; though important, that small area which they were willing to regard as the legitimate accomplishment of the Revolution was small. England before the first reform bill, with somewhat more of royal prerogative, was their ideal. The Liberals are to be differentiated from the Doctrinaires only in degree; they were as fearful of democracy, they were monarchists of strong conviction. A constitutional monarchy based on a highly restricted property suffrage, or, one may say, the Charter put into practice was the program of both. The outward forms of the Restoration with a change of personnel, this was their desire. The July Revolution became their victory when they were able to capture it from the quite different forces which had overturned Charles X. But, if confronted with the alternative of either Robespierre or Charles X the choice of Guizot would have been swift indeed; only with injustice may he be forced into either of these "two Francs."

The Republicans were an almost silent group under the Restoration, representing a sentiment more than a party, but holding views which responded most closely to those still prevailing among a large part of the French middle class. During the last ten years
of the Empire the government had put much effort into erasing the Republic from memory. The word became synonomous for the Terror.\textsuperscript{57} Success in establishing this association is often credited to the regime upon the basis of Quinet's account of his own experience. As a boy, coming into contact with a work which retold those recent years he was unable to understand the references to "Girondins," "Jacobins," and "Montagnards."

A single word had replaced all of the others, the Terror, a word which no one defined for me. I would have needed a dictionary for each line; to such a degree the language of the Revolution had promptly ceased to be a living language. \textsuperscript{58}

Silenced by the Restoration, "the other France," that of the Revolution, retained control over the mind of the bourgeoisie, which remained vaguely republican, strongly anti-clerical and patriotic. Quinet went through a development, which as an example, does its bit to justify the charge which Seippel and Soltau have made.

\textsuperscript{57} Weill, \textit{op. cit.}, p.1.

\textsuperscript{58} Quinet, \textit{Histoire de mes Idées}, pp.75-76.
III

THE IMPORTANCE OF MME DE STAËL

To be French is to be logical -- the reputation is not entirely undeserved. Thus, that "during the Empire, as before and after," a man's philosophy meant his politics is not surprising. In this instance, however, the pragmatic spirit was as much in evidence as the logical turn of mind. Philosophy served politics, and this is not quite all of logic. Time and place determine the form which the dispute between liberalism and conservatism may take. In Quinet's youth French philosophical as well as political debate had its peculiar coloring. Modern liberalism, Croce concluded, could, without hesitation, be called a "religion." Taine, the product of another Catholic environment, so described the philosophy of the Eighteenth Century. In that system Reason replaced God, and intolerance matched intolerance. Dogmas, fanatics, inquisitors and martyrs, and the ambition to reshape man in the form of a pre-conceived type were a part of the new as well as the old.

In Restoration France the political standard was the religious one. Liberalism faced Catholicism. Both religions demanded the whole man, separation of public from private life being as forbidden by one as by the other. The English too are logical. John Stuart Mill made an "empirical and superficial defense of liberty" because in England the antagonist was a different one. Mill believed "the notion that truths external to the mind may be known by intuition or consciousness, independently of observation and experience" was the most effective instrument ever devised for the support of evil prejudice. Seeking utility rather than truth Mill was content with this. In like fashion one may disprove the existence of God by stating that no other concept is more useful to despots. In England the enemy of liberalism was historicism and "tradition," or, as the liberal said, "prejudice." For the French Catholic, historicism and relativism led to that error.


3 See Croce, op. cit., p.17, on this phase of liberalism.

4 Ibid., p.318.

which later took the name of "modernism." Thus the Catholic-Liberal debate in France left largely to one side the "unhistorical aspects" of the ideas of 1789. Universalism was Catholic as well as Liberal, and such an area of agreement was without usefulness or interest to either party. To be "logical" was to forge weapons.

Placing Germany and France at the two extremes of the moral chain, the former considering ideas as the source of all material impressions, Mme. de Staël, in spite of her philosophic idealism, could not fail to note one French virtue. Whereas among Germans there seemed to be no connection between thought and action, in France one was hardly ever concerned with abstract ideas except in their connection to practical matters. Here we truly have the vaunted French logic, that aspect of the French classic spirit which in Taine's eyes was a French form of insanity.

These matters have a relationship to Quinet's early development which will become increasingly apparent. For an understanding of his first groping in the world of

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6 Mme. de Staël, de l'Allemagne (Paris: Garnier, 1874), pp.11 and 77. Oscar A. Haac, Les Principes Inspirateurs de Michelet (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951) notes the "feeble influence" of "true philosophers" on Michelet who accepted or neglected their thought according to its usefulness in the fighting of contemporary political battles (pp.130-and 140).
ideas they have almost no significance. As a boy and as a young man Quinet gave a natural and unquestioning allegiance to the political heritage of 1789. That this should have solved all questions of faith and religion escaped him. He suffered from doubt, and sought certainty. As it did to many others, the problem appeared to him in a very different aspect than that we have first touched upon.

Individualism, or the right of private judgment and the inviolability of the human personality, was one of the precepts of the Enlightenment. A reaction against individualism, both in its democratic and "liberal" manifestations, was among the strongest and most persistent currents in the intellectual history of nineteenth century France. Important in this reaction was a group of men possessed with the idea that individualism as a principle had caused the disappearance of the spiritual power. Believing that this force was necessary to men they saw the task to be the restoration of the old, that is to say Catholicism, or the creation of a new faith. Quinet has been placed in the latter category.

In fact Quinet's first reaction against the eighteenth century was of a very different sort. Although there is

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7 See Michel, l'Idée de l'État, p. 625.
8 Faguet, op. cit., II, vi.
a certain justice in the above observation it creates a false impression except when applied to his later thought. The crucial question is whether or not the Enlightenment deserves the frequent charge that it was primarily negative in its accomplishment. For the present it need only be stated that the young Quinet became closely associated with a group dominated by this view, and that his early thought was profoundly influenced by it. Referring to the leaders of the previous century he wrote, in 1825,

They destroyed everything (and I am very satisfied that this is so) with their persiflage. Now it is necessary to construct, there is a need for convictions, of affection, and the sentiment of liberty and humanity. 9

Monod noted that Mme. de Staël imposed her opinions and her ideas with respect to Germany on all Frenchmen who were not obstinately bound to the tradition of the eighteenth century, and who were curious about new tendencies.10 What was meant by "eighteenth century" here was the materialism which seemed the necessary logical consequence of its philosophic determinism, the aspect against which Quinet revolted. According to Mme. de Staël the


10 Monod, op. cit., I, 152.
increasing influence of a mocking scepticism was but the natural outcome of a philosophy which attributed all of our ideas to our sensations.\(^{11}\) Passing from the critique of a philosophy which believed only in what could be proved as a fact or a calculation, she arrived at Kant, who, from his theory of beauty moved to that of the sublime, which he made consist in moral liberty in conflict with nature or destiny. The power of destiny and the immensity of nature were in infinite opposition with the miserable dependance of mortal creatures. However, a spark of sacred fire in the human breast triumphed over the physical universe subject to necessity and natural law, for it sufficed that this spark exist to resist all the material forces of the world.\(^{12}\) Resolving properly the question of free will was the pivotal concern. What was there more important than for man to know that he is responsible for his actions, and in what relationship the power of his will stands with respect to the circumstances which influence or control it? What would be our conscience if only our habits gave birth to it, if it were nothing but the product of colors, sounds and odors.\(^{13}\)


\(^{12}\) Ibid., p.448.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., pp.405-406.
Faith seemed logical in the face of such a depressing hypothesis; and the logic of Mme. de Staël reduced itself to this: so bleak a thought must be rejected, its reverse embraced. Natural and immutable laws were projected out of faith, laws within the understanding of the conscience, if not the reason, of the commonality of men, which permitted the application of the Evangelical precept: judge the prophets by their works. That maxim could then serve as a guide among philosophies: all that tended toward immorality was but a sophism. This life had meaning and value only if the religious education of humanity were the goal, if it served to prepare us for a higher destiny, by the free choice of virtue here on earth. Metaphysics, social institutions, the arts, the sciences, all ought to be appreciated in relationship to the moral perfectibility of man. Moral perfection was the touchstone which was given to the ignorant and to the learned alike.¹⁴

In this fashion, men unable or unwilling to return to superstition, which they associated with Catholic orthodoxy, and equally unable or unwilling to divorce themselves from a Catholic tradition, were offered a solution to an old difficulty. The eighteenth-century

¹⁴ Ibid., p.404.
identification of man with nature, both being the necessary product of natural law, had threatened to eliminate purpose from the world and lead to the inescapable conclusion that "whatever is is right." Thus arose the necessity to separate society from nature once more. Carl Becker wrote:

It is well known that such separation was effected by Rousseau: "man is born free but is everywhere in chains;" "naturally good it is society which corrupts him" so ran the famous formula of the new dualism. 15

The dilemma of the early nineteenth century, for those who sought a moral purpose and who were chained to the concept of progress, is set forth by this, but when Rousseau was rediscovered by Mme. de Staël, it was his idealism which became the saving grace. In the search for an authority, for a distinction necessary to life itself, that between good and evil, through the medium of German philosophy, Rousseau was returned to France.

Conscience! Conscience! divine instinct; immortal and celestial voice; sure guide of a being ignorant and limited, but intelligent and free; infallible judge of good and evil.... Without you I feel nothing within myself which raises me above beasts but the wretched

privilege to be confused in error, with the aid of an understanding without rule, and a reason without principle.  

In Paris during the last years of the reign of Louis XVIII, Quinet was deeply concerned with the connection between abstract ideas and practical matters. But religious faith, not a political philosophy was his own practical need. Charlèty, seeking an adequate yet brief means of contrasting the spirit of the Restoration with that of the July Monarchy, noted that in the latter:

The impassioned word, oratorical, flamboyant, or even solemnly apostolic replaces the measured, academic and doctrinaire distinction of the preceding age.

This historian believed that it sufficed to bring together the names of a Royer-Collard or a Benjamin Constant, and those of a Michelet or a Quinet to make minute comparisons unnecessary. As a young man Quinet sought a sanction for the characteristics he later embodied.

At the close of his life he recalled the despair which had hung over the youth of his generation:

We advanced in life enveloped in heavy mists. You say: "Deliberate obscurity; the affectation of misunderstood genius." No, all was

17 Lavisse, op. cit., V, 350.
not voluntary in that despair of the intelligence. We sought the light, and it was refused us because, badly oriented, we sought it where it could not appear to the human spirit.

Croce gave Mme. de Staël the credit for beginning in France the doctrinal development of modern liberalism. Prepared for this role by her study of German speculative thought, she added the requisite political element to that base.\textsuperscript{19} This woman was most important among those from whom Quinet sought guidance. The sources of her inspiration were much the same as those of Cousin, modified by the latter to give some place to sensory and sensual reality in the effort to preserve the unity of all things. For Cousin too "the eighteenth century was the age of criticism and destruction, the nineteenth ought to be that of intelligent reconstruction." The challenge was the need to build a new edifice with the "debris," to find a more profound analysis which could serve the future.\textsuperscript{20} The encouragement of this man was of decisive importance to Quinet.

Saint-Simon was another who suffered from what he felt was the moral and intellectual anarchy of his


\textsuperscript{19} Croce, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 10 and 98.

time, a state of affairs resulting directly from the doctrines of the eighteenth century. What his disciple, Comte, called the "sickness of the West," the insurrection of the individual against society, had resulted from the principles of the French Revolution. A pride which could not be disciplined had become a general trait of modern man. Saint-Simon had as his central thought the establishment of a new spiritual power, and he and his followers serve as an example of that search for authority, although they reacted against the individualism rather than the materialism and determinism of the previous century. That a new synthesis was of primary importance to many men is apparent in Quinet's own case. He, in spite of his idealism, was for a short period attracted by the Saint-Simonian group, as was Michelet. Also to be noted is that the vacuum in mind here was that left by the breakdown of the authority over men's minds of the Catholic church. The ideal was that of an exclusive unity, its absence was the greatest cause of discomfort.

Goethe's view of history contains another aspect of this conception according to which some faith is necessary to man, and, although there is no evidence

21 See Michel, l'Idée de l'État, p.452. Ortega y Gasset but repeats this in a later context.
that Quinet was familiar with it, the interpretation it presented was repeated in a strikingly similar fashion by him. Goethe wrote:

The true, the only and the deepest theme of world and human history, to which all others are dependent, remains the conflict between belief and unbelief. All epochs in which belief prevails, in whatever form it may be, are glorious, stimulating and fruitful, for those who share the experience directly, and for those who follow. On the other hand all epochs in which unbelief, in whatever form it be, maintains a sorrowful ascendency, even should it swagger for a moment in seeming glory, passes without trace, because no one wishes to torment himself in the face of the knowledge of its unfruitfulness.

The conviction, founded or unfounded, that the requirement of the age was to replace or to rebuild an edifice generously or ruthlessly destroyed by the preceding century was commonplace in Quinet's youth. As a young man he personally was deeply conscious of the need. For a de Maistre or Bonald the solution had a

certain simplicity: restore the Church. This became impossible in the face of positive faiths of the previous century, too firmly implanted to be uprooted: belief in the perfectibility of the human species, and in science.

The philosophical and religious implications of the scientific revolution, which seemed to give evidence of the simplicity and trustworthiness of natural laws, and to have placed within the compass of human understanding the mysteries of the universe, had been the force most destructive in the undermining of orthodoxy. Natural and scientific law, in being universally applicable, led to much more than the growth of scepticism and disbelief in Bible Miracles. The moral unity of human life thus established seemed incompatible with a Christianity which insisted upon man's innate sinfulness, and was primarily concerned with another world.

The opening of Quinet's career is usually placed at the time of the appearance of his translation of Herder's Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit, a task which he began in 1824, shortly before his meeting with Victor Cousin, another important landmark in his life. No person can pretend to settle conclusively the exact influence of either the Herder translation or the relationship with Cousin on the formation of Quinet's thought. However, both encouraged attitudes and prejudices which were deep seated before 1825. Other persons, if
not as influential, were similar in their thinking to the young man, and these persons are important in arriving at an understanding of his development. They are Mme. de Staël and Bossuet; the first was an influence Quinet never hesitated to admit; the second was as permanent, if less frankly avowed.

Quinet's enthusiasm for Mme. de Staël was instilled by his mother, who as a young woman had met her famous compatriot. When a boy, hearing his mother defend her exiled heroine from the ridicule in fashion under the Empire among those who took their cue from Bonaparte, he

but half understood that language, the impression, however, was that which a harp might have had on me; without being able to say why, I was moved, it was as if scales had fallen from my eyes. 23

Later, in 1820, standing between two centuries, one which had nourished him and one which was struggling to be born, he and others of his generation were torn between two persons: Chateaubriand and Mme. de Staël. As different from one another as he, at least, could imagine, one Catholic, one Protestant, one turned towards the Middle Ages, the other to the uncertain future, Quinet was confused by their almost diametrical opposition, after the first promise that

23 Quinet, Histoire de mes Idées, p.75.
their very brilliance and separation from the common herd would give him the inspiration and light he sought. If her answer to his searching was never quite complete, never altogether satisfying, it was to Mme. de Staël that his allegiance had gone. That year, when one of his professors at Paris gave only a lukewarm and qualified approval to de l'Allemagne, Quinet wrote to his mother that this fact was enough to discourage him with the age in which he lived. Soon thereafter he was looking forward to taking up the study of German, a desire inspired by this work. The intention was long postponed, and in February 1824 he reported to his parent that a friend was being very kind in lending to him English translations of German works which were unknown in France. Among these were works of Herder. The kind friend "loved Mme. de Staël passionately;" upon this basis, Quinet wrote, he always "measured" his men. During these same years it is to be presumed that he became acquainted with and enamoured of Rousseau; although he had not read Jean-Jacques in 1820, when three years later he made a summer visit to Switzerland he showed a detailed familiarity with his work, as well as a consuming admiration.

24 Ibid., p.245.
25 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 67.
26 Ibid., I, 215 and 252.
27 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, p.67. Oskar Wenderoth,
magne, and particularly the chapter on "enthusiasm," was, however, Quinet's bible during these years, and the most decisive intellectual influence of his early life.

During the first twenty years of the nineteenth century German philosophy and letters appeared as the great initiator. The Empire had marked a period of relative intellectual sterility in France, and its close saw develop a wave of enthusiasm for the German accomplishment. The great impetus to this movement was Mme. de Staël's de l'Allemagne. The Empire had hindered the spread and cut off the development of Rousseau's thought in France, but in Germany Herder, Goethe, Schiller and the German romantics following Herder gave new direction and new results to that inspiration. Then with the fall of Napoleon as after the giving way of a dam the new German world of thought, often muddled, streamed into a French literary and philosophical world parched by the Empire, and gave back richly what we had once received. 28

"Enthusiasm" was the word Mme. de Staël gave to the non-rational, and she introduced a chapter of her

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Der junge Quinet und seine Übersetzung von Herders "Ideen"; Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der literarischen Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Frankreich und Deutschland (Erlangen: 1906), p.29.

study of Germany devoted to its discussion with the confession that what followed in many ways summed up the whole work. Not only was the distinctive trait of the German people their enthusiasm, this characteristic was the means by which the human spirit moved forward; with it, and only so, life could be dedicated to that which was invisible, and to interests which had no immediate action upon our well-being.\textsuperscript{29} The importance of the work for Quinet requires that we add briefly to what has previously been noted regarding it, and outline those views which were taken over by him, those which explain the fascination the work had for the youth. This emphasis was certainly the touchstone of the attraction he felt.

Mme. de Staël's message that scepticism was but a natural result of philosophical materialism, that philosophy according to which to hold an opinion was but a delicate manner of indicating an interest, we know. She found that the eighteenth century had been quite correct to consider morality founded on interest to be a consequence of a metaphysical system which attributed all ideas to sensations; for if there be nothing in the soul but that which sensations have put

\textsuperscript{29} Mme. de Staël, \textit{de l'Allemagne}, p.607.
there, the agreeable and the disagreeable ought then to be the sole motive of our actions. Helevétius and Diderot, in this tradition, had explained even the devotion of martyrs by self-love. The other error had been that of Leibnitz, who had founded his system purely on reason; whereas, to reason about the liberty of man was but a step from doubt that such liberty is real: put your hand upon your conscience and you cannot doubt that liberty.  

The philosophical idealism of Mme. de Staël, which she found in Rousseau and in Kant, by its nature refuted a morality founded upon interest; making the life of the soul all that mattered rooted our actions in the exercise of our will, and in the practice of virtue. Individuals are virtuous when they sacrifice their particular interest to the general interest; governments are bound by a similar code, for all true principles are absolute, since if two and two are not always four the most profound algebraic calculations become absurd. Mme. de Staël was a Protestant Christian moralist, but both her Christianity and her moralism were steeped in the idealism so characteristic of German thought after

30 Ibid., pp. 433, 440 and 492.
31 Ibid., p. 506.
32 Ibid., p. 500.
the turn of the century.

As a disciple of the conservative Montesquieu, her individualism foreshadowed that bourgeois liberalism which in the nineteenth century became a fortress against radical democracy. Against this timorous liberalism Quinet was to represent a reaction. However doubtful the authenticity of her liberalism, her views on religion foreshadowed those of Quinet. The philosophic spirit, her true religion, could by its nature never, she felt, become an affair of the masses of any nation. Thus like most intellectual aristocrats of her day she thought that a positive religion was necessary for the people. Although her philosophic outlook placed the full responsibility for conduct in the free choice of the sovereign individual person, she was convinced that only traditional political and religious institutions could provide the necessary sanctions for public spirited behavior in the Masses. It is not surprising therefore that her argument should culminate in an advocacy of a state religion. She never pardoned Napoleon the Concordat, but despite the protestations of her Considerations, his fault was much

33 Michel, l'Idée de l'État, pp. 289-290.
34 Mme. de Staël, de l'Allemagne, p. 452.
less that he recognized a state religion than that he had recognized Catholicism as that religion. There could, indeed, be no more effective weapon against Catholicism, which she execrated, than to establish Protestantism as the State religion.

Then the State would have in its hands all of the influence of a cult which it supports, and that power which is always exercised by the interpreters of religious ideas would be the support of republican government. 36

To equate this with individualism, liberty and idealism may well seem utterly impossible, but it foreshadowed the mature Quinet.

The most striking feature in Quinet's letters to his mother down to 1830 is the absence of any reference to his later passionate patriotism. Nor is there any evidence that he aligned himself with those elements with whom he later became identified. So long as his idol was Mme. de Staël, this cannot be surprising. "Anti-French, anglophile, so is Corinne; and Corinne is Mme. de Staël completely and absolutely;" 37 this is

36 Paul Gautier, Madame de Staël et Napoléon (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1903), pp. 72-77. See also Mme. de Staël, Dix Années d'Exil: Fragmens d'un ouvrage inédit, composé dans les années 1810 à 1813 (Bruxelles: Louis Hauman, 1830), p. 41 where she criticizes those hostile to established religion without regard to its nature.

37 Gautier, op. cit., p. 198. Corinne, published in 1807, was Mme. de Staël's most widely read novel. The work was named for its heroine.
unjust, but it is the interpretation of all those who greatly admired Quinet the patriot. Quinet's most loved book was one which had lavished exaggerated paeans of praise on Germany and England, and was written with the purpose, in part at least, of undermining the influence of French culture abroad. It had been published at a moment when France stood all but alone against a coalition headed and sustained by the nation which shared her enthusiasm. When one recalls the place Waterloo held in Quinet's interpretation of world history it is astonishing to find his idol writing, less than four months after that event, of her beloved England:

One has seen her, as a knight armed for the defense of the social order, preserve Europe during ten years of anarchy, and during ten others of despotism. Her happy constitution was, at the beginning of the revolution, the goal of the hopes and efforts of the French; my soul has remained there where theirs then was. 38

The admiration of the eighteenth-century philosophes for English liberty, for the English constitution, for English customs was nearly unanimous.

38 See her introduction to the first edition of de l'Allemagne permitted in France, dated October 1, 1815. That Mme. de Staël during the Hundred Days was tempted to rally to Napoleon, "out of love for France and liberty," was as little known to Quinet as was the fact of her enthusiasm for Napoleon on the occasion of the 18 Brumaire. See Gautier, op. cit., pp.379- and 26.
Mme. de Staël in this only followed, for example, Necker, and it was thus a part of her cult for her father as well. The Quinet who visited England in the spring of 1825 reported back to France the type of impression to be expected from a person to whom Mme. de Staël was as an idol. He wrote, "I breathe more freely than in France," and then, in his first letter upon returning to Paris, "It is the first time in my life that everything joined to favor my desires; when nothing was contrary to my illusions. Days of enchantment! land of liberty!" It was scarcely in character for a French patriot to speak in this fashion of the country of Pitt and of Wellington. For a democratic republican, whether French or otherwise, English liberty was a very dim torch, indeed, in 1825. The truth is that the young Quinet was neither patriot nor democrat. Two years later he traveled to Germany, to Heidelberg, to find "that all things combined to make him happy where he was." He added that, excepting a recent visit with his mother in the country, there had been but two previous occasions in his life when he had been happy, in England and in Switzerland.

Faguet did his countrymen the disservice of

40 Ibid., II, 38.
terming the eighteenth century the least French of all literary centuries, reaching this conclusion because of the degree to which its principal figures were cosmopolitan in outlook. It has been said of Mme. de Staël, of Swiss parentage, with a Swedish husband (not, however, her most important loyalty), that England was the country of her choice, Germany that of her thought, and France that of her birth and of her friends, but that the country of her "soul" was the society of great and distinguished men of all lands. 41 Nothing could be more foreign to the expressed views of the mature Quinet than this division of loyalties; few attitudes came in for more bitter attack from him than did "cosmopolitanism." But, before 1830, his views and attitudes may be more easily fitted into the tradition here represented by Mme. de Staël than to any other. For those who have preferred his mature opinion no blame has been attached to youthful error, so emphatically repudiated in the age of wisdom.

Quinet's Protestant tendencies have been a matter of some debate; the typical conclusion drawn is that his "religious philosophy always retained a strong Protestant coloring." 42 If one means by Protestant

41 Gautier, op. cit., p. 275, from Ameil, Étude sur Mme. de Staël (1876).
42 Monod, op. cit., I, 60.
the Savoyard faith the judgment may stand. In 1825
he was a nominal Catholic, and, surprisingly, anti-
Catholicism is little apparent in his thinking. We
find that as late as 1838 he had not finally or ir-
revocably broken with the Catholic Church. His mother,
to whom conventions and the proprieties were so im-
portant, in spite of her own apparently sincere Calvinism,
saw to it that as a boy Quinet entered into the Church
of his most respectable countrymen. As a young man
in Paris, if his letters to his mother are to be
trusted in this regard, he did frequently attend
Protestant services. In the spring of 1822 he re-
ported that he did so every Sunday. A year earlier
he had written, "I prefer to pray to God in your
church; when there I feel less unworthy of you."43

Almost all that Mme. de Staël had to say was
borrowed, Rousseau and Kant being the creditors to
whom she owed her finery, but this did not immediately
concern the youthful Quinet. He knew her de l'Allemagne
better than he knew any other book, his admiration for
the work was profound and enthusiastic; in those parts
of it from which we have just drawn is to be found the
philosophical foundation of much of his early work.

43 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 114 and 166.
Bossuet, whom he knew before Herder or Cousin, will explain some of the modifications or differences in emphasis of the young eclectic, Herder and Vico the rest.
IV

FAITH IN NATURAL REASON SURVIVES A GERMAN INTERLUDE

Quinet related that he was turned to the study of primitive epochs by the barbarism which all of his generation in France had been enveloped after Waterloo. The collapse of a world had been his first education. He interested himself in history, searching for analogies in the past, and in this fashion a subject which previously he had found unbearable became a living thing. Quinet pretended that before knowing German philosophy at first hand, before knowing Vico, he had "by instinct become engaged in an analogous path...without guide, without counsellor...launched in the metaphysics of history." ¹

In 1823 he worked on a group of essays, never published, in which he personified the principal epochs of the Christian world in a monument or in a man. He intended to entitle these combined studies Institutions politiques dans leurs rapports avec la religion.²

¹ Quinet, Histoire de mes Idées, pp.200-201 and Lettres à sa Mère, I, 395-396.

² This effort is much less extensive than Quinet's remarks of 1857 would indicate. In manuscript the six chapters form but forty-two pages in a large scrawling hand. The selection from "Preliminaries" quoted below is from the first chapter. Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouvelles acquisitions françaises 20781, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XXI ("Premiers Essais de Quinet"), fols. 1-42.
Le Juif Errant had made little impression anywhere. Undismayed Quinet set himself to this larger task. More than ambition demanded that he make haste. Jerome Quinet was impatient with the youth's seeming dalliance. Mother and son were in league in keeping up the pretence that Edgar was devoting his main energies to the study of law, and the authorship of Le Juif Errant was kept secret from the patron who made it possible. Not that even Mme. Quinet was encouraging. She dreamed of a more worldly success for her son than the most talented writer could expect to enjoy. Only by some prodigious accomplishment did it seem possible that these obstacles could be overcome, but the young man soon sensed that the essays of 1823, as well as his yet more ambitious Histoire de la Personnalité humaine, written in 1824, were beyond his forces. It was this realization which decided him to undertake the translation of Herder. Thus he might enter upon the scene more modestly, but in making a useful and necessary contribution.

The historical works of Guizot and Thierry both came within Quinet's sphere of knowledge at this time.

3 Ibid., XXI, 59-238. This manuscript is so titled, though Quinet remembered it in 1857 as "Histoire de la Conscience humaine."

4 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 396.

and perhaps did something to make him doubt his own readiness to treat subjects such he had undertaken. Not, of course, that he was so without guide and example as suggested. He knew eighteenth-century thought, having been nourished on it. That century had conceived history, not as the recital of a succession of facts, but as the analysis of the evolution of customs and ideas. Early in 1823 Quinet, "occupied with history," had been reading Robertson and Hume, in French translation. He found the latter of particular interest, because in his history of England one could observe "the march and progress of liberty in representative government" through the "continual succession of revolutions."7

The unpublished essays, written between the publication of Juif Errant, early in 1823, and his Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire, published in 1827, allow certain other conclusions to be drawn as to Quinet's conceptions before the meeting with Cousin.8

6 Cassirer wrote that the charge that the Eighteenth Century was an "unhistorisches" Jahrhundert...ist selbst keine geschichtlich-begründete und begründbare Auffassung; sie ist vielmehr ein Kampfwort und ein Schlagwort, das die Romantik geprägt hat...(op. cit., p.263). This problem will be touched upon later in this chapter.

7 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 190.

8 These manuscripts are those mentioned by Mme. Quinet (Avant l'Exil, pp.71-72), which, she records, were recovered in 1863 in such wretched condition that they "disintegrated in one's fingers." Her usual exaggeration is present in this statement.
In December of 1826 Quinet left France to reside at Heidelberg. He remained in Germany until December 1829. Here he continued his studies and became a friend of Creutzer. That his early mysticism was not purely the influence of that experience, as has been presumed; that his 1828 Origines des Dieux did not result solely from confusion on the part of an impressionable youth caught up in the giddy atmosphere of obscurantist Heidelberg, is suggested by his 1823 "Preliminaries."

One may judge this from the excerpt which follows.

...the philosophical examination of nature has led to the discovery, in each leaf of the forest, on each stalk of grass in the field, of a world which also had its valleys, its rivers, its plants and trees, its inhabitants with different origins and customs. Besides, on that slip of grass there is room for hate and vengeance, as well as wars. There is place for death; that is to say that nothing lacks there in order to give a representation of real fidelity of that vast and animated scene which man observes....

Submitted in this to the same laws, the moral world presents the same phenomena. Here the universe is represented in the individual; the individual in the universe; and when all identifies the existence of the nation with the existence of the individual, I admire a marvelous dawn, which habit and prejudice have prevented our seeing; I admire it, I do not explain it. But that by that astonishing concordance the great should be instructed by the small; that particular applications depend in their turn upon the generality of things, so that to whatever side one turn there is a lesson for peoples or for the individual; that there is neither grandeur nor smallness for Him from whom every moral law emanates, and before whom the point and the sphere are one, the shepherd and the assembly of tribes. A moderate [tisée] reproduction, a unity so
perfect in all of those objects to which understanding applies itself, at least aids me to conceive how the supreme intelligence contemplates in a glance, fine and prolonged, all truths, how one is explained by the other, exist, the one in the other, or rather how a single truth, existing eternally, eternally immutable, and eternally the source of all others.

The 1823 essay is one piece of evidence that very early German pantheism offered itself to Quinet as an attractive and possible accommodation of eighteenth-century philosophic determinism to his own need for a transcendental faith. More important, it mirrored his indecision, and presented him testing an hypothesis at odds with the idealism which he knew through Mme. de Staël, and which, hitherto, he had accepted wholeheartedly. If, this early, Quinet had been searching for a political solution, rather than for a personal religion, the danger that pantheism obliterate moral distinctions might have repelled him at once, but it had not been the political usefulness of idealism which had appealed to him. Its heroic aspect, the moral worth it

9 Quinet, loc. cit., fols. 5-6.
10 Vaisès, op. cit., p.84.
placed upon disinterested behavior as a means of individual salvation, much more than its social consequences, enticed him. Later he returned to this path, for what were, at least in part, political reasons, but during several years Quinet experienced an almost feverish attraction for the thought he embodied in this 1823 essay. Valès was typical among admirers when he disapproved of this pantheistic interlude, believing that the young man showed an unFrench indifference to the social and political consequences of "German" thought.

The spirit of Herder's Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte has been described as a "sentimental-teleologische Naturempfindung, die Mensch, Natur und Gott in einen heilig-schönen Zusammenhang brachte." To the impetuous and unstable French youth this aspect of German philosophy seemed a foretoken of tranquillity. In this harmony there appeared to be an answer to his despair, and in a later essay Quinet stressed above all else the "serenity" of Herder. Before his decision to translate the Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit this quality in German thought was most important in leading him to such an undertaking. Apart from pre-dilection and ambition there was the important factor

that Mme. de Stael and Benjamin Constant encouraged him, in the belief that the role of interpreting German thought for the French audience was waiting to be filled. Throughout Quinet's career one may speak of his opportunism. Interest in a largely unexplored field of thought was growing, he entered it.

The late years of the Restoration were marked by a general religious as well as by a Catholic revival. Although the Catholic historian is apt to write of the religious thinking of men like Constant and Cousin as being the dark side of a page which was at least more hopeful than those immediately preceding, their thought represents an increased preoccupation with religious matters which was very noticeable outside the Church. In 1824, when the youthful Quinet was groping for answers to questions which seemed all important, and was already strongly attracted to what he knew of German developments, Benjamin Constant published the first volume of *De la Religion*.\(^\text{12}\)

Faith in progress was the universal which brought together representatives of all of the intellectual currents outside of the Church during the first half of the nineteenth century. Among the essays Quinet

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wrote in 1823 was one which analyzed the *Imitation of Christ*. He found the work an

...admirable code of wisdom, but an unappreciated monument for the study of the progress in ideas of morality in modern Europe. That which the Gospel exposes as doctrine it develops as result. This is an immense step. There is no longer the need for parables, nor inductions of any sort. Fourteen centuries of misfortunes have added to the intelligence of the heart. Each truth has born its fruit and received its application.

Here was the germ of Quinet's philosophical opposition to Catholicism. How progress came about he did not settle finally for himself until much later, but he never doubted the fact. The importance of this subject necessitates treating it in some detail.

*De la Religion*, which was much influenced by Creutzer, Quinet's future master at Heidelberg, is instructive for the insight it gives into the contemporary treatment of the problem. The work was the most ambitious Constant ever undertook, and he devoted a portion of more than a quarter-century to writing it. A philosophical idealism which was all but identical to that of Mme. de Staël, served in this work to support the author's contention that religious forms must be progressive. The five volumes may be regarded as an elaborate effort to bring history to the support of the conviction which

underlies Quinet's comment on Thomas à Kempis, and to spell out all of its practical implications.

As it was apparent to him that a faculty must exist separating man from beasts, Constant believed it only logical that this characteristic (the religious sentiment) should be the "fundamental law of his nature." The form, or the manner in which this sentiment found outward expression, could be of infinite variety; indeed, only its presence was constant and universal. What mortals believed and hoped could always be found "within the circumference of their understanding." Positive religions, however, had a stationary and dogmatic character which refused to follow the intelligence in its discoveries, or even the soul and the emotions, which every day rendered more pure and delicate. For Constant the history of all positive religions was thus that of a struggle between an established faith and the intelligence which outworn dogma wounded, between the sentiment and a form which no longer satisfied it. The human race had no more cherished or precious principle to defend than that of progress, nor had any been defended at the price of higher sacrifice. Henceforth, he believed, if one wished to render to religion

14 Constant, op. cit., I, 3-7.
15 Ibid., I, 41-42 and 143-145.
the only homage worthy of it, and to support it upon
the only foundation which would be solid and unshakeable, progress much be made its principle as well. In
the 1820's this represented, almost primarily, an attack upon the Catholic Church, but Constant, too, professed to being a Christian, preferring Protestantism to all other Christian communions. Place had then to be found for revelation:

Yes, without doubt, there is revelation, but that revelation is universal, it is permanent, it has source in the human heart.

One may say that the young Quinet accepted all but the conclusion that Catholicism could not change, and that on this score he was no more than uncertain. Constant, like many non-Catholics, feeling that absence of the religious sentiment was simply impossible, felt also that that which was outworn would without doubt pass away. So much for Catholicism. On the other hand "a mysterious agitation, a desire to believe, a hunger

16 Ibid., V, 200-202.

17 Ibid., I, 16. Constant remarked that his hostile critics had done him the service to point out that his manner of viewing religion "was identical in its essentials" with that of Cousin. Their difference was that whereas Cousin admired the priesthoods of the religions of antiquity Constant did not. The latter made it a rule of history that the heirarchy of every positive religion was the root reason for its being unable to progress naturally with the society of which it was a part. Ibid., V, 186.
for hope was manifest everywhere." German idealism, in essence a modernized and secularized Christianity, which was at once mystical and moralistic, was only one example he could see of this, one of the manners in which a human need was being met.\(^{18}\)

That in 1950 a prominent Catholic spokesman should have written that the "progress of moral conscience is indeed the most unquestionable instance of progress in humanity"\(^{19}\) is understandable. In the early nineteenth century the ideas of progress and perfectibility seemed too great a threat to Catholic articles of faith to permit their acceptance. The transformation, or the end of Christianity was a thing much discussed, and the idea of progress, as we have seen, had a real relationship to this discussion. After mid-century, even, the Catholic position remained that progress was "the religion of those who had abandoned the Christian faith."\(^{20}\)

Ballanche is not infrequently named with de Maistre and Bonald as a member of a trio which led the theocratic reaction against the thought of the previous century.\(^{21}\)


\(^{19}\) *Maritain, op. cit.*, p. 94.

\(^{20}\) *Tronchon, op. cit.*, pp. 54-55 and 64-65.

even when credited with humanizing their principles. Heine once remarked that Ballanche wrote books which everyone praised and no one read; he is still not read. Ballanche, however, helps to explain, in part, why Quinet, and possibly Michelet, did not break with the Church earlier than was the case. He deserves to represent a "liberal" Catholicism far different in its nature from the political party which took the name. A modernized Catholicism to fit his philosophy would have been very near the religion Quinet later wished to establish.

Ballanche set as his purpose the expression of the profound and religious idea which God had given his era the mission to accomplish: the organization of a new social order. Before contrasting the views of Ballanche it is important to remember that de Maistre despised the people, even more, he despised the individual; as the Pope was the Church, so the Monarch was the State. Everything that concentrated the nation satisfied him; the

22 Heine, S.W., op. cit., VI, 405.

23 Haac, op. cit., p. 86 makes the grossly unfair charge that Ballanche did not admit his debt to Vico to the public. Ballanche completed but two volumes of the five projected of his Essais de Palingénésie. The second, Orphée, is largely devoted to making clear that debt.

24 Ballanche, Essais de Palingénésie sociale (2 vols; Paris: Jules Didot, 1827-1829), I (Prologomènes), "Dédicace."
aristocracy and democracy dispersed it, thus they were errors. His Christianity condoned injustice in relegating justice to the world of eternity. If for no other reason divine right kings were put on earth to punish man, to make this life a vale of tears that he might earn the right to pass into a better world. As for government, the king was responsible to truth, the Church was the depository of truth, and the Church was the Pope.25

Ballanche discovered Vico during his visit to Italy with Mme. Recamier in 1823 and 1824. Whether his interest in the eighteenth century Italian preceeded that of Michelet is unimportant here. Apparently they discovered him independently.26 At least in part influenced by Vico, Ballanche arrived at a philosophy of history according to which progress was Providential and Christian. According to this synthesis societies, when they grew old, could find salvation only by entering into and accepting the


26 Vico had been translated into German in 1822, and it was probably this translation which brought him to the attention of Cousin, who in turn suggested to Michelet that he undertake a French translation. See Edouard Herriot, Madame Recamier et ses amis (Paris: Payot, 1948), pp.263 and 270, and Haac, op. cit., pp.8 and 86. The latter errs in stating that Cousin introduced Quinet to Herder. On the German translation see also Fisch in his introduction to G. Vico, The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico (Max Fisch and Thomas Bergin, translators; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1944), pp.70-71.
rising spirit of the new age. Clovis, for example, had bowed his head to Christian law as the only means of self preservation for his dynasty. For the nineteenth century the issue was clear: Ballanche declared that without a fundamental readjustment of Christianity to new concepts its doom was sealed.\(^27\) He, who has been so frequently included among the theocrats, wrote that those religious persons who insisted that only the Middle Ages had been truly "Catholic;" that theocracy was compatible, even, with religion; that man should remain chained, submissive to an authoritarian institution; all of these compromised religion. Humanity had progressed beyond such necessities.\(^28\) He foresaw that geological evidence was on the verge of permitting the rather definite conclusion that life on this earth had gone through an evolutionary process; this when his purported colleague, Bonald, proved the existence of God by beginning with the premise that evolution was too insane and filthy a notion to take into consideration at all.\(^29\)

Ballanche frequently divorced himself from

\(^27\) Ballanche, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 253.

\(^28\) \textit{Ibid.}, I, 256.

de Maistre, with specific references to that "prophet of the past." Upon the latter's death he wrote that, now face to face with eternal truth, de Maistre must recognize that his dreams had been "sterile and without power." Faith could work prodigious miracles, but could not change the present into the past. In response to de Maistre's unconcern with evil being rewarded by success, and the failure of efforts at virtue here below, in the belief that a future life would repair the balance, Ballanche wrote: "I would dare name this form of justification impious." Such a doctrine attenuated in measure as the moral sentiment of humanity became more perfect. In so holding Ballanche was further removed from orthodoxy than was Cousin, who proved the existence of Heaven by referring to the evident fact that here below virtue did not always find its just reward. In the face of a philosophy which would have denied participation in their government to the people, Ballanche, in admiring Fenelon for having favored such participation, added that times had since changed. Participation of the people in the governing power no longer sufficed. Society, once

30 Ballanche, op. cit., I, 204.
31 Ibid., I, 154.
32 Cousin, op. cit., p.415.
instituted, marched ever forward to its independance, and in the present state of ideas and opinions (1827) the time was at hand when that emancipation should be expressed by control, by the people itself being the governing power.33

Present in this work, if never openly stated, was the concept that Christianity had left the Church, and that, for all of its errors, the Revolution was in fact its modern expression. Because this so much resembles Quinet’s basic thinking another note should be added. Ballanche spoke of 1815. It had required, shamefully enough, the presence of all of the armies of Europe to induce France to give just recognition to Jeanne d’Arc. A people felt the need for territorial unity, for the unity of language and of traditions; when violently suppressed it found refuge in the spirit until this spirit burst its shackleing bonds. Moral unity gave to each people its personality and its genius.34

Quinet knew Ballanche well. Never did he note for the record the strange and striking similarities in their thought. There is no absolute certainty that he read this particular work, though he sent Orphée to his

33 Ballanche, op. cit., I, 159-160.
34 Ibid., I, 105.
mother in 1830.  

Ballanche has been discussed here in order to indicate that a sincere and devout Catholic need not, in 1827, despite appearances, have foreseen the Sylabus of Modern Errors. Nor did he need to have been Ultramontane in outlook, or to have seen sacrosanct dogma in the pronouncements of de Maistre and Bonald. Thus one has what is possibly a partial explanation to why Quinet did not attack the Church until the time when the picture was not only fully developed for him, but also when his own views had become more radical.

Quinet began work on a study of Bossuet in 1823, and completed it at the end of 1826. He described Bossuet's effort and accomplishment:

...he attempts finally to concentrate into a single absolute principle the entire chain of phenomena which he had just traced in such vivid colors. Not only the character, but the law of metaphysics is predicted. If God had appeared with authority in the sphere of the individual's life, in the history of human kind, in the spectacle of the physical universe, he will not be less present in the conscience and the reason of man. As he has broken empires and worlds with his hand, he would not leave a less profound impression upon les faits intérieurs....

One is not surprised to find in Quinet's hand the

35 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 139. Supercilious with regard to the volume, he added that Ballanche was an excellent fellow for whom he had a strong affection.

notation that he reread this essay in 1845, and again in 1850, both times deciding that it could not be published without review and correction. One is not surprised because this is "pure" Quinet. Here is his philosophy of history. Bossuet, in his Histoire universelle, had established the unity and the purpose of humanity's efforts in this world. The history of humanity was the history of Providence speaking through man's conscience. At this level of abstraction Bossuet was not incompatible with the philosophic idealism of Mme. de Staël, Constant and Cousin, rather the reverse. But Quinet gave to this view an emphasis which made it the fundamental characteristic of his outlook. Bossuet was the person most frequently referred to in his private notes, during all of his life, and the author he most frequently reread. Quinet, with his usual insistence upon his own originality, related that he read Bossuet in 1823, examining him in his different aspects, "with regard to the principles which I had just formed on the metaphysics of history." He found these views justified.

37 Ibid., fol. 261.

38 Ibid., fol. 256.

39 See B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11827 "Journal Quinet," III, 1, where we find that Mme. Quinet has given him a twenty volume edition of Bossuet which he had so much desired.
and confirmed. A single and absolute principle was what Quinet sought, but the limitation of Bossuet's orthodoxy stifled the young romantic. The principle, secularized and modernized, appeared to him across the Rhine.

Constant made recent German thought on religious matters of particular importance among those manifestations he noted of a revived sentiment. Creutzer and Goerres were especially pointed out. It was, he felt, unfortunate that their thought had not gained in France anything like the audience which they had been accorded in the rest of Europe, and he hoped that his own work would do something to rectify this situation. When the first volume of this work appeared Quinet had just begun, or began soon after, his translation of Herder.

Chronology poses a difficult problem as regards both Quinet's beginning and completing the Herder translation, and the writing of his introductory essay, Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de l'Humanité. Desiring to make it appear that the latter had not been influenced by Cousin, Quinet gave 1825 as the publication date.

40 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 396, where he dates the essay between 1822 and 1824, rather than properly in 1826.

41 Constant, op. cit., I, 137.
date, and noted that it had been written in 1824, when the essay was included in the 1857 edition of his works.\(^{42}\) That the translation and the Introduction were begun in late 1824 is indeed likely, although the Introduction was probably not finished until the summer of 1826, and the complete translation not until the end of 1827.\(^{43}\)


\(^{43}\) Mme. Quinet, in *Avant l'Exil*, p.83, and in a note, *Lettres à sa Mère*, I, 395, wrote that Quinet began the translation at Charolles in October 1824, from an English translation (he did not then know German), and that at the same time he began the Introduction. Monod noted that the Introduction could not have been written until after Quinet met Michelet (probably in May 1825, but not before), because of the comparison between Vico and Herder made in the essay. The assumption that Michelet introduced Quinet to Vico is a sound one, if the fact is not certain, but Monod was only guessing when he wrote that Quinet began the work in 1825 and completed it in 1827. The latter guess was probably wrong (Monod, *op. cit.*., I, 64 and 68-69, where he also corrects Mme. Quinet with respect to details surrounding the first meeting of Quinet and Michelet). The first two volumes of the Herder translation were not published until early 1827, with the Introduction. Quinet, on March 17, informed his mother that he had had copies sent to Constant, Royer-Collard, Lamartine and Goethe, and that he was working on his *Essai général sur Herder (Lettres à sa Mère*, II, 33). In *Cinquante ans d'amitié: Michelet-Quinet (1826-1875)*, (2nd. ed.; Paris: Armand Colin, 1965), p.10, Mme. Quinet prints a letter from Quinet to Michelet which refers to proofs Quinet had asked his friend to correct. She dated this letter in 1825, and wrote that the proofs were of the Introduction, the printing of which had begun. Three pages later a letter is printed, dated May 27, 1827, in which Michelet acknowledged receipt of Quinet's "beau travail." Mme. Quinet inferred that this remark concerned the third and final volume, which a May 7 letter of Quinet had announced would soon be available. The letter she dated 1825 obviously dated from late 1826 or early 1827, and the May 27, 1827 letter undoubtedly referred to the Introduction and the first two volumes of the translation.
A publisher's agreement to pay six hundred francs upon the delivery of each of the Herder volumes in translation, the first of which Quinet promised would be ready in one month, made possible the young man's visit to England for the first two weeks of April 1825. With this windfall seemingly assured Quinet left for London, in part because he hoped to improve his faulty command of English. He also intended to correct errors in his translation of the first volume, a draft of which he had completed. 44

When he had returned to Paris and was at work on the Introduction, difficulties arose with the publisher and the understanding was broken. Then, early in May, a few days before his first meeting with Cousin, Quinet obtained an audience with Degerando, with whom he had previously exchanged several letters, in the hope of gaining the active support of the older man in his Herder enterprise. 45 Degerando and Charles de Villiers had been

44 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 276-278.
45 Ibid., I, 303.
of immeasurable assistance to Mme. de Staël in her preparation of *de l'Allemagne*. She had been in correspondence with both after 1802, knew de Villiers's *Philosophie de Kant* (1801), and had made use of Degerando's *Histoire comparée des systèmes de philosophie* (3 vols., 1804), one of the first French works to make use of German developments.46

The boyish enthusiast, ambitious and unknown, not unnaturally thought of Degerando as a person who might use his influence to aid in making the Herder project a success. At their first meeting the older man gave encouragement, remarking that Quinet had undertaken a work to which he himself had hoped to turn in old age. He placed his library at Quinet's disposal and mentioned that a close friend, Camille Jourdan, was "infatuated with Herder." Most important Degerando promised to give the youth all of the aid within his power, and offered

46 Wenderoth, op. cit., pp.44-46. Mme. de Staël payed tribute to de Villiers by writing that "he seemed called by his talent and his profound studies to represent France in Germany and Germany in France (de l'Allemagne, p.91). That the larger role of Degerando went unmentioned is explained by a slight Mme. de Staël suffered at his hands in 1809. Under the Empire Degerando, who became secretary general to the Minister of Interior in 1804, had used his official influence to assist Mme. de Staël; but she never forgave that when in 1809 he passed through Geneva he did not call upon her. In not doing so he had sacrificed virtue to interest. See Herriot, op. cit., pp.89 and 143; Gautier, op. cit., p.297.
to write a notice to be printed at the head of the work so that, as the delighted young man informed his mother, "my name will be accompanied and protected by a name illustrious in the moral sciences." The introduction to Cousin which followed, and finding a new publisher, seemingly did much to bolster the confidence of Quinet, and to cause him to promptly put aside the intention, as well as the desire, to appear under the protection of an established name. Not that his contacts with Degerando became less frequent. Partly under his auspices Quinet became a member of a group of Germophiles, who, in July 1825, had in mind a Revue germanique, the purpose of which was to have been to acquaint the French public with German letters. Quinet was promised an opportunity to participate, but the revue never appeared, that of 1827 with the same title being a different enterprise. As the youth progressed with the translation of Herder he was in frequent touch with Degerando, and, it is to be presumed, received his assistance.

47 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 303-304.

48 Degerando; Stapfer, the translator of Goethe and the former tutor of Guizot, whom he had introduced to German philosophy and literature; and Cousin were among the prospective editors. Wenderoth emphasized the debt Cousin owed Degerando, noting that he was similar to Mme. de Staël in this regard (op. cit., pp. 46-53).

49 Typically Quinet remembered that Degerando had read the translation as it progressed, but "for his pleasure, for he made no observations at all" (Nouv. acq. franc. 11832, "Journal Quinet," VIII (1866), 191).
Victor Cousin did little more than give Quinet further impetus along a road already entered upon, but the importance of the encouragement he gave to the younger man is not to be discounted. Levraut, the director of a Strasbourg publishing firm, almost simultaneously contracted to publish the Herder translation and introduced the young romantic to Cousin. The meeting took place only a few days after the latter's return to Paris following a four-month's sojourn in a German prison. For Quinet it was love at first sight; very shortly he was writing to his mother that "liaison" was the only word which properly described the relationship. If the personal magnetism of Cousin was enormous, Quinet's response was extravagant, and for several months unremittent. That summer he made a practice of walking through the Luxembourg Gardens, along a route which permitted him, at one point, to catch a glimpse of Cousin's window. Cousin gave freely of his encouragement and

50 After the first meeting Quinet wrote: "A man with whom one is in sympathy stirs you like the sight of the sea or of a beautiful night" (Lettres à sa Mère, I, 306-309). This correspondence is alone sufficient to disprove Mme. Quinet's recital in which she had the first meeting take place before Quinet's visit to England (Avant l'Exil, pp.92-93). Also, Cousin did not return from Germany until early May (Monod, op. cit., I, 64).

51 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 321. A person as little prey to immoderation as Renan recalled the "incomparable life which the conversation of Cousin exhaled" (Souvenirs d'Enfance, p.58), and the Cousin Renan knew had lost something of his enthusiasm, was twenty years older than the sage of thirty-three who captivated Quinet.
of his time, was enthusiastic and uncritical. In July Quinet read the beginning pages of his Introduction, by now nearly one hundred pages in manuscript, before a gathering at Cousin’s home. He had hardly begun before the master interrupted with delighted cries of, "C’est beau! C’est parfait!"

The idealism, the fervor, the optimism, embodied in an impressive and finished performance, account for, in so far as Quinet’s own personality does not, the passionate episode. The performance later repelled Quinet. One may presume that at the time it was all important in his seduction.

52 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 335. It should be noted that Quinet undertook the translation without knowing German, and in translating from an excellent but not perfectly exact English translation, he was under the further handicap that his English was inadequate. See Henri Tronchon, Le Jeune Edgar Quinet ou l’Aventure d’un Enthousiaste (Paris: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de Strasbourg, 1937), p.290. This work is a detailed study of the Quinet translation, sound in its main conclusions: the first that Quinet ever consulted Herder in the original German was "an accidental and tardy scruple," and does not affect the fact that the Churchill translation was his "très continue et solide" (ibid., p.38). Second, that under the influence of Bossuet Quinet weakened, was inexact, embellished, "often without seeming to have good reason, but frequently enough because of his own instincts and tendencies, in deference to public tastes, and finally because of religious and moral scruples" (ibid., pp.316 and 344; pp. 316-323 and 337-343 justify these charges). Quinet worked on the translation during his first year at Heidelberg, and did at this time learn German, though he did not master it.

53 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 295, made a typical post July 1830 comment: "The actor was there; he came to me and took my hand with an effusion of inexhaustible tenderness. What a Tartuffe!"
As for Cousin's thought, those areas in which he differed from Mme. de Staël need not have seemed prominent to him; Cousin may well have seemed a reinforcement of an old faith.

Cousin believed that the time of exclusive theories was past, and confidently set for himself the task of conciliating all systems, taking from each that which the "facts" justified. He too represented the reaction against eighteenth-century materialism, which his authority gave the permanent label sensualism. On the other hand he attacked mysticism and avoided the stoic aspects inherent in Kant's stern view of duty. Faguet concluded, that of all the men who made the effort to establish a new spiritual power during the years between 1820 and 1850, Cousin was the least of the failures.54 Certainly Cousin was most practical, or, in other terms, he demanded least of the faithful. Boas was just when he wrote:

Cousin seems to have seen his goal from the very start....It was a political goal. His task was to found a philosophy which would be non-Catholic and non-atheist, which would provide for liberalism but not for republicanism...He was eminently fitted to give philosophical expression to the rule of Louis-Philippe.55

This reveals some innocence as to the true nature of

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54 Faguet, op. cit., II, 229.
55 Boas, op. cit., p.198.
Louis-Philippe's reign, and it should be noted that the greatest enthusiasm for Cousin existed before his elevation in 1830, but his philosophy is well characterized. Cousin's system contained no apparent pessimism, fatalism, or scepticism. Its tenets were: Act, for you may do so (free will); for you do not depend upon sensations which you receive (a soul distinct from sensation);\(^{56}\) for you are not lost in a maze of vain appearances (reality of the exterior world);\(^{57}\) for there is duty (moral law);\(^{58}\) for you will be recompensed for having fought the good fight (merit and demerit, recompense and punishment here below);\(^{59}\) for even if unfortunate here below you will have your reward (immortality of the soul)\(^{60}\) for there is a judge who renumerates and metes out vengeance (God).\(^{61}\)

In the eloquence of the Savoyard vicar Cousin saw "the most sane as well as the greatest production of the eighteenth century."\(^{62}\) A different sort of religion

\(^{56}\) Cousin, *du Vrai, du Beau et du Bien*, p.36.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., p.106.

\(^{58}\) Ibid., p.68.

\(^{59}\) Ibid., pp.414-415.

\(^{60}\) Ibid., p.415.

\(^{61}\) Ibid., p.422. See Faguet, *op. cit.*, II, 263.

\(^{62}\) See the Richard's introduction to *Emile*, p.xxi.
was required by the people. Without religion, philosophy addressed itself to but a small number of the mass of humanity, and thus ran the risk of being without great effectiveness as regarded the manners and the life of those who made up the greater part of the nation. On the other hand, Cousin believed that, without philosophy, the most pure religion could not escape superstition, and thus saw the intellectual elite leave its fold. When this occurred, as the eighteenth century clearly showed, bit by bit scepticism spread downward to the masses. Thus the alliance of true religion and true philosophy was at once natural and necessary; natural because of the common fund of truth both recognized, and necessary for the better service of humanity. Very similar to Mme. de Staël, Cousin was more obviously related in his outlook to that which found crass expression in Napoleon's frequent remarks on the usefulness of religious superstition, a type of remark indeed frequent in governing circles during the July Monarchy. We will never find Quinet on this road, but before 1830 the implications of this aspect of Cousin's thought were not particularly in evidence. During the Restoration Cousin represented a strong reaction against the materialism involved in the doctrines of the previous

63 Cousin, op. cit., pp. 428-429.
century, against what he termed *une doctrine désolante.* A defense against scepticism was what he offered, and what Quinet sought. Cousin's intellectual and political opportunism were obscured for Quinet by his own sincerity.64

Quinet, in later life, could state, with more justice than has usually been granted, that Cousin "taught me neither an idea nor a fact; I owe him nothing."65 One may conclude that those opinions which Quinet shared with Cousin in 1825 were ones which the younger man had formed before 1825, and that Mme. de Staël was most important in inspiring them.

None the less, Cousin encouraged and supported Quinet in his studies, and in his nascent ambition to become the interpreter for France of German philosophy. Exactly how far this tipped the balance is impossible to say, but its importance is not to be doubted, and the charge that Quinet was ungrateful is justified.

The evidence of Quinet's letters to his mother is ample to disprove the consistently inaccurate Mme. Quinet


65 B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11831, "Journal Quinet," VII, 155. Monod, who was sharply critical of the manner in which Quinet turned against Cousin in 1830, concluded that Cousin did not seem to have had any direct influence on either Quinet or Michelet (op. cit., I, 71).
when she dated Quinet's severance from Cousin before 1830. At the end of 1828 Quinet wrote to Michelet that, in reviewing the French scene, it was clear to him that Cousin was decidedly the only truly philosophic French mind; only he "had the sense of what was divine, which is the most important part of the science" of philosophy. However, as early as August 1825, when liaison was yet his choice to epitomize the association, he wrote that he had no desire or intention to become a "servile disciple." He held himself on guard against the excessive metaphysical character of Cousin's philosophy, and was also sensible that his idol was more dogmatic than was desirable. Quinet's mother sorrowed to see her former dominating influence giving way to that of a rival, but, judging by how little her son's previous outlook was modified during these years, it would seem that this reassuring letter may be taken nearly at face value.

66 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, pp.102-106. The ridicule heaped upon Cousin may reasonably be attributed to Quinet himself, but it was in retrospect only that Cousin seemed the buffoon.

67 Monod, op. cit., I, 70. Mme. Quinet included excerpts from this letter in Cinquante ans (pp.26-27), but suppressed this passage. A letter to his mother in December 1829 gave evidence of a continued full measure of admiration (Lettres à sa Mère, II, 126).

68 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, I, 344.
Michelet knew Cousin before he did Quinet, and it is probable that Cousin brought the two younger men together as early as May 1825. They had certainly met before February 11, 1826, the day of the first meeting of a philosophical society, a group brought together by Cousin. The membership was made up of Cousin, Jourdan, Guignat and Poret who made a bi-monthly report on ancient philosophy; and Michelet, Quinet and Jules Simon who took modern philosophy as their province. From this time dated the close friendship between Quinet and Michelet, an intimacy which was not disturbed until December 1851. Michelet, in later life, was as disposed as was Quinet to discount the importance of his early relationship with Cousin. If Michelet, who was five years Quinet's senior, was never quite so overwhelmed by Cousin's personality, he did have the youthful ambition to someday write like him.

An emotional crisis, occasioned by developments in a relationship between Quinet and a young married woman, resulted in his decision to leave France temporarily. Friends at Strasbourg recommended Heidelberg as a retreat from temptation, and in December 1826 Quinet crossed the

69 Monod, op. cit., I, 193.
Rhine. He remained in Germany for slightly more than two years, but for periodic visits to France. At Heidelberg he came to know well both Creutzer and Schlosser. The young man's ambition to become an interpreter of German thought and culture for the French public was intensified and he now determined to make this his career. The distasteful matter of earning a livelihood pressed itself upon him ever more urgently. But the German environment, the Herder translation, and work on three lengthy essays served to palliate the offensive intrusion of material insecurity.

Frequently during later life Quinet insisted upon the unity of his intellectual development, and that all of the presentments of his adolescence had been confirmed in the age of maturity. The first important published presentation of his views is the 1827 Introduction to the Herder translation. If long an opponent of the "official" eclecticism of Cousin, Quinet was none the less also an eclectic. He never found it possible to enclose himself in either an exclusive materialism or idealism. At the close of his life he declared that when he considered nature as a materialist the horizon seemed to contract, and the universe became sterile.

71 Quinet, O.C., II (Avertissement preceding Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de l'Humanité), 346.
When he listened to the spiritualists, reality disappeared, and all that remained was a vapor which he could not seize.\textsuperscript{72} He had not found the world to be one of illusion, the more one penetrated it, the more it was found to conform to itself. The star did not lie, nor the perfume of the rose; only man had the gift of falsehood.\textsuperscript{73} In 1827 he had put it a little differently.

Philosophical and religious liberalism was a distinguishing characteristic of the two essays which introduced the first and third volumes of the Herder translation. The main tenants of the message which the translator directed to his French audience were familiar to all readers who knew the thought of Mme. de Staël, Benjamin Constant or Victor Cousin, and the undertaking appeared headed by a glowing tribute to the leader of the eclectic school. The finished essays were the product of Quinet's sojourn at Heidelberg. Although the political implications of the ideas discussed and defended were not obtrusive in these studies their tendency was undeniable. Never was Quinet more genuinely a liberal than on the eve of the July Revolution.

The young man attempted to bring the loose ends of his thought together. Humanity, he wrote in the first

\textsuperscript{72} Quinet, \textit{l'Esprit Nouveau}, pp.334-335.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., p.314.
essay, had been slow to develop the historic sense. Only after untold generations did the conviction develop that an invisible hand guided man and nations in the service of the law of Christ. This idea, in assigning to human actions a goal and an element of fixity, was the first which gave to history a philosophic character. With Bossuet this philosophy of history had reached its culmination. In his hands the history of humanity had become a sublime epic. Quinet professed to no other historical belief.

Only that which was particular has become general...that which appeared in a particular place or time, has become the work of all places and of all centuries. But we too, we believe in Revelation, that is to say in reason, justice, and liberty....

Humanity having established that God was the source, the eternal debate between the materialist and the idealist had been extended to the consideration of history. In what manner did God reveal himself, asked Quinet: it was the task of the "new science" to discover the answer. Two men then appeared, Vico and Herder, who, each in his manner, represented, and in a sense created, the schools. The annals of the city of ideas were all of reality for Vico; if he introduced physical facts it was only as pure symbols which confirmed his science,

74 Quinet, O.C., II (Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de l'Humanité), 348-351.
75 Ibid., p.354.
that of the progressive realization of the Christian ideal. Never did they serve as foundation. Quinet found in Herder the very opposite method, writing of him that:

If... [Vico] gave as a point of support to the series of human actions thought in its sublime essence... [Herder] built upon the most gross manifestations of the material being... 

Vico's, not Herder's, point of departure Quinet found "more solid." Particularly disturbing to him was the fatalism to which Herder seemed doomed. Herder's animal world, dominated by its physical environment until that moment when man began social progress, disquieted him. From where did this impulsion come?

That first freedom from materialistic determinism which seems so inexplicable to Herder, I see it reappear under a thousand different faces, in all of the succession of ages. Far from being a miraculous moment in the history of humanity, that act of emancipation has never ceased. It was repeated yesterday and is repeated today. Because of it we have... traditions and annals which possess unity and meaning. At this moment, by what miracle is it that we do not live under the law of the Middle Ages...? Why is it? Because at different moments in history humanity has declared itself unwilling to accept the institutions which have been willed to it. Men have wished to modify or overthrow them, and at their own pleasure,

76 Ibid., p. 356.
77 Ibid., p. 361.
and at their own risk and peril have made their own destiny.

This was Vico, as understood by Michelet, and by Ballanche as well. This was the explanation for progress: an ever recurring revelation served to guide, if man would follow, toward new vistas, toward a fuller understanding and realization of the Word. History, Quinet now wrote, in its commencement, and in its end, is the spectacle of liberty, the protestation of human kind against the world which enchains it, the triumph of the infinite over the finite, the freeing of the spirit, the reign of the soul. The end of liberty would be the end of history.79

Referring to Victor Cousin's identical statement, Croce noted that such words not only sounded differently in Germany, but had a quite different effect there than in France.80 The Italian liberal, in defining his own "modern" conception of liberty, rearranged the terminology of Quinet and Cousin scarcely at all, and concluded that liberty was a continual struggle in which "final victory was impossible, because it would mean the death of all

78 Ibid., p.365.
79 Ibid., p.366.
80 Croce, op. cit., pp.86-87.
the combatants, that is, of all then living." Not only may one wonder what the effect of such oratory really is, it cannot be startling that it should sound differently to separate audiences. In terms as general as these each private, class or national interest may easily translate its ambition into the "protestation of humankind" against its unenlightened opponents. In this regard the difference between the French and German experience was not particularly great, a contention Quinet's development does something to support. The young man's liberalism, however, was made of more than this belief that history was a ceaseless struggle between good and evil.

Quinet preferred Vico to Herder. The choice was a revealing one. Reacting above all against the deterministic materialism of the previous century, he could hardly help being attracted by Vico's idealism. The problem of Quinet's acceptance of the natural rights

81 Ibid., p.11.

82 Robertson went so far as to write that: "Vico's system did not really clash with that of Descartes." For, although "his idea of historical evolution may have nothing in common with metaphysical idealism which wholly ignored the historical factor...the Meditations, no less than the Scienza Nuova, is a defense of the spiritual and unseen against the levelling matter-of-factness of the new physical sciences." See his Studies in the Genesis of Romantic Theory in the Eighteenth Century (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), pp.182-183.
theory does arise, and although this acceptance was implicit rather than explicit in his early essays it was always present. The basic dogma of the French Enlightenment was the presupposition of an identical human nature at all times and all places. Vico's theory of evolution would seem to indicate that man is not, as the natural rights theory contended, everywhere identical, but, that he is shaped by the historical process. The difficulty of reconciling the Eighteenth Century belief in progress with the conviction that human nature is always and everywhere the same thus arises, in a somewhat different form, for Quinet. The difficulty itself, however, is in part the making of Romantic critics of the Enlightenment, whose over simplification of the ideas they attacked has frequently been accepted as a valid description of these ideas themselves.

First it should be said that the incompatibility of eighteenth-century universalism with a faith in progress gave Quinet no more conscious difficulty than it did Constant in his De la Religion, a work in which the two forms of optimism are very much in evidence.

83 See Cassirer, op. cit., pp.5 and 29.

84 See Walter L. Dorn, Competition for Empire: 1740-1763 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940), pp.218-219 for his discussion of this problem in so far as it relates to an understanding of Voltaire.
Whether the tone of disparagement is justified or not, Meinecke was correct enough when he wrote that Voltaire conceived of progress only as the "Annäherung an die Vernunft-und Zivilisationsideal seiner Zeit." Quinet would have been quite willing to admit his very similar guilt. Reason, he too believed, was everywhere and at all times the same; but progress was the process by which man's comprehension of a truth which was eternal was extended and purified, although it would never be complete or perfect. This evolution can best be described as a progressive refinement of man's understanding. In any age the dispersion of the existing ideal to as large a portion of society as possible was of pressing concern. However, Quinet did not wish to bind the future, believing this no more a possibility than a thing to be desired. Natural rights were in part practical necessities, which, when protected and guaranteed by society, insured that progress would continue. Of more fundamental importance they were within the comprehension of all men; a modicum of "common sense" was all that was necessary for understanding them. They were based upon truths which were, as the phrase went, "self-evident."

85 Meinecke, op. cit., I, 104-105.
Vico posed less of a problem for the adherent of the natural rights theory than did Herder, and for Quinet he posed no problem at all. Not only did Vico emphasize what is typical in history, rather than what is unique, he also gave natural law itself an important place in his synthesis. The difficulty might indeed be great if Vico had written no more on the subject than this:

It is equally beyond our power to enter in the vast imagination of those first men whose minds were not in the least abstract, refined, or spiritualized, because they were entirely immersed in the senses, buffeted by the passions, buried in the body. That is why we said above that we can scarcely understand, still less imagine, how those first men thought who founded gentile humanity.

However, Vico stated that one of the fundamental purposes of his New Science was "to demonstrate that the natural law of nations originated separately among the various peoples...."

Uniform ideas originating among entire peoples unknown to each other must have a common ground of truth.

86 Vico has been warped to many purposes. Nazis, Fascists, Communists, and Liberals have all found it possible to make important use of his thought. See Fisch in his "Introduction" to Vico, Autobiography, pp.72 and 107.


88 Ibid., p.58. My italics.
This axiom is a great principle which establishes the common sense of the human race as the criterion taught to the nations by divine providence to define what is certain in the natural law of nations.

Vico believed that there were three kinds of reason. First was divine reason which was understood only by God. Men knew it only in so far as it was revealed to them. "To the Hebrews first and then to the Christians, this had been by internal speech to their minds as the proper expression of a God all mind...."

This led Vico to conclude that "in good theology divine authority holds the same place as reason." All of this Vico fitted to his orthodox Catholicism, but it permits a very divergent interpretation. The natural rights theory needs no more of a foundation than Vico's "common sense," and the minds of men which comprehend "divine reason," may provide.

Michelet, who wrote that he had no master but Vico, felt that his most important debt to the great Italian was to the latter's view of history as a struggle of

89 Ibid., p.57. In his Autobiography (op. cit., p.127) he wrote, "For in our mind there are certain eternal truths that we cannot mistake or deny, and which are therefore not of our making."


91 See infra, p.122.
liberty against fatality. In Mme. de Staël Quinet had found the confirmation that the meaning of life itself was in this struggle. This feature of Vico may well be thought the decisive reason for Quinet’s finding him "more solid" than Herder.

Herder’s work, with its concept of individuality, and the uniqueness of nations, may be said to be incompatible with the universalism of the French Enlightenment, but this escaped Quinet and was not the cause of his preference for Vico. In 1827 and 1828 he resisted what he thought were the fatalistic aspects of Herder’s "disguised pantheism," although shortly thereafter he briefly succumbed to just this aspect of German thought. It is wrong to attribute a mechanistic doctrine of causation to Herder, but it is not so difficult to under-

92 See Vico, Autobiography, p. 79.

93 Although Robertson felt that the whole conception of Herder’s Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit was "unthinkable without knowledge of the Scienza Nuova," a bridge between the two works has not been established. Hamman did describe Vico’s work to Herder briefly, in a 1777 letter, but certainty ends there. Herder first discussed Vico in print in 1797, several years after he had completed his own great work. See Robertson, op. cit., pp. 288-289; and Vico, Autobiography, pp. 67-68. Robertson greatly overestimated the similarities between the two works. Meinecke, op. cit., I, 57-58, pointed out that Robertson’s conviction remained unproven.

stand how Quinet did this as it is to explain his reading into Herder a kind of deterministic materialism.95

What Quinet, in fact, found objectionable was Herder's historicism. True, this aspect was comforting and inspiring as well. Herder wrote:

What is the principal law which we observe in all great historical events? I think it is this: that every potentiality of this world is realized here. In part according to the situation and necessities of place; in part according to the conditions and opportunities of time; in part according to the innate or self-made character of peoples. 96

This "astonishing serenity"97 calmed and refreshed the impatient youth. He never rose from Herder without feeling able to view events with greater equanimity.98 But how, asked Quinet, could man accept the law which Herder established. If humanity was not and could never be anything but in conformity with the accidents of time and place, could only be "ce qu'elle pouvait

95 See Meinecke, op. cit., II, 449-450 on this point.


97 Quinet, O.C., II (Essai sur les oeuvres de Herder), p.437.

être et rien que ce qu'elle pouvait être" what of man's free will? What then of the rights of man?

Herder's progress, which Quinet understood to be produced by the action of natural circumstances, and the more or less spontaneous, irresistible and collective human nature, tended to justify things as they were. Quinet always needed to believe in the freedom of man's will, and his own pantheism never had this seemingly fatalistic complexion for long. His debt to Herder was a different one. In Bossuet he found the unity he sought; in Herder the formulation of a Christianity suitable to his needs. Herder wrote:

Certainly a divine hand guided humanity from the beginning, and led man, with all possible tenderness, into the proper path. But the more man's own powers came into

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99 Ibid., p.361. See Herder, Ideen, II, 328 for a similar statement. Meinecke wrote that, in spite of Herder's relative virtue in such matters, "das Ideal von Humanität, das in seiner eigenen Brust lebte, blieb... der Masstab für die Behandlung die politischen Seite der Weltgeschichte. Dieses moralisierende Messen macht das grosse Ideenwerk, vom Standpunkt der Entstehungsgeschichte der Historismus aus gesehen, zu einem Rückschritte gegenüber dem Entwurfe von 1774" (op. cit., II, 458). Herder was far from free from the trait of universalism. Later in life he wrote: "Eine endlose Schraube, eine boser Wirrwarr ist die Geschichte, wenn Vernunft sie nicht aufklärt, wenn Sittlichkeit sie nicht ordnet." To Meinecke such a statement was evidence of further decline (ibid., II, 469).
play, the less did humanity require this aid from on high, or the less was man's capacity to use it.

This passage implies how wrong was Quinet's talk of Herder's fatalism, but also embodies the spirit of Herder's Christianity. When all of the forces and elements of the earth had been chaos all that they might become had been present in them. History was the process of the gradual realization of God's grand conception, and would culminate in man's freedom.

Quinet's full development waited upon a diversity of frustrations, his concern with the application of truth to the event in the everyday political world was ever more dominant. Herder's secularized Christianity was the most permanent influence upon his thought. The German philosopher's conception of the nation, the thought which Quinet later adapted most completely to his own purposes, he all but ignored before 1830.

Quinet's 1828 Essai sur les oeuvres de Herder did mention that for Herder national forms were "sacred vessels, formed by the hand of God," and the "sole exterior cult worthy of the author of things." A

100 Herder, Ideen, I, 189.
101 Ibid., I, 26.
102 Ibid., I, 179.
103 Quinet, O.C., II (Essai sur les oeuvres de Herder), p. 426.
passing reference, here, in time this became the aspect of Herder most important for Quinet. In time the conclusion of this essay was sacrilege.

Farewell, hospitable land, peaceful land! What might I give in return for all that I have received from you? You have neither the sweet climate of France, nor the liberty yet more sweet of England....The delirium of your inspiration is past, as the branch charged with fruit you incline to earth, and yet you remain the land of the soul, and of hope.

This second work revealed more clearly Quinet's admiration for the natural religion that he found in Herder, as well as an unwillingness to pay his respects to orthodoxy which later characterized his writing until he arrived at the College of France. He wrote that the more nearly each age of human development conformed to Revelation, the greater the progress which could be said to have been accomplished. But let us not abuse the terms "Revelation" and "Scriptures," "nature" and "reason," for if they are gifts of the same God "probably" they are far from excluding one another, and rather contain one another. One sees the letter opposed to nature, "but nature is itself a vast enough book." The first rule of the Scriptures ought to be to give way to the common intelligence, which was the manifestation of the medium

104 Ibid., pp.438-439.
through which God truly revealed himself.105

De l'Origine des Dieux,106 written in 1828, is the last work by Quinet which precedes July 1830 to be considered. The most frankly pantheistic of the three essays, it opened by declaring that man was neither the master nor the slave of nature, being its "interpreter and the living word."107 This piece of writing is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of the usual Quinet admirer; even Mme. Quinet termed it "obscure."108 Rousseau, it should be remembered, closed all books, for nature was open to all eyes. "It is in that grand and sublime book that I learn to serve and adore its divine author."109

105 Ibid., pp.415-416. "Probably" may seem an important concession, and indeed it was, but did not compare with those he made when appointment to the University seemed probable. Hegel's criticism of Schleiermacher's "philosophy of feeling," that it "frustrated religion by disparaging the rational side of life," must be thought to represent Quinet's view as well. See Richard B. Brandt, The Philosophy of Schleiermacher: The Development of His Theory of Scientific and Religious Knowledge (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), p.324.


107 Ibid., p.415.

108 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, p.127. She blamed the environment in which Quinet then found himself. Monod, too, found it obscure, "filled with the symbolism of Creutzer and the mystical pantheism of Shelling and Hegel. The individual man here disappears in the absolute. Nature and man were narrowly joined together, the one and the other with God" (op. cit., II, 102). Valès, op. cit., p.84, has been quoted, supra p.75.

Although little different in spirit from the two preceding essays, one matter was given greater prominence, which may be thought to be at the heart of its objectionable character.

The task which truly awaited the modern genius was to create a universal authority. Quinet stated this in terms which did not presuppose that Cousin, or any other figure on the scene, was near to the answer. The Christian symbol, in a sudden expansion, had, with the Church, dominated the Middle Ages, but had never freed itself from subjection to national traditions. Quinet proposed that local traditions, which had contradicted one another and fought among themselves, for as long as they had been subordinated to the individual forms of the conscience of particular races, might, if freed from such bonds, take up their development and their natural order in the poetic conscience of humanity itself. Should the genius appear to break these molds, Dante's Divine Comedy would then appear to have been the first act in a kind of last judgment. The Divine Comedy of this improvised genius would not have the taking of a city, the vengeance of a tribe or the migration of a people for its dénouement, but the progressive law of the civil world. Preceding epics had been the contribution and the tableau of a race or of a nation; the epic of Dante opened a new cycle which Quinet hoped would seem
the work and the image of humanity.

The above may serve to indicate how little Herder modified either Quinet's eighteenth-century universalism or cosmopolitanism, at least at first. Not that Herder is to be "blamed" for Quinet's later development. The young Frenchman hoped that a future poet might use the annals of humanity as Homer had used those of the Greeks. For unity he should choose the unity of history and of nature. This poet should bring together individuals from across the centuries, no longer in the shadows of hell, or paradise, or the purgatory of the Middle Ages, but within an unlimited compass. This was the necessary and possible form of the epic of the modern world.

Small wonder that this is slighted by those who admire the patriot. Cosmopolitanism was a basic characteristic of that woman Quinet yet so admired; the time was far off when the word would be a term of reproach on his lips. For the spell under which these words were written was not brief; Quinet's three most ambitious creative efforts of the ten years which follow had an important relationship to it, although, no doubt,

110 Herder was not at all a "patriot" in the sense which Quinet became one. See Meinecke, op. cit., II, 441.

the thought was seriously modified. If the nation was here viewed as an outmoded form, which in a happier synthesis was to be submerged in a larger and all inclusive perfection, this was not all that was at variance with the older Quinet.

At Lyon in 1838, and thenceforward, Quinet embraced religion as the substance of humanity, and preached that political and social revolution is accomplished only in the conception of an idea of God. Then he taught that religious revolution must always and without exception precede political or social change; and that history of the civil world was "eternally formed by its primary source," that is by its faith. This represented a definite break with Mme. de Staël, and, of course, with Montesquieu, to whom Mme. de Staël owed the view that political institutions were the source of all others, and a definite shift toward a more exclusive idealism. But, before 1830, Quinet sought firmer ground than

112 Monod alone sensed this in part, and wrote that although Quinet's 1829 voyage to Greece helped "free him" from German mysticism, as did his political and philosophical reaction against Germany in 1831, "the prose poem D'Ahasvérus," conceived since 1828, written in Italy in 1832, and published in 1833, "is again full of the philosophical mysticism of 1828" (II, 102-103). D'Ahasvérus clearly was an effort to fulfil the author's own prophecy.

Mme. de Staël's idealism offered. On the other hand, his suspicion of any suggestion of materialistic determinism prevented his fully accepting Herder. This suspicion was a consistent trait. As protest against the existing order built up within him, Quinet assigned an ever larger role to the human will, and to immutable abstract verities. Sorrowful experience stiffened his idealism time and again, until he went beyond Mme. de Staël herself in this regard. After 1830 the part of Vico which remained a living part of Michelet's philosophy was neither the former's metaphysical theories, nor his religious conceptions, but almost exclusively the law expressed by Vico of the power of humanity to make its own destiny. Quinet's course was similar, in that he too placed greater stress upon that power of man, but divergent in that his original sympathy for Vico's metaphysical theories was increased.

Vico's thought that religion is the productive as well as the conserving principle of society was taken up by Quinet and developed. As Chassin would have it, Vico crippled the principle in restricting the flight and destroying the consequences, from the moment he immobilized the City of God in Catholicism, and in the name of a divine ideal, "condemned humanity to turn

114 Monod, op. cit., I, 76.
eternally in a circle of despair." Quinet took the principle, but was not bound by the limitations of Vico's orthodoxy. Thus transformed, Vico's ideal city became a vantage point from which Quinet could view the past and present as

...a moralist, sure of himself...approving, disapproving, applauding or hooting, according to the impression of his conscience, in the name of all humanity.  

On the eve of the "glorious three days" of 1830 we have a young man first romantic, then ambitious and impecunious; a somewhat undisciplined enthusiast, impatient and nervously self-confident. In certain respects he had found himself. Mme. de Staël had introduced him to German idealism, a modernized Christianity, which met his profoundly felt need for a faith which could stand against the scepticism so prevalent in the France of his youth, and yet not entail, as Catholicism or his mother's Calvinism seemed to, sacrificing a belief in human progress due to rational and good human beings. Mme. de Staël gave the necessary allegiance to the ideas of '89 and showed the way to a faith accommodated to them. Bossuet offered an absolute unity and a philosophy of history which Herder taught him to fit to his own needs. Germany

115 Chassin, op. cit., p.96.
116 Ibid., p.106.
then became briefly a greater love than France -- because in Germany there was faith, there was not the cynicism and indifference which seemed to him to characterize his own countrymen. That Chateaubriand vied briefly with Mme. de Staël for his allegiance reveals how important he found it to discover a synthesis which did not view emotional behavior as ridiculous. He chose the Protestant way; his background made that almost necessary. Cousin assisted and encouraged him.

Heine wrote:

Cousin's eclecticism is a fine spun hand-bridge between a fleshy Scotch empiricism and the abstraction of German idealism, a bridge which may completely satisfy the needs of a few lightfooted strollers, but which will come crashing down should the mass of mankind, with its heavy burdens of the heart, and its trampling chargers wish to cross.

In the sequel Quinet found himself not lightfooted enough, but in 1830 he showed fair promise of becoming an "official" spokesman of Cousin's doctrine.

A review of these years should not close without mentioning the fact that in Michelet Quinet had a generous and loyal friend.

117 Heine, S.W., VI, 414.
V

REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRAT, 1815-1830

Virtual unanimity prevails that Quinet should be classed as a stalwart of the democratic-republican wing of the French Revolutionary tradition. Soltau was representative when he contrasted de Tocqueville with Quinet, commenting that the former nowhere came out "as the bold champion of positive democracy as the participation of all in the business of government as did Michelet, Quinet and their school."^ Definition of terms becomes the first necessity in entering upon the subject of Quinet's political views in 1830.

The association in the French mind of the Terror and republicanism has been noted. Under the Restoration the public expression of republican views met with arrest, imprisonment or banishment, and the movement was limited to activity within secret societies, which had a flourishing existence. Theorists headed the republican group, men who thought in terms of the distant future, and who in 1830 were not ready to

^ Soltau, op. cit., p.53. This comment is not typical of French comment in so far as it touches upon de Tocqueville. The need to distinguish him from the democratic party is most frequently not felt to exist.
assume responsibility for government, much less think of seizing that power. Even in 1848 the Republic was imposed upon these leaders by the people, and the former took control with faint hearts and trembling hands. During the Restoration the party followed the opportunistic policy of giving what support it could to the official opposition headed by the Liberals, a party which, once in power, had as specific end making the middle class safe from democracy, but which before 1830 fought the good fight against Charles X. Republicans were obscure on matters of doctrine.

Mme. de Staël was fiery in her opposition to Jacobinism; nevertheless she frequently spoke of republican institutions as the ideal. She typifies, as does Lafayette, around whom so much republican activity centered under the Restoration, the patient and conservative temper of many a theoretical republican. She wrote that although democrats might say that the necessity was a king without a nobility, or the doing away with both, experience had shown the impossibility of doing


3 Weill, op. cit., p.21.
away with either. During the last days of the Restoration the National and its controlling group came into prominence, a liberal monarchist group; in February 1830 Thiers described the republican spirit for the readers of this paper.

France wishes to govern herself, because she has the capacity to do so. Will one say that this is a republican idea? So much the worse for those who enjoy taking fright at a word. This spirit, republican if one wishes, exists, manifests itself everywhere, and is becoming impossible to repress.

Few republican leaders could have taken exception to this. A representative and constitutional monarchy, in form not essentially different from that desired by the Liberals, was acceptable to the majority of an improperly labeled republican leadership. The aftermath of July 1830 forced decision, and under the July Monarchy the gulf between Republicanism and Liberalism widened. By 1848 "the Republican is more often an undeveloped Socialist than an advanced Liberal." This describes the evolution of at least the extremist minority. Another aspect of the problem was suggested by Michel, when he wrote that the historian of the

5 Weill, op. cit., p.20.
6 Soltau, op. cit., pp.93-95.
democratic school "would have some difficulty to isolate its action from that of the socialists in the years that separate 1830 and 1848." Both are partly accurate statements, if one can manage to divorce Marxian materialism from his mind in thinking of "socialism," but both apply after 1830.

Political science and doctrine played a subordinate role in the thinking of a party whose title leads one to another expectation, but the republican element was not without its passion, nor without a program for which it had unlimited enthusiasm. Between 1815 and 1848 one may say that the republican party, and the democratic party as well, favored military aggression with an enthusiasm and consistency which they rarely showed for either republican institutions or democratic practices. Under the Restoration an uneasy alliance between Liberal and Republican was accompanied by an easier, if no more sincere, alliance between Bonapartism and Republicanism, in which both paid lip-service to democracy, but with patriotism the adhesive agent. 

The foreign policy of the republicans during the early July Monarchy was to deliver Germany and Italy, to appeal to the people of Europe against oppressive

7 Michel, L’Idée de l'État, p.317.
8 Weill, op. cit., p.55.
aristocracies, and so wash away the shame of Waterloo. Armand Carrel, who in 1830 felt that a Republic was neither desirable nor possible, in 1832 broke with the government, and then with monarchy itself, ostensibly because this foreign policy was not followed. But Carrel once told Quinet that he spent his life writing the very opposite of what he believed; he loved and admired England, everyday he wrote a violent article against England; Cromwell seemed to him a hundred times greater than Napoleon, he wrote the reverse.\(^9\) Waterloo and Napoleon were symbols not to be cast aside.

The Revolution of July was not made by those who benefited by it. "Like the victory of the republicans over the king, the victory of the liberals over the republicans was easy." Although some justice attaches to the charge of a "betrayal" of the Revolution, many a republican realized the justice of Cavaignac's later remark that "We were not in force." The real result was that the struggle which had begun in 1815, between the Bourbons and the Liberal party, had ended with the defeat of the Bourbons.\(^10\) The Liberals had wished to change the personnel of the previous regime, many of them thought of the Revolution as though it had been


\(^10\) Lavisse, \textit{op. cit.}, IV, 391.
a ministerial crisis, and at first believed that the people had sacrificed themselves to uphold the Charter. This group did not understand "that a new idea had been born, and that the Revolution marked the first stirring of the democratic idea."\textsuperscript{11} Royer Collard typifies the more perceptive element among the Liberals, and he is reported to have remarked at the event, "Moi aussi, je suis des victorieux, triste parmi les victorieux."\textsuperscript{12} But, as Schapiro notes, the Liberals of 1830 were not long in realizing "that in order to maintain their victory, they would have to pass to the other side of the barricade."\textsuperscript{13}

Thureau-Dangin explained the republicanism of Carrel by saying that when the monarchy at whose birth he had assisted offered him no more than a prefecture, vanity did the rest.\textsuperscript{14} Quinet had a somewhat similar motivation, although in neither case should one be certain that it was decisive. They do, however, exemplify a group, in which is to be found many a

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., IV, 393.


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid., p.181.

theoretical republican of the Restoration, which refused to pass to the other side of the barricade after July. Sincere in their liberalism, or disappointed and hungry for authority, they were an element which turned to the Left after July 1830.

The July Revolution brought no solace to a bruised national spirit. Rather than fling defiance at the victors of Waterloo the new Monarchy spent all efforts to appease the irritated tempers of crowned heads. No opposition could fail to realize than an appeal to French patriotism was the best part of political wisdom. Thus Carrel wrote what he did not believe.

If "republican" under the Restoration was little more than a loose term, describing one moved by certain general and not strictly defined sentiments, "democrat" was little more precise as a piece of terminology. It may be worth noting first that even later authors of the more radical social doctrines were rather realistic about the preparedness of France for democracy. Proudhon's remark, "La propriété, c'est le vol," is famous; his "La démocratie, c'est l'envie" is equally characteristic. He wrote in 1851 that the masses were far from having reached a condition of

15 Proudhon, op. cit., p.165.
being capable of benefiting themselves should they have the power of government. Democracy still remained a "fictitious word, which signified love of people, love of children, but not government of the people."\textsuperscript{16}

The Saint-Simonians set as the goal to be achieved the amelioration of the condition of the poorest classes of society, but were in agreement with Proudhon as to the incapacity of those classes to bring about such an accomplishment by their own efforts. The disciples of Saint-Simon posited the essential necessity for an absolute authority; de Maistre's writing was an important source for their argument.\textsuperscript{17} Louis Blanc was later in a minority among the more radical social reformers who believed that universal suffrage must, or even should, precede social reform.\textsuperscript{18}

Although the Ledru-Rollin school of republicans made universal suffrage the key to their program in the last years of the July Monarchy (Quinet became a member of this group), in 1830, as well as later, "democrat" better described the person who subscribed to several general premises than a person who insisted

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid., p.57.


\textsuperscript{18} Weill, \textit{Histoire du Parti Républicain}, p.159.
upon a necessary list of institutional arrangements. If republicans put their hope in the distant future, democrats were much further from the prevailing sentiment, and it was only natural that their debate revolved about attitudes rather than a specific program. Lamartine, who after 1831 was an unsteady spokesman for democracy, stressed an important aspect of the French democratic sentiment when he declared that defiance of the country in the face of the state was "unintelligible nonsense" in a democracy. This expressed one of the essential, if not the essential, differences between the French democratic and liberal viewpoints, although one may say that democrats shared the opinion with their worst enemies.

Michelet clarified another aspect of the democratic viewpoint, one which in France separated him from most of the radical social reformers as well as from the Right. When Mickiewicz was preaching the need for "a man," Michelet wrote in his "Journal," "I say there is a need for men." [19] Debidour made a statement of principle at the outset of his Histoire des rapports, in which he declared that he had two basic and equally dear principles: freedom of worship and the sovereignty of the State, but if a conflict should arise between the two "the last word should always rest with the State," op. cit., p.1-11.

[19] Michel, l'Idée de l'État, p.334. Debidour made a statement of principle at the outset of his Histoire des rapports, in which he declared that he had two

A further simplification takes one to the heart of the matter. Constant belonged with the most enlightened of the liberals, but we find him express the idea upon which democratic idealism is based, the hope which is a component part of the whole rationalistic optimistic structure, and which alone bears up a logical and meaningful democratic faith.

In order that these [future] generations may advance along the route which is open to them [as a result of immense discoveries in science] it will be necessary for them to have what we lack: conviction, enthusiasm, and the power to sacrifice interest to opinion.

If human nature permits man to sacrifice interest to opinion, and virtue is a distinguishing earmark of democratic society, only perversity could lead a man into any but the democratic camp. This optimism with respect to human nature we may say made the democrat, and the lack of it made his opponent. If the French republican was an impatient warrior the democrat was an optimist.

Universal suffrage was one part of the democratic program, aggressive nationalism was the other. Weill relates how even working class political meetings, held secretly during the last years of the Restoration, culminated in attacks upon the treaties of 1815, and the

21 Constant, op. cit., I, xii, note 1.
demand that France have the Rhine. A working class pamphlet of 1831 stated:

We have chased the government of the Bourbons, not because it rendered us miserable, for the people were never better off than between 1816 and 1829, but because it had been imposed upon us by the pretended victors; by foreign arms, and domestic traitors. 22

In all but the ruling element this was the constant cry. Among the many groups who at first rallied to the July Monarchy were the Saint-Simonians. Through their press (Michel Chevalier was their great journalista in these years, and Sainte-Beuve one of the editors of the Globe, which became the daily of the cult in 1831) 23 they presented France as fitted for a missionary and conquering role, a people marked by a God to initiate Europe into a universal but French-controlled communion. The annexation of Belgium was specifically demanded. 24 Glory was a happier memory than the sacrifice it had cost and was better remembered.


24 Weill, l'École Saint-Simonienne, pp.67-68.
Monod was surprised to find no evidence that the youthful Michelet, in the years between 1810 and 1815, had been moved to either pride upon the occasion of French victory or to humiliation by her defeat. It was only later, at the time of his visit to England during the July Monarchy, that Michelet shared the feeling of hostility and rancor toward England "common to all Frenchmen who had grown up during the years of the Empire." In 1846 Michelet was "haunted" by the fear of that anglomania, the admiration and imitation for English institutions -- the heart of the doctrine represented by Guizot and the House of Orleans -- which was killing France.

In 1846 Quinet expressed the view Michelet held in that year; before 1830 no trace of such a viewpoint is to be found. In England at that time Quinet breathed the freest air he had ever known. When Mme. de Staël advocated the importation of the English constitution into France, her pupil did not protest. He wrote with admiration and approval of an acquaintance who had spent five years in confinement for having

25 Monod, op. cit., I, 16.
26 Ibid., I, 329.
27 Ibid., II, 221.
28 Mme. de Staël, Considérations sur les Principaux Événemens de la Révolution Françoise, III, 325.
spoken too openly of that constitution during the reign of Napoleon.\(^{29}\) The youth's letters from Paris down to 1825 show a singular lack of concern for those matters which were later to consume his life. At a time when the Paris student body was fired by an enthusiasm for the lost cause of the Revolution, when secret societies recruited great numbers of ardent members among those students, there is every indication that Quinet devoted his energies to breaking into precisely those literary circles whose opinions and outlook he was later to denounce as bringing death to France.

During the winter of 1829 and 1830 Quinet called upon Guizot weekly.\(^{30}\) He became a regular visitor at Mme. Recamier's, where Chateaubriand was the center of attention.\(^{31}\) Cousin, the philosophical spokesman of Royer-Collard and Guizot, was still an intimate friend. This was the same Cousin for whom the Charter "spontaneously granted" by Louis XVIII was a "liberal and wise" constitution, and all that the moderate men of 1789 had dreamed of, and that Montesquieu had described;\(^{32}\) the same Cousin who saw in democracy the certain destruction

\(^{29}\) Quinet, *Lettres à sa Mère*, I, 220.

\(^{30}\) *Ibid.*, II, 133.

\(^{31}\) Harriot, *op. cit.*, p.305.

\(^{32}\) Cousin, *op. cit.*, pp.401-402.
of liberty, and who on the evening of July 27, 1830, in the office of the Globe, declared that the Bourbon flag was the only possible one for France, this man was still his idol.

Approaching thirty Quinet was far removed from those circles where could be found the individuals with whom his name would be joined by Gambetta over an open grave in 1875.

33 Ibid., p.vi.

34 Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 375.
VI

JULY 1830: THE EMERGENCE OF THE PATRIOT

At the beginning of 1828 Creutzer and Quinet conceived the idea of having a Commission d'antiquités sent to Greece by the French government. They forwarded their suggestion to Cousin, Degerando, Constant, Chateaubriand and others, but when the government decided late that year to send such an expedition it was only with difficulty that Quinet's friends managed to have him named a member of the group.¹ Quinet at this time was impatient to marry Minna Moré, later his first wife, but could not hope to do so until some regular source of income was found. It was hoped that appointment to such an expedition, which in itself would briefly bolster his finances, might serve as a stepping stone to a permanent position. Cousin, Degerando, Constant, and particularly Michelet were anxious that something be turned up for him so that he might live in Paris. The thought most in mind was that a professorship would solve the difficulty. The state of Quinet's feelings was suggested by the letter he wrote to Michelet in August 1828, asking that the latter bend all his effort

¹ Westphal, op. cit., p.vi.
to seeing that he might be included as a member of the expedition to Greece: "You have a part of my destiny in your hands. Would that this might encourage you to serve me."² News of his appointment reached Quinet at Heidelberg in December.³

The commission sailed from Toulon on February 10, 1829; already Quinet was embroiled with his companions. Arriving in Greece, he separated himself from the group, going his independent way, and then returned to France alone in May. The result was that the hope of his friends was not realized; instead, playing the romantic poet brought upon him the disfavor of those who might have assisted his appointment to the University.⁴

Back in France Quinet divided his time between Certines and Paris. The literary result of his travels in Greece, La Grèce moderne, was partly written and

² Monod, op. cit., I, 245. Mme. Quinet (Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.21-22) suppressed this passage.
³ Westphal, op. cit., p.13.
⁴ Monod, op. cit., I, 245-247, relates the efforts of Michelet to collect payment for a full year's service for his friend. When, in November 1830, he succeeded, Quinet, not satisfied, desired salary for another year he now said he needed in which to write his report. When Royer-Collard, who had become Chief of the Division of Sciences and Letters, grudgingly promised three month's pay upon delivery of the report, as the limit of what he could do, Quinet dropped the matter and did nothing further. Mme. Quinet's account (Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.31-33) is imaginary.
selections appeared serially from December to March of 1830. During the fall, at Charolles, he met Lamartine; in Paris where he resided after the first of the year, Mme. Recamier requested his regular attendance at her Friday gatherings. Enthusiasm for Greece increased interest in a young writer who had only recently returned from the scene, and Quinet was lionized in a fashion quite unfamiliar to him. His travel account was well received but not acclaimed, and displeasure which the administration still felt respecting the expedition was little modified. He saw Cousin and Guizot frequently in the first months of 1830.

In March Quinet returned to Minna at Heidelberg; here he worked on *La Grèce moderne*. He was in Strasbourg, conferring with the Levrault firm which was preparing to publish this work, when word of the July Revolution reached him.

The Revolution of 1830 had a noticeable influence upon a number of French literary figures. Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Hugo, Lamennais and Vigny were all

5 Mme. Quinet, *Cinquante ans d'Amitié*, pp.35-37.
6 Ibid., p.40.
given pause by the event. They "sought the wind."
Beranger observed that his confrères were all "like
birds whose tree has fallen, and who were at a loss
as to where to perch." Quinet, more closely associated
by inclination and temperament with this company than
any other, is an interesting parallel.

On August 10 Michelet wrote that Quinet should
come to Paris promptly; friends were in power, Guizot
in the Interior, Cousin in the Instruction Ministry,
but places were being claimed quickly. On the basis
of this Quinet wrote to his mother that Cousin had
seen to it that he be requested to come to Paris at
once. But something larger than the ambition of the
place seeker had flamed up in Quinet at the news from
Paris; patriotism was reborn. His first thought was
that the treaties of 1815 had been defied. In this
August letter to his mother he reported that all along
the Rhine people were drunk with joy, and waited only
for the signal in order to reunite with France.

The break between Cousin and Quinet which now oc­
curred has been most frequently assessed in terms more
favorable to Cousin than to Quinet. Monod wrote that

8 Lucas-Dubreton, op. cit., p.131.
10 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 152-153.
Cousin refused to name Quinet to the University post at Paris because he was neither agréé nor docteur, and that this refusal resulted in the ferocious rancor which saw Quinet's love turn to hate. The ease with which the formality of the degree requirement was met when Quinet later received appointment to Lyon, not to speak of exceptions which Cousin made in 1831, suggests, at least, that this need not have been decisive in 1830. Letters of September 1830 first revealed Quinet's disappointment. In these he related that Cousin had shown the most miserable character, his head having been turned by his sudden advancement. The master was profoundly fearful of being compromised by his former disciples. This unwillingness to endanger his new found glory by a scrupulous loyalty to old but unpredictable friends may seem more damning than it did to Monod. Public attack on Cousin waited however; his bitterness that Cousin failed to grant him a University chair at Paris was immediate, deep and lasting, but Quinet was impatient to find a place and held fire. Not philosophy but behavior caused his discontent. When Constant, who continued to support his appointment to the University, died that December Quinet was

11 Ibid., II, 154-155.
saddened.\textsuperscript{12} Villemain promised his help,\textsuperscript{13} Guizot made assurances, and in September, after the betrayal of Cousin, Quinet wrote to Minna Moré:

Either I will be sent as a professor to Strasbourg or I will obtain a sub-prefecture in Lorraine or in Alsace. The latter position would suit us better for it would give a greater chance of advancement.\textsuperscript{13}

These remarks might be interpreted as an effort to put the best possible complexion on the most likely eventuality; but Quinet had never evinced a high degree of enthusiasm to be a teacher. The solution had been one suggested by his friends, and more probably this letter revealed the uncertainty of his desires, and a nascent ambition to play a role in great events which was evident repeatedly in the future.

Coolness toward Guizot was first apparent in October, when Quinet reported that the Doctrinaire disapproved of the fact that the Globe, and similar journals, had showered praise on la Grèce moderne.\textsuperscript{14} Guizot now seemed unlikely to support Quinet's candidature, in spite of his former promise to do so when the work was published. Royer-Collard made his unsatisfactory offer of settlement at this moment, and

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid., II, 173.

\textsuperscript{13} \textsc{Bunj.}, Nouv. acq. franc. 20799, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XIX, 181.

\textsuperscript{14} Guizot and Cousin had both been important contributors to the Globe, until July.
in November Quinet declared that the Doctrinaires "were in a state of ruin." By April of the following year hope was all but abandoned, although Quinet assured his mother that he had not given up completely. In May he made his decision. He was slow to act upon it, and first met strong resistance from all who felt that they had his interests at heart. To a friend at Lyon Quinet wrote:

Do not mention Cousin to me. He is a coward and utterly base, and we are going to launch une guerre légitime against him in our journal.

By carrying out this intention much of his past was put behind him.

The brevity of his enthusiasm for the new dispensation was suggested by the pronouncement before one of his classes in the 1840's that "three days of truth in a lifetime" did not suffice. Peace and the status quo were at once the policy of the Liberal Monarchy, and almost immediately Quinet was in the

15 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 162.
16 Ibid., II, 194.
17 Westphal, op. cit., p.38. The journal referred to was Revue des Deux Mondes; Quinet was one of the 1831 founders of the publication. Lettres à sa Mère, II, 197, announces the project.
opposition. Independence had been promised, definitive victory over the old regime, the émigrés, the priests; but then the bitter fruit was tasted. Quinet's voice joined a protesting chorus, if unexpectedly.

During the Restoration republicans, democrats, Bonapartists and liberals had held in common two important attitudes: anti-clericalism, and a modification, at least, of the treaties of 1815, was demanded in the name of national honor. In July unity on these matters had been the presupposition of the overthrow of Charles X. Then the barricades were crossed. The Liberal forgot honor and embraced the Church. The latter phenomenon is a matter of concern at the moment.

The expectation that the July Revolution would deal harshly with the Church was natural; but, the event was "nearly without effect for the cult or for its ministers." The people did not attempt to bring down the Church, and "the legislators of the new regime showed themselves more moderate than did the people."19 Within a few years Quinet declared that in France "we are, by a notorious miracle, at once at the bourse and at the confessional."20 Proudhon was concise:

19 Debidour, op. cit., p.413-415.
20 Quinet, O.C., IX (Mes Vacances en Espagne), 139.
The bourgeoisie, what happy symptom! after a century of indifference, has suddenly been seized with a religious fervor. It has become advised that religion can be useful to its interests: at once it demands religion, a great deal of religion. A joint-stock company is organized by them for the restoration of religious ideas. Christ had been called to the assistance of the bourgeois gods Mammon, Plutus, Porus, and Poenus. Christ did not answer: but the Church, orthodox and reformed, came running.

Spokesmen of the Church were equal to comprehending what had befallen and why. Dupanloup could not credit the early leaders of the July Monarchy for having wished it. The result had been Providential, but the July Revolution had served the Church in freeing it from many of the political prejudices, lies and calumnies which had previously burdened it. Cosmopolitan wealth had replaced cosmopolitan monarchy, and the Church was to become as much of an instrument of one as it had been of the other. The most Voltaireian among the bourgeois liberals of 1830 were, in many instances, of the conviction that a religion was necessary for the people; and, as the people "seemed to have one ready made which satisfied them, there was not a moment's dream of taking it away from them." 

The Liberal had previously paid his respects to a fundamental liberty, but, with the advent of Casimir Périer, there opened a long period during which the power of the state was used with consistent harshness against political opponents of the new regime. A fight to the knife was opened against the revolutionary party; at no time under the Restoration had press seizures and trials been so frequent as in 1831.24

Whatever the pressures of personal disappointment Quinet was consistent with his past in breaking with Cousin. Liberal rule, representing in Quinet's eyes a crassly egotistical materialism, turned him toward the democratic camp. His logic may be questioned; his course was not unique. The Revolution pretended to do away with classes. That was how Quinet, like Michelet, like all idealists in that tradition interpreted its message. The July Monarchy, in his eyes, created and fomented class war; its policy, he wrote, was to crush the poor with the arrogance of the rich, to frighten the rich with the hatred of the poor, and to weaken national pride in order to better dominate the country. Only gold was worshiped.25 From exile he one day described the phenomenon.

25 Quinet, O.C., IX (Mes Vacances en Espagne), 79-80.
When, after a long struggle against the outworn dogma in the name of a new idea, philosophers, supported by the sentiments and the hopes of all obtain victory, and the power, so long desired, falls finally into their hands, something happens which no one could have foreseen. It is that the philosophers find domination so sweet that they forget the ideas in the name of which they took that power, and without further concerning themselves with truth, they dream of nothing more than enjoying in peace the authority acquired. Then they discover, first that the old dogma, attacked by them for so long, is the best harness with which to keep men under their yoke; and they put to use all of their artfulness to repair that harness which they have broken, and which appears divine to them now that it is in their power. For they thus obtain the double advantage of living in peace with their former enemies, and repressing their former partisans, now their principle embarrassment.

At the end of August 1831, discouraged and unwilling to wait longer for a position which now seemed not to be forthcoming, Quinet retired to Germany and to Minna. Although planning an attack upon Cousin in May he had yet held back, and in July published De l'Avenir de la Religion, an essay which did nothing to destroy whatever chance might have remained of official favor. In this essay, his references to Catholicism were vague, and, more notably, nothing suggested his divorce from the official eclectic school. Quinet wrote that the history of religion was not finished, no more than was

that of humanity; Catholicism could be expected to live for as long as did the present type of western society. One day that type would alter, and with it, the cult made for it. In suggesting that the French Revolution represented a striving to break away from the religious tradition of the past, and that it foreshadowed the future in this regard, he showed no impatience, and neither asked for nor predicted a sudden transformation. He was no less moderate than Cousin himself.

Quinet remained at Grundstadt during September and October, then returned to Charolles early in November after stopping off at Strasbourg. This brief period was one of the most decisive in his life. On November 2, 1831, from Strasbourg, Quinet sent Buloz, the editor of the Revue des Deux Mondes, his article, "De la Philosophie dans ses Rapports avec l'Histoire politique." He requested that Buloz also print the article which he had sent to Michelet from Grundstadt in October, and which Quinet assumed was in the editor's hands. The article previously sent from Grundstadt was even then not completed, but he wished Buloz to print the first installment.

27 Quinet, O.C., VI (Mélanges), (Paris: Pagnerre, 1887), 398.

28 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.58-60, and Paul Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet (Edition nou-
The article Quinet sent from Strasbourg was published by Buloz, in the first December issue of the Revue. Now publicly Quinet hurled his thunderbolt at Cousin, and at that system of philosophy to which he himself had but recently been bound. Avoiding with care a direct attack upon the government, Quinet the patriot was, however, here first revealed. Never attached to the Jacobin or democratic tradition, one aspect of its revival seemed either to have stirred a responsive chord, at least to have fitted his mood of discouragement. The note quickly faded, but later

velle de ses articles sur l'Allemagne d'après les textes originaux avec commentaire; Paris: Plon, 1917), pp.84-85. In the 1857 and later editions of Quinet's works the volume Allemagne et Italie contains four articles, among others; that named above is dated November 1830 (pp.174-182); "Système politique de l'Allemagne" is dated October 1831 (pp.142-158); "Avertissement à la Monarchie de 1830" dated only "1830" (pp.158-174); and "l'Allemagne et la Révolution," also dated 1830 (pp.135-142). The first was published by Buloz in December 1831 under the title "de la Révolution et de la Philosophie." The last three originally appeared in a single pamphlet entitled l'Allemagne et la Révolution; as a single article they also appeared in the Revue des Deux Mondes. Publication was simultaneous and was in January 1832. The text in the review is more complete than that to be found in the 1839 edition of Quinet's works, but suppressions were made by Buloz not made in the January 1832 pamphlet. The 1857 and later editions of Quinet's works restore the Revue version with minor stylistic changes. Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet, pp.68-71 and 90-91, treats these facts. Gautier printed the full pamphlet version. Quinet obviously wished to have the world forget that he was so tardy in reacting against the July Monarchy, and pushed back some fourteen or more months, not only the date of publication, but of the actual writing of these essays.
returned to become his theme.

Quinet damned eclecticism for having been born under the sword of the Restoration. It was a degraded philosophy, and as such had suited a degraded France. Its popularity was indicative of a striking resignation in the face of discordant ideas, matching the resignation in the face of the invading armies in whose train the philosophy had marched. Exhausted, unable to fill a role worthy of herself in the field of thought or action, France, in paying her respects to this alien doctrine, had practiced a pitiful diplomacy.

In this fashion Quinet appealed to patriotism, so that he might forego logic. Not daring to count himself among them (he let silence make that suggestion) he spoke of far-sighted men who had suspected that when life again appeared in France the artificial combinations of eclecticism would fail the test. With a stirring of life the suspicion had been justified. Now, surely, all could recognize that the system was but the distorted reflection of theories already in decline in Germany. All that some had believed to be the free emanation of French national genius (and certainly Quinet could not have expected to be included here) was now found to be near ruin across the Rhine.

For all this rhetoric, Quinet did not attack a philosophy, but Cousin. He declared that to judge the
degree to which the "philosophy of the Restoration" was repugnant to the heart of the country one had only to observe what had occurred the moment it was called upon to prove its sincerity. The demands of three days had sufficed to disperse the alien philosophy in such a manner that one searched in vain for its trace. By taking no part in a revolution philosophy had abdicated; after it had exchanged principle and lofty ambition for the first material advantage offered no esteem could remain to it. An apostate idealism was worse than an avowed materialism. For those who had been present at the betrayal courage to name the crime was required. Whatever the cost, Quinet stated, he had faced the choice of either laying aside his pen or of accusing the criminal. With this essay he had chosen the latter course. 29

At the close of his life Quinet wrote that in the days following the July Revolution a wise moderation had been the virtue most commended. Sagacity had consisted in the ability to forget, as soon as one had conquered, all of the principles under whose banner victory had been won. 30 The inconsistency was on both

29 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 178-181 for the above two paragraphs.

sides, and Quinet would have been more just to have admitted that his own development took a change in course following July 1830; and more, that a brief period of passionate protest on his part was followed by an unseemly calm, until he entered upon the rough waters of 1840, and found himself more or less permanently. The fact that he dated this article incorrectly in later editions of his collected works also served to lead one to forget that his own sagacity lasted into the second year, when all hope of aid from Cousin had been abandoned.

The truth was that his own instability, if not in doctrinal, at least in personal matters, made the years between 1826 and 1835 a bitter and unhappy period of his life. The foundations of his philosophical outlook were as shifting as were his emotional attachments, and it was after a crisis in the latter that the real revolution in his attitudes became apparent. In a period marred by much personal disappointment he came to see differently, and more acutely; he came to wish for a more radical readjustment of a world less and less to his heart's desire. The revolution was in attitudes and affections, not in philosophy or religion. In 1830 Cousin failed to act in a manner consistent with his word; he sacrificed opinion to interest; he betrayed the ideal he had seemed to embody.
The reaction in Germany to the events of July was an equally bitter disappointment to the young Frenchman who had believed that the German world was motivated by the idealism of her philosophers. Disillusion gave him profound insight.

When now Quinet's attack fell upon the government itself the failure of the new monarchy to pursue an expansionist foreign policy was the ostensible cause for his anger. One may say that in foregoing an old enthusiasm Quinet did not cease to be enthusiastic. He joined his voice to a chorus, which if it was not to prevail, was most passionate and aggressive, that of militant nationalism. The cry masked Jacobin politics, but Quinet's political development trailed behind his emotional response; his adjustment to a different tradition than that which had formed him was gradual. He did not at once attack the bourgeoisie.

There was more than one hint in his past which might have made his shift predictable. The Rhine had always fascinated him. Late in 1827 he had written that in passing through Coblenz "a strongly seditious" thought had passed through his mind (Quinet presumed that his mother understood him to mean the thought of a France extended to the Rhine), adding that he and all of his German friends believed that "it would be
realized later."31 During the spring of 1830, being fêted in Paris in a fashion new to him, although he continued to love Germany as much as previously, he was beginning to see things there with a great deal more independance.32 After July the Rhine became a main preoccupation; "our" Rhine frontier would now be taken, Grunstadt would then become French "again."33 Possibly never correct in the presumption that his Palatinate friends dreamed of returning to France, Quinet was soon forced to admit that they had felt a change of heart. A brief visit to Germany in February 1831 disclosed that though Creutzer and other old friends at Heidelberg greeted him with all of their former hospitality, they were none the less full of prideful talk of drawing the sword at the moment of the first sign of French aggression on the left bank of the Rhine. This singular development Quinet attributed to the "weakness of our government."34

Soon it was difficult to believe that there had been a time when Quinet could have written that the

32 Ibid., II, 146.
33 Ibid., II, 172-173.
34 Ibid., II, 184.
greatest thing taking place in France was the influence of new ideas which had originated in Germany, and that the greatest of all opportunities was open to the individual who could make himself the interpreter of this "supreme movement." 35

Depressed at his failure to find favor in the eyes of the new regime, impatient and unwilling to pursue favors any longer, Quinet left for Grunstadt in August 1831. He was greeted there by an aroused anti-French atmosphere. The situation which he found in Germany was so shocking, and he felt it so menacing to France, that he postponed the writing of his attack upon Cousin momentarily and began the pamphlet, the beginning pages of which he sent to Michelet in October. That month his engagement with Minna More was broken. One may not weigh precisely the influence of this event upon Quinet's development. Certainly no other disappointment in his private life left so lasting an impression. More than thirty years later, during his years of exile in Switzerland, Quinet had constantly recurring periods of depression during which he was obsessed by the memory of the circumstances surrounding the temporary breaking off of this engagement. Repeatedly he decried the fact that he and

35 Ibid., II, 71; April 1828.
Minna had not married in 1828, and emotion overcame him as he recalled her "unpitying hardness." German Luthernism came to be embodied in the terrible Dittmar, the brother-in-law who insistently pressed Minna until she broke with a man who was French, a man who could not possibly bring happiness to a profoundly devout and German woman.  

Quinet returned alone to Charolles. Wretched and full of gall he continued to work on his De l'Allemagne et de la Révolution. Michelet had previously begged him to agree to a postponement, or to forego publishing the pamphlet altogether, and had failed to turn the first part of the manuscript over to Buloz while still hoping that he might dissuade his friend. After an exchange of letters between Charolles and Paris, Michelet wrote in November:

36 The depiction of such scenes is a curious part of the "Journal Quinet." This is not a subject the second Mme. Quinet would have been prone to exaggerate. The feeling, and "obsession" does not seem too strong a word for it, is rather unexpected in view of the apparent coolness which characterized Quinet's feelings toward his first wife during the last years of her life. See B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11829, "Journal Quinet," V, 38; and nouv. acq. franc. 11833, "Journal Quinet," IX, 158, for examples of Quinet's preoccupation with the memory of the separation. In the former reference Mme. Quinet stated that "dead drunk with love" was the most accurate description to be found for "ce cher Ahasverus" of the years between 1828 and 1834.
Finally, to speak my mind fully, this pamphlet is of a nature which will end your future in this country....In the name of heaven wait a little while.

What disturbed Michelet, and other friends at Paris, was not Quinet's prophecy of what the German future held in store, but the bitter manner in which the pamphlet attacked the July Monarchy. Neither Michelet nor Buloz proved able to halt its publication. When the former reduced his request to that of asking that at least certain suppressions be made Quinet answered:

My friend, you who know so well the meaning of the dignity of thought, you should understand what I suffer in seeing mine arrêtée, étouffée, against declarations which I have repeated so many times.

Michelet, made "ill" by this letter, gave way and made arrangements for the publication of the pamphlet form. Buloz, feeling that printing the full text would infallibly result in government prosecution of the Revue, made important editorial modifications. On December 11 the editor had written the author that the article could not appear in the December 15 issue, since it was uncertain that he would have received Quinet's latest corrections by that time. He added:

37 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, p.61.
38 Ibid., p.64.
39 Ibid., p.65.
I should inform you that there is another reason: a meeting of your friends was held to read your work. Lerminier, Janin, and several other of our editors were present; all were frightened at the violence of your conclusion; all unanimously agreed to adjourn publication so as to give you more time for reflection; fearing that you would compromise your future, and that several passages which I will point out would destroy the effect of the whole.

Opposition had but one effect upon Quinet: it fired his energy to move forward with the attack. Early in January *de l'Allemagne et de la Révolution* appeared in print, in a modified form in *Revue des Deux mondes*, unmodified as a pamphlet.

Quinet interpreted the French past and present; he prophesied the French and German future. The interpretation developed the patriotic position taken up in his recent article; the prophecy read the future with astonishing accuracy.

Belatedly another doctrine of Herder found its way to Quinet's heart. Now he repeated that each people had its peculiar characteristic, one aspect which fixed its personality; that this unique gift dominated and reappeared at each decisive epoch in the history of a nation. The problem then was to fix


France's role. Preeminence in industry was given to England; in science to Germany; in liberty to the United States; in art to Italy. To France had been given the instinct of civilization, and the need to initiate the progress of modern society. Should this need for exterior influence fail to find expression France would descend below all of the nations surrounding her; it was her best part, her genius, her happiness, her art. Many a Frenchman ignorant of Herder had reached this conclusion. Quinet gave it a more thorough application.

For two centuries destiny had made France the instrument of civilization; Quinet wrote that this was the idea for which she existed. This thought rallied the parties of France; held French territories united; and served as a natural attraction for conquered provinces. Quinet warned the July Monarchy of these facts. France could lead or die. The Revolution, giving expression to the national genius, had moved

42 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 136-138; Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet, pp. 94-95. Monod wrote that for Michelet after 1831 "the glorious fatherland is the pilot of the vessel of humanity" (op. cit., I, 196). Haas declares that the July Revolution convinced Michelet that France led the progress of the civilized world (op. cit., p.34), which is true if properly understood.

toward the Rhine, but now that France seemed bent upon betraying her mission the force which had given her power to convert others tended to abandon her. Provinces once taken grew astonished, and in spite of themselves they again felt the attraction of the German world. Quinet insisted that internal reform could not be purchased at the price of world influence, and charged the government with just such a policy. France demanded a wider suffrage at home and wished to aid Italy to be born; the government traded suffrage for the defeat of Italian aspirations. French municipal government was reformed, and the Monarchy spent the favor thus gained by the desertion of Belgium. The nobility was sacrificed -- but in exchange for that concession made to the spirit of the country and to necessity the Rhine was abandoned and Poland betrayed. Disaster was in store, he predicted, for a government which continued on such a course. Each step the Monarchy descended in appeasement of reactionary thrones abroad would see more of the country forsake it at home. Placed between two opposed forces, reactionary Europe and national opinion, when Louis-Philippe had ceded all to

44 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 158; Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet, p.121.
one he would also have ceded all to the other, and could then no longer survive.

Quinet replied to those who defended the policy as being one which would create a European equilibrium; that was to say peace. True, but what these men called peace was war and death for France. The policy resolved itself into "pacifying the abyss in order to enter it without a raised voice and without emotion."46

Quinet arrived at his idée fixe: France, synonomous with the Revolution, had a mission, which she could fulfil or betray, to lead humanity into the bright dawn. Should she fail in this none could replace her.

The implications of this plea, and particularly of the manner in which he seemed to suggest it be carried out, may have partially escaped the disappointed office seeker, but the viewpoint it represented was not to prove a merely temporary aberration of Quinet's thought. The fact that many Frenchmen shared his understanding of the fatherland's proper role was important in the relatively prompt demise of the Monarchy. A large audience was receptive to these ideas. Quinet hoped for a more select following, but in the final analysis his talents rather than his ambition decided the part

46 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 169; Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet, pp.133-134.
he played.

The pamphlet had some success, particularly among the younger and militant element of the opposition, but attracted attention almost exclusively by its demand for an aggressive foreign policy and by its criticism of the government. The most noteworthy aspect of the pamphlet, Quinet's prophetic remarks on the German future passed unnoticed. 47

The reputation which Quinet gained as a later day Cassandra rested most firmly upon that section of the pamphlet which attracted little attention in 1832. He looked at Germany, and the scales had fallen from his eyes. The fault had not been so much that Mme. de Staël had been wrong, but that France was always something like a half-century behind reality in its opinion of her neighbor. The time had come, he wrote, to face the present and dangerous reality.

All at once Quinet seemed to realize that the enthusiasm which had characterized Germany at the beginning of the century had turned bitter. Germany had rediscovered the "sarcasm" of Luther in order to rail its own dreams and past candor. Particularly did this apply to Prussia. No longer dreams or theories, but now "unity was the profound and continual thought

47 Monod, op. cit. I, 250.
at work across the Rhine." Religion, law, liberty, despotism, every live force, he contended, each in its fashion tended toward that culmination.

Quinet conceded that at first view one might be astonished that the only popular government beyond the Rhine was almost the only one which was despotic in form. In Prussia, however, despotism was intelligent, alive and enterprising. She drew sustenance from science as other despotisms based themselves on ignorance; between her and the people there existed the secret understanding to adjourn liberty so that aggrandizement might be theirs in common. The despotism of Austria, which wished little more than to honor the past, was, indeed, a secondary menace for the rest of Germany. Prussia lacked only a man who could see and recognize her destiny.

France must realize, cried Quinet, that the Holy Alliance was no longer on the thrones of Europe. It had descended to the peoples of Germany; and if France were to allow the time, those peoples, divided since the Reformation, would rally about Prussia. France could, if she wished, continue to be lulled by the superficial dissensions and disorders, which she had done her part to nourish. They would continue to be heard yet a little while. But soon it would be seen
that the apparent struggle between liberty and despotism, that German chaos of peoples and kings which at the present it seemed impossible to unscramble intelligently, was but a mirage.

One day there would be surging at the gates of France a community of interests, of ambition, of genius, of resentments; they would rise up, this time not from thrones, but from all the might of a race of men in the face of an obsessed and ruined France. Quinet's prophecy did not halt when he foresaw a man using the instrument of Prussia to accomplish the illiberal unification of Germany. Alsace and Lorraine would, he foretold, be one of the first objectives of a national Germany. All of this passed unnoticed in 1832, but was the subject of much conversation in 1866.

48 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 142-162; Gautier, Un Prophète: Edgar Quinet, pp.100-125.
VII

FROM AHASVERUS TO AVERTISSEMENT AU PAYS: POET TO PUBLICIST

The immediate hope of favor from the government had been put aside by the publication of the January 1832 pamphlet, and Quinet remained at Certines, bitter and heartbroken. Jerome Quinet died late in that same month; father and son had never been close. Now working on Ahasvérus, Quinet stayed on in the country with his mother until the estate had been settled, then in May departed for Italy. A share in the inheritance enabled him to undertake this journey. He did not return to France until the autumn of 1833, bringing back the completed manuscript of Ahasvérus, notes for a number of articles which would appear in the Revue des Deux Mondes, and a beginning of Révolutions d'Italie.¹

The death of his father changed Quinet's economic status little. The only improvement, aside from the temporary one of a sum sufficient for him to live frugally in Italy during an extended visit, was that his mother now controlled the purse strings, and the

young man hoped for more generosity than he had known from his father. Now Minna and he might at least be permitted to live at Certines. Reconciliation between the couple took place shortly after Quinet's arrival in Italy, and in the fall of 1833 the son wrote home,

Today I ask of you, comme un suppliant, to consent to my marriage. 2

Not until late 1834 was this project realized, and then the couple resided in Germany, at the bride's request.

Quinet's mother did give her consent, and agreed that the couple might live with her at Certines, although it had certainly been their hope that she would assist them in setting up an establishment of their own at Paris. The traveller returned to Paris from Italy by way of Grunstadt, where these tentative plans were laid; going on to Paris he made arrangements for the publication of Ahasvérus. 3

Nothing was more like Quinet than that his impatience for the marriage to take place moderated now that Minna had been rewon. Remaining in Paris until March, long after the December publication of his new work, he entered into the literary and social life of the capital with apparent relish. His mode of existence,

2 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 223.
3 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, p.75.
as well as the circles he frequented, was more consistent by far with the young man he had been in the spring of 1830 than with the nascent radical of the late fall of 1831. Calmer and more confident he returned to his past. Sainte-Beuve, de Tocqueville, Montalembert, Leon Faucher, Ary Scheffer and Corcelles formed a group with whom Quinet dined almost daily during this stay in Paris. He became one of the inner circle at Mme. Recamier's salon which was favored with Chateaubriand's reading of his Mémoires d'outre-tombe.4

While Minna Moré waited at Grunstadt Quinet became a constant caller upon Miss Clarke, whom he had known before his trip to Greece, and who was a close friend of Mme. Recamier. The wealthy Englishwoman now affected a violent passion for him, before everyone; on the occasion of his third visit she presented him with her account books, so that he might take into consideration the state of her fortune, in thinking over what was in fact her offer of marriage. Quinet's sister hoped that her brother might, for the first time in his life, use common sense, but was disappointed. Minna, however, suffered after her marriage from attentions her husband continued to pay the Englishwoman, and from the manner of her rival, described by the latter's remark that

4 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, pp.227-228.
"she did not recognize" the marriage.  

The prose poem Ahasvérus (The Wandering Jew), which an admirer described as "the exact expression of the sickness which then tormented humanity," the sickness of expectation and of waiting, was poorly received. The praise of Lamartine, Heine and Liszt did something to temper Quinet's disappointment at the public reception. Also among those impressed was the Princess Marie, who made two bas-reliefs of scenes from the poem.

5 B.N., nouv. acq. franc. 11831, "Journal Quinet," VII, 323, and nouv. acq. franc. 11833, "Journal Quinet," IX, 169. We read in the former of the injustice of Minna's ridiculous jealousy because Quinet paid attention to a woman who was "eccentric, ridiculous, fantastic and ugly." Fauriel honored Miss Clarke with a constant and patient devotion, comparable to that Ballanche paid Mme. Recamier. Julius Mohl, the German orientalist, later married her. She was ten years Quinet's senior.

Blanche, Quinet's sister, was quite critical of her brother, although close to him during their youth. She remarked to the second Mme. Quinet that he lacked the paternal instinct, that preparing a home and providing for the future were not in his character; more important he was too much of a spoiled child himself to be able to bear the thought that his wife should divide her attentions between him and another person. B.N., nouv. acq. franc. 11829, "Journal Quinet," V, 293.

6 Chassin, op. cit., p.36.

7 Valès, op. cit., pp.115-119.

8 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, p.225.

9 Chassin, op. cit., p.36.
In 1828 Quinet had hoped for a poet to appear who would make use of the annals of humanity as Homer had used those of the Greeks. For unity he should choose the unity of history, and begin where Dante had concluded. Ahasvérus was Quinet's own attempt to realize that hope. Simultaneous with its publication Charles Magnin treated the work in a long essay, "Ahasvérus et de la nature du génie poétique," which appeared in the December 1, 1833 issue of Revue des Deux Mondes.10 Magnin pointed out that others, notably Goethe, had been attracted by the Ahasvérus legend, but had thought of making the hero the witness and spectator of humanity during the last eighteen centuries. Now, in a larger and more poetic conception, Quinet conceived Ahasvérus as humanity itself, the personification of humankind during the Christian era.11

10 This essay is included as an introduction in all subsequent editions of Ahasvérus, O.C., VII (Paris: Pagnerre, 1857). Magnin was one of the friends who had attempted to dissuade Quinet from publishing his January 1832 pamphlet attacking the government (B.N., nouv. acq. franc. 20792, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XII, 124-126).

11 Quinet, O.C., VII (Ahasvérus), 25. A reference to Goethe was in place. In a masterpiece of understatement, it has been said that although the nature of Ahsavérus is such as to force a comparison with Faust, "as its author lacked the robustness and serenity of Goethe, so also the work fails to achieve the fullness and universality of Goethe's creation." See Herbert J. Hunt, The Epic in Nineteenth-Century France: A Study in Heroic and Humanitarian Poetry from Les Martyrs to Les Siècles.
Magnin had assuredly been advised of his friend’s previous characterization of the *Divine Comedy*. The critic wrote that Dante’s work had been the poetic expression of orthodox Christianity, of a young and confident Catholicism; but Christianity, now in decline, or better, at the present developing along pantheistic lines, was opening up a new and vaster perspective.

In the domain of religious poetry the epic had now become possible again; thus *Ahasverus* was the expression of beliefs still in a chrysalis and on the eve of spreading their wings. 12

The prose poem was obscure and disorganized. Lanson dismissed the author’s contribution to literature with the remark:

Quinet n’a pas réussi à faire un œuvre: on peut lire ses *Lettres*. 13

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12 *Quinet, O.C., VII (Ahasverus)*, 44.

Anyone desiring to contest this conclusion, on the basis of one of Quinet's poetical works, would be forced to rest his case on Ahasvérus. It, at least, was not so marred by a prosy didactic quality as were Quinet's other ventures into this field. Quinet was no poet. He could not discipline his emotions, and was always noticeably self-conscious about the effect he wished to create by displaying them. It has been said that the chief significance of Quinet's poem is that it can claim a place along side Musset's _La Confession d'un Enfant du Siècle_ as a monument of Romantic sensibility, as a wholly characteristic blending of apocalyptic exaltation and imaginative exuberance.

This may be true. To mention the two works in opposition none the less reveals a lack of sensibility. Musset's art may not be to one's taste; he was an artist. Quinet was not. Although he received some recognition in France as a poet it was never much. Had he found greater critical or popular favor no doubt he would have continued in his efforts as a creative

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14 Hunt (op. cit., p.143) states that Quinet is "above and before all the author of Ahasvérus;" he concludes that it, and Merlin, "may be relegated to the category of literary curiosities" (ibid., p.406).

15 Ibid., p.130.
writer. Hunger for applause, not need for self expression, inspired Quinet, and no injustice was done his abilities when the indifferent reception given his poetry finally forced him back into other lines of endeavor. His lack of importance as a creative writer is suggested by the fact that he is either mentioned but not discussed, or treated as a literary curiosity, not requiring critical evaluation, in works devoted to nineteenth-century French literature. In 1833 romanticism held the stage. Quinet, as always, sought the limelight.

The relatively greater merit of Ahasvérus among Quinet's poetic works was due to its comparative artistic sincerity, and to the fact that it grew out of a deeply felt personal experience. The epic was a history of the world, of God, and of man's doubt. Recent events had shaken whatever faith Quinet had previously won.

In spite of the disorder and general confusion in the work some things were not left to obscurity. The


poet concluded that orthodox Catholicism was an exhausted force, and that organized Protestantism was incapable of replacing it. When later Quinet rebuilt his faith, and was acting as a dogmatic spokesman of his own theology he insisted that Ahasvérus had not said what it seemed to say.

Readers failed to understand the conclusion the author wished them to draw. Critics declared that Ahasvérus ended in a cry of anguish, and on a note of despair. Not so, replied Quinet. The "Epilogue" was wrongly interpreted. It was meant to be a song of renovation: from the second sepulcher of Christ a new Heaven, and a new Adam would rise. It is indeed difficult to read such a meaning into the passage in question. As Christ, the reign of His City having closed, prepared to depart, He spoke to Eternity:

Vie, vérité, mensonge, amour, haine, fiel et vinaigre mêlés ensemble dans mon ciboire, oui, l'univers, c'était moi. Et moi, je suis une ombre; je suis l'ombre qui toujours passe; je suis le pleur qui toujours coule; je suis le soupir qui toujours recommence; je suis la mort qui toujours agonise; je

18 Quinet wrote of "the black depths of German science," of its Church without priest or God, O.C., VII (Ahasvérus), p.289. Methodism was the "sect of death" (ibid., p.227).

19 Ibid., p.3. Quinet made these remarks in his introduction to the 1843 edition of the work.
suis le rien qui toujours doute de son
doute, et le néant qui toujours se renie.

Quoi! personne après moi dans la nuit?
Personne dans le jour? personne dans le
puits de l'abîme?

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Moi, je suis encore dans le puits de
l'abîme. Mon sein est celui d'une femme,
mais je ne suis pas ta mère Marie; mon
front est celui d'un devin, mais je ne suis
pas ton père Jéhovah.

LE CHRIST.

Aidez-moi à pleurer.

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Je n'ai point de larmes pour pleurer
dans ma grande paupière.

LE CHRIST.

Où les avez-vous versées?

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Mes yeux sont secs.

LE CHRIST.

Les mondes sont orphelins. Aidez-les à
ma place, quand je ne serai plus.

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Dans mon sein, je n'ai ni amour, ni haine.

LE CHRIST.

Est-ce une vierge qui vous a nourrie comme
moi?

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Personne ne m'a nourrie. Je n'ai ni père,
ni mère.
LE CHRIST.

Qui donc vous ensevelira, quand, vous aussi, vous monterez votre Calvaire?

L'ÉTERNITÉ.

Je ne monte, ni ne descends; je n'ai ni sommet, ni vallée, ni joie, ni douleur.

At last even Le Néant was dismissed, and Eternity was alone.

Ici finit le mystère d'Ahasvérus
Priez pour celui qui l'écrit.

Doubt and despair did not prevail for long.

Inserted between the second and third day of the epic was a passage of some five pages. These pages contained the source of a new faith. The spirit of the "alien philosophy" which seemed now to have failed Quinet, nevertheless prevailed throughout the work.

But something new was added. A choir addressed France:

Men of Lodi...of Marengo, where are you?
Rise from the earth; you retired too soon.
Come accomplish the task which your children lack the heart to achieve; pale as death has made you, you will yet surpass your sons....

Only the battle chargers seemed to recall; when one laid hand upon them they yet cried: Lead me to graze upon a field of glory. For response the sons of heroes led them along a path where grew a harvest of shame....

France...it is late, rise that the world may fasten your sandals. You must attend

20 Ibid., pp.400-401.
21 Ibid., p.404.
the ball to lead the dance, not of the dead
but of the living, not of the bourgeois
but of empires. Dare tread underfoot the
dust of men, of kings and of gods; in
laughter stamp under a world's regrets,
desires and terrors. The East...awaits you,
America too is ready; tomorrow and always
have revolve about you a galaxy of nations
in the harmony of your heavens....

Time presses. Remove from your assemblies
and your governments those who speak in other
terms than these, for they are your evil
enemies. If you follow councils other than
mine you will repent, public life will perish. 22

If only the sea might render back that which remained of
Napoleon as a force to aid in salvation; 23 the Emperor
who had defied the world with, "heads or tails, the
universe or Saint Helenal" 24

These pages had no context in Ahasverus; Magnin's
lengthy essay failed to note them or make the effort
to explain their meaning. If not buried in the middle
section of a lengthy religious epic of obscure meaning,
so thinly veiled an appeal for a change in rulers could
not have escaped censorship or prosecution. The im-
passioned plea was too well hidden, and those who would
have made a hero of its author failed to discover its
existence.

Quinet returned from Italy willing, almost anxious

22 Ibid., p.171-175.
23 Ibid., p.309.
24 Ibid., p.172.
for a truce. The publication of Ahasvérus increased official hostility. A literary triumph would have been ample compensation had it materialized. The result was far less.

At the end of March 1834 Quinet was called to Bourg by the illness of his sister. During this visit Certines was put in readiness for Minna, who was expected to move back with him following their marriage. Not until November did he leave for Germany. On January 13, 1835 a letter announced his marriage, but did not inform his mother that the happy event had taken place more than three weeks previously, on December 21. The couple decided to remain in Germany; life was cheap there, Ahasvérus was selling fairly well, Napoléon was almost ready for publication, and Quinet believed that arrangements were being made for him to substitute for Fauriel at the Sorbonne and that he would eventually replace him there. One by one these hopes were blasted.

At Certines in May of 1834, Quinet had informed Michelet that he had begun "something unlike any of my


27 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 237.
previous efforts; I do not know what will become of it." This was a reference to his *Napoléon*. The work should have appeared the following February, but when the first printing was entirely destroyed by fire an eleven month postponement resulted. Constant efforts were made in Paris by Quinet's friends to enable his return, but the rumor that Fauriel intended to have a substitute give his course at the Sorbonne proved false. Quinet, in his 1857 introduction to the poem *Napoléon*, ruefully admitted that the legendary hero had fallen upon him. He found himself crushed by the debris. The 1836 introduction had informed the reader

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28 Mme. Quinet, *Cinquante ans d'Amitié*, p.78.


30 Magnin wrote in April that there was still hope, B.N., nouv. acqu. franc. 20792, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XII, 128-129.

31 Quinet, O.C., VIII (Napoléon), (Paris: Pagnerre, 1857), 139. This poem was suppressed by Mme. Quinet in all subsequent editions of Quinet's works. Vales found partial excuse for this contribution to the Napoleonic legend in the fact that it was written amidst the gallophobe passions prevalent in Germany in 1835 (op. cit., pp.119-120); this has the weakness of ignoring that the work was almost ready for publication when Quinet left Gertines in November 1834. Sainte-Beuve later biting remarked that Quinet's 1836 work was one such effort which did not contribute to the legend, for the simple reason that it had not been read. See his *Portraits Contemporains* (5 vols.; Paris: Michel Lévy, 1869); II, 326; the critic prided himself that in 1836 he had viewed with reserve the effort to fashion the legend, but smiled to note, that in frankly accepting the
that the work was the second in a trilogy. *Ahasverus* had represented the poetry of the past, the general history of humanity. *Napoléon* belonged to the poetry of the present, and had for subject the individual, the hero, Napoleon. The author promised a third work "which would complete the sense of the first two;" this was a reference to *Prométhée*, which had now been in progress for some time.32

The purpose Quinet announced was, however, more than simply to express the spirit of the present. He wished to commemorate the dead of Waterloo. Often he had shared the thought, which occurred so frequently to those of his generation, that it would have been best had one been able to die in the battles of 1814 and 1815. Humanity's cause itself had been at stake. Recent events, he wrote, had confirmed his regret. Unfortunately, he had been too young, but could now at least pay reverence to those who had died.33 By

Second Empire it was not he who had suffered from the outcome. Quinet came to detest Sainte-Beuve, stating once that the latter had wished to be the Grimm of his own time, and although Grimm's moral character had not been high, it had been a hundred times superior to that of Sainte-Beuve -- the latter was "un Grimm putréfié, one of the most perverse souls on the face of the earth" (B.N., nouv. acq. franc. 11831, "Journal Quinet," VII,112).

32 Quinet, O.C., VIII (Napoléon), 141.

33 Ibid., p.141.
these words Quinet appropriated a legend which he did little to create. He was beginning to put the pieces together, to be consistent in all things with his patriotism. Sainte-Beuve wrote in 1836 that the dominant idea of the poet, "that which perhaps best inspires him," was his sensitivity to the double wound of 1814 and 1815.\textsuperscript{34} Certainly this indicated that the author had been successful in communicating the essential part of his message.

Quinet explained and defended his choice of a hero. Napoleon was the personification of the latest phase in man's development, the democratic era. Previous French history he divided into three epochs, each of which had a hero who personified it (Arthur: 

\textit{romanticism}; Charlemagne: \textit{feudalism}; Louis XIV: \textit{monarchy}). Napoleon fulfilled the first condition of taking his place beside the heroes of the past by absorbing within himself the spirit and the aspirations of an entire generation. His role was to represent the development of the individual in modern times. In the France of the future the wars of the Revolution and of the Empire would form the heroic age of democracy and Napoleon became the hero of popular

\textsuperscript{34} Sainte-Beuve, \textit{op. cit.}, II, 323.
poetry. All of this was, of course, commonplace. Quinet's generation, wrote Brandes, thought of the Emperor als das personifizierte Volk. Quinet was not yet prepared to define or explain "democracy," but his use of the word may be clarified by comparing the viewpoint expressed above with that of Mickiewicz. The Polish poet served the legend with a more persistent loyalty.

At Vilna in 1812, Adam Mickiewicz, then fourteen, conceived a love to which he was true until the end of his life for the liberator who crossed the Nieman in June. A new messiah had appeared, leading a chosen people in a crusade to free all nationalities from their oppressors. A Pole, in time Mickiewicz realized that not the French, but the Poles (later all Slavs), were the people chosen to revive the laws of justice and liberty in the world. In France the Jacobin Republican made his peace with the Napoleonic tradition, so that he might put it to use in the struggle against the existing social order. Quinet in 1836 resembled Mickiewicz, in that he was still largely indifferent to the fight between aristocrats and democrats. Mickiewicz did not wish to battle for a Poland of

35 Quinet, O.C., VIII (Napoléon), 156-158.
the "left" or of the "right," but to free the "nation;" so in 1836 Quinet had in mind the "freeing" of France.

Quinet is remembered particularly for the violence of his statements on the invasions of 1814 and 1815 which first appeared in this work. All things might pass in time,

But not tomorrow, not ever, will the footstep of the Stranger upon the rock efface or change. There was another and important innovation, his treatment of England. This reversal was as sudden as it was complete. He had now discarded his love for England. Now suddenly, he could not bear the thought of Napoleon at Saint Helena:

This is why I hate you, vile and vile England; Land of deceit, ship of misery....

To efface the shame written on your name.... Bathe day and night in the seas of Atlas, The entire ocean will not cleanse you.

Your gold glitters in the sun, your purse is full. Your thought, your genius, a void. Your mask is Liberty. Your name is Slave... 39

His subject and the concessions Quinet made (as in the case of England) to popular prejudice, failed to add up to success. The fault did not lie with circum-

37 Marie Czapska, La Vie de Mickiewicz (Paris: Plon, 1931), pp. 11-12 and 127. Quinet met Mickiewicz in December 1837 (Lettres à sa Mère, II, 289).

38 Quinet, O.C., VIII (Napoléon), 291-292.

39 Ibid., 309-310.
stances, but with the dullness of the work. The young author tentatively, and on the wrong foot, reapproached the democratic-republican element. In 1832 he had quickly thought better of breaking off all association with the official and semi-official world. After the January pamphlet nothing of a like nature followed. In 1836 he did not persist in the face of an indifferent reception at the hands of the party which attracted him ever more strongly.

Nagged by financial worries and unable to repay old personal debts involving small sums, Quinet remained in Germany during 1836, hoping that friends in Paris might finally have the influence to see him appointed to the University. Still he insisted on his own terms, and when Michelet prevailed upon Buloz to make an offer which would have enabled Quinet and his wife to move to Paris it was refused. Michelet wrote in October 1836:

40 Hunt, in his most satisfactory characterization of one of Quinet's works, wrote, "Napoleon's historical greatness is scarcely revealed, and his legendary glamour is almost completely absent. So the author fails in his purpose." (Op. cit., p.133). This author does not grasp the sense of Quinet's 1857 introduction to the poem (ibid., p.131).

Why won't you accept, for several months at least, the offers Buloz had made: It would draw you out of that solitude in which it frightens me to see you remain. It is not good that a man should be alone.

Quinet had done no writing for Buloz since February 1834, out of pique at editorial changes made without his permission. In October of 1836 his name appeared in the pages of the Revue des Deux Mondes for the first time in nearly three years. Depressed at the failure of his more ambitious works to batter down the walls of the indifference which seemed to surround him, he took up the writing of a series of articles on Germany and Italy with a heavy heart. Life seemed to be passing him by. So little had been accomplished, and to supply the type of thing Buloz wanted from him seemed a surrender of his better self. He could not bring himself to move to Paris, where he would be dependent upon turning out a regular stream of what amounted to hack work. Unhappy in Germany, he stayed on, completing his trilogy by continuing to work on Prométhée.

During the summer of 1837 his mother agreed to move to Paris, and to pool her resources with her son


44 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.92-93.
and daughter-in-law. Michelet responded to the news by declaring that all of Quinet's friends would owe his mother a great debt if she should find the means and the heart to allow him to return. In October, or November, Quinet left Germany and moved to Paris, in order to be present during the printing of *Prométhée*. Minna, rather unwillingly, spent the winter at Nice with her mother and sister-in-law. Her husband was alone in Paris until March, when he left briefly to meet his family on their return from Italy. Back in Paris, he was alone again, for Minna now visited Germany.

That winter in Paris was a time of decision for Quinet. The previous spring he had written to his mother that Lamennais's journal (*le Monde*) was at his disposal;


46 *Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié*, p. 97; Quinet, *Lettres à sa Mère*, II, 279-310. The health of Quinet's sister necessitated this change in plans. A letter from him to Minna during this separation, which chides her for weeping about money, and their dependence upon others, would seem to indicate that the mother could not see her way to supporting the couple in Paris alone, and insisted that Minna accompany her to Nice (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20800, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XX, 309-310). This letter is dated October 23, 1837; another, dated October 9, 1837 (*ibid.*, 303), gives the same details as a letter dated "November" in *Lettres à sa Mère*, II, 284. It would appear that Quinet moved to Paris in October, not in November as *Mme. Quinet* related.
whether or not he would substitute for Fauriel at the Sorbonne depended upon his own decision. In the latter instance he was either misinformed or grossly exaggerated the truth. What was important was his admission that he did not know in what degree the two activities open to him could be conciliated. All bridges would be burned if he joined Lamennais. Although when he returned to Paris the ex-priest seemed to him one of two persons "who had remained at their post, and consistent with themselves," Quinet hesitated and did not leap. He turned along another path. Certainly the pressure to do so was great. Progressively unhappy in the German atmosphere, he was hounded by financial insecurity, and his wife was miserable. All could be solved by the compromise of an idea.

The schedule of his social activities that winter was strenuous: Tuesday the Princess Belgiojoso; Wednesday, Mme. Hoche; Thursday, Miss Clarke; Friday, Odilon Barrot; Saturday, Lamartine; Sunday, Mme. Recamier. More important in winning him the University chair he sought was the nature of the work he published. For the first time Quinet found favor in official circles. The cross

47 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 265.
48 Ibid., II, 282.
49 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp. 89, 90, 91, and 94.
of the Legion of Honor was a first result. Above all else was the degree to which the publication contributed to his nomination to a chair at Lyon. \(^{50}\) Prométhée appeared in March 1838; then in December he published an article critical of Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. These two works proceeded and seem to have been decisive in his finally being appointed to a chair within the University of France.

Whatever the influence of external considerations, one would be hard pressed to decide that they dominated the conception of Prométhée. Quinet wrote, in 1836, that he was struggling for a greater degree of simplicity and clarity in expression than had yet characterized his work. \(^{51}\) Napoléon was largely free from his previous pantheism, and gave to the human personality a new dignity and place in history. Predicting the imminent disappearance of Catholicism in its present form, Quinet had not yet strongly attacked the Church. He had written in 1836, of his visit to Rome:

> They are fortunate, I cried to myself leaving Rome that morning, still overwhelmed by the impression of the eve. Fortunate are those who believe, if mine be


\(^{51}\) Quinet, *Lettres à sa Mère*, II, 249.
the feelings of those who doubt. Is it possible that such an institution has died? Is it made of the faith of our ancestors? Have I seen but a phantom, a ruin upon a ruin, or is it my heart which is dead?

In 1838 he wrote to Mickiewicz, who was then an ardent Catholic:

Your faith, which I would wish to share, attracts me. It lifts me above this unhappy earth. You have in this a decided advantage over me....Time passes and I yet know nothing of that which must be known. Dear friend, aid me to escape, or to bear that ignorance.

These statements suggest a less positive position than in later life he wished to recall. Monod wrote of Quinet's 1838 reaction against the excesses of symbolism and pantheism; the reaction was only against the "excess." At Certines, in May, Quinet was one of those who spoke out in defense of Lamartine's Chute d'un Ange, a work disturbing to the orthodox. He visited Saint-Point "to talk pantheism and symbolism." What was apparent in Prométhée was a desire to appear tolerant and undogmatic, and a slightly veiled plea for sympathy for the author as he searched a way out of darkness.

52 Quinet, O.C., VI (Allemagne et Italie), 327.
54 Monod, op. cit., II, 103.
Quinet read parts of the manuscript at the Abbaye aux Boix in the fall of 1837. Chateaubriand and Ballanche were among those present. Ballanche, who also crossed Quinet's personal path through Michelet, has been noted for the similarities which existed between his and Quinet's thought. Prométhée was an example of their parallel views. It was about this time, in 1837, that Ballanche defined his own view of progressive Christianity. He believed Christianity to be progressive, in the sense that in measure as human faculties became more able to comprehend and more refined in their judgments, man approached nearer to a full comprehension of dogma. But dogma (or truth), from the time of creation, had contained all that entered successively into the human intelligence.

Ballanche applied this in a manner which, as we have noted, would permit Quinet to believe himself a Catholic if Ballanche were. Laprade, and a whole group of Catholic liberals at Lyon, soon received Quinet with warm enthusiasm, a group formerly directly influenced

56 Herriot, op. cit., p.341; Quinet Lettres à sa Mère, II, 284.

57 Ballanche and Lamennais were among the visitors in fairly regular attendance at the Michelets' between 1830 and 1837 (Monod, op. cit., II, 243).

58 Herriot, op. cit., p.342.
by Ballanche. The Catholic philosopher had also been intrigued by the Prometheus legend, and had written that "Prometheus is man forming himself by the energy of his thought." For Ballanche, as for Quinet, he symbolized the struggle of the human will against fate, which was all of history.\textsuperscript{59}

Vales judged Prométhée to be the most eloquent protestation ever written against the tendency toward materialism, and the pretensions of modern science, and that never were modern democrats more seriously invited to raise their sights.\textsuperscript{60} It is difficult to agree with this judgment. What was important in 1838, in so far as his advancement to the University was concerned, was to be found in Quinet's introduction to the work. He replied to the orthodox critic.

If he had been fortunate enough to have retained the faith to which he had been born, "without any admixture of reflection," Quinet confessed he would not then have been entering into a treatment of the matters inherent in his subject. If it were impious to think that the Christianity of the nineteenth century was different from that of the twelfth, then the author confessed that he merited the accusation, "from which

\textsuperscript{59} Ballanche, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 88.

\textsuperscript{60} Vales, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.126-127.
his obscurity had not always defended him." If, on the other hand,

to be religious was to recognize the presence of the infinite in all things; if a believer was one who kept the cult of the dead, and faith in the eternal resurrection; if it was to be a friend of God to search Him, to call Him; to recognize Him...in each moment of history and in all nature, without confounding Him with either the one or the other

then, Quinet declared, he was the very opposite of impious.61

No new creed was offered. Quinet presumed that his reader sensed the existing void, and could not escape realizing that the spirit of the century had shaken the confidence of his generation in the authority of the past. He did not wish to destroy but sought a path to healing and belief.62 Each age and each people formed their conception of God and the eternal. Prometheus, then, was the personification of that constant striving for a more perfect understanding and expression of what was highest.63

Quinet's optimism had returned. The history of successive religions was a record of man's painfully won, but ever greater, mastery over matter. Hard

61 Quinet, O.C., VIII (Prométhée), xxii.
62 Ibid., xx.
63 Ibid., xii-xiii, xvi and 75.
gained and partial victories led to an ever greater liberty and freedom of man's will. Each advance created the conditions for yet further progress. All of this was repetitious, and a return to the days of his enthusiasm for Cousin. Patriotism, in time, greatly modified Quinet's religion, and the hints of that future development were already clear, particularly in Ahasvérus. In Prométhée, however, the elements to which he more or less consistently adhered prevailed. The note of personal despair which ran through Ahasvérus was never in evidence again. Not that Quinet did not frequently experience periods of severe depression, but in the role he later played he believed it improper to confess them to the world.

The sweet reasonableness of Prométhée could only please. It contained no demand that the Rhine be seized, no violence, no bitterness, no veiled attack on an apostate eclecticism. When the work was successfully launched, Quinet, in April, began his l'Examen de la vie de Jésus. He now reserved violent condemnation for "excessive pantheism." Evidence of his insincerity is at no other time in Quinet's career quite so overwhelmingly as on this occasion. Unorthodoxy had, now for eight years, been an important factor in his failure to receive the appointment which would have enabled him to settle in France with a comfortable, assured future.
Frequently he had written in a fashion calculated to irritate the government, or to make difficult the task of friends who were anxious to help him, but now the most orthodox piece ever to come from his pen appeared opportunely. His appointment to a chair at Lyon came within a matter of months of its December publication.\(^64\) That after Prométhée the further step was necessary is not certain.

Michelet was elected to the College of France in February 1838, in the face of strong opposition within the University, but with the support of Salvandy, the Minister of Public Instruction.\(^65\) Michelet was at this

\(^{64}\) Mme. Quinet, Àvant l'Exil, pp.267-273.

\(^{65}\) Monod, op. cit., I, 363. Monod wrote that Salvandy, who admittedly was very hostile to the advanced party during his second ministry (February 1, 1845 to February 24, 1848), was very liberal during his first (April 15, 1837 to May 13, 1839). Monod was led to this conclusion by his thesis that Michelet belonged to the "advanced party" in 1838. Salvandy must be made "liberal" because he supported Michelet. Salvandy during his first term, like the government of which he was a part, sought clerical favor (See Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., III, 434 for a Catholic-Royalist statement of the fact). Charlety wrote of Salvandy's 1845 appointment, when he replaced Villemain, that "his benevolence for the clergy and his indifference with regard to the University were well known" (La Monarchie de Juillet: 1830-1848, V, 341). See also Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., V, 547. Mme. Quinet fell into a more deliberate error; she had Villemain become Minister of Public Instruction in September of 1838, eight months before he did so in fact, so that her husband would not seem to have been appointed by Salvandy, whose clericalism she justly saw no reason to doubt at any time of his career (Cinquante ans d'Amitié, p.100).
time more moderate in his opinions than Quinet. In June of 1838 Quinet, who was also in Paris, was informed by his friend that a faculty was being made up for Lyon, and that it could probably be arranged for him to have the chair of literature if he wished it. Michelet and the Princess Clemintine (the latter had recently met Quinet) had both spoken to Salvandy, and the Minister seemed well disposed to the idea.

Before such an appointment it was necessary for Quinet to go through the formality of acquiring the necessary degrees. He decided to take them at Strasbourg, and in August received his license. Members of the faculty there requested that he give up the Lyon project in favor of remaining with them. What opposition still remained at Paris had to be silenced before either choice could be assured, and in December the Revue des Deux Mondes published his attack upon Strauss.

The Life of Jesus had not then been translated into French; in attacking it Quinet found, if he did

66 He was the tutor of Louis-Philippe's daughter, the Princess Clemintine.
68 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 311-312.
not seek, orthodox approval for his defense of the real existence of the historical Jesus. Part hypocrisy, there was present in this article a modification of his past thought which may be said to have been permanent. To this aspect Quinet pointed with pride in his 1857 introduction, while observing a sage silence with respect to others. He then recalled that in 1838 a whole school of thought had regarded the anonymous action of the masses as the sole reality; the false view that strong individuals could be abolished with impunity had been widely held. He implied that his criticism of Strauss had been essentially no more than a blow struck against that false doctrine. True, this had been the honest and most important part of the article. The essay had marked a modification of his own past thought, and in this sense was consistent with Quinet's shift to a philosophy which gave the individual free-will greater force and decisiveness.

He concentrated his attention on the tendency of stripping the individual in order to enrich humanity. He was not cautious in his attack. Quinet professed to be persuaded that the personal Jesus was so much a part of the edifice of eighteen centuries of history, that

If He were removed every other part of that past would crumble to dust. To be logical one would inevitably be forced to admit a humanity without people, or peoples without individuals, generations of ideas without forms, who died, were reborn, and died again at the foot of an invisible cross where the impersonal Christ of pantheism hung eternally suspended. Though exaggerated, this represented what had become a sincere view. What was objectionable was something else. Renan wrote that nothing in the Strauss work could justify "the strange and absurd calumny by which one attempted to discredit it among superficial persons." Strauss did not deny the existence of Jesus, but on each page of his book implied his existence.

The level of Quinet's criticism is apparent from this: "Having disputed Moses the Decalogue, it is natural that one comes to dispute Jesus Christ the Sermon in the Mount." Discussing in several pages the German intellectual climate before the appearance of the work in question, Quinet was non-committal and ironical, and, in a manner which suggested that he was

71 Ibid., 337-338.


73 Quinet, O.C., III (*Examen de la Vie de Jésus*), 317-318.
a Catholic addressing a Catholic audience, he simply revealed the damning record. He then stated:

For fifteen pages, and in the same fashion as if it were a matter of an interpolation of Homer or Pindar, the author disputes Christ his cradle and his tomb. What was most objectionable, apart from the standard of historical scholarship it implied (and Quinet pretended to competence in such matters), was that this was inconsistent with anything he had ever written before, and with anything he ever wrote in the future. Coincidence can hardly explain the appropriate moment of its publication.

Quinet was at Heidelberg preparing for his doctorate when this article appeared. That same month, little enthusiastic at spending one or two years anywhere in the provinces, Quinet followed Michelet's advice and chose Lyon over Strasbourg. He did so only in the hope that the time before he could move on to Paris would be very short. In January 1839 he received his

74 Ibid., 287-312.
75 Ibid., 316.
76 Quinet had known Lyon in his youth. He wrote to a friend living there in 1836: "How do you find it possible to...[pursue your studies] in the midst of that lamentable city..." (Westphal, op. cit., p.45).
doctorate from the university at Strasbourg.  His final appointment he owed mainly to Villemain and to Michelet, but Quinet was as dissatisfied as grateful as he travelled to Lyon. He began his first course in April.

Michelet wrote, "Il faut plaire à Lyon pour n'y pas rester." Quinet had immediate success; standing audiences of between 1,000 and 1,500 flocked to hear him speak. But no enthusiasm he might inspire could compensate for that immense distance between Lyon and Paris, a distance he did not measure in miles or in hours. As if an exile at Lyon, from the outset Quinet could not restrain his impatience to leave. Mme. Quinet wrote that he was restless "to meet his true destiny which awaited him at the College of France." Michelet advised that a wise moderation at Lyon would be the surest path by which to arrive at Paris.


78 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, p.102.


81 Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, p.102.
Quinet the poet and philosopher and Quinet the publicist were not yet one. The patriot was an intruder in Ahasvérus, hardly present at all in Prométhée; when in 1839 the serious life of the professor was in prospect, with a University position won, but with Paris still the goal, Quinet made a generous settlement with a past from which he had once seemed to separate in bitterness and rage.

The publicist, writing in the fall of 1836, had assailed the principles of the Holy Alliance, and concluded that the self-respect of nations fluctuated in inverse proportion as the right of armed intervention in the affairs of another nation was established. The enforcement of such a principle might, indeed, repress tumult and stamp out sedition. A premature cosmopolitanism might be instituted. "Premature" was a concession to the logic of his premises, for in Quinet's own synthesis cosmopolitanism must one day possess the future. But in some unexplained fashion that time was not yet. Later Quinet solved the difficulty by cutting away all vestiges of his former cosmopolitanism, but in 1836, and 1839, was still embarrassed by it.

In the former year it seemed to Quinet that loyalty to any supra-national authority was a violation "of all that our ancestors honored." By abandoning
the idea of the nation one degraded the fatherland. Love for France would never revive if the maxims of political cosmopolitanism were not opposed by an iron curtain. Unless patriotism were retained as a primary civic virtue, for at least another century, Western and continental Europe would become nothing more than a bourgeois rabble, ready to become the prey of the first despot who wished to establish his authority over it.82 Philosophy was here bent to the demands of a strong emotion, or a popular prejudice. In attacking the Holy Alliance Quinet was led to see new virtues in patriotism. Without the cult of the nation, modern societies lacked the cohesion necessary to healthy political life. There was no originality in this, but Quinet took some time to fit it into his "philosophy." In 1839 he had not done so. His immediate aim then was to be promoted to Paris, which made the problem a difficult one. Loud patriotism was associated with opposition to the government.

At Lyon on April 10, 1839 Quinet gave the address which served as a point of departure for his course. The expression "foreign literature," included in the title of his chair, was, he said, a poor one. He

82 Quinet, O.C., VI (Mélanges, "Le Champ de Bataille de Waterloo"), 389.
asked how "foreign" could sensibly be applied to
the spectacle of the passions, or to the
sorrows and beliefs of man as represented
by the human word. As if all men were not
citizens in the same city of beauty, art
and immortality!

Quinet pleaded for a disappearance of national
provincialism, like the past disappearance of local
provincialism in France. Paris was indeed a magnet to
bring these words to his lips, but he did not quite
return to 1828. The patriot broke through when he
made one of the defenses for the study of "foreign"
literature the fact that ignorance may lead to an
exclusive domination of one people by another. Although
not naming Mme. de Staël, Quinet declared that had the
French known German philosophy directly they could never
have been duped, as they had been, by an enthusiastic
secondary account. 84

France, he told his listeners, was called by the
nature of her geographic position to understand all
other peoples. She could enrich herself by taking
what was of value in each new foreign development,
"without ever letting herself be absorbed by any." 85

83 Quinet, O.C., I ("Unité morale des Peuples
84 Ibid., 404-405.
85 Ibid., 406.
The thought of Quinet's early formative period thus continued to give evidence of great staying power. If, however, much was borrowed here from his 1828 statement, and if the speaker did not seem the man seething under the treaties of 1815, his emphasis had changed and the conclusion been modified. Soon he shored up the logical structure and brought nationalism within the fold of his all embracing religion.

The course at Lyon, later entitled Le Génie des Religions, developed Vico's premise that God was present in the pre-Christian religions; as did Ballanche, Quinet classed this thought as possibly the greatest of the Neapolitan's contributions. In so far as this work was a further step in Quinet's own development, his announced purpose to reverse the popular view that religious dogma was an outgrowth of, or was formed by, political institutions was most significant. An Hegelian idealism was apparent for the first time.

Christianity existed in Bethlehem before modern institutions, and the latter were but an outgrowth of that religious faith; so too, the Koran preceded the

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caliphate.\(^{87}\) The history of religions formed the
genealogy of the Eternal.\(^{88}\) From birth a unique and
ineffaceable character was apparent in the features,
the heart, and the intellectual striving of each race.
From birth to death each people retained on its brow
the mask of its god.\(^{89}\) This divine instinct alone
made history comprehensible; history was determined
by it.\(^{90}\) It was in a people's god that one found the
truest expression of their spirit and genius, and
political and artistic forms were simply an outgrowth
of this Providential inspiration. The Hebrews were an
example: their God was free! He had the power and the
will to act. In His divine personality the miracle of
liberty dawned.\(^{91}\)

Quinet later developed this philosophy of history,
and determined exactly the place of France within its
structure. The thought was a permanent addition. The
second edition of the work appeared in 1850,\(^{92}\) with
an additional chapter on Rome, an example which seemed

\(^{87}\) Ibid., 5-6.
\(^{88}\) Ibid., 107.
\(^{89}\) Ibid., 22.
\(^{90}\) Ibid., 28.
\(^{91}\) Ibid., 280.
\(^{92}\) Ibid., 7.
to confirm his argument. Also in this chapter, Quinet wrote that the Romans failed to destroy foreign religions because they were ignorant of the art of "moral extermination, the only one which kills." Their materialism and their indifference deceived them. This idea was foreign to the 1839 course, and to the 1841 first edition of the work.

Frequent examples may be found where Quinet allowed materialistic forces to have an influence which, logically, he should have denied them. In view of his announced purpose, it was almost ridiculous for him to explain the different conceptions of God as resulting from the surrounding physical geography. He wrote that the more powerful nature is, the greater will be the reaction of man in the direction of asceticism; the increasing control over natural forces in the modern world was thus his explanation for the weakening of the ascetic ideal. Whatever the merit of this it had little to do with races providentially marked to pursue and to realize a particular conception of God. A logical and carefully constructed philosophical system, like a sound theory of historical and cultural evolution,

93 Ibid., 375.
94 Ibid., 14-21.
95 Ibid., 164.
was not within the powers of his gifts.

In view of what was soon to follow, the absence of a strongly expressed anti-Catholic sentiment was a noteworthy feature of Quinet's lectures at Lyon. Among those in his audience were Victor Laprade and Saint-René Taillandier. The former became not only "an ardent disciple, but an enthusiastic friend." The younger man was a member of a group inspired by a liberal and humanitarian Catholicism which had centered at Lyon since 1835. At the example, or at the instigation of Quinet, Laprade now devoted himself to the study of Ballanche.96 When Quinet abandoned Lyon, in 1840, he offered the suppletance to this disciple; and when, in 1846, he was forced to renounce his course at the College of France, it was again Laprade whom he proposed to replace him.97 No uncompromising anti-Catholic could ever have attracted Laprade. After 1851 Quinet was bitter that the former pupil, whom he felt he had launched in both his literary life and in his professorship, never mentioned the debt either in print or in his courses.98 Laprade returned


97 Ibid., 123.

to a stricter orthodoxy; Quinet became anti-Catholic. The silence of the former had some merit.

Saint-René Taillandier was turned in the direction of Germany by Quinet; their relationship was undisturbed by 1851. That Quinet did not emphasize his break with the German tradition at Lyon is suggested by a letter sent to him by the young disciple in July 1840, from Heidelberg, in which he spoke of his trip as a "pious pilgrimage to these places which are full of you....It is Paradise on earth."100

Popularity at Lyon in no manner lessened the professor's passion to depart for Paris. In looking back at this episode Quinet said that he had not been fitted to teach, and that only by overcoming his true character had he been able to speak in public. The knowledge that the spoken word was an ephemeral thing had always been a conscious and painful thought.101

With the beginning of the 1839 summer vacation Quinet was at once off to Paris, to campaign for advancement. The always friendly Vilemain, Minister


100 B. N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20797, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XVII, 60.

of Public Instruction since May, promised his best. Michelet did all in his power to influence Fauriel not to give his course, so that Quinet might substitute for him. In autumn the younger professor returned to Lyon, dispirited and angry. The following March Fauriel wrote to him that he had only then learned of Quinet's anger that the substitution had not materialized; never for a moment had he considered not teaching that year. The Sorbonne professor added, "I feel as deeply as yourself how tiresome is your present position; my sympathy is heartfelt." Quinet did not repay such coin with gratitude.

On March 1, 1840 hope was further confounded by the replacement of Villemain by Cousin in the Ministry of Public Instruction. Leon Faucher, whose efforts on Quinet's behalf in this matter were of long standing, took the rather futile step of approaching Cousin for support. He then wrote to his friend at Lyon to find just how definite a commitment Villemain had made, and to ask if Quinet thought that there was any purpose in


103 A man of a very different type than Quinet was picked by Fauriel when he did choose to retire. Ozanam took his place at the Sorbonne in 1841, first as a substitute. In 1844 he became Fauriel's successor. Calvet, op. cit., VIII, 315.
revisiting Cousin with a statement of such promises. 104 Effort was, in fact, futile until such time as Cousin was replaced; but in May Quinet left Lyon, with small intention to return. By mid-summer he had made the decision to remain in Paris, despite the unfortunate detail that he had not been called there, that the step meant desertion of his post at Lyon. Mother, son and wife now finally shared a domicile. 105 More swiftly than had been foreseen Villemain was back in office, 106 deposing Cousin in October. Other events had been at work, however.

The insurrection of May 12, 1839, dispersed before nightfall, increased the power and the prestige of the revolutionary parties, and in spite of the failure marked a rebirth of the republican Left. In months that followed the government held rigidly firm before a growing demand for electoral reform, remained silent before energetic attacks upon the personal power of the king, and admitted its indifference to social questions which increasingly agitated the working class. 107 In January

105 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 339.
106 Monod, op. cit., II, 99; Debidour, op. cit., p. 446.
107 Lavisse, op. cit., V, 158-165; Weill, Histoire du Parti Républicain, pp. 139-141.
1840 Lamartine voiced the fear of conservatives that Napoleon's ashes be returned in view of the prevailing temper of public opinion. Heine noted in May that Napoleon was the unceasing topic of conversation: "Toujours lui! Napoleon und wieder Napoleon!"108 Later he wrote that the radical party in France, fearing the definite establishment of the Orleans dynasty, and the assurance to it of a long future, wished for a war so that the opportunity for a change in regime might be increased.109

During the summer of 1840 Thiers, overestimating the power of Mehmet Ali, and seeking to strengthen his political position at home by victories in diplomacy, was duped and isolated by Palmerston. On July 15, 1840 the Treaty of London was signed. The bluff had been called; France could only throw in her hand, for in August Mehmet Ali met defeat. Thiers had defied Britain in the Middle East by encouragement and support of the Egyptian leader. The presumption of his military strength as an ally had given France this courage. Palmerston's disdain was justified by his defeat. In France the announcement of the treaty raised indignation to fever pitch. It seemed a new

108 Heine, op. cit., VI, 177.
109 Ibid., VI, 240-241.
treaty of Chaumont. Thiers called up three year's classes, and war was in sight. But, after the defeat of Mehemet Ali, only the Left and the legitimists continued to demand it, more in the hope of defeat than of victory.110

Lyon had been unbearable. In the exciting summer and fall of 1840 the College of France was less and less the goal Quinet pursued. As in 1831 his patience was finally exhausted. The event in July made it seem impossible to return to Lyon, and unimportant whether or not he were given a chair in Greek literature at Paris. On October 14 his pamphlet 1815 et 1840 was on the stalls.111 At that moment he was searching for collaborators for "un journal de combat;" capital to publish for four months would be sufficient, for decision would be soon. Already he was discouraged; war, he recognized, was but a feeble hope.112 Thiers fell within two weeks. Quinet worked against time.

If the French Revolution was vanquished in 1815, public law, founded on the treaties of Vienna, is the legal, palpable, and permanent brand of that defeat. Under the yoke of treaties written with the blood of Waterloo, we remain legally for the world the vanquished of Waterloo....

110 Lavisse, op. cit., V, 165-173.
111 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 333.
112 Ibid., II, 335.
For France it is not so much a matter of conquering as of freeing herself, not of expanding, but of repairing; she should make no movement which does not lead toward deliverance from the public right of invasions. Anything in that direction is good, all that is contrary is bad. Monarchy, republic, juste-milieu, democracy, bourgeoisie, aristocracy, men of theory, practical men, men of politics, on this matter all have the same interest; it is the point upon which their reconciliation is forced; for none of our parties will be anything but a shadow for as long as there is but a shadow France. Our internal debate will be sterile for the world and for ourselves, for exactly as long as, in any manner whatsoever, by diplomacy, or by war we have not risen from the sepulcher of Waterloo.

The pamphleteer found it impossible to forgive the men who had ruled France since 1830 the blindness which had prevented their seeing the dangers which lay in the military feebleness of the State. Troubled by shouting in the street they had ceased to see Europe. The Revolution had surrendered its sword in 1815. It had been the belief that she might retake it in 1830, but it had not happened that way at all. 114

The day following the appearance of this pamphlet an attempt upon the life of Louis-Philippe failed. Thiers had been kept in office so that he might assume the unpopularity of accepting peace, then, in the reaction following the assassination attempt, it was

113 Quinet, 1815 et 1840, pp.206-222.
114 Ibid., pp.204-205.
possible to drop him. Cousin left office with the Thiers government; Villemain came back as Minister of Public Instruction. Quinet seemed hardly to notice. On the last day of October he wrote: "We are not going to have war. The king does not wish it; he may well come to repent it."115

The dismissal of the Thiers ministry, in late October 1840, is a dividing point in the history of the July Monarchy. The policies and politics of the July Revolution had now met with total defeat. Peace and the personal power of the king were established as policy and fact; anti-clericalism had long since died out. The resurgence of a warrior nationalism, attacks upon the irresponsible power of the monarch, and anti-clericalism, all in the form of a bitter opposition to a regime thought to have been established upon these principles, now occurred. In that resurgence Quinet played a leading part; first by appeals for aggression. He wrote to his mother -- on the day Villemain took office -- that he was encouraged by the stir which his political pamphlet had caused. A new road seemed open to him.116 France had been humiliated and Edgar Quinet "translated that national

115 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 344.
116 Ibid., II, 341.
A second edition of *1815 et 1840* was prepared and appeared in the middle of November, with a new introduction. Quinet wrote of the recently formed ministry:

A coalition similar to that of 1815 forms against France in 1840. Who, do you think, is going to cover France against this new aggression. The man who was the agent, the defender and the friend of the coalition of 1815.

The ashes of Napoleon are returned to France; they approach, they are about to enter the port. Who, do you think, in the name of all, is going to be the first to receive and salute those remains: The man who was at Ghent while Napoleon was at Waterloo. Ah! if such is the hospitality which you prepare for those ashes they were better upon their rock; pray to heaven that should they touch a debased or enemy France that at that moment they be swallowed by the sea.

Guizot remained in the government until February 1848. Quinet never moderated this statement. The new edition of the pamphlet spelled out what had been left in partial obscurity the month before. The Rhine was an immediate objective of France, the first requirement of her recovery. Germany was invited to accept this peaceably, and to pursue her true destiny in the East; for Quinet meant not to be unfriendly. Germany and France should join hands at the expense of Russia and

England; but first Germany must disgorge the left bank of the Rhine. Thus peace depended upon Germany's desire for it.119

The ashes of Bonaparte were cold. The government survived their return, and in late December Quinet shifted his appeal. Foolish to demand a war now hopelessly impossible, another popular demand was championed; the democrat now emerged. The *Avertissement au pays* was Quinet's first piece of writing in which he, in any detail, discussed the French political problem. He came forward in this field to state that democratic suffrage has become a prerequisite of a sound national spirit.

Casimir Périer epitomized for him the spirit which had divided France in two opposing camps. Since his ministry consistent policy had been to heighten the barrier between the people and bourgeoisie; defection had become the name for bourgeois-led efforts at rapprochement, sedition the term for the people's struggle to rise.120 The strength of France under Napoleon had been its unity, and in the fact that there

119 Ibid., pp.194-201.

had not been an "official" and a "real" France.\textsuperscript{121} The failure of France to rise in 1840 Quinet blamed on the debilitating internal division between the \textit{pays légal} and the majority excluded from membership.\textsuperscript{122} The binding force of democratic participation in national political life was the only instrument by which France could deliver herself from the insults of the world.\textsuperscript{123}

The political form did not seem to matter to him. Gladly he would have accepted from monarchy the leadership required, an aristocracy would not have repelled him. The democratic principle meant for him the participation of all classes in the activities of government, not yet majority rule.\textsuperscript{124} Radicals who hoped to attain the goal, but rejected the means, seemed to Quinet the most dangerous adversaries of all movement or progress. Their immoderate pretentions condemned them to a stupified quietism.\textsuperscript{125} The patriot wished also to state that if democracy desired no more than to augment and imitate the bourgeoisie he would willingly have held the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{121} Ibid., pp. 255-256.
\item \textsuperscript{122} Ibid., p. 232.
\item \textsuperscript{123} Ibid., p. 243.
\item \textsuperscript{124} Ibid., p. 236.
\item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid., p. 248.
\end{itemize}
line where it then was. The bourgeoisie and their values were already too prevalent. Quinet disassociated himself from those who think that all of the evil in France is of either bourgeois or democratic origin. I am much more tempted to believe that the greatest evil comes from their separation, and that things have reached a point at which it is not within the power of any party to save the country, and that salvation is not possible, but in cementing and rallying the one to the other in the bosom of their common principle.

National unity, recreated in the name of the fatherland, was the common principle which would allow France to smash the treaties of 1815, and restore herself to the fated role of European leadership. Quinet appropriated a democratic plank when it seemed suitable and necessary to his patriotism; he widened his audience and his appeal by seeming to move nearer to the most ardent of the patriots, the democratic party.

According to Herder revelation is simply the providential guidance of the development of the human mind, through the influences operating on individuals and on peoples which combine to produce a certain result through their experience of nature and of the course of human events....it is highly varied and progressive, and suits itself to place and

126 Ibid., p.245.
127 Ibid., p.240.
time, to race and person. The progress of human civilisation is not always and everywhere on the same road, or at the same rate; on the contrary, God makes use of special peoples and special times for special purposes; and hence comes "positive revelation" by chosen divine instruments....for the realisation of that which is the end of the race as a whole, namely, of true humanity.

For Quinet the divine instrument was France. His religion was being absorbed by his nationalism, and he began to foreshadow the prophets of Machtpolitik. Quinet's impatience for war in 1840 was based upon convictions which were quite compatible with Treitschke's belief that, "Most undoubtedly war is the one remedy of an ailing nation," or, "It is war which fosters the political idealism which the materialist rejects."

French domination in Europe was not, however, desired for its own sake. Quinet never wrote or thought along the lines of Treitschke's statement:

We may depend upon the re-Germanizing of Alsace, but not of Livonia and Kurland. There is no other course open to us but to keep the subject race in as uncivilized a condition as possible, and thus prevent


them from becoming a danger to the handful of their conquerors.  

In 1840 Quinet saw in war the possibility of a revived patriotism, but French aggression would have carried enlightenment with it. True, this concomitant of French victory was no longer thought of strictly in terms of benefits to be conferred upon the territory to be seized, and the good fortune which would thus befall those people on the left bank of the Rhine. But a reenergized France, restored to European leadership, would give the idea she represented new vitality everywhere. External influence was France's "vital principle." Pfleiderer's statement on Herder thus gives a clear picture of how Quinet thought, or how he pretended to think. France had this Providential mission, for humanity. The glorification of the

130 Ibid., I, 122.

131 Quinet did not heap insults on everything in Europe which was not French. He admired and respected all national groups, and his sincerity in this regard was believed in by republican nationalists from one end of the continent to the other (see infra, Chapter X). The English and the Russians were low in his affections, but he blamed their history for their faults, not their blood. Quinet refused to associate himself with pacifism when it became a strong current in the European socialist movement. He attended the Peace Congress, held in Switzerland in September 1867, only after it was understood that he would speak against the notion that all wars were unjust or unnecessary. He was listened to in silence (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11834,
French State was not his aim; he wished only to see
the spread of the idea God had intrusted to France, an
idea which was embodied in the not too carefully defined
expression: the Revolution.

Democrats fought the existing economic and political
order behind the cover of aggressive nationalism. The
ruling middle class reacted by becoming increasingly
rigid in its opposition to an adventurous foreign
policy. This group saw only its own economic interest,
and so betrayed the national ideal. Democratic republicans
were most receptive to Quinet's proposed foreign policy;
he went to meet them by taking up their plea for democratic
suffrage. He was not inconsistent in doing this (his
tendencies had long been in this direction), and one
may suspect that he had not done so before because it
would have been dangerous to his chances for advancement
to Paris. In a moment of enthusiasm he forgot ambition,
or was attracted by another possibility, that of be­
coming a popular political figure.

A new road had seemed to open and he entered upon

"Journal Quinet," X, 30). On the other hand, a work
like Proudhon's la Paix et la Guerre, which glorified
war, enraged Quinet. It must be admitted that he found
glorification of the army particularly unforgiveable
after December 2, 1851. See B.N., Nouv. acq. franc.
11826, "Journal Quinet," II, 52-53 where he is reported
as saying of Proudhon: "C'est un ouvrier ignorant et
prétentieux à la recherche d'une idée."
it; but with a certain moderation after the moment of crisis had passed. The **Avertissement** was restrained, following upon the introduction to the second printing of **1815 et 1840**. As in 1832 a sudden violence was short lived. For more than ten years Paris had been his goal.

Friends stayed true, and in March Chateaubriand informed Quinet that Villemain had him in mind for one of two chairs to be created at the College of France. Hope in this matter was dulled by too frequent disappointment; but, to his surprise, the appointment was made in July. For once Quinet admitted a debt of gratitude: Villemain had been marvelous. Indeed, he would have preferred the chair of northern literature, but, "having shown color" on the Rhine, Quinet was granted the chair devoted to the study of the literature and institutions of southern Europe.132

VIII

CHURCH AND UNIVERSITY

The struggle in France between the University and the Church dated from the creation of the former by the first Napoleon. Interludes of apparent peace were never more than a truce; periodically the fundamental antagonism became a matter of violent public debate. During the July Monarchy this battle reached its highest pitch from 1843 to 1846, and for those years was the most bitterly fought of all political issues. Edgar Quinet's term at the College of France was closely parallel, he opened his first course in February 1842, and concluded his last in the spring of 1845.

These courses, and those of Michelet, are credited with having been one of the most direct causes of the "national and universal" revival of 1848; and with being the most important factor arousing public opinion, showing that in the University-Church fight "the problem of the Jesuits was really the vital issue."\(^1\)

Before Napoleon's organization of the University, the 1802 law, establishing the system under which lycées were now to operate, marked the commencement of the anta-

agonism between Church and State in the educational field. Foucroy, charged by the First Consul to direct public instruction, fully realized that the clergy reconstituted by the Concordat would not postpone the effort to regain its past monopoly, and decreed the exclusion of celibates from the direction of lycées. But in 1806 Fontanes replaced Foucroy as head of affairs relating to public instruction, and in 1808, when the University was organized, the act constituting the body stated that the base of its instruction was to be "the precepts of the Catholic religion."  

The organic decree of March 17, 1808 placed a Grand-Maître, assisted by the Conseil de l'Université of thirty members, at the head of the University.  

Under this body a group of Rectors headed the various academic fields. Controlled by these bodies the univer-
sities dispensed higher education; secondary education was given over to the lycées of the larger cities, and the collèges of the less important ones. Both were placed under University control. Primary education was left in the hands of the local school master, and practically nothing was done for primary education under this arrangement until 1833. 4

So much for the structure of the University. The charge of "monopoly" must be examined, for it became the object of Catholic attackers marching under the banner of "liberalism" in a battle in which vocabulary was all important. The monopoly consisted only in this: after 1808 in order to be admitted to take the examination for the baccalaureate, necessary for entrance into the faculté des lettres of a state university, the student had to be sixteen years old and be prepared to be examined in all subjects taught in the highest grades of the lycée. The baccalauréat ès lettres was thus a prerequisite for those who wished to teach, or practice medicine or law. Only such persons ever took it. In September 1818, when philosophy examinations had been consistently poor under this system, University influence was further increased by the decree that in

4 Dansette, op. cit., I, 202-203. Between 1815 and 1848 the lycées were named collèges royaux.
the future a certificat d'études would be required of all baccalaureate candidates. The certificate would certify that the candidate had attended rhetoric and philosophy classes at a school where the University had approved the standards for these two subjects, or, the candidate might certify that a tutor, a parent, or a brother had instructed him in these subjects. Before 1815, and after 1828, these regulations put the Catholic school at a disadvantage in competing with the lycée for bourgeois youth.

Private secondary educational institutions, other than ecclesiastical, could only exist upon authorization by the University. The University had the power to revoke such authorization at any time, and students at such institutions paid the rétribution universitaire, that is payed a tax to the University, and thus contributed to the support of the competing lycée.

This organization of the State was not, however, exclusive. In 1809 bishops were authorized to open secondary ecclesiastical schools, to be devoted especially to the interests and needs of students who were destined for the clergy. At the end of the

5 Cournot, op. cit., pp. 358-359.

6 Ibid., pp. 350-351. These schools were known officially as des écoles secondaires éclésiastiques, popularly as the petits séminaires.
Empire eighteen thousand students were attending such schools, as against thirty-five thousand attending lycées and collèges. Primary schools were frequently headed by members of the clergy, the priest taught "morality" at all such schools. Dansette sums up the situation prevailing at the end of the Empire:

One can understand that if fonctionnaires sent their children to the lycée or collège, religious families placed theirs in ecclesiastical schools. Thus was perpetuated in education that division of the country into two hostile Frances, the bequest of the Revolution and destined for a long future.

Between 1809 and 1815 the University had some powers of regulation over the petits séminaires, but when the Bourbons returned, and no institution was more criticized and attacked by their partisans than was the University, certain of these controls were erased.8

The clergy, in 1814 and thereafter, had as their program either the destruction of the University, or, if this were not possible, the subjection of the University to the Church and the extension to the Church of the liberty to open schools at all educational levels, schools over which the State would have no control, but

7 Dansette, op. cit., I, 205.
8 Cournot, op. cit., p.280.
which the State would aid to support.\textsuperscript{9} Before examining the contending policies and programs it should be stated that the problem was much more than one of lay or clerical control. The question was what morality would be taught, one might say, what religion would be taught.\textsuperscript{10} The Revolution and the Church were each as tolerant of the morality of the other as the prevailing temper of opinion demanded, never one whit more.

That the Church had the exclusive right to religious teaching, and the right to at least supervise all other branches of learning, so that any matter contrary to faith or to morality might be excluded, was the all but unanimous conviction of the Restoration clergy. In 1815 the immediate issue before them became one of dealing with the University. The Ultras decided upon its suppression, bishops called for this to be done; Lamennais and Chateaubriand led the attack.\textsuperscript{11}

Lamennais used such terms as "seminaries of atheism and vestibules of hell" in speaking of the University schools, but the policy of the Church was dominated by another consideration. Frayssinous is

\textsuperscript{9} Debidour, \textit{op. cit.}, p.327.
\textsuperscript{11} Lavisse, \textit{op. cit.}, IV, 163.
said to have remarked that Lamennais would have spoken
with yet more violence had he known how truly deplorable
the situation was. But how replace the institution both
wished to destroy, what do with 100,000 children?
Neither the secular clergy nor the Jesuits felt equal
to replacing the University overnight.12

The result was that the Restoration retained the
University, while weakening its power and greatly
assisting in the development of the Church schools out­
side of its jurisdiction.13 Circumstances thus forced
the Church to follow a policy which it regarded second
best: the subjection of the University to the Church,
and the extension to the Church of the liberty to open
schools at all educational levels.

Subject to constant clerical aggression the Univer­
sity gained steadily in popularity. When in 1827 the
reaction against the religious politics of the Ultras
resulted in a Chamber of Deputies with a moderate

12 Cournot, op. cit., p.280. Taine believed that the
Restoration government had no real desire to destroy
the disciplined and centralized instrument the Empire
had willed to it. Le Régime Moderne (vols. IX-XI of
Les Origines de la France Contemporaine), XI, 296.

13 The government doubled the budget of Church
schools between 1815 and 1830, and more than 1500
full scholarships, and 2,700 half-scholarships were
created beyond this budget increase in order to
facilitate the attendance of poor children
(Dansette, op. cit., I, 256-257).
monarchist majority, the June ordinances of 1828 followed. The University was defended by the government for the first time since 1814. The Jesuits had borne the brunt of the anti-clerical attack, an attack lately strengthened by the appearance of the Catholic Monarchist Montolsier's pamphlets. These Jesuits were the target of the first ordinance.

Frayssinous, grand maître from 1822 to 1828, had shown the poor judgment to defend the Congregation, and to admit, by inference, the existence of some eight Jesuit colleges in France. The first ordinance obliged all teachers to take an oath that they were not members of an unauthorized congregation. The second grew out of the alarm, felt by the anti-clerical party, at the competition developing to the University system in the form of ecclesiastical secondary schools. These schools had been given their original authorization largely to assist the Church in recruiting priests, at a time when such recruitment had posed a serious problem. Under the Empire, and progressively so during the Restoration, they came to serve a very different purpose: that of forming the minds of a large number of lay Catholics.

1 Comte de Montlosier, Mémoire à consulter sur un Système Religieux et Politique, tendant à renverser la Religion, la Société et le Thron (Paris: Ambroise, Dupont et Horet, 1826).
The second June ordinance was meant to arrest this development, by limiting the total number of students who could be enrolled in such institutions in all of France to twenty thousand, and by making compulsory the wearing of ecclesiastical costume after two years of attendance. When seventy French bishops signed a protest refusing to apply these ordinances the government was forced to call upon Rome. The Pope took advantage of the opportunity to exercise his authority and Jesuit colleges were closed. The second ordinance was not rigorously enforced.\(^\text{15}\)

Charlèty summed up the clerical program after 1830:

> Liberty of education...was the minimum for the present, the disappearance of all control by the state over private education was the hope; for the future, a complete victory over youth, no private rival being presumed strong enough to measure itself against the organized power of the Church.\(^\text{16}\)

That separation of Church and State came to be an attractive idea to a growing number of Catholics, is understandable in view of this. Catholic Liberal is an accurate label for the party originated by Lamennais, and made into a permanent political force by Montalembert. Liberal, nowhere more than in France, is the label to attach to that party which, seeing in democracy

\(^{15}\) Lavisse, op. cit., IV, 336-337; Dansette, op. cit., I, 281-283.

\(^{16}\) Lavisse, op. cit., V, 327.
the handwriting on the wall, created the gospel of the weak state. It seemed too that if the State could be removed from the field of education the Church would have a monopoly in that field.

During the July Monarchy the Church was mainly concerned with improving its position with respect to secondary education. Anti-clericalism was one of the three principles victorious during those "glorious three days," but a revolution which had the character of a sort of "revenge of irreligion against the clergy and Catholicism," was promptly tamed. Before the end of seven months Casimir Périer, representing the "party of resistance," headed the government. The Catholic historian of the Monarchy judged that

compared to that which had preceded, and that which seemed the fatalistic consequence of July, that part [religious policy] of the ministry's policy testified, as did the others, a real progress. 17

By January 1833 Montlosier charged that the "ecclesiastical party dominated the government." 18 In May of 1835 de Tocqueville noted the virtual disappearance of liberal bourgeois anti-clericalism. Talk hostile to the clergy or to Catholic doctrine seemed to have passed from the scene. De Tocqueville's

18 Ibid., II, 329.
explanation for this change deserves full citation for it helps to emphasize that it was not an anti-Catholic one.

Most of the liberals whose irreligious passions [for de Tocqueville, when he speaks of France, irreligious and anti-Catholic are synonymous terms] have formerly put them at the head of the opposition, now talk in quite different terms than they once did. All recognize the political utility of a religion and deplore the weakness of the religious spirit in the population.\footnote{Ibid., II, 332-333.}

Guizot’s 1833 education law partly explains why secondary education was almost solely at issue after 1840, when Catholic attacks on the University took the forefront of the political scene. It was not so much that the Church was little interested in primary education because the people did not vote;\footnote{Dansette, \textit{op. cit.}, p.318.} more important was the circumstance that the 1833 law met all of its important demands on the matter.\footnote{Debidour wrote of Guizot’s "narrow accord" with the Catholic clergy; and of the "great success" the clergy won in the passage of the law \textit{(op. cit., p.435)}. Hugo wrote of Baudin’s father, a schoolmaster, one of that group "always persecuted, who have fallen from the Guizot law into the Falloux law into the Dupanloup law" \textit{(op. cit., I, 230).}}

The law required that primary education include moral and religious instruction, and made the priest a member by right of the committee established in each commune to
oversee and control the public school.22

In so far as secondary education was concerned the July Revolution was another temporary setback for the Church, following upon the June ordinances of 1828. Many a Liberal who crossed the barricades was slow to enter the confessional, or to wish his son to do so. No matter how speedily he halted public expression of anti-Catholic sentiments, he continued to resist Catholic attacks upon the University.

The winning of the mind of bourgeois youth was the goal of both Church and University; the battle lines were drawn between the spirit of the Revolution and the spirit of the Catholic religion. The University was determined not to give up the monopoly it enjoyed, which in time might serve to extirpate Catholicism from educated France. The Church fought for a privileged position under the banner of liberty, until such time as it might become possible to demand the complete suppression of the University, so that one day France might be like Spain. No settlement was made before 1848, and then followed the unforeseen but logical victory of the clerical party in the passage of the Falloux laws.

Guizot worked constantly to meet the wishes of the Church, and in January 1836 presented a bill which did away with all former University control over private schools: the bill provided that there would be no previous University authorization, no requirement of certificates of study for presentation for the baccalaureate; certain degree requirements were established for the heads of private institutions, none at all for professors. The government retained some right of inspection and some disciplinary authority, but only civil tribunals would have had the authority to close an establishment. The bill presented by Guizot would have left ecclesiastical schools in their privileged position: the requirement of degrees for directors would not have applied to them. When the Chamber of Deputies amended the bill in one respect the Church and Guizot ceased to support it. The Chamber added the provision that the head of a secondary school be required to take an oath that he did not belong to an unauthorized congregation. One prejudice had not died; even in the Chamber of Deputies a majority could not be found which would willingly open the gates to Jesuit education. The clerical party, feeling that sentiment was running on their side, refused a victory tainted by

23 Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., III, 413-426; Guizot, op. cit., III, 87-111.
compromise.

In 1836 the demand for liberty of education was particularly the property of the younger clergy, those who had followed Lamennais until the moment of his break with Rome, and who in the years after modified their former leader's doctrines. Lacordaire became their head within the Church. Montalembert remained their lay spokesman. They and their program had not wholly won the Catholic hierarchy in 1836; by 1840 further progress had been made in this, and a new effort was made to improve the power of the Church in the educational field. That year Montalembert negotiated a settlement with Cousin, then grand maître of the University; when Villemain replaced Cousin before action was taken, Montalembert served as intermediary between Mgr. Affre and the new University head. In 1841 a new project was submitted to the Chamber, only to fall before the opposition of the clerical party. Villemain insisted that ecclesiastical schools give up certain of their privileges, most notable he would have imposed degree requirements upon professors which the clergy could not meet. Bishops judged that ecclesiastical schools were threatened by the measure. Rather than a concession to their request for liberty the proposed step seemed to endanger important privileges already in their hands. Now the alarm was
sounded; attack upon the University seemed the best way of winning complete victory.\textsuperscript{24}

Dupanloup, later the real author of the Falloux laws, fixed the Catholic line in writing that the 1841 project was the first effort of the University to conserve, harden and even extend its monopoly, in scorn of the Charter and of the public clamor. The project was a manifestly criminal attack against both liberty of education and against religious liberty.\textsuperscript{25}

The non-Catholic view has rather been that at a moment when the government was being lax in enforcing a monopoly which it intended to end, just when the State was practicing un laisser aller débonnaire, a furious attack against the University was launched.\textsuperscript{26} The reason was not far to seek. Although the issue flamed into prominence in 1840 it had never been off the scene. Gustave Drouineau enjoyed a brilliant success in 1829 upon the publication of his five volume neo-Christian novel; violent passages exposing University education had largely explained its success in Catholic

\textsuperscript{24} Dansette, \textit{op. cit.}, I, 320-321; Thureau-Dangin, \textit{op. cit.}, V, 464-468.
\textsuperscript{25} Dupanloup, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 45-47.
\textsuperscript{26} Lavisse, \textit{op. cit.}, V, 334.
circles. The Catholic reaction was pronounced after 1830, particularly after 1833. The threat of democracy made new allies for the Church, and by 1840 enough ground had been recovered to bolster confidence for renewed all-out attack. By the end of the 1830's an intransigent Catholic youth was making itself felt within the University itself; in 1839 Lerminier was forced to abandon his chair at Paris. In the year Quinet arrived at the College of France two courses were suspended following clerical attack.

Among the eventual benefactors of the liberty demanded by the Church the Jesuit order was most important, and was most interested in victory. During the 1833-1840 revival of Catholic power the Jesuits regained more ground than did any other of the interdicted orders. That the French clergy as a whole was increasingly inspired by ultramontane doctrine, and appropriated the interests and ambitions of the Jesuit order as their own, is more truth than exaggeration.

27 Herriot, op. cit., p.319.
28 Monod, op. cit., II, 81-83.
29 That year the Univers listed eighteen professors whom it charged with "irreligion." Among them were Cousin, Michelet, Quinet, Jouffroy, Nisard, Jules Simon, Chevalier and Damiron (Debidour, op. cit., p.448; and Monod, op. cit., II, 122).
By 1840 the Church was willing to fight the University on the Jesuit issue, it seemed that even on this ground victory could be won. The campaign against the University was "opened" by the appearance of the Jesuit Garot's pamphlet *Le monopole Universitaire dévoilé à la France catholique*. The floodgates of abuse swung aside. 31 This was in May 1840, the intensity of the battle was still rising when Quinet reached his Paris pulpit in February 1842.

Of this battle's importance Heine wrote, in June 1843:

> The fight against the University, continually pressed by the clerical party...still occupies the public. Perhaps this interest will soon be pushed aside by some new question of the day; but the quarrel itself will not be settled so quickly, for it is rooted in a division which is a century old, and may perhaps be regarded as the essential cause of all of the revolutions in the life of the French State.

31 Ibid., pp. 444-445.

IX

THE COLLEGE PULPIT

The revolutionary and militaristic fevers, which overcame Quinet in 1830 and in 1840, were thought by many to have been but temporary aberrations. If not a Catholic, he had not yet interjected aggressive passion into religious matters, and some believed to see in him a thinker searching for the God he suffered to have lost. At the College of France a transformation took place; a profound anti-Christian fanaticism became evident. This is the Catholic view. Intense nationalism, rather than anti-Catholicism, was the note Quinet struck in his opening lecture in February 1842. The spirit prevailing at the College of France, as well as Quinet’s conception of his new role, is apparent from his description of his feelings, and the recital of his remarks, in the report he made to his mother of that first day.

The hall was packed. The speaker entered, pale and tense, and upon reaching the lecturn put aside his one resource, a single page of notes. In silence he remained standing, looking out directly to his audience; "finally I began." The commencement was calm, the

1 Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., V, 504-505.
sympathy of the listeners apparent. One-third into the address Quinet was first halted by unanimous applause; he began to dare more. Far from the conclusion "deafening" applause answered when he asked:

Is it really true, as is repeated day in and day out, that here I have to do with a people who are finished...? No, no, if they are exhausted they will be refreshed; if they recline, they will rise up; if they are dead, they will be reborn.

From this moment the hall was filled by a dialogue between the orator and the answering applause.

Applause which was "thundering" as he concluded:

In their crabbed imaginations I have often heard the peoples of the North say that France, bound to the Revolution, resembles Mazeppa being dragged far from the beaten track and torn by a steed no longer controlled by his hand. More than one vulture circles overhead, coveting the remains in advance...This is perhaps true.... But it should be added that at the moment when all seemed lost, it was then that he rose to the noise of the acclamation of those who had made him king.

As Quinet turned to depart Mickiewicz embraced him.

Magnin and Ampère, "who knew the métier," were charmed.

Quinet's courses of the spring and fall of 1842 were later brought together to form a part of his Révolutions d'Italie. This publication followed that

2 Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 363-366. Two stenographers from the Moniteur took down each word.

of his three later courses, and when it appeared, be-
tween 1848 and 1852 in three volumes, formed a con-
clusion rather than an introduction to this period of
his life. After treating Italy in these two courses
he had begun to write, but found that "when I wished
to unite those parts I saw that no connection existed
between them." What was the vital principle? He
searched the chronicles until he had found the thread
for which he sought. For, and nothing was more
characteristic, "I had no doubt that it existed."4
The "thread," or the dogma, was that developed and ex-
pressed in the courses of 1843 and 1844; these, and
the 1845 *Le Christianisme et la Révolution frança-
ïse*,5 in this sense proceeded the published form of the
first two courses and will be considered first.

Beginning early in 1843 religious pamphlets at-
tacking the University multiplied, until they became "a
mounting sea of calumnies and outrages which threatened
to submerge" it. Then, in the spring, Quinet and
Michelet at the College of France reduced their at-
tackers to silence in a series of memorable lectures.6

4 Quinet, O.C., IV, 4. These remarks are from the
1857 introduction to the work. One may take lightly
the claim to have searched the chronicles.


Another description of the event would have it that, as a part of the University plot to maintain its monopoly and to evade the Charter, in the spring of 1843 the signal for a direct and violent attack on the clergy was given in the College of France itself, by two professors, Quinet and Michelet. 

The decision made by Quinet and Michelet in the spring of 1843 to turn their courses into an attack upon the Jesuits was in a sense, or in part, in order that they might answer the Catholic attack of the Monopole universitaire, a Catholic journal solely devoted to this battle, and the most scurrilous in the field. Heine wrote that the treatment meted out by clericals, and the nature of their attack upon Quinet and Michelet, had had the unfortunate effect of pushing these men, quite against their deepest natural inclination, to throw out the Christ child with the bath, and to force them into the element furtherest to the left in the revolutionary Armada.

The foreign policy of the Monarchy had done much the same thing, but in 1843 the spotlight was upon a different issue. Those forces which in 1840 had

7 Dupanloup, op. cit., p. 64.
8 Monod, op. cit., II, 124.
9 Heine, op. cit., VI, 403.
demanded the Rhine in 1843 were hunting Jesuits. The tide had long been running against the University; as the Catholic reaction gained force the clerical party raised its sights. Cousin had been willing to compromise on many essentials with the Catholic attitude; Villemain was a devout Catholic. But by 1843 destruction of the University, always the goal, was made the immediate program of the intransigent party.

Important in the Catholic revival was the tendency for the Church itself to define orthodoxy in ever narrower terms. By terms of a strict orthodoxy Quinet had never been anything but a heretic; he began to attack the Church when it felt confident enough to draw the lines of faith in a fashion so as to exclude all who had hoped for some settlement between Rome and the modern spirit. Many, who might hitherto have been hesitant in approval, could now be expected to give a sympathetic ear to a more frank expression of his views than Quinet had previously ventured to make.

In 1843 Quinet was violently opposed to the foreign policy of Guizot. He was soon to find Cousin's affirmation that the Catholic religion was the basis of the philosophy of the University humiliating; as a member of that body he felt implicated in his former friend's intellectual dishonesty. He did not yet profess republican ideas.
Now that his attack was mainly upon the Jesuits, Quinet found more respectable company sharing his viewpoint than when he had demanded the Rhine. Not that such company was wanting in either instance, but the Voltaireian liberal had not died out, and his back was stiffened by clerical success. As a result Quinet now found greater support in high as well as low places. Shortly before the opening of his course on the Jesuits (the topic and the nature of which were foreseen), the Duchess of Orleans approached the professor to discover if he would be willing to take charge of the education of the Comte de Paris. At the height of the uproar over these lectures Quinet was invited to Vincennes by the Duc de Montpensier; he had at least one long and friendly conversation with the Duc d'Orleans upon another occasion within this period. Such contacts were not without meaning to a man who was never indifferent to recognition from his social superiors.

10 Monod, op. cit., II, 125; Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 369-373. Quinet's republican leanings would seem to explain his refusal, although this is not clear.

11 Monod, op. cit., II, 125; Quinet, Lettres à sa Mère, II, 369-373.

12 Quinet's social snobbery was pronounced. When, during his exile in Switzerland, the maid he and Mme. Quinet had employed for several years announced her intention to marry he was hurt. Such an action he regarded as disloyal and ungrateful, and he regretted
The democrat, in fact, evidenced no more ardor against the Jesuit than did the liberal who remained Voltairian in attitude. Not the few republicans, but Thiers and Dupin spoke out in the Chamber of Deputies, demanding the strict application of the 1828 ordinances. Genin, in the republican National, was no more violent in his anti-clerical attacks than was Libri in the Journal des Débats, a moderately liberal paper. The Courier français, the Constitutionnel, and the Siècle supported Quinet and Michelet, the last named publishing Quinet's 1843 and 1844 lectures the day following their delivery at the College of France. During the spring of 1843 Quinet found warm and avowed partisans in the literary world, among his colleagues at the University, even within the royal family, in other circles as well, but particularly among these non-republican elements.

On May 3 Quinet began his course on the Jesuits. Many a stormy scene marked those lectures of May and June. Erckmann-Chatrian wrote that the Revolution, suspended since Louis-Philippe took the throne, "stirred his past kindnesses to an inferior who now proved herself unappreciative. He remarked sharply to Mme. Quinet that Rousseau "a perdu la noblesse de son esprit dans ce commerce de domestiques." B.N., Nouv. acqu. franc. 11828, "Journal Quinet," IV, 25.


14 Monod, op. cit., II, 132.
itself back to life out of horror of Jesuitism."15 Quinet unchained the furies with his course. With Michelet and Mickiewicz he stirred a generation of ardent patriotic and anti-clerical students to a passion, while at the same time the people were aroused by episodes of a like tendency in the novels of Eugene Sue. "Hardly had those professors opened their mouths and applause broke forth like a tempest. At the end of a lecture one had not been able to make out four intelligible sentences."16

The first lessons were attended by large numbers of Catholic students, who came with the intention of silencing the professor, and who greeted the master with a storm of hissing and booing. Several lectures were heightened by physical combat between the clerical and revolutionary youth in attendance. More than once the administrator ran from his office to the auditorium where the lecture was being held, pale and frightened, to advise Quinet to dismiss the audience, protesting that if he did not the College of France might be leveled to the ground.17


16 Ibid., p.33.

17 Chassin, op. cit., pp.49-50. Monod suggested that Chassin grossly exaggerated these disorders, and that
Mme. Quinet related that her husband spoke almost without notes, writing nothing beforehand; the truth is that Quinet sent an advance text to the _Sicèle_, which printed each lecture the day following its delivery. The wife is unfairly charged with falsehood here, however, for Quinet, like Michelet, preferred to seem inspired. Michelet stated that duty forbade his making advance preparation, to do so shackled the pure inspiration which otherwise never failed. Quinet in 1845 spoke in similar fashion; each night he retired unprepared to "deliver battle" the next day; before the hour of the lecture everything came to him, from where he knew not.

The adjective "grave" poorly describes the orations Quinet delivered. On the other hand, keeping in mind

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Mme. Quinet only repeated Chassin (Monod, _op. cit._, II, 130-131). Admitting the likelihood of exaggeration, accounts like that of Erckmann support Chassin. Monod was prone to discount evidence that Michelet was not always as dignified and staid, or bound quite so firmly to the middle class standard of propriety as himself, and in this instance Michelet would be tarred with the same brush that smeared Quinet.

18 Mme. Quinet, _Cinquante ans d'Amitié_, p.119.

19 Monod, _op. cit._, II, 127, who wrote that Quinet's course, in contrast to that by Michelet on the same subject, was "serious, solid, grave, rich in facts, and documented. One sensed they [the lectures] were based upon lengthy preparation."

20 Ibid., II, 91.

21 Quinet, _Lettres à sa Mère_, II, 426.
the nature of the clerical attacks upon the University, there was merit in the degree to which the course was factual and serious. Quinet now entered into his true element. That part of his career which had a lasting influence began. Weak in aesthetic sense, and possessed of but a feeble capacity for intellectual self-discipline, Quinet had failed to find himself either as a poet or philosopher. At the College of France he began to formulate and to give effective expression to a democratic-republican program. Throughout his life Quinet felt a deep need for adulation, a need which was most nearly requited in the period of his life which now opened.22

A distinction between anti-clericalism and anti-Catholicism need not be made when speaking of Quinet from the time of these lectures. The Jesuits, not the Catholic Church, were the avowed target. However, when accused of making a distinction which in fact he did not recognize, he frankly replied that he separated only those who wished to be separated.23 Quinet declared

22 Quinet, as he grew older, remembered with particular vividness two actions of his mother. In 1811 she abandoned him at Charolles during a typhus epidemic, fleeing by herself to Certines. Upon another occasion, and Quinet later learned of the fact, she wrote to her sister who had lost a son, "comme j'amerais mieux que ce fut Edgar." B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11830, and 11833, "Journal Quinet," VI, 40-41, and IX, 226. Whatever the reasons Quinet never matured emotionally.

that to him no debate seemed possible on the proposition that the teachings of the Order were incompatible with modern liberties. In a hollow show of concern he wondered if Catholicism, by placing itself under the banner of Jesuitism, really desired to reopen a war already so destructive to the Church. If so, he forecast that a struggle between ultramontanism and the Revolution could only result in victory for the more Christian principle. The capital of the universal religious sentiment would henceforth be in France rather than at Rome. While he did not exaggerate his own orthodoxy Quinet professed to believe in the future of Christianity: the preparation of the souls of men for that unity and solidarity promised by the Gospel was the true spirit of the education of modern man. More than a half century after Quinet’s courses Troeltsch wrote:

So long as the modern world is thought of purely in its political, social economic, and technical aspects, it can reconcile itself well enough...with a somewhat softened form of Protestant orthodoxy, whereas Catholic orthodoxy constantly opposes it with a new Syllabus, and cancels again and again such accommodations as had already taken place...
Quinet, who thought of the modern world in religious terms, was confronted by a resurgent and aggressive Catholic orthodoxy. The Church seemed on the verge of overcoming the University. Jesuit education for France was in the offing. Although Quinet, in his course on the Jesuits, did not identify the Order completely with Catholicism, this was merely a tactical maneuver on his part. Certainly, he would have felt no differently about the prospect of Catholic education for France, even if the Jesuit Order had been excluded from the schools.

Quinet's liberalism was an outgrowth of his conviction that men are free; that a man's actions spring from his own personality, and that he is beholden for them to no authority other than that of his own individual conscience. Prejudice or ignorance might disqualify the individual, and make impossible the granting of full liberty to all persons; but the duty and purpose of organized society was to reduce both evils, and thus prepare all men for the enjoyment of full individual freedom. The Catholicism of the Church of Rome, wrote Croce, was "the most direct and logical negation of the liberal idea." 27 Jesuit doctrine was, however, a particular difficulty. On this score

Boehmer, incomparably more dispassionate, and who searched for truth rather than for evil, reached the conclusion which was most important to Quinet.

The early question of "whether the Order would gain a deciding influence at the Vatican and in the religious life of the Catholic world," seemed to have been settled affirmatively "for all time," since 1607. 28

Boehmer wrote that:

After all of the foregoing one dare conclude and assert, without fear of contradiction, that the Order has imprinted the stamp of its nature upon the Catholic Church of modern times. For all of the characteristic peculiarities through which the new Catholic Church is distinguished from the Roman Catholic Church of the Middle Ages: the absolutistic centralization of the Papal-idea and connected with this inseparably the spiritualization of the ancient Curialist doctrine of supremacy and ecclesiastical authority; the Propaganda and the war against heresy; the changing of confession into a means of soul-guidance, and the priest of the mass into a soul-guide...and also the complete symbolization of religion (piety) its utter mechanicalness and complete subjection to the authority of the Church....

For Quinet the danger of such doctrines was not merely, or even mainly, in themselves.

A part of past failure to achieve the unity promised


29 Ibid., p.184.
by the Gospel had resulted from the Protestant-Catholic division. Quinet hoped for a remedy to this, and he reiterated that the character of a truly living religion communicated its force to, was the foundation of, the political State. The ultramontane doctrine was philosophically and theoretically true. Submission should be given to the spiritual force. Here, made as an apparent concession to Catholic dogma, was the hint of the idea of a state political religion, which Quinet later wished to establish by setting up a system of compulsory state education. In Jesuit hands, however, the ultramontane doctrine was death. 30

One rule every Jesuit teacher was instructed to observe condemned the Order: the regulation that "no one, even in matters which have no danger for piety, is ever to pose a new question." 31 This was indeed the word of the devil; the interdiction that the seed of progress be sown. The diametric opposite was the spirit of the Revolution, which was predicated upon a faith in progress. His emotional faith in the rationalistic spirit was at the core of Quinet's hatred of the Jesuits. What could be more evil than to make a virtue of blind

30 Quinet, O.C., II (Les Jésuits), pp.87-107.
31 Ibid., p.110.
obedience? When he attacked the practice followed by
the Jesuits in India, of suppressing the Passion of
Christ in the religion they spread, he was sincere in
his anger. He detested the practice of deception as a
deliberate policy with a perfect constancy all of his
life. The practice was based upon a lack of faith in
man's reason. Men who had as code the Spiritual Ex-
ercises and the Constitutions were simply an impossible
choice to mold French youth.

It would be foolish to deny that retrograde
Catholicism was the real object of his attack. Also,
popular prejudices with regard to the Order must be
made of first importance in any valid explanation of
the special attention Quinet paid to the group. Was
it not damning evidence that the Society of Jesus had
been brought back to life in August 1814? What better
evidence of the opposition between the Order and the
Revolution? The lectures were replete with similar
logic. These were the statements which ended in
applause. The authoritarian and absolutistic aspects

32 Ibid., pp.63-64.
33 Ibid., p.78.
34 Ibid., pp.40-41.

35 Preserved Smith included les Jésuites in a list of
works "in which some noteworthy contribution has been
made to the philosophical interpretation of the events"
of the Jesuit doctrine were, naturally, of serious im-
portance to Quinet, but their discussion in detail
awaited his next course.

Quinet was constrained to justify his choice of
topic. The professor's critics protested that the
Jesuits had but a tenuous relationship to the field of
study suggested by the title of his chair. He made the
retort that the relationship between the Order and the
fate of southern European literature was indissoluble.
At the end of the sixteenth century an atmosphere of
death spread over Spain and Italy; with the disappearance
of the national genius of two great peoples Quinet saw
a small Society become great upon the substance of what
had been a great organism. The orator denied that he
could or would study the effect without considering the
cause. He might, indeed, have found other causes, but

Boehmer's work was mainly aimed at correcting the type
of exaggeration Quinet did his part to make legend, but
in spite of certain fundamental divergencies (regarding
the Missions particularly) what both stated as fact makes
fair harmony. Quinet insisted that the reader shudder in
revulsion, Boehmer asked that he be reasonable, this is
the greatest difference.

Maritain's description of Protestant practices in Saxony
and the Scandinavian countries during the Reformation re-
calls Quinet's treatment of the Jesuit missions. See the
former's Three Reformers: Luther - Descartes - Rousseau
with Maritain's portrait of Luther (ibid., pp.11-12) can
be charged to Quinet.

36 Quinet, O.C., II (Les Jésuites), 17-18.
preferred this very timely one. He might also have defined "death."

In certain important respects Quinet must be distinguished from the typical mid-century liberal historian in these matters. For example, from Macaulay, who wrote:

Our firm belief is that the North owes its great civilization and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the Protestant Reformation, and that the decay of the Southern countries is to be mainly ascribed to the great Catholic revival. 37

Quinet never wrote of nor believed in Macaulay's "great civilization of the North." Nor did he ever think of passing judgment on a culture on the basis of its "prosperity." When he visited Spain in 1843 he believed that the country's greatest fortune lay in the very fact that bourgeois materialism had not infected her people. Not that Quinet's doctrine of causation was not equally crude.

Goethe compared the Reformation to the French Revolution: "it turned back the advance of quiet culture." Troeltsch added that it gave the incentive to a revival of the Catholic idea, and, as a result, "Europe had to experience two centuries more of the medieval spirit." 38

For, he wrote:

37 Smith, op. cit., p.717.
38 Troeltsch, op. cit., p.86.
Individualistic rationalism, with its theory of the establishment of Society in the interest of the individual, is no creation of Protestantism, even though it has many links of connexion with the latter, or at least with Calvinism and Spiritualism. It is a product of Illuminism and the rationalistic spirit which takes as its data the equality of all men in virtue of possessing reason, and the possibility of the systematic construction of Society on the basis of scientific knowledge. In such a Society all can then harmoniously unite in virtue of their scientific understanding of it. This, however, is the form in which the Latin and Catholic peoples, rather than the Teutonic and Protestant, apprehended the idea of Society...

Even this is not as incompatible with Quinet's position as one might suspect. He believed strongly that Luther was a necessary step in the growth of the modern spirit, but was perfectly cognizant of the fact that early Protestantism had wished no such result. As an historian he might have come to consider the advantages which could have accrued to "the quiet growth" of the Humanist spirit. For a French political philosopher, concerned with the contemporary scene, such an argument had no usefulness. True enough, the association of individualistic rationalism with Catholic peoples was not likely ever to have occurred to him.

Quinet's most serious difficulty was with causation

in the field in which, purportedly, he was most fundamentally concerned. The association of artistic and cultural achievement with liberal or democratic political institutions, or with "liberty," is a deep rooted prejudice, not at all peculiar to those who, like Quinet in this instance, carried it to a ridiculous extreme. This is in no sense an apology. Quinet made his untenable position the justification for making the Company of Jesus the subject of his course. Believing, as he did, that religion was the root of all social phenomena, and detesting Catholicism, he simply drew his conclusions. He had an uncertain feeling for art and little respect for history. Was a definitive Church victory over the University probable during the 1840's? Quinet was important in preventing it, both immediately and in the future. At this level he can be taken more seriously, his more ambitious pretentions notwithstanding.

Mme. Quinet related that the storm over his course was so great that, in October 1843, when Quinet should soon have taken up his teaching again, it was suspended. Only after a ministerial change was he able to reopen it in February 1844. 40 Although this account has become

40 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, pp.340-341. Monod (op. cit., II, 165) repeated this, stating that, in the fall of 1843, Quinet had been criticized by Villemain, because he "pretended" to give as title of his chair
part of the legend there is evidence to disprove it.

Quinet left Paris shortly before his course was to have opened, and visited Lyon during the last days of October. Among friends he wished to see there was Victor Laprade. The continued affection between these two men is, considering Laprade's Catholicism, an interesting fact, although it ought not be forgotten that Polish followers of Mickiewicz cheered Quinet at the College of France, and, Mickiewicz at their head, attended Catholic services en masse each Sunday. From Lyon Quinet departed for Spain.

In view of the title of his chair at the College of France, Quinet's desire to know Spain at first hand was

"the literature and institutions of southern Europe." This is unfair because it omits mention that this title had been approved by the faculty.

Mme. Quinet included Alfred de Vigny and de Tocqueville among those who praised and supported Quinet in his attack upon the Jesuits (Avant l'Exil, pp.329-330). She is correct in the first instance, probably not in the second (see B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20798, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XVIII, 297-298 for an 1843 letter praising les Jésuites, an 1844 letter praising l'Ultra-montanisme from de Vigny). Michelet in June 1843 noted that Quinet had informed him that de Tocqueville and Corcelles were no longer friendly (Monod, op. cit., II, 149). The undated letter from de Tocqueville mentioned by Mme. Quinet may be presumed to refer to one of Quinet's previous courses. In August of 1843 Enfantin, rather surprisingly, wrote a letter of praise and encouragement (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20788, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," VIII, 29-32).

justifiable. His taking French leave of the University was in character. That all was not well within the bosom of his family is not to be entirely overlooked. For different, and sometimes certainly unwelcome reasons, he and Minna were apart more than together during their marriage. Earlier separations have been noted, then when Quinet moved to Paris almost a year elapsed before Minna joined him. Her visits to Germany were frequent and extended thereafter. One of the few traces of some difficulty, one which the second Mme. Quinet could not destroy, is a notation in Michelet's "Journal" in September 1842:

I wish to appeal to Quinet for his wife. In order for her to be beautiful again it would suffice that he love her a little. 42

Whatever the cause for Quinet's sudden visit to Spain it was not the suspension of his course. In Madrid, on January 10, 1844, he received the following notice from Paris. The letter had been sent on October 24, 1843, by Fauriel:

As for your trip to Spain, I scarcely dreamed of it further at a time so advanced in the year, and at the moment of the opening of your courses at your college. But since there you are, on your way, I have nothing to do but make the best of it. I saw Villemain as you asked; he is being amiable about the matter but wishes that

42 Monod, op. cit., II, 115.
you write as soon as possible to M. Letronne, President of the College, to inform him of the step you have taken and of an inevitable postponement in your course.

The course referred to was the one which should have opened in November. It was particularly unfair that Mme. Quinet should have placed the onus of the imaginary suspension on Villemain; for, on November 23, the Minister of Public Instruction wrote to Quinet granting a request that the originally unauthorized absence be further extended. The plea of research would, he wrote, be the formal justification. He added: "since you have indicated no limit to the time you desire, I am sending you the regular forms for requesting such a leave." This letter reached Quinet at Cadiz in January, before he received the previously dispatched note from Fauriel. Immediately he informed Minna that Villemain had written in an extremely friendly manner, and stretched the truth to add that the Minister "approves completely of my trip." On February 26 he was back on French soil. Mes Vacances en Espagne, Quinet's account of this interlude, was written and published in 1846.

46 Quinet, O.C., IX (Mes Vacances en Espagne), 246.
On March 20 the returning warrior gave the first of his nine lectures that spring at the College of France. No ministerial change had taken place, and Quinet took up a more radical position than in his previous course. Villemain's leniency is suggested by the fact that University regulations stipulated that Quinet give forty lectures a year. He gave seven in 1843, nine in 1844, and fifteen in 1845. Michelet was little different in this regard, appearing thirteen and twelve times respectively during the last two of these years.47

With the course of 1844 Quinet was frankly done with Catholicism; now his announced purpose was to make apparent that a distinction between Jesuitism and Catholicism could no longer be made. The previous year he had been content to "refute" the past, to lay bare an insidious evil; now he insisted that Jesuitism had compromised Catholicism, that one had become the other. Would Catholicism in turn compromise Christianity, this was the danger to be faced.48

From this moment Michelet and Quinet have been said to begin moving along different paths, Quinet remaining at heart a Christian, continuing to believe

the Revolution was a natural transformation of the
Christian faith, whereas Michelet was now to interpret
the Revolution as a revolt against the Christian dogma
of Grace.49 Michelet, at Cologne on July 14, 1847,
recorded in his "Journal" that France was drifting
intellectually, allowing its thought to become
obscure. He regretted that:

Even we, Quinet and I...we have seemed to
drift, especially in so far as one has been
able to believe that we think Christianity
can be reconciled with the Revolution.

The distinction between Quinet and Michelet on
this point can be clarified by reference to Troeltsch's
characterization of modern Protestantism, one which
may be applied to Quinet's beliefs.

All stress was now laid on the intuitive
certainty of faith, on the inward move­
ment and impulsion, on the inwardly
necessary attainment of the idea of God
in general, on the winning of a purely
personal conviction of His real existence,
for then everything further might be left
to Him and His mysterious wisdom, if only
this main decisive point was won. Thus
Protestantism became the religion of the
search for God in one's own feeling, ex­
perience, thought, and will, the seeking
of an assurance of this supreme centre
of all personal convictions on this one
point, while trustfully leaving open all
the further obscure problems about which
the Dogmatics of the earlier Protestantism
had so much to say.

49 Monod, op. cit., II, 106 and 130.
50 Ibid., II, 232.
51 Troeltsch, op. cit., pp.196-197.
Regarding the doctrine of grace Quinet was no more of a Christian than was Michelet. An outright antagonism to historical Christianity, and to liberal Protestantism as well as modern Catholicism, was increasingly apparent in Michelet's thought after 1843. On the first two points he parted company with his friend.\(^52\)

*L'Ultramontanisme* treated of Catholicism or liberty, which Proudhon, too, termed that "fatal dilemma."\(^53\) In this course Quinet made a notable return to the eighteenth century, and paid moving tribute to the positive side of the Enlightenment.

Nearly a century before Carl Becker reminded another

\(^52\) It should be noted that although Quinet never attacked Christianity in print or in a public statement, in periods of depression during the years of exile in Switzerland, if at no other time, he did so privately. Reading Paul in 1861 he said to the second Mme. Quinet, "What a slave doctrine! Bow down before all authorities, for all power comes from God. That is what Paul said to the people. Christ before him had said: 'Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's.' It is the religion of slaves." B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11826, "Journal Quinet," II, 194.

In May of 1867 Michelet and his second wife visited the Quinets in Switzerland. The relationship between the two men, which had long been strained, threatened to come to a close. Mme. Michelet declared to Mme. Quinet of Edgar's sympathies for Protestantism, "C'est là ce qui divise votre mari et le mien." Quinet himself did not think so. December 2, 1851 was to blame. This was to say that Michelet had failed that test, by remaining in France (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11833, "Journal Quinet," IX, 167 and 181).

audience, Quinet recognized that the Enlightenment "had not overturned, but had replaced the Church." Voltaire, Rousseau and Montesquieu were the "triple crown of that new papacy which France had presented to the world."

Quinet went further, and declared that although there were many things in which the eighteenth century had ceased to believe,

...it is equally certain that the essential aspect of that century was a universal faith in that which was most important in the Christian heritage, I mean in the power of the invisible, in the mind. In this all men of that time are as one.

Quinet portrayed Voltaire as the true representative of the Christian tradition; everywhere violence or injustice showed its face he saw that hero answer with anathema, jeering and overcoming the infidel Church with the arms of the Christian spirit. Voltaire was an instructive choice in the aid it gives to defining Quinet's Christianity. To present Voltaire in this light

55 Quinet, "O.C., II (l'Ultramontanisme), p.244.
56 Ibid., p.260.
57 Ibid., p.249.
58 Ibid., pp.255-256.
was to go beyond Mme. de Staël, while remaining with her camp, in secularizing Christianity. Vestigial orthodox scruples Quinet might have felt when translating Herder certainly could have existed no longer, but, obversely, it was clear that the break with Cousin and with "foreign" ideology had been only on the surface. Then too, Quinet's long lasting admiration for Voltaire was due to the eighteenth-century figure's implacable opposition to the Catholic Church, not to any great philosophic affinity. With the Jesuits his adversaries, he did the obvious in calling upon Voltaire. He declared that the worst of the capitulation following upon Waterloo had been the fall from grace of the greatest representative of the French eighteenth century. The time had come to erase at least that shame. 59

Quinet put rhetorical questions to those who

59 Ibid., pp.252-253. Quinet was consistent in his high opinion of Voltaire. He wrote that "his was the first name I knew" (Histoire de mes Idées, p.54); he declared to the second Mme. Quinet that Voltaire was "the first genius of France" (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11826, "Journal Quinet," II, 197). Chevalier, formerly one of the elect in the Saint-Simonian church abandoned that faith during the 1840's, and returned to a philosophy strongly influenced by the eighteenth-century individualism against which he had reacted as a younger man (Weill, op. cit., l'Ecole Saint-Simonienne, p.234). It is interesting to find that he was especially pleased with Quinet's defense of Voltaire. He found it "excellent and without reply" (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20784, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," IV, 425-426.)
saw in the past an age of faith, and a true Christian society. The reign of force, the Inquisition, the caprice of a single man for authority, that is to say when pagan society still existed and still dominated, was this "the very Christian kingdom?" And since, when to the contrary, fraternity and equality more and more descended to the plane of reality, since the liberty of the individual had been consecrated in law, since the Christian ideal penetrated little by little into institutions, and became the substance and the sustenance of modern law, a mere epithet, "pantheist," was deemed by the Church sufficient rebuttal. What then was the Church's understanding of religion? "Who indeed is your Christ?"

You search Christ in the sepulcher of the past; but Christ has left his sepulcher; He has moved on, has changed place; He lives... He descends into the modern world. Ah! you who think that with a word you may put France under interdict, your great misfortune (is that)...you search your God there where He no longer is; there where He is, you do not know or you do not any longer wish to see. 60

In this, as clear a statement of his faith as Quinet ever made, Vico and Bossuet were mentioned but Herder was not. There was little justice in this. As once long before, he reduced the originality of Vico to a single thought, the source of all his others:

60 Quinet, O.C., II (l'Ultramontanisme), 175-176.
the realization that civilizations depart from an idea of God as rivers from their source. Like Bossuet, Vico had observed that the world is submitted to the government of Providence. Quinet, not bound to Bossuet's conception of God or by Vico's Catholicism, defined his own position in similar terms: "from ruin to ruin, from Church to Church, man had not ceased for a day to gravitate toward God." To be complete, he declared, the philosophy of history must note the manifestation of divine action in all human things, thus is it identified with universal religion. Humanity is the true, the real Church.

Catholicism no longer represented "religion;" the evidence was 1789. Quinet declared that then, for the first time since the existence of that Church, the temporal world had changed without the change having been provoked by a corresponding movement of the Church. As it was axiomatic that religion was the sole dynamic factor in history the only possible conclusion was that "religion" had left the religions institution.  

61 Ibid., pp.211-214.  
62 Ibid., p.222.  
63 Ibid., pp.221.  
64 Ibid., pp.173-174.
three centuries not a page had been added to the Catholic conception; the Council of Trent had been its last breath.65 Could, he asked, one imagine that the spirit of God had spoken only to the ancient prophets?

Quinet took the position that science was the true religion, Galileo, Kepler and Newton the prophets of the modern world; Galileo the martyr of the modern church.66 This science must encompass and grow with the continuing revelation of natural law, or of Providence, which lived in nature, and in history as well. To mutilate and paralyze religion or science to render the alliance between them more commodious was to flee the question, not to solve it. Science, or reason, promised to reconcile all men and peoples, since it knew neither sects nor heresies.67

Finality was not claimed for the eighteenth century. One could honor its heroes by not imitating them, and Quinet denied himself the satisfaction evidenced by those in possession of the infinite. The risk and the danger, this was the grandeur of seeking the unknown.68

65 Ibid., p.172.
66 Ibid., p.200.
67 Ibid., p.203.
68 Ibid., pp.263-264.
What was most important he had also found in Herder, for if orthodoxy were made compatible with science, or if the Church had made peace with reason, this would not have been enough. The contempt of Rome for nationalities was nothing other than contempt for life in its most profound manifestation. The original form which a people received at birth was the seal of God, whereas the social ideal offered to Southern Europe by the Roman Church was a vast cosmopolitanism in which all national personality would be dissolved. Italy had fallen into the trap, in imitating that example France would infallibly suffer the same fate.69

Quinet’s name is closely associated with a development in France foreign to his conception of society as rightfully organized: the separation of Church and State. The necessities of the French situation led him finally to advocate such a step; his ideal was a different one. In the spring of 1844, more logically, he attacked the Catholic church for seeming to desire that separation. He could not, even at that date, decry the prospect of separation of the State from Catholicism, but he scorned the apparent willingness of a highly vocal element within the

69 Ibid., pp.272-273.
Church to see that institution "desert the nation."

The memorable lectures of 1843 and 1844 did less than "silence" the adversaries of the University, but were a factor in another shift of Catholic policy. When not destruction, modification or amelioration of University education along Catholic lines had been the demand of the clergy. When attack seemed only to increase resistance Montalembert was in time able to convince many of the Catholic party that the hope of improving the University was illusory, and to spread his belief that the University could not be "representative of anything but indifference in religious matters." This did not seem criminal to him; it was "a result of the state of society." He attacked the views of Michelet and Quinet, but defended their right to freedom of expression; in return he demanded that a like liberty be granted to the Jesuits.

By 1844 Montalembert's program had resulted in a Catholic understanding to serve religious liberty under the banner of civil liberty. His program brought the clergy under this strange flag. A true liberty, he

70 Ibid., pp.150-152.
71 Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., V, 484.
72 Monod, op. cit., II, 197-198.
argued, could not condone that the University education should be imposed upon those parents who were concerned with the preservation of the Catholic faith among their children. The only solution was to grant complete liberty at all levels of education. Montalembert always disclaimed that his motive was an eventual Church monopoly. That he was sincere in this is sometimes granted, that the clergy was sincere when they followed his leadership is less frequently admitted. In any case the argument was such that the defenders of the University sought a somewhat different ground on which to fight. The demand for liberty stole their thunder; they shifted their emphasis to a different aspect of the problem, though not an aspect they had ever ignored.

After 1840 the government had continued to seek a transaction, and in February 1844, at the moment Quinet was beginning his lectures on ultramontanism, a bill favorable to the clergy was submitted to the legislature on behalf of the Crown. The important concession stipulated that the certificate of university studies would no longer be necessary for presentation for the baccalaureate. Cousin was prominent in the debate. He defended the University with the latest weapon, protesting that the bill, the certain result of which would be the creation of large numbers of new confessional colleges, would shake the unity of the country:
From childhood we would learn to flee one another, to enclose ourselves in different camps, priests at our head; a marvelous apprenticeship for that civil charity we call patriotism.

Should the bill become law and two competing systems be established,

this country, which in its misfortunes has at least conserved one immense resource, the force of its unity, would lose it.

Thiers wished to preserve the status quo because "above all else we must conserve the unity of our national spirit." The French Catholic need not have been silenced by this. Dupanloup could in all sincerity reply that the "sacred duty of teachers, everywhere and always" was to bring up youth in love of their fatherland, and "to inspire it with zeal for its glory and devotion to its interests." This was the first sense in which "education ought to be national."

No amount of debate could obscure that the difficulty was not here. When Dupanloup continued that he was just as firmly convinced that education should not be "political," and that the only political lesson suitable for children was that they be taught to "love,

73 Lavisse, op. cit., V, 340.
74 Debidour, op. cit., p.461.
75 Lavisse, op. cit., V, 340-341.
76 Dupanloup, op. cit., p.231.
respect and obey, "he was nearer to the problem. How contend that Catholic education was not "political?"
Only by assuming the Church to be in possession of immutable truth. As in 1840, however, the bill was rejected. Favorable to the clergy, the measure would have withdrawn certain clerical privileges, by establishing regulations as to competence for all teachers. Worse, it was amended so as to exclude Jesuits from teaching, by requiring an oath from teachers that they belonged to no unauthorized congregation.

That Cousin came to the defense of his former protégé in this debate was to his credit, but there was nothing perverse in Quinet's continued and bitter attacks on the official eclectic position, embodied in that frequently quoted statement by Cousin that his school of philosophy was patient. Quite happy
to see the masses, the people, that is to say nearly all of humanity, enter into the arms of Christianity; it contents itself to offer them a friendly hand, and to aid them to raise themselves to a yet higher plane.

77 Ibid.
78 Debate opened in the Chamber of Peers April 22, 1844, where the University defense was led by Cousin, and where the amended bill passed on May 24. Debate in the Chamber of Deputies began on July 13; Thiers was the leader of the fight against the bill in the lower house. Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., V, 533-548.
79 Ibid., V, 472.
This supercilious note was as infuriating to Quinet as it was to the Catholic, and when Saisset, a disciple of Cousin, attacked Michelet for deviation from this sweet reasonableness Quinet promptly answered for his friend in one of his February 1845 lectures. Saisset repeated the familiar argument that religion was the philosophy of the people, philosophy the religion of the educated. The latter should gradually extend its empire, but any effort to hurry progress by the preaching of a natural religion would create moral anarchy, just as the sudden institution of universal suffrage would create political anarchy. This position had the merit of infuriating both the enthusiastic clerical and anti-clerical, but was not a banner under which men would march.

Jacques Maritain in his *Man and the State* labors with "the problem of means;" his discussion may clarify the politics of both Church and University in France in 1844. Man in an evil environment is confronted with a hard choice. He may refuse to commit himself to "political" activity because the only means at his disposal are incompatible with moral law; on the other

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hand he can leave aside moral law and accept evil means in order to eradicate evil.

The second position assumes that the end justifies the means and that no God exists. For, as David Rousset puts it..."you cannot have moral principles playing the part of an umpire dividing bad and good means from each other unless you keep those moral principles out of historical, social relativity, and therefore find foundations for them outside the human species, that is to say, be it pleasant or not, in God." Let it be added that the one who takes the stand under discussion cannot help being corrupted in the long run by his total adaptation to a corrupted environment.

82 The word to note is "total." Inserting it does more than make the meaning elusive; meaning had been divorced from all that precedes, and variable and contrary application to specific events is now permitted.

Reason must never abdicate. The task of ethics is humble but it is always magnanimous in carrying the mutable application of immutable moral principles even in the midst of the agonies of an unhappy world, as far as there is a gleam of humanity.

83 This suggests that "mutable application" is but the use of means adapted to a corrupt modern society, one in which error so prevails that means, to be successful, must be adapted to error and be corrupted by it. The hope of reestablishing the universal authority of

82 Maritain, Man and the State, pp.72-73. My italics.
83 Ibid., p.75.
Catholic truth by means of force is irrational in a world in which scepticism prevails; although the Inquisition was justifiable and proper, because in an environment much nearer to truth than our own it could enforce conformity to truth, to demand its immediate reestablishment today would be to "abdicate reason." The principle, however, is immutable.

Soltau saw in Maritain's thought the fulfillment of Quinet's prophecy that a new scholasticism was almost certain to appear. As a derogatory epithet (which it was for Quinet, and one may presume, for Soltau as well) "scholasticism" means the practice of perverting the meaning of words, as Quinet would say the Church did in demanding "liberty" in order that they might one day destroy it.84

The University more frequently applied another adjective to the program of its adversary. Heine thought it apt for describing both disputants: "jesuitical."85 In unmodified terms, neither Church nor University was honest as to its objectives, and both professed indignation at methods of the other


85 Heine, op. cit., VI, 422-423. He generously, if not quite properly, excluded Quinet and Michelet from the charge.
which neither had qualms about practicing in the pursuance of its own cause. The Church denied that the goal was a completely Catholic France; the University denied that it wished to extirpate Catholicism; both, but the latter particularly, expressed horror that belief ever be enforced by inquisitors and arms.

In 1844 at the College of France Quinet decided finally that religious sentiment had left the Church, and declared lay society in its pursuit of scientific truth to be the modern expression of humanity's search for God. The next year, his last in the college pulpit, he embraced the democratic state, which in the pursuance of the "general interest" had powers limited only by certain immutable principles, prime among these being the dignity of the human personality. The development of the human personality to its fullest limits, and this was the justification and purpose of social organization, he easily concluded to be impossible where Catholicism formed attitudes and controlled minds. Thus later he came to believe that the general interest demanded that Catholicism be rooted out, by whatever means.

Then Quinet, like Duperinloup or Maritain, could not escape the unhappy circumstance that the application of his program was impossible given the French environment.
He, too, was faced with the problem of a mutable application of immutable principles. As events disclosed the tragedy of truth, he followed logic to its inexorable conclusion, and discarded toleration as a principle. Quinet has frequently been granted the name of prophet, never heretofore, in this matter where his attitude was most prophetic. Nevertheless his solution, for the immediate future, was the one which finally prevailed: the separation of Church and State. All of this is to anticipate, however.

When a brief mental illness incapacitated Villemain in December 1844 Guizot took prompt advantage of his colleague's misfortune, and replaced him with Salvandy (on February 1, 1845); whereupon the latter quickly indicated that the confidence felt in him by the Catholic party was not misplaced. One of the new Minister's first acts was to address "severe but powerless remonstrances" to the administrator of the College of France regarding the courses of Quinet and Michelet. He wrote in part, "the disorders astonish and wound public feeling."86 Then Mickiewicz was suspended. If there is the slightest justice in the charge that Quinet deserved the suspension which came in late

86 Thureau-Dangin, op. cit., V, 546-547. An irrational fear of Jesuit machinations was an important manifestation of Villemain's illness (Monod, op. cit., II,132).
1845, there is much more in directing a like charge at
the Polish prophet, whose one preoccupation after the
spring of 1844 was to spread the word of the new
messiah, Towianski. On March 19 he had announced to
his audience at the College of France:

The joy which I have experienced, and which
will not be taken from me, the joy which has
moved me to be charged with the mission to
come before you, will be the joy of all my
life, and all my lives. I proclaim myself in
the face of heaven to be the living witness
to the new revelation.

Quinet's courses were a continual source of em­
barrassment to the government, but the only means of
silencing him was through the faculty of the College
of France. At the semi-annual meeting of that body in
July 1845, Salvandy requested the assembly of professors
to insist that Quinet and Michelet restrict their
lectures to the limits suggested by the titles of their
respective chairs; this plea was rejected by a vote of
seventeen to seven, but Salvandy did not desist.
Quinet occupied the chair of "Southern languages and
literature." The faculty, which had several times ap­
proved Quinet's program, that is the title of his

37 Czapska, op. cit., pp.225-226. Debidour, in
placing all blame for the suspension on the pro­
clerical Salvandy, fails to note that Villemaîn had re­
quested Mickiewicz to take a "vacation." The professor
drew full pay (6000 francs annually) until Salvandy
named a replacement in May 1845, henceforth dividing
the salary equally with his substitute (Debidour,
course, "Comparative literature and institutions of southern Europe," now requested him to remove the word "institutions." He refused, but in November 1845 the course was listed with the deletion made. On December 2, Quinet wrote to the Minister that he could not in good faith accept the change, and that he would not take up his chair until such time as the word were restored.

Guizot's characteristic solution to end the uproar had prevailed. He hoped the criticism of sensible men might be ended by silencing the extremists at the University, and by prevailing upon Rome to request that the French Jesuits retire. The Minister had pursued this policy although Montalembert and his followers had wished to gain "liberty" for the Company in return for permitting University figures like Quinet the free expression of their convictions. De Tocqueville expressed the uneasiness of the moderate party in his January 1844 address. He reproached the government for remaining silent, while, on one hand, bishops with impunity attacked the University in an injurious and calumnious manner, and, on the other, important men,

88 Chassin, op. cit., pp.56-58. See Mme. Quinet (Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.142-143) for Quinet's letter to Salvandy.
irritated by those unjust attacks, speaking in the name of the State, in chairs created and maintained by the State, attacked not only the portion of the clergy which menaced lay instruction, not even just all the clergy, but Catholicism itself, Christianity itself.

The policy Guizot pursued largely met the wishes of men of this viewpoint.

The fifteen lectures Quinet delivered in the late spring and early summer of 1845, and the lectures he would have delivered beginning in November, had he not made the decision to retire, were published as Le Christianisme et la Révolution française. In his dedication to Michelet the author insisted that if this work, and the preceding ones which had come out of his teaching, had been written far from the madding crowd there would have been no essential difference in the conclusions reached; but he freely acknowledged that the public clamour which had surrounded the statement of his message had necessarily affected the form it had taken. The first part of the argument was weak.

The 1845 course presented the first clear design of Quinet's doctrine which associated the idea of religious renovation with a democratic and social

89 Monod, op. cit., II, 169.
90 O.C., III.
91 Ibid., pp. vi-vii.
revolution; a conception which found its most perfect expression in his 1849 *Enseignement du Peuple*. Quinet now made an offering little different from that of the politically advanced group who wrote for *Revue indépendante*, among whom Leroux, George Sand, Schloecher, Duprat and Renouvier were most important. Hostile to the Voltairian spirit and to Catholicism, this sect dreamed of a religious revolution which would replace the existing Christian churches with a new Christianity, which would be an offshoot of democracy and of modern social aspirations. In 1843 and 1844 the *Revue* applauded Quinet's announcement of a future religious unity.\(^92\) In 1845 we find Quinet nearer to their democratic and social attitudes.

The more important impetus to move in the democratic direction may, however, be thought to have been the attacks of the spokesmen of the eclectic school. We have mentioned that one of Quinet's lectures specifically answered Saisset's criticism of Michelet. What Quinet asked, had been the tactics? In order to obtain the triumph of a week one had pretended to come to an understanding, while in secret intending nothing but to supplant the rival. A coalition of hate had been formed, one party renouncing half of its belief, the

\(^{92}\text{Monod, op. cit., II, 136.}\)
How different was the example of Christ in the desert! Quinet believed that if one admitted for a moment that a God was necessary for the people, that was to say continual progress of the spirit among some, and eternal immobility of belief among the rest, the union of society was broken. France would then be divided into two irreconcilable camps, everlastingly separated by an abyss which would never cease to deepen, and the work of Christianity be destroyed.

A truce had to be established between the City of God and the city of men, the one and the other reunited in the same principle; the city of men enlarged by declaring there the law and the right of the City of God. Quinet believed the conscious desire for this culmination, which he did no more to define, to be so great that should that sacred phrase "follow me" be pronounced, whatever the source of that voice, should it be from the Vatican, from a throne, from the heart of a people,

I do not say all Christianity, but all humanity, prepared at that cry to recognize the voice of the future, will march at once.

93 Quinet, O.C., III (Le Christianisme et la Révolution française), 25.
94 Ibid., 36-38.
95 Ibid., 88.
96 Ibid., 48.
Even this last was two parts rhetoric, for he proved the Vatican and thrones incapable. But there was a chosen people.

Napoleon, not yet fallen from grace, remained for Quinet the incarnation of democracy, almost a second Christ, a hero whose most dreadful error could be justified. The Concordat had ended forever the thought that Catholicism could be reconciled with modern society. It was well, therefore, that such a last attempt at social organization upon the principle and according to the ideal of Catholicism should have been attempted by the greatest and most enterprising man of modern times. After his failure no one would ever be tempted again.97 This is an example of the limits to which Quinet went, but rarely did he go quite so far. Not for a moment could he have believed this to have been an accurate characterization of the Concordat. Given his premises, and his fanatical insistence upon a universal acceptance of his own rationalism, Quinet need not have been dishonest about his opponent. Catholicism was incompatible with his philosophy, he need never have misrepresented the Church to prove this.

Quinet sounded the call to arms, in hushed tones,

97 Ibid., 248-249.
but in a fashion little likely to be misunderstood. The new order he proposed could not take place without suffering; that was not possible. His generation could not escape the laws of history; but its suffering would make the peace of those who followed them.\footnote{Ibid., p.272.}

That he might not be misunderstood Quinet warned his readers against a dangerous tendency of much contemporary theorizing, one which had come into being under the Restoration. Frequently France seemed to pale to the profit of humanity. Quinet pleaded that no man descend that slope.\footnote{Ibid., 162. Ballanche too believed progress came only out of unusual sacrifice. In these lectures Quinet apologized for Luther's denial of man's free will, and for the Protestant doctrine of Grace, but rejected both and specifically denied that he was either a Protestant, or that he wished France to become so ibid., 163-169 and 193-196). He did not, to be sure, define "Protestantism".}

After his last lecture in August 1845 Quinet wrote to his mother, "the campaign is finished,"\footnote{Ibid., p.272.} more prophetically than he probably suspected. Although he and Michelet never identified themselves with Mickiewicz without reservation the three had a single place in the heart of many a student, and when "the campaign was finished" Quinet and Mickiewicz were presented with a medal at a large student demonstration.

98 Ibid., 162. Ballanche too believed progress came only out of unusual sacrifice. In these lectures Quinet apologized for Luther's denial of man's free will, and for the Protestant doctrine of Grace, but rejected both and specifically denied that he was either a Protestant, or that he wished France to become so ibid., 163-169 and 193-196). He did not, to be sure, define "Protestantism".

99 Ibid., p.272.

100 Quinet, \textit{Lettres à sa Mère}, II, 425.
The token of admiration and affection was adorned on one side by the profiles of the three warriors. In the presentation ceremonies the student representative declared that these men,

alone have not deserted the great teaching of the greatest days of our history, and, thanks to these professors, the greatest tradition has been renewed among us.

Students and workers were the two Parisian groups devoted to the Republic; Weill supported this characterization of student opinion by noting that in February 1848:

All of the schools were rivals in patriotic ardor and furnished the Hôtel de Ville with gratuitous and devoted auxiliaries. All the youth of the Latin Quarter acclaimed Edgar Quinet when his course...was reopened at the College of France.

Returning to 1845, on December 3, the day following the publication of Quinet's refusal to submit to a change in the title of his course, some three thousand students formed at the Place de l'École de Médecine and at the Place de Panthéon. Converging into one group, they marched in a body to Quinet's residence. Their "republicanism," at least on that day, was limited to the attitudes expressed in these parts of the address

101 Chassin, op. cit., p.56, and Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans d'Amitié, pp.137-138. Michelet was absent from Paris and could not attend.

delivered by a student, in the name of all those who had assembled:

Our applause has reverberated beyond the walls of the College of France. There has been fear to see us fired by a true patriotism, the enthusiasm of the great days of the Revolution. 

...it is our cause you have lent support, it is for us that you have fought the ultramontane reaction against the spirit of the Revolution, with as much firmness as eloquence.

Quinet's response is typified by this selection:

How little the fate of one person affects the cause! The seed is sown, the cry of awakening has gone forth. The new generation has heard. It will not sleep. You will honor your fatherland, and that will be the recompense of my efforts, if, in fact, they have so merited.

The gathering then retired. As the group passed under the windows of the Minister of Public Instruction the chant "À bas les jésuites...Vive Quinet" was heard. General disorder, culminating in numerous arrests in the Latin Quarter, ended the morning.

Publication of the undelivered lectures went on through December and January. At the opening of the second semester, in February 1846, the College of France again received from the Minister the order to

104 Ibid., p.59.
105 Ibid., pp.59-60.
delete the word "institutions" from the description of Quinet's course. Not until April 1846 did he formally resign, in a letter which fully presented his case, and in which he made appeal to the royal ordinance of March 1831 which stipulated the purposes and privileges of the College of France. The line drawn between academic freedom and academic license will determine to which side the observer will grant his sympathy, and those who arrive at differing conclusions find reason a poor means of dissipating the area of disagreement between them.\textsuperscript{106} Quinet's decision not to compromise led to his separation from the Liberals with whom he had not previously parted.\textsuperscript{107} It was now that he moved into the Ledru-Rollin camp, a rather significant step to the left politically, particularly in so far as it affected the company he kept.\textsuperscript{108} An increased preoccupation with matters of

\textsuperscript{106} Quinet's April 8 letter is printed in full at the end of \textit{Cinquante ans d'Amitié}, pp.367-370.

\textsuperscript{107} Mme. Quinet, \textit{Avant l'Exil}, p.371.

\textsuperscript{108} Quinet's relations with Lamennais are an example of this change. Several times in the past the latter had pressed Quinet to "cooperate in his radicalism" (Quinet, \textit{Lettres à sa Mère}, II, 263), without avail. Now Quinet frequently visited Lamennais in prison, and the latter was one of those who encouraged him to stand firm, writing that although deeply concerned at the thought of his being silenced "the title, and with it honor and principle" must be conserved (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc, 20791, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XI, 33-34.
political organization resulted temporarily as well.

Enemies, and even the more or less friendly Monod, have cast doubt upon Quinet's true motive for resigning his teaching post. They suggest that he was becoming bored, and so pushed the quarrel to the breaking point; or that he sought popularity with the mob, and expected he might win a greater share as a martyr seemingly sacrificed to clerical opinion. Convincing material evidence is lacking.

Years later Quinet wrote that all of the pleasure of teaching at Paris had been poisoned for him as he came to realize that living in the midst of a crowd of friends, and addressing cheering audiences was deceiving him as to the reality of things. He came to understand that the number he reached with his message was so small that, whatever his success in influencing it, he was not affecting the depth of the general ignorance. Among the mass of Frenchmen his voice had no echo. If Quinet was impatient for a different role, the fact that a new demand had forged to the

109 Monod, op. cit., II, 101, goes so far as to say that Quinet "renounced" his chair by his action, and that only Michelet had "his mouth closed" by the authorities. Valès scoffs at such an interpretation (op. cit., p.165).

forefront of public debate might have influenced his actions. By 1846 electoral reform had superseded the Church-University battle in the center of the political arena. Reaching the masses was a growing preoccupation for Quinet; events would now rapidly underscore the essential importance of doing so.
FEBRUARY 1848 TO DECEMBER 1851: TRUTH MADE APPARENT

Parliamentary reform, by means of an extension of the suffrage, was proposed in the Chamber of Deputies seventeen times between 1831 and 1847, to be defeated in each instance by the opposition of the government in power.\(^1\) During the summer of 1846 electoral reform was the most debated issue at the time of elections. Quinet, under the auspices of Ledru-Rollin, the leader of the left wing of the republican party, made an unsuccessful bid for a seat in the Chamber, running on a platform of universal suffrage.\(^2\) Following this defeat Quinet turned his attentions to his unfinished work on Italy, the subject of his first lectures at the College of France. His purpose, as always, was didactic: Italy should serve as example to France.\(^3\)

In 1848 Ernest Renan found the spectacle of the physical suffering of the poor lamentable; but wrote that this touched him infinitely less than to see the

\(^1\) Lavisse, \textit{op. cit.}, V, 344-348.

\(^2\) Mme. Quinet, \textit{Avant l'Exil}, p.376.

\(^3\) Westphal, \textit{op. cit.}, p.54 for an 1847 letter in which he outlines his purpose.
immense majority of humanity condemned to intellectual helotism, and men, perhaps his intellectual superiors, reduced to a beast like existence. To raise these men up to the level of humanity was, he thought, the "true religion, the only serious and saintly matter facing society." For this reason the conquest of material well being, which seemed to him to be the work of the nineteenth century, was not profane. It was saintly, when one considered that it was the condition of the freeing of the spirit. Quinet was slow to concern himself with these matters. Although he believed it to be one of the more noble traits of his time that each day seemed to bring forth a new system, which had as purpose the amelioration of the infirmities and physical misery of the greatest number, the hunger of the soul and of the spirit seemed more redoubtable to him. The intimate connection apparent to Renan escaped Quinet in 1845. This may be explained in two ways. Quinet's romanticism had a German more than a French character; since, in contrast to the French Enlightenment, German idealism was little concerned


5 Ibid., p. 403.

with economic and social problems, this was possibly another instance of his background of German studies making itself apparent. His own essentially middle class viewpoint, which he never wholly lost, was probably a more important cause.\(^7\)

The tragedy which followed upon February 1848 resulted in a different orientation in Quinet's thought. He learned that an ignorant people could not fulfil the mission of France; the Second Republic established that fact for him. The implementation of the required educational program, and of elevating the people, forced itself upon him as the great problem. Never did he devote his efforts to the working out of a system of economic and social reform, but the factor of a necessary and proper material standard for the masses was one he ceased to ignore.

Not only the superstition and ignorance of the people, 7

The moral regeneration of France was of primary concern to him, and Quinet was never attracted to currents in German thought which he believed were out of keeping with this purpose. Schleiermacher's statement that, "It is an insult to religion to try to make it the handmaid of morality" he could not really have understood. See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart, editors: Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1928), p. 6. The Protestant theologian's belief that Church and State should be kept apart because the former could have no "more than an indirect influence upon the latter" (Brandt, op. cit., p. 96) could not have influenced him at all.
proved to him by the ease with which they were won to reaction after February 1848, turned him to the problem of their elevation. Of at least equal importance was his conviction, one which developed slowly but which had grown to sturdy stature before 1848, that the bourgeoisie was unhealthy, was amoral, that is to say was not "national."

The 1846 Mes Vacances en Espagne first revealed the trend. Les Révolutions d'Italie, published 1848-1852, marked the height of his concern with the masses, from which time he again reverted to more ideal matters. In the former work he pointed out that there were everywhere in France examples of two men,

who for fifty years have met in the street, every day at the same place; a nod has never been exchanged between them. They are in proximity during their entire lives, and yet eternity would pass and their lips would not part. For one is rich and the other is poor. One has found his place on earth, he occupies it; the other still wanders without knowing where to rest, he lives and dies standing.

Tuning to Italy he found the parallel, and the explanation for the sharpness of this division (only that part of the Révolutions d'Italie completed before 1848 is under discussion).

France was on the eve of changing governments

8 Quinet, O.C., IX (Mes Vacances en Espagne), 213-214.
again. Quinet increased the violence of his attack. The enemies who were ruining France were seen at the same work in Italy. Not only the French, but the Italian, and by implication, the European bourgeoisie, was corrupt. The people of Paris acted before Quinet's encouragement to revolution reached the press.

Quinet now made Catholicism responsible for the class struggle. The essential fact in the social history of Italy was that the plebeians, having hardly emerged from the people, turned with fury upon their origins. Whereas in ancient Rome patrician and plebeian had been contained by their national sentiment, in Italy intolerance, being at the base of religious belief, broke out into political life; the bourgeoisie made no concession to the people, the people no concession to the bourgeoisie.⁹

With his ability to discipline history Quinet found ready examples in fourteenth century Italy. When Guelph and Ghibeline reciprocally changed banner in a bourgeois or proletarian interest the root of this action was that an intolerant and cosmopolitan religion increased class strife, and prevented the existence of that fraternity which can develop if national feeling be strong and deep. Lest the lesson go unheeded Quinet

⁹ Quinet, O.C., IV (Les Révolutions d'Italie), 172-173.
reminded the reader that the French Revolution had been resolved in the reign of a new *popolani grassi*, whose resemblance to the former was striking: the same parvenu spirit, the same blind abandonment of all national instinct. Indeed the *popolani grassi* of the July Monarchy were attempting something new under the sun in foregoing the virtues of the former; in abandoning God, country, humanity, heroism, beauty, science and art to their adversaries they were in truth abandoning too large a share to the impatient fortune of the *peuple maigre*.10

The February Revolution returned Quinet to the College of France; he was charged with making the ceremonial address at the beginning of the first term to open under the new dispensation. With Michelet at his side he spoke to the assembled faculty and students on March 8. "Since the dawn of Liberty in '89, never had a patriot tasted a more radiant happiness,"11 so

10 *Ibid.*, pp.173-179. At the last of these pages the February Revolution interrupted the printing of the first volume (*ibid.*, note 1, p.179).

declared Mme. Quinet, and with less than her usual exaggeration. He described the recent events.

If ever a miracle has been consummated on this earth, it is that which you have seen with your eyes and made with your hands....

Each class performed its duty at the place marked for it by Providence; and the sentiment of that duty accomplished seals eternally that alliance which the monarchy strove to destroy. It believed that it had formed two peoples, enemies the one of the other, but they found one another on the barricades....

The masses have entrained and conducted their chiefs [the learned and educated]. Such is the spirit of this last revolution, accomplished by faith, by the weak, by the poor, by the small, that is in greater conformity than ever to the Christian spirit of the Gospels....

If, by a misunderstanding which would seem impossible, the spirit of concord which animates us were misjudged by the princes, if the frontiers of the sacred soil were menaced, or if our friends should be in peril of death...with what joy, with what intoxication, with what felicity all of us would take up the arms of yesterday...But I stop...I have more need to tame than to stir your warrior enthusiasm.

Quinet had been returned in triumph, but was not to devote his energies to the College of France. Instead he dedicated himself to political activity, and was elected to the Constituent Assembly in the April

 academy; London: 1944), p.33. This suggests the author's point of view better than it pictures the historical occurrence.

"One of the strangest paradoxes of a strange period" now occurred, for the Revolution provided the Church with "two of the most signal victories she won in the whole of modern history." The overthrow of the Roman Republic and the passage of the Falloux laws were the work of a French Republic. One might also say that a Republic in name granted victories which were signal if not paradoxical. More nearly the latter had been the action of the conservative bourgeoisie during the last days of the July Monarchy, when they worked "with an unpitying ardor to dissolve a regime which they had so great fear to see disappear."

A Republic was forced upon republicans by the Paris mob. Democratic concessions made during the five days following the Revolution threatened to pass the limits of a simple political revolution, and were made only in order to calm the people of Paris. The partisans of the new government looked on with increasing fright as innovations were imposed by the populace. Thus the conflict which would end in the

15 Lavisse, *op. cit.*, V, 376.
June Days began with the Revolution itself.¹⁶

Universal manhood suffrage was declared, and an electorate of less than one quarter of a million over­night became one of nine millions, a majority of whom could not read. Democrats were now on the verge of having to face reality, and a struggle immediately broke out between the Réformé, or left republican element, and the National, or center republican element of the Provisional Government, as to the date on which to hold the elections for the Constituent Assembly. Originally fixed for April 9, the members of the democratic faction demanded postponement, correctly judging that the country would return a large majority against them. On March 17 a mass demonstration in Paris protested the government's decision to adhere to the original date; the government held firm momentarily, but on March 26 postponed the date to April 23, now realizing that a delay would strengthen the Right.

Republican clubs in Paris debated the duty of the citizen should a non-progressive majority be returned to the Assembly, frequently concluding that insurrection would be the most sacred of duties. Another issue divided the government itself along similar lines:

¹⁶ Ibid., Ch. Seignobos, La Révolution de 1848- Le Second Empire (1848-1859), VI, 9-17.
Ledru-Rollin heading the minority faction which wished France to intervene directly in Europe to aid peoples against their monarchs. 17.

On one hand it may be said that the "democrat of 1848 was an ardent patriot and often a frank Jingo;" 18 on the other, that, whereas the entire nation was passionately concerned about questions of foreign policy, "in 1848 it no longer dreamed of warlike propaganda." 19 The controlling element of the Provisional Government, the men of the National, very quickly put aside the thought when they saw that pursuance of such a policy would have put them at the mercy of the democratic minority, whose social radicalism frightened them, and who were all that is suggested by the expression "frank jingoes." 20 After much soul-searching Ledru-Rollin proved the sincerity of his liberal optimism, sacrificing himself and his party to it. By mid-April he seemed convinced that conciliation with

17 Ibid., VI, 53-72.
18 Soltau, op. cit., p.97.
20 On March 1, Lamartine informed the Duke of Wellington: "Le Gouvernement Provisionnaire...fera une déclaration énergique aux nations de l'Europe, mais le Duc de Wellington en comprendra le vrai sens" (Namier, op. cit., p.37).
the bourgeoisie, now dedicated to reaction, was impossible, and to be inclined toward taking up arms against the government of which he was still a part. But at the last moment he stood with the Government, called out the National Guard on April 16 to crush a popular demonstration for Poland, and so helped to bring about "the definitive defeat of the party of social reform," that is to say, his own.\textsuperscript{21} He received paltry thanks for his action. Quinet found little to choose between the foreign policy after July 1830 and that after February 1848, but the worst of the second nightmare was not this.

Debidour wrote of the days immediately following the February Revolution, "the clergy had never been so popular in our country."\textsuperscript{22} The enthusiastic reception which the Church accorded the event was his suggested explanation, for the clergy wasted no tears on Louis-Philippe, and understood at once that its own interest was not to try uselessly to bar irresistible events, but rather to put themselves at their head.

During the Restoration the middle class had professed horror of the clerical party; under the July Monarchy this attitude had been significantly modified,

\textsuperscript{21} Lavisse, \textit{op. cit.}, VI, 70.
\textsuperscript{22} Debidour, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 484.
even reversed among the most conservative. However, the
tradition that the danger was from the Right, and the
fact that until late in the 1840's, when Montalembert
began to influence greater numbers within the Catholic
hierarchy, the Church was closely associated with the
legitimate branch of the royal family, had limited
government favor. The group at the National, wishing to
replace Guizot, had been prominent in the anti-clerical
attack. All changed "as if by enchantment" after the
February Revolution. The peril was now democracy, and
the Church offered its aid.23

The Provisional Government was hardly installed
when, "from one end of France to the other, the Church
deafened it with its acclamations and weighed it down
with its promises."24 It should be remembered that
Pius IX was still the "liberal Pope," and that the
liberal lay Catholic world was enthusiastic and
expectant. The April election fell on Easter. Church
services were arranged so that in many localities
electors were led in a body to the polling places by

23 Ibid., p. 647.

24 Debidour, op. cit., p. 483. Meeting de Rémusat on
streets of Paris on February 25, Cousin raised his arms
to heaven and cried: "Courons nous jeter aux pieds des
évêques; eux seuls peuvent nous sauver aujourd'hui"
(Taine, op. cit., XI, 308).
their priests. Fifteen ecclesiastics were elected to the Assembly, among them three bishops, and in an election in which almost all candidates ran as republicans, practically none were elected who were openly opposed by the clergy.25 The men of May 24, 1873 presented themselves as "républiciens rouges" in 1848 and were elected. When the results were known Barbès wrote in the Réforme; on April 29:

We counted on bad enough elections; it must be admitted that the event has surpassed our expectation. 27

Carnot, the former Saint-Simonian, served as Minister of Public Instruction in the Provisional Government. How little he resembled Quinet is apparent from his statement of February 25, the day after he assumed office:

The reunion of the two administrations [religious and university] under a single direction is the guarantee of the just conciliation between the equally respectable interests which will be established. 28

25 Dansette, op. cit., pp. 344-345. Quinet was an exception. On April 25 he wrote to Minna from Point d'Ain, still awaiting the result, that he was told that the people had resisted "the furious campaign of the clergy against" him. See B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20800, " Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XX, 357-358. On the 28th from Bourg he announced his victory (ibid., 359-360).

26 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, pp. 405-406.

27 Lavisse, op. cit., VI, 83.

28 Garnier-Pagès, op. cit., VIII, 92.
Thus on the very morning of the Revolution Quinet might have felt alarm. Not until March 19 did the Provisional Government order the dissolution of non-authorized congregations and corporations, with specific reference to Jesuits, and then not at the demand of friends of the University. Only after the working class had taken matters into its own hands, devastating several Jesuit buildings, and when this movement threatened to spread, did the government act. Worse, worker antagonism was not religious; the Jesuit communities attacked competed with certain classes of labor, and in a time of depressed employment feeling against such competition flamed up.29

In the moderation of his views on Catholicism, Carnot may be said to have resembled Cousin. The new Minister had a great deal more of a "socialist" concern about the general level of education, but he thought of the last in terms of imparting skills rather than as a method of instilling doctrines. His cardinal effort was to establish free and compulsory primary education, without the notion of taking from the clergy their dominant influence in this field. In the field of secondary education he wished to grant "liberty" to the Catholics,

29 Ibid., VIII, 121-122.
if they would accept some regulation of ecclesiastical schools. By reducing the cost of State secondary education, through the creation of a much larger scholarship fund to aid needy students to attend the State colleges, he felt that "liberty" would not hand secondary education over to the Church, which is what meeting Montalembert's demands would have meant. This was a solution moderate men might have accepted; in fact it represented helpless innocence.

Definitive action had, perforce, to wait for a permanent government. The Constituent Assembly first met on May 4. A conservative majority, consisting of diverse elements and extending from Catholic legitimists to former Republicans of the National school, took charge. When on May 15 the National Guard proved loyal, in face of the popular demand that aid be sent to Poland, the government felt strong enough for a final trial of strength, and began to carry out a policy which culminated in the June Days.

The insurrection began at 6 A.M. on June 23, and lasted three days.

It was a battle between the classes, the battle of the bourgeoisie and the army against the workers.

30 Ibid., VIII, 127-128.
31 Lavisse, op. cit., VI, 102.
In that hour of decision Quinet did not hesitate. 
Commander of the eleventh legion of the Paris National Guard, on May 15 his task had been to cover the Luxembourg. During the June Days his troops upheld law and order in the area of the Panthéon. Eventually he resigned his commission in protest to the violence of the governmental repression which followed the uprising of June 1849, but, although never fully forgiven in "left" circles for the lateness of that resignation, Quinet remained certain that his 1848 action had been justified.

The Revolution of 1848 was terminated on June 26,

32 Vales, op. cit., pp.176-179.

33 In December 1869 he was shocked at a young friend's article glorifying the June days, that "war against the men of 1848" as Quinet still thought of them (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11836, "Journal Quinet," XII, 97-98). Chassin refused even to discuss this aspect of Quinet's career, stating: "I have nothing to say here of the conduct of Quinet as a colonel in the National Guard during the insurrection of June. The day does not seem to me to have arrived, the place does not seem to me to be favorable, to touch upon the horrible misunderstanding which armed republicans against republicans. No one can say that he has suffered more than Quinet the discords by which has been adjourned the definitive triumph of Democracy" (Chassin, op. cit., p.67, note 1). Mme. Quinet defended his actions by stating that he had been convinced that had the uprising succeeded Napoleon would have been the beneficiary (Avant l'Exil, p.413).

Five brief notes dispatched from his headquarters to Minna during the insurrection suggest that Quinet might have been a little carried away by the opportunity to play a military role. In one he expressed concern that rain might spoil his Shako. See B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20800, "Correspondance d'Edgar Quinet," XX, 361-368.
1848. An era of political and social reaction followed. Ozanam remarked in 1849 that there was not a Voltairian to be found, who, if he had several thousand francs a year in dividends, did not wish to send the rest of the world to mass, on the condition that he not attend himself.\(^{34}\) Cousin and Thiers were two representatives of the non-Catholic world who turned at once to the Church as a force able to maintain, now not only the masses in obedience, but all society in health. As early as March 1848 Thiers wrote:

> As for liberty of education, I have changed; I have done so, not because of a revolution in my convictions, but because of a revolution in the state of society. \(^{35}\)

Short months before he and Cousin had defended the University, with many others they now surrendered.

Marx ridiculed those optimists, whom he classified as "social democrats," whose essential character was in their demand for republican institutions as a means, not to suppress the two extremes of the social order, the capitalist and the wage earner, but to attenuate their antagonism and to transform it into harmony.\(^{36}\) He had in mind his adversary Proudhon, who character-

\(^{34}\) Dansette, op. cit., I, 364.

\(^{35}\) Debidour, op. cit., p.492.

\(^{36}\) Marx, op. cit., p.41.
istically wrote, "Resolve the bourgeoisie and the proletariat into the middle class...such is...the true question of February.\textsuperscript{37} Marx could scoff because the event had been so little promising to the optimist and democrat. His sarcasm reached far beyond Proudhon, to all of those for whom February had been a moment of generous hope.

Quinet could not take the path of Thiers or Marx. Their policies were antagonistic but it was the materialism of both which he could not accept. After June 26, like the bourgeois democrat in Lyon who wrote as follows, he was saddened:

For me, who have had as the dream of all my life the fraternal republic according to the Gospel, that is to say the triumph of reason, of morality, of justice; who have aspired only for the form of government which would be able to assure the happiness of all, the liberty of all, the well being of all, I have shame for my country, I have shame for modern civilization.\textsuperscript{38}

June 26 may have ended the Revolution. Quinet did not admit it; resilience, his unwillingness to admit defeat, became more apparent as adversity mounted. Although the horizon of hope had quickly


\textsuperscript{38} Weill, Histoire du Parti Républicain, p.226, note 3.
narrowed, Quinet's readjustment was equally swift. The ignorance of the people had lost the Revolution, more revealing in this regard even than the elections of April was that of December, when Louis Napoleon received seventy-five percent of the popular vote. Early in the summer of 1849 Quinet published his l'Enseignement du Peuple; a fifth edition went to press before the close of the year.

The inculcation of respect for the authority of a tradition and for the institution representing that tradition, and planting in the minds of youth the premises or prejudices, doctrines or dogma, suitable to an easy acceptance of the authority in question is part of education. The problem of educational control, that is which of two opposing traditions will have the privilege of teaching French youth, has been, and remains one of the problems which has most divided France since the Revolution. Napoleon voiced the opinion of both camps when he stated:

There will never be a fixed political state of things in this country until we have a body of teachers instructed on established principles. So long as people are not taught from their earliest years whether they ought to be republicans or royalists, Christians or infidels, the State cannot properly be called a nation.

39 Taine, op. cit., XI, 197; and Fisher, op. cit., p.56.
Here the term "two Francs" is perfectly descriptive: Catholic France and the France of the Revolution.

First Quinet posed the question:

Catholicism being the national religion, how establish modern liberties on a religious principle which damns them. This problem has been the most fundamental in the history of France for sixty years; one finds it everywhere....

For it seems at least for the time being, that the French nation wishes neither to renounce the Catholic religion nor modern liberty; we pretend to maintain one with the tenacity of habit, the other with the enthusiasm of novelty. This is the practical reality.

Recent experience had forced Quinet into a new attitude. The reality, not the ideal, was now his concern. The question was not at all to decide whether or not in an ideal democracy education should be organized and administered by the State, that had become "an abstraction without any application to France."

Whether, given a country in which the clergy formed a caste, it was not necessary that the lay principle be organized in a manner so as to be able to balance the action of that body, was what begged for an answer.

A quarter of a century later Gambetta declared of Quinet:

He uttered the true cry, that which will remain the rallying cry of democracy. He said: "In order to save the country from the dangers which menace it at home and abroad, instruct the people in conformity to its genius; grant it lay education."

It is Quinet, my fellow citizens, who first pronounced those words.

This was largely true (Michelet wrote in a similar vein in his 1846 *le Peuple*), but Quinet had done so in the face of an unfortunate circumstance, for he bowed to no one in the conviction that education must have more than a strictly lay character. He too demanded that it should have a religious base. The tragedy was that for his compatriots religion was synonymous with organized churches. To constitute education without the Catholic Church seemed impious to a majority of them.

The months just past solved the enigma. In all of the debate on matters of social organization Quinet noted an astonishing absence of any mention of the moral and religious factor. France must awake to the fact that the religions problem enveloped the political and economic one, and that no solution of the latter could be more than hypothetical for as long as the

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43 Quinet, *l'Enseignement du peuple*, p.100.
first had not been resolved. Quinet was coming to realize that the people of France did not share his modernized Christianity; they were, as he came to see, and in his own terms, without faith. He began in 1849 to grope his way to the remedy.

Here was the difference between the Revolution of 1789 and that of 1848. The first had believed that it could save the world by its own spiritual energy, and it had given birth to great events and great men; the second had believed that it could not save the world without the support of the priest, and the expedition to Rome had been a logically necessary result. Had France, or had it not, the spirit of life, did the Revolution feel within itself the power to make men without assistance from the Church? Quinet was certain that the first condition of achieving freedom was in such a faith, and that the hope that lay society might emancipate itself was a fatuous one for as long as it doubted its own self-sufficiency. France, if it possessed such self-sufficiency, upon what principle was it based?

44 Ibid., p.145.
46 Ibid., pp.144-145.
With _le Peuple_, a work dedicated to Quinet, Michelet preceded his friend in a full statement of what was their common conviction as to what should be taught.

This book is more than a book, it is myself. This is the reason it belongs to you. It is me and it is you, I dare say this. You have remarked with justice that our thoughts, spoken or not, agree always. We live from a single heart.... A wonderful harmony which could surprise, but is it not natural? All the variety of our works has been rooted in the same source: the sentiment of France and the idea of the fatherland.

This dedication, and the like warmth and exaggeration of Quinet's dedication to Michelet of his _le Christianisme et la Revolution Francaise_, have frequently served to justify quoting either one of the two men to suggest what the other thought regarding an issue on which he did not express an opinion. The practice is questionable enough. It is none the less true that Michelet and Quinet were never so close as in the last days of the July Monarchy, and that both were steadfast in their adherence to the first principle they held in common: France has as mission to lead humanity.  


48 See Hans Kohn, _Prophets and Peoples: Studies in Nineteenth Century Nationalism_ (New York: Macmillan, 1946), pp.58-68 for a discussion of Michelet's 1846 work. Michelet and Quinet were saying much the same thing at this period, although the former was much more of a social radical, and considerable less restrained. Haac, _op. cit._, p.225 gives a misleading estimate of Kohn's position.
In the section entitled "La Patrie," in le Peuple, we find Michelet, like Quinet, grasping at patriotism as the common ground on which all classes of French society could unite. The fatherland should be taught as a religion, indoctrinated from the first day of the primary school program. Monolithic loyalty to the ideas of '89, and a profound sense of the holy mission of France to give the world spiritual and intellectual leadership, this was the cult Michelet believed the school must serve.

For Quinet the ideal would have been to unite indissolubly the religion of the fatherland and lay science in the same system of education. Before his audience at the College of France he had claimed as his purpose the creation of an all inclusive system, "more Catholic than Rome." After 1848 he felt a new and permanent urgency that his faith be implanted in youth at the earliest age.

If the light, evidence, truth, justice, liberty and fatherland taught were so taught they would have time to grow, if the storm then came they would stand against it.

Quinet concluded his 1849 work:

49 Quinet, l'Enseignement du Peuple, p.167.
50 Quinet, l'Ultramontanisme, pp.148-149.
51 Quinet, La République, pp.97-98.
Oh blasphemy! must my pen write these words! If ever the destruction of the French fatherland should be consummated, all the world would be swallowed up in that death. Then truly the death of Achilles, all and entire the ancient world would be sacrificed on that tomb.

But what of the practical reality, the religious conditions of French society? Quinet restated a now familiar idea, here as an explanation of the limitations of what could be accomplished immediately in France. What had occurred on the political scene had been but the reflection of what existed in the religious world. Religion, he repeated, was the ideal toward which the nation tended, and which it progressively realized in its civil institutions. A people who had lost the idea of God, by the same token, lost all ideal, and Quinet could not imagine how it could then continue to orient its collective life. If unable to orient her collective life, what was reasonable to demand of France, if not immediately, in the near future?

No labor was expended to demonstrate two laws which Quinet believed he had proven to be axiomatic: Catholic states perish; political liberty cannot be realized in a Catholic state. The only answer for France was complete separation, the only means of

53 Ibid., pp.172-179.
conciliation was to trace a line between Church and State which would descend fathoms deep.\textsuperscript{54} Two means existed by which a nation might escape the ruin which accompanied the decline of its religion (in Quinet's sense of the term), by far the most desirable was a religious revolution, a substitution of a new faith for the old. The inferior choice, but one forced upon a nation without positive faith, was to separate absolutely lay and ecclesiastical society; not only an inferior method, it could only be effective upon the condition that the separation be total.\textsuperscript{55} Nor was Quinet sanguine as to the promptitude with which France might follow even the second course. In all of the debate since February 1848 about "liberty" salaries had been voted for the clergy almost without discussion, although by that action "liberty" had been rendered impossible. Its own first condition, that of equality, had been destroyed.\textsuperscript{56}

First suppress salaries of the clergy; second make education free and compulsory; third, and meeting the first two demands would have only a negative result.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p.69.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p.26.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p.19.
without this, separation of lay education and ecclesiastical education of particular sects. Only by adherence to this third rule could the national unity of France and true liberty of conscience be obtained, for otherwise each religion and each dogma would have its own schools, or all would have representation in every school. In the first instance as many nations as communions would result, in the second all beliefs would necessarily be taught by one person who could do justice only to his own, so that "liberty of cult" would be circumvented.

There was not a little irony in the fact that this work, in which he presented a program far removed from that he would have wished were possible for France, is the one for which he has been primarily remembered. If ideas influence events no suggestion of Quinet had nearly so important an effect on later French history. Nor should it escape one that the attractive element in his program was that it obscured the objective as nearly as did the slogan of "liberty" upon the Catholic banner. Separation of Church and State accompanied by free and compulsory education at State schools, in which no positive religion would be allowed an influence

57 Ibid., p.144.
58 Ibid., pp.160-161.
or a voice, was a daring and aggressive demand; in being met monopoly would be truly gained. Quinet was finding himself. Events continued to light the way.

Napoleon was swept into the presidency in December 1848; the following May the Constituent Assembly gave way to the Legislative Assembly, after elections in which the deceit of April 1848 was scorned. Monarchists of every stripe, legitimists, Orleanists, Bonapartists, and Catholics united behind the program of Order, Family, and Property. Falloux, who took the position at the behest of Dupanloup, was Minister of Public Instruction in Napoleon’s first cabinet. In this capacity he held up discussion of an education bill during the last months of the Constituent Assembly, then in June submitted to the Legislative Assembly a bill drawn up by an extra-parliamentary commission which had been headed by himself, and which had included Montalembert, Dupanloup, Thiers, de Riancy, and six (out of the total twenty-four on the commission) representatives of the University. On June 13 the manifestations led by Ledru-Rollin against the expedition to Rome was crushed; after the clerical victory at

59 Lavisse, op. cit., VI, 133-136; Dansette, op. cit., I, 358.
60 Debidour, op. cit., pp.501-503.
Rome, came Montalembert's "domestic Roman campaign."

The Church recognized the right of the State, or University, to have a voice in the regulation of primary and secondary education, and the State accepted the participation of the Church in the direction of the University. The Falloux law, "in the thought of the Minister and of his friends" ought to have been the "great charter of clerical education in France." When more than "liberty" was offered, liberty was compromised. Montalembert had done something very similar to what he had so criticized the Church for doing under the Restoration; the Church made a pact with the State, and tied itself to the social policies of the bourgeoisie, as in the past it had wedded itself to the program of Charles X. Seignobos aptly termed the law "a political measure for the defense of society against the revolution."

The result did not meet either the dire or hopeful expectations of the contesting parties. Liberty of education, invoked to justify the bill, was no more accomplished than the supremacy which had been hoped for. The Church did become a more powerful rival of

61 Ibid., p. 510.
63 Lavisse, op. cit., VI, 141.
the State, but the conclusion that by the measure French youth was cut into two masses "oriented in opposite directions," and that one is thus forced to see in the law "one of the decisive events of the nineteenth century," is difficult to defend. Such had been the prophecy of Thiers and Cousin with respect to similar proposals before 1848, and such continued to be the forecast of Quinet. But was the law at fault, or did it only serve to intensify a struggle between two adversaries of too nearly similar strength and staying power to hope that one of them might, in anything less than generations, reduce the other to unimportance?

The events following February 1848 forced many besides Quinet to reconsider certain past and easy premises. The most difficult paradox was the attitude of the middle class. A particularly popular liberal shibboleth had always held that means, the freedom from economic want, made possible a greater independance of judgment in political matters. The aftermath of the February Revolution brought home with particular force quite another suggestion, and Quinet concluded that the servitude of a man's intelligence seemed rather to

64 Ibid., VI, 149-150.
augment in proportion to his wealth, remarking that it was a singular material independance which had for condition the absolute servitude of the mind and soul.\textsuperscript{65}

The actions of the educated suggested disturbing things about the nature of man, but this was not what gave him pause. His suspicion that the bourgeoisie was unsound was in a sense only justified; but the people, the people who had seemed inspired when Quinet addressed the College of France in March 1848, what of them?

Flaubert was a generation later than Musset in that century of optimism. He described Paris on February 23, 1848:

\begin{quote}
-Plus de missions!
-Plus de baccalauréat!
-A bas les grades universitaires!
-Conservons-les, dit Senecal, mais qu'ils soient conférés par le suffrage universel, par le Peuple, seul vrai juge!\textsuperscript{66}
\end{quote}

Edgar Quinet was never Sénecal, but in the hour of victory declared:

See and weigh that lesson! All seemed lost according to calculation or human wisdom, at the moment when all was won and saved by the inspiration, by the instinct, by the divine genius of the masses. The people, naked, pressed

\textsuperscript{65} Quinet, \textit{La République}, p.126.

on by wisdom from on high, by the folly of
the cross, consumated the impossible.

Came April, June and December, the expedition to
Rome, the Falloux law, all leading to the second of
December 1851, each and all approved by a majority of
Frenchmen. Helpless in the path of an inexorable tide
Quinet sat in the Legislative Assembly, voting with the
minority, turning out brochures of hopeless protest, and, in
the fall of 1851, publishing the second volume
of Révolutions d'Italie. Minna Quinet died in March
1851.

For as long as reaction seemed to have a tint of
legality Quinet remained within the bounds of loyal
opposition. On the morning of December 2 he escaped
arrest, and remained underground in Paris until further
resistence had become hopeless, then fled to Brussels.
Quinet arrived there on December 11. An eighteen year
exile had begun. He had been assisted in his flight

67 Quinet, l'Enseignement du Peuple (Discours
prononcé au Collège de France), p.311.

68 Quinet, l'Enseignement du Peuple (l'État de Siège;
La Croisade Autrichienne, Française, Napolitaine,
Espagnole contre la République Romaine; and Révision);
the first two in 1849, the last in 1851.

69 Mme. Quinet, Avant l'Exil, p.440.

70 Victor Hugo's Histoire d'un Crime gives an hour
by hour account of events in Paris until resistance
collapsed and makes frequent reference to Quinet.
by a Mme. Asky, whom he married in July. 71

Late in 1852 the last volume of Révolutions d'Italie was published; it was a resume of Quinet's "histoire morale de décembre 1851 à juillet 1852." 72 He wrote of recent events in Italy; the French parallel was his real concern. At the College of France the unequivocal incompatibility of the two authorities struggling for control had been Quinet's theme, but conclusions with respect to policy had not been clearly formulated. Now the age of innocence was past. Written large in tragic events one could read that the very nature of things decreed that either Catholicism or the French Revolution destroy the other; the day when the Revolution became imbued with a willingness to make a settlement with its eternal enemy it delivered itself

71 In September 1866 the second Mme. Quinet, disturbed at the thought that future biographers might pry into her past, wrote down the version of her life she desired history should perpetuate: Her real existence began on December 2, 1851. Life with "God on earth" effaced her previous existence from memory, years which could be of no possible interest to posterity. She added that in 1836 a young girl hardly fifteen had been married to a "byzantine prince," twenty years old and "a little mad." Two years later, after the birth of a son, the girl had been abandoned, had then continued to live under her father's roof for fourteen years, devoting herself to the boy. In 1845 she had come to Paris so that her son might be brought up on the ideas of justice and truth; in 1852 the "widow" had only consented to live again out of pity for the poor proscript. "Voilà la vérité devant Dieu et devant les hommes" (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11832, "Journal Quinet," VIII, 182.

72 Mme. Quinet, Depuis l'Exil, pp. 32-33.
bound and gagged.73

This, Quinet wrote, had occurred in Italy and France, and had come about largely because of the attitude of the masses. The hatred of the majority of the Italian people for the Revolution was the work of Jesuit education, well done and achieved in silence. By that means men had been riveted to servitude, spiritual slavery had become the very flesh of the people, and they had lost all desire to be freed.74 As always religion had determined politics. In France the July Monarchy had fallen for having too greatly despised the people, the Republic for having esteemed them too highly. Each Catholic people was like a child, eternally in tutelage it sought a master, if not given one it imposed one upon you.75 This thought was on the morning of disaster; time brought it to maturity.

One may believe that had the Second Republic prevailed, had reaction stopped short of Napoleon III, Quinet, remaining in France, in all probability devoting his efforts to political activity, would have spent his energies in holding the line here, in winning a concession there, and that in time he would have become,

much more typically than was ever to be the case, a spokesman of the "left."  

The opinion of an electorate need never concern him in exile -- he sought again his natural place in the clouds; bitter and isolated a more serious and less sanguine vision came to him. He set his course in the closing lines of his work on Italy.

I commenced this work, and I conclude it, in dedicating it to the Italian exile, percursor of all the exiles of the earth.

He who is in exile is condemned to live outside the law.

He who is in exile is imprisoned in the house of injustice.

The banished is he who in his homeland, at his foyer, feels himself proscribed by the conscience of men of good will.

But you who live with right, wherever you may be, if you remain true to yourself you are in the land of your father. They cannot take from you the city of the conscience.

You nourish the flame of justice; would you then believe yourself absent from your foyer?

If the fatherland dies become yourself the ideal of the new fatherland. In order to remake a world what is required? A grain of

76 Late in 1848 Quinet and Pascal Duprat attempted to push a measure through the Constituent Assembly which had as object the democratization and republicanizing of the lower clergy by giving the state a voice in the appointment and dismissal of desservants (Debidour, op. cit., pp. 489-490). After 1870 Quinet wrote "I say again to French democracy what I said to it thirty years ago. Renounce the mirage of a revolutionary and democratic lower clergy opposing a theocratic and reactionary higher clergy. The one and the other are formed in the same mold, made of the same essence" (La République, p. 172). Quinet always took up the work at hand, consistent with his purpose, but unconcerned with inconsistencies in policy.
sand, a fixed point, pure and luminous. 
Strive to become that incorruptible point.
Be a conscience. To form a new world but
awaits to encounter an atom of truth in the
emptiness of deserted heavens.

77 Quinet, Les Révolutions d'Italie, p.528. Croce wrote
of those in France who refused to submit in 1851: "We are
still moved today by the pages written at this time by
De Tocqueville, Quinet, Prévost-Paradol, and other men
of their type" (op. cit., p.203). Such a statement high-
lights the difficulties inherent in such generalizations.
No "type" can be represented by so divergent a trio.
Croce's lines on "the poet militant," who exemplified
the "liberal ideal," aid one to understand Quinet's
personal evaluation of his own exile. See ibid., p.18.
EXILE AND MATURITY: THE LESSON OF HISTORY

Modern liberties are several; their practical political application presumes certain institutional arrangements; their bedrock foundation is the recognition of rights believed to be "natural," or accepted as being so. What rights are "natural" is as much a subject for debate as are questions relating to the institutions necessary to liberty in a given environmental setting, and representatives of Revolutionary France were as noisy and as narrow in their defense of their private political theology as the human record would have us expect. In 1849 Quinet had asked that secondary questions be put aside in the face of a fundamental embarrassment. First and above all freedom of thought must be guaranteed, once this had been granted he would be generous regarding all the rest.¹ On this "right" liberty was based, there could be no denial of one without the destruction of the other. Truth proved itself by prevailing, its right to expression was the guarantee of progress, error fled before it.

¹ Quinet, l'Enseignement du Peuple, p.43.
The coup d'etat of Louis Napoleon brought about the completion of Quinet's thought; now, according to his past definition, one valid enough, he preached the destruction of liberty. The exclusive possession of absolute truth logically justifies intolerance, for how stupidly permit the growth of error when armed with the sole means of universal salvation? Of the unshakeable conviction that Providence stood revealed in the Revolution and his own secularized Christianity, Quinet embraced the logic of faith.

Faltering steps were taken in the disillusion of the summer of 1848, when Quinet, confronted by the problems facing a democracy brought into being in a corrupt age, concluded that any democracy which emerged with the long habit of servitude, and which contented itself with the pleasure of merely being born, without taking any precautions against its enemies, necessarily became their dupe. In order that the philanthropic laws of democracy be applied and survive it was necessary that men already be changed and improved by the laws of democracy.2 The Gordian knot -- now draw the sword: Quinet did.

It is a favorite idea of the liberalism of our day that brute force can do absolutely

2 Quinet, Les Révolutions d'Italie, p.190.
nothing against ideas. As for me, I confess not to have the same conviction of that helplessness....When I consider that men of theory themselves reject the force which God sometimes places in their hands, and which they tremble to use, I ask myself if this is not an indication of scepticism rather than assurance. A certain degree of faith is always necessary in order to dare touch the ax.

This was somewhat disingenuous. Liberalism did not hold that force could do nothing against ideas, but that the use of force in such matters was an evil thing.

Quinet found after 1852 that his former liberal idealism failed to explain the tragic course of recent history; he adjusted his philosophy to the event. The transformation included three important judgments. First in importance was his discovery of what he insisted was a law of history: Catholicism can only be destroyed by force. Second, he faced the logic of his own past attitudes and publicly re-evaluated the Revolution itself, and in judging it a failure, placed that failure at the door of the unfortunate fact that the Reformation had been stamped out in France. Last, he turned in a bitter attack upon historicism, and upon the optimism of tout est bien. The three conclusions were consistent with his basic concept that a people's religious belief determined its history. All that he

3 Ibid., p.383.
The last volume of *Révolutions d'Italie* saw the author face up to the accusation that he was foreign to the philosophy of his time, by the confession that he did not believe that a nation could win freedom from slavery without putting iron to the service of right. Quinet could find no historical precedent for the belief that ideas prevailed without the necessity that one take up arms for them. The lesson of his own time in particular led him to persist in the conviction that the sword, in certain instances, could accomplish more in a day than all of the wisdom of the earth in several centuries. Recent personal experience in Paris, on the days between December 2 and 6, may be suspected to have been large in his mind as he wrote these words. The first two years of exile were devoted to a work which completed their meaning.

*Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde*, which appeared in 1854, was as frankly didactic as every other of Quinet's mature efforts. The author professed to believe that each forgotten historical figure who reappeared, as his subject

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4 Ibid., p.513.
then did, brought with him some forgotten message for which the world had need. The three lessons taught by a study of the life of Marnix were: the perfect accord of his life and his word; the fact that he had understood all things in the light of his religion; and that he had realized the necessity for intolerance. Quinet examined a revolution which had succeeded; he found that these were the reasons for its success. Failure marked any contrary course.

The Reformation, Quinet wrote, had been the face which liberty had shown to the world at the close of the Middle Ages. It was too often ignored that those peoples who had been unable to conquer that liberty had to the present remained powerless to establish any other. The obvious question then became, where and how had the Reformation succeeded? Only by violence, by stern and ruthless intolerance, had the germs of Protestantism been destroyed in the southern provinces of the Low Countries. Quinet believed that it would be easier still to show that everywhere Protestantism had left liberty to the Catholic Church, the Reformation had promptly disappeared without trace.

6 Ibid., p.11.
7 Ibid., p.204.
8 Ibid., p.103.
With what exactitude history seemed to repeat itself! Writing of the conference at which the Dutch had refused the Catholic offer that universal suffrage be instituted in all of the provinces, Quinet asked the secret of the Protestant minority's wisdom. The simple answer was that the Dutch had possessed the firm resolve to be victorious, the unshakeable resolution not to cede their victory to a demand of logic. The author knew that the moment any revolution was victorious the invitation that it perish for the honor of its principles came from all sides, and that it was rare that such an invitation did not win a majority. History, however, hated the dupe and put him almost at the level of the guilty. This, Quinet concluded, was but half an injustice; to be abused was almost always to be in a false situation.

If this was understanding history Marx understood it as did Quinet. Before man in the majority could recognize the higher truth all means of communicating with him must be seized and held. This was the logic of the position now taken. It differed from that of de Maistre in the authority it would make of the Pope. Not that what Quinet described as having been the Dutch example could, in any sense, have been duplicated in the

9 Ibid., pp.92-98.
France of 1848. The intimation that, on the morning of the February Revolution, suffrage might have been arranged to give complete power to the minority who shared his opinions, or that these men might themselves have prevented any elections whatsoever, was pure fantasy. Quinet himself had dreamed of no such possibility.

The forces of "disorder" were vanquished in June, and Quinet had chosen against them. Where, indeed, might he have found allies? Croce wrote that the Catholic Church posed problems for liberalism which, "in certain particular cases," permitted that a "rigorous and radical procedure" be used against it. Favorable conditions for such a procedure must first be prepared by the Church, by its "indescretion and disregard for moral sentiments." The certain "particular case," seemingly, would then be at hand.\(^\text{10}\) A willing public opinion, then, was a necessary condition of success; in France the Dreyfus case provided it. In 1848 the Church, to state the matter cautiously, was less unpopular than was usual during the nineteenth century. Quinet, however, less willing than Croce to weigh the politically feasible against the program he wished to implement, made no concession to reality. The Italian Liberal also described the necessity governments sometimes feel, in periods of society's mental and moral

\(^\text{10}\) Croce, \textit{op. cit.}, pp.287-288.
depression, "for an alliance with the not always distinguished forces the Church has at her disposal."

The practice need not be put in such censorious language, but one instance of the phenomenon was displayed by the Provisional Government. The group from the National, which was in control, shared much of Quinet's anti-Catholicism. These men, however, did not act blindly, but with deliberate purpose. It was quite another thing to share Quinet's religious convictions, and this was the difference.

The Dutch revolution, the exile wrote, had succeeded because it had been based upon a religious revolution; because it had dared to take itself seriously, and to give itself time to take root before granting amnesty to the adversary. It had dared to use the ax. The provinces in which the revolution had failed had evidenced a different logic and had paid the price.

The lesson for the present was spelled out in detail in Quinet's later writing. He denied that religious unity or another universal church was possible, and criticized those who seemingly strove for such a goal. To propose a universal acceptance of a particular sect or formula was to wish for the rebirth of the past at

11 Ibid., pp.193-193.
12 Quinet, Marnix, p.109.
the moment of rejecting it. A universal church or universal philosophy was impossible in the face of modern individualism; those who dreamed of either had not truly thrown off the Catholic heritage. So Quinet wrote, but with less than complete sincerity, and more to disparage the Saint Simonians than to express his true position. He too asked for unity after all, demanding a universal attack upon Catholicism. Proposing neither a system nor a dogma, though suggesting that the faith of the Vicaire savoyard, and its almost exact counterpart, Unitarianism, could most easily be conciliated with the modern age, Quinet demanded an alliance "of all free minds" in order to break in common the "spirit which possessed and sterilized the earth." 

The world of enlightened man should, he advised, concentrate all energy upon the point which was the center of all attacks directed against themselves: the Roman Church. The defender of the Church was invited to speak his mind, but to speak of conciliation between

15 Ibid (La Révolution Religieuse), p.524.
16 Ibid., pp.532-533.
Catholicism and Democracy was now unforgiveable; the incompatibility was complete. Self deception on this matter was criminal.

The thought embodied in the above paragraphs is the basis for the frequent statement that Quinet desired a Protestant Reformation for France. Ruggiero noted that Liberalism, although less Utopian than the democratic or socialistic school, demanded a religious reformation "necessitated by the hostility of the Roman Church towards its social and political programme." The Italian Liberal added:

In Quinet and his successors the idea often appears that the Catholic countries must have a Protestant Reformation of their own, if they wished to raise themselves to the level of other nations.

Putting the matter in this light distorts not only Quinet's thought, but his motivation as well. First, it need hardly be said that few panaceas were more Utopian than that which Quinet offered to France. Also, Quinet's politics and his religion were one. The increased intensity of his attack upon the Roman Church after 1848 is to be attributed, not to a greater antagonism to the philosophy and politics of Catholicism, for some time

17 Ibid., p.526.
18 Ruggiero, op. cit., p.182.
previously his hatred had been total, but to his sudden awareness of the extent of the power which that institution wielded in France. Quinet's fury became ruthless when he saw that the majority of Frenchmen believed more in their priests than in prophets of the philosophy of the Revolution. The Church gained steadily in France after 1830. During the Restoration the alliance between throne and altar had been in defiance of French opinion. Under the Second Empire political opportunism seemed to advise close ties between Church and State. These developments are important to an understanding of Quinet's progressive intolerance. He wished to raise France to the "level" of no other country, but to the height of her own destiny.

In Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde the problem of means in the nineteenth century was broached. Quinet wrote that those who would undertake to uproot superstition, if they possessed the authority, should above all remove that superstition from the people and render its exercise absolutely and materially impossible, at the same time removing all hope that it might ever be reborn. There were indeed several ways of vanquishing an outworn religion, but first among them was the use of force by the established authority. Whatever one might say of

19 Quinet, Le Livre de l'Exil (La Révolution Religieuse) p.500.
this means it was the only one which ever succeeded in destroying an ancient belief. Every long established religion which had finally disappeared from earth had been effaced in this fashion. There had, in fact, never been a religion so senseless, or so absurd, that it had been possible to erase it from earth solely by freedom of speech. Although the whole world repeated that force could accomplish nothing against ideas, the whole world was witness to the contrary.20

The first of the three volumes of Quinet's Révolution21 was published in 1864, and aroused a storm of protest from many who had heretofore numbered Quinet among the annointed. Although the message of intolerance was not the primary cause of this protest he was then for the first time widely charged with this sin. The Critique de la Révolution, which was first published in January 1867, and which served as an introduction to the Révolution in all subsequent editions of the longer work, was the author's answer to these critics. In defending himself against the charge we have so far particularly noted Quinet retracted nothing; his defense resolved itself in the statement that tolerance was a

20 Quinet, Le Livre de l'Exil (Lettre à Sue), p. 449.

virtue, but that intolerance was permissible against the intolerant, that is to say against the Catholic. His one concession was that in 1867 he believed that separation of Church and State was all one could possibly hope for in France.22

Quinet defeated his own purpose when he wrote, in the Critique, that Catholics of the de Maistre school, who vaunted the necessity for the Inquisition in the past, would never convince him that they were friends of liberty today until they renounced in the past what they pretended to renounce in the present.23 This covered his own case, in so far as it touched upon the past. His renunciation of intolerance for the present was hedged in terms which he would have described as Jesuitical had they come from the pen of an adversary.

To conclude this discussion of Quinet's doctrine of intolerance his attack upon the Terror should be examined. This attack, much more than Quinet's views on intolerance, explain the unfriendly response his former friends gave the work. In the Révolution he repeated that indifference could never destroy a religion;

22 Ibid., I, 17-24. The Critique might obscure Quinet's intent for the person who has not read Marnix de Sainte Aldegonde or La Révolution religieuse au dix-neuvième Siécle and the Révolution, but for no one else.
23 Quinet, La Révolution, I, 43.
a religion never died unless "the formal order was given" it to do so. What Quinet attacked in the Terror was not its intolerance but its uselessness. Comparing Danton and Robespierre with Moses, the Terror of the Revolution with Hebrew terrorism, he concluded that if Moses had been content to entrain the Jews in the desert, while allowing them to carry with them their ancient idols, his people would not have failed to return to the spirit of Egypt. In vain Moses would have redoubled his menaces and exterminations, he would have killed without profit for the future, and the blood uselessly spilt would have cried out against him. Danton and Robespierre were remembered as Moses would then have been; the less they had dared as regarded Catholicism the more they dared in the non-religious field, but such audacity was sterile. If one had wished the Terror there should have been no tolerance for Catholicism, if tolerance was the desire then there should have been no Terror. The Jacobins had used the weapon, but not against the enemy. When Quinet defended

24 Ibid., II, 392.
25 Ibid., II, 343.
26 Ibid., II, 347.
27 Ibid., II, 398.
himself against the charge of intolerance, by pointing out his opposition to the Terror, he indulged in a form of deceit he professed to detest in others.

As late as 1849 Quinet still wrote of the Revolution as a religious transformation which had endowed men moved by its spirit with unnatural powers, as a movement confident in its self-sufficiency, and thus capable of mighty accomplishments. December 2, 1851, following as it did upon a long series of like deceptions for men of his faith, seemed to demand that one reexamine a received interpretation of the Revolution itself. How speak of success after the experience of the years between 1830 and 1851. For Quinet the courage to do so finally failed, and the question became something else.

The Révolution was undertaken, so the author declared, to discover the laws which might explain why such prodigious efforts had resulted only in abortion; for events had pressed upon him the unescapable conclusion that the result had not been commensurate with the cost it had entailed. Having so decided he needed not

28 See supra page 267.

29 Critique, pp. 57-69. The kindest words ever spoken by a representative of a later dispensation in the field of historical writing with regard to Quinet's contribution in this field dates back to 1866 and was in
have searched far for causes, with no difficulty the Revolution could be explained by squaring it with the view that political history took its shape from the religious faith of a people. By assuming in this work, although he had frequently attacked his nation for a like weakness, that a positive religion was meant by "religion," the failure of the Revolution was apparent. Where could one find the religion of liberty professed by a Kléber, where were its rites, its altars? It had disappeared from the souls of men more completely than from the material world. 30

Pained astonishment among his colleagues greeted the work. It seemed to Quinet that their attitude was a quite Catholic one. They asked that all adherents of the Revolution "Believe all or renounce the whole." 31 The Revolution, he wrote, was not, however, a supernatural fact, and Quinet insisted that one might examine reference to the Révolution. Aulard in opening his course on the French Revolution at the Sorbonne said of Quinet:

Il est bon que son nom soit prononcé avec respect au début d'un cours d'histoire de la Révolution française ...

...Car, si ce cours est possible, s'il existe, c'est par ce qu'Edgar Quinet a écrit. Oui, son livre, digne de Montesquieu, inaugura vraiment la critique de la Révolution (Vaisé, op. cit., pp.298-299).

30 Quinet, La Révolution, II, 257.
31 Quinet, Critique, p.30.
it without being against it. Theologians judged men according to their theology, rather than after their actions and character, but he would not write as a theologian of the Revolution.32 Professing his ability to sacrifice his life for democracy, Quinet asked that no man await the time when he would sacrifice justice and reason upon any altar. The moment was overdue to break out of the iron circle of attributing results to fate; the necessity of things had not made the Terror, false ideas were to blame.33

In Le Christianisme et la Révolution Quinet had confronted the paradox, for him, that France, alone among modern nations, had carried out a political revolution before having consummated a religious one. Logically he should have found this impossible, and he had escaped the dilemma by stressing the positive faith of the eighteenth century, and by making this a type of "religious" revolution. Now that his optimism had fled he concluded that really there had been no revolution at all, failing a truly religious one. The 1845 lectures had proven him consistent with his philosophy of history, when he had pointed out the Catholic characteristics of the post-1789 upheaval, and this far

32 Ibid., pp.7-11.
33 Ibid., pp.41-48.
his later Révolution had been foreshadowed. In the former work Quinet pointed out that the English and American revolutions had known nothing which compared with the Terror, and explained that both had been born of Protestantism; whereas France, obliged to break out of the confines of Catholicism, had found it impossible to escape the tradition of intolerance and infallibility. This was of course before Quinet himself had begun to insist upon the virtues of intolerance.

Not only were the evils of the Revolution to be attributed to the Catholic heritage, almost nothing of value had been won without borrowing from that tradition. The virtue of proselytism, the tendency toward universality, and toward greater political unity and centralization were Catholic in inspiration. The face of Catholicism had changed, its spirit remained. The discrepancies between this and his still traditional view regarding the greatness of the Revolutionary accomplishment were erased in the later work.

Science and progress received little note in the Révolution. Idealism, illogically enough, in view of his stress upon the efficacy of force against ideas, was almost the sole causitive force he recognized.

34 Quinet, Le Christianisme et la Révolution française, p. 231.
Quinet admitted his purpose in this regard. When accused of rendering too little account of material interests, he made the retort that he would not be of his century if he did not realize their importance, but, wearied beyond measure by the prevailing materialism, he saw no need to carry water to the sea.36

To judge if a revolution had succeeded but one question need be answered: had man been changed?37 Upon this basis failure was apparent, for in reality an ideal, a flag, several slogans about justice were all Quinet believed remained of a great political upheaval. Three words left to the world as heritage, and millions vainly dead for them. One could not deny that which was sublime in this, but failure was the conclusion.38 The only permanent act of the Revolution, the establishment of civil equality, had been accomplished without struggle and by common consent, had taken place "by itself."39 After August 5, 1789 there had remained "the problem of liberty," that is to say the whole difficulty; political and religious questions had unchained the

36 Quinet, Critique, p.48.
37 Quinet, Révolution, I, 198.
38 Ibid., III, 327.
39 Ibid., I, 172-173.
By definition, he repeated, a revolution was the transformation of a religious ideal. No great revolution had failed to have the pre-existing religion for its most bitter antagonist; no victory had ever been won unless the old faith had been repressed until such time as new moral habits had been imprinted upon the nation. Quinet granted that the position of France had been difficult. In no epoch in its past had the nation known liberty. Accustomed to passive obedience after having passed ten centuries upon its knees three years had been too short to greatly modify posture.

Quinet now attributed a large share of the reason for the failure of the Revolution to the fact that the Reformation had not won France from Catholicism. Seemingly the other peoples of Europe who had known or found liberty had seen it supported upon the tripod of the Reformation, the Renaissance and upon philosophy. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes was thus one of the most decisive acts in the history of France; the support of the Reformation had been taken from French liberty. The tripod

40 Ibid., I, 178 and 201.
41 Ibid., I, 235.
42 Ibid., III, 103.
43 Ibid., III, 260-262.
Although the difficulty had been great, the error of the Revolution was no less. Leaders had found themselves before an obstacle, the people being separated from their chiefs by the long habit of superstition; but when the leadership convinced itself that it was impossible for the people to cross the gulf, and, from fear of being brought into dispute with the masses, chiefs imposed upon themselves respect for superstition they had voluntarily placed themselves in a hopeless position. They put to death anyone who wished to attack it, thus engaging themselves, out of respect for the people, to respect what enslaved the people. Leaders who believed themselves powerless to change anything in the domain of the spirit became so in fact.45

A religion for the people was necessary; the harshness of his past attacks upon this aspect of official eclectic doctrine did not prevent Quinet from now taking a similar position. The course of the Revolution permitted all to see how little attraction vague philosophical concepts held for a people long bound to a positive faith.46 The now enlightened author warned learned men

44 Ibid., I, 347.
46 Ibid., II, 254.
who believed that science would one day replace religion that they poorly understood the nature of man. Although science and religion drew ever nearer there would always be questions which science could not answer, and these mysteries would form the inexhaustable source of future religions. The failure of the leaders of the Revolution to realize the need for a positive religion for the people, so that Catholicism might have been destroyed with the consent of the masses, had meant the failure of the Revolution. As always Quinet used history to teach by example, forming the past into well ordered battalions. He had some conception of what was impossible in the present; but was impatient with the past for having failed to accomplish miracles.

Robespierre had undertaken to elevate upon a Gothic base, which he changed not at all, a small edifice of Greek or Roman style, and this impossible architecture had crumbled of itself as he built. He rendered a revolution impossible, thinking he had saved it. The hope to preserve Catholicism for the masses and create a cult of a Supreme Being for official adepts had been doomed to failure.


The modification Quinet made was, however, one of degree not of kind. As he would have given a monopoly to truth and exterminated error, so truth itself must exercise caution, and must satisfy the common taste for a positive religion with external trappings. Philosophy was for the elite. Cousin was not cited here.

Comte once complained that the typical student of history saw only men and never things, whereas the latter pushed men with an "irresistable force." The error was the same as that of Indians who had attributed an eclipse to Columbus because he had predicted it. Pantheism, in confusing all phenomena with God, and eclecticism, being of essentially the same nature, permitted, if they did not result in, indifference as regarded the morality of events as callous as that posited by Comte's materialism.

The adherents of the doctrine of progress, however, seemed not indifferent to historical crimes, but determined to justify them, which was worse. The lessons of history could never be learned, thought Quinet, until all actions, independent of time and place, be measured against an absolute and immutable standard. Thierry and Buchez and Roux, the latter pair in particular,

49 Michel, l'Idée de l'État, p.434.
one may say, became celebrated by their rehabilitation of the great crimes of history. All that had occurred in the annals of France they justified upon the plea of necessity, all failures of the past had been "premature." In 1855 Quinet turned his attention to the evil these men practiced:

Le tout est bien may be understood and maintained to a certain point if one applies it as did Leibnitz, to the whole, to the universe and to humanity, which survives and heals the wounds it has made. But if you apply the same maxim blindly, as does Candide, to the particular history of each nation, of each man, if the faults of people and of individuals produce nothing but the greatest good, if their servility makes their liberty, if their vices engender their virtues, the moral order is abolished. History is no longer the great judgment of the Eternal. You remove justice with conscience; much more, you remove reality.

For to do so supposes that there is neither decadence nor fall for peoples, no matter what their actions they are as certain of tomorrow as is humanity itself. At the same time it is the overthrow of philosophy; the overthrow of history.

The theologian declared that the Old Testament was the necessary road to the law of justice, unpityingly closing his eyes to the bloody centuries he must traverse. Quinet accused the French of a like method in the

50 Ibid., p.213.

51 Quinet, O.C., III (Philosophie de l'histoire de France), pp.355-356.
writing of their own history. The historian, confident that the secret of past suffering was in the political rights by which the nation's history was crowned, dealt only in praise.52

The result would have been amusing if the effect of such thinking had not been so tragic. Quinet outlined a few of the examples which he found most ridiculous. One excused arbitrary authority under the ancien régime because it had been needed to organize equality; in the new France arbitrary authority seemed necessary in order to organize liberty; next one arrived at the Providential necessity for the despotism of the Terror, which engendered the necessity, more Providential than before, of a despotism which overthrew and succeeded it. The procedure could be continued up to the moment at which he wrote; the only virtue being force, and what was supported and justified up to 1789 was deserted and condemned the moment force was detached from it.53

Quinet wondered how Thierry had never suspected that the development of a more limited monarchy might not have been of more value to the future of France.

52 Ibid., p.364.
53 Ibid., pp.410-416.
Could one not suspect that despotism, rather than preparing liberty had rendered it impossible?

Our theorists have neglected one quantity which has an enormous value. They have forgotten the effect produced upon a people by the education of an absolute secular power. Where they have seen progress in the material order, they have seen the consummation of the revolution; they have forgotten but one thing in the history of humanity; that is the human soul. They have not dreamed that under the pressure of an unlimited monarchy the temperament of a nation is so formed that it becomes more and more difficult that it be able to breathe the air of liberty....

How many peoples formed by absolute power have remained in an eternal childhood, without ever having been able to don the virile robe; phantoms whose existence may hardly be discerned beneath the history of their masters! Institutions make the education of a people; that is the foundation of the historians of antiquity. By what fatalism have our theorists renounced that large base? 54

Of those who believed that success made legitimate any crime Quinet could not forbear to ask of what benefit it was to live long after an event. The persistent illusion of the terrorists had indeed been to invoke the success of the Terror. Seventy years later posterity might open its eyes to the despotism of Napoleon III and wonder. 55 Crime after crime was justified for having "saved the Revolution;" Quinet turned the page

54 Ibid., p.388.
55 Quinet, La Révolution, II, 464-470.
and was already at ruin.56

The doctrine of progress must cease to be perverted so that it might cloak the infamies of the past. Quinet declared himself proud to have made his contribution to the modern faith that man might advance, but had never dreamed of the day when the doctrine would be formed into an instrument against all progress. The time had nevertheless arrived. Men concluded that man, whatever his activity, "doing good or evil, drinking, eating, and creeping served progress."57 Progress meant but one thing, the higher development of man's spirit, and Quinet felt that much of the difficulty which had arisen could be erased the moment this basic definition were reestablished.

In noting the important point on which Michelet's view of history differed from that of Hegel, Haac very nearly describes Quinet's case, though in both instances Hegel only fortified Vico in that area where the two friends seem to follow the German philosopher. If Hegel saw in great historical changes successive incarnations of the divine spirit, and if he recognized man's liberty of action within this synthesis, the dif-

56 Ibid., II, 285.

ficulty was that Napoleon was acclaimed equally with the Revolution, the Restoration with July 1830. Michelet, writes Haac,

indeed wished to see the divine spirit being manifest in victories of the people, but not in the success of their political adversaries.

"A particular set of ideals" rather than "the people" is a better way of putting it for Quinet, if not for Michelet, but with this modification accurate description is achieved. The ideal, for Quinet, was never sacrificed to success.

In praising the human race for what a century added in the way of material results one was granting honors that rivers continued to flow, one made it an infinite glory to man that the earth yet turned. Quinet warned that material progress, with its increased demands for specialization, held more dangers than promise for the only type of progress worthy of praise. Philosophy would come to be disdained because no one understood it any longer; only vanity would survive. The lowest would set himself up as a model for others,

58 Haac, op. cit., pp. 97-98.

59 Quinet detested the work of Taine and Renan, and spoke frequently of their "aridity," of how well they represented the corruption and sophisms of Second Empire society. B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11830, "Journal Quinet," VI, 124 and 183.

60 Quinet, La Révolution, III, 432-433.
and the most intolerable of all possible situations would come to prevail: the necessity to endure the fatuousness of the slave. Although the development of mechanical contrivances demanded a more than equal development of the energies of the spirit, the spirit was more and more buried beneath what one complacently termed a victory over nature. For example, how ridiculous it was to imagine that railroads would bestow dignity, security and liberty without man's lifting his finger.  

I wish finally to take from you that last bit of self-deception. Servitude will travel more swiftly than you along those iron rails; it will be in advance of you if you have no other means of escaping it. Railroads will entrain none but the ideas you supply, and if it is to be a slave conception rails, steam, electricity, will be able to transport nothing but your slavery to the ends of the earth.

Materialism was that slavery.

Such were Quinet's conclusions. During the last years of the Second Empire the political climate of France grew more promising, and Quinet again began to devote effort to influencing opinion along specific lines of policy by taking part in the polemic of day to day political discussion. Sedan permitted him to

62 Ibid., p. 548.
return to the fatherland, and to give the last five years of his life to the fight for republican institutions in France. The mutable application of immutable principles became then a duty, but by neither word nor act did he retract the conclusions of exile.
During the greater part of the first seven years following his December 1851 flight from France, Quinet resided in Brussels. Here he and the second Mme. Quinet were members of a small French colony of political refugees. Earning a livelihood was not a problem for the self-exiled prophet after his marriage in 1852; Mme. Quinet enjoyed a modest private income, and, if not affluent, the couple did not suffer want in the same fashion as did many others in their banished company.\(^1\)

The intensity of Quinet's literary activity during these years in Belgium was such that it culminated, in 1857, in a near physical and mental breakdown.\(^2\) The purpose of every line he wrote was to reawaken the French conscience. His determination to remain outside of France until his country repudiated the despot who had overthrown

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1 Seillière gave a quite false impression when he wrote that Quinet "became rich" through his second marriage (op. cit., p. 89).

2 The third volume of Les Révolutions d'Italie; les Esclaves O.C., VIII (Paris: Pagnerre, 1857), a tragedy in verse which was never produced, and practically never read; Marnix; les Roumains O.C., VI (Paris: Pagnerre, 1857); Lettre à Sue; La Révolution religieuse au XIXe Siècle; l'Histoire de La Campagne de 1815, which was not published until 1861; Histoire de mes idées; and the preparation of his ten volume Oeuvres complètes for publication were all the work of this period.
legitimate government was unwavering.

Orsini's unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Napoleon III led, indirectly, to Quinet's decision, made six months later in June 1858, to move to Switzerland. After the Orsini incident the Belgian authorities were constrained to enforce more rigid surveillance over the activities of political exiles within their borders, and Quinet and his wife found the resulting situation unbearable. In September 1858 the couple moved to the hamlet of Veytaux, at the eastern extremity of Lake Geneva, where they remained until September 6, 1870. Merlin l'Enchanteur, la Révolution, and la Création were the products of this period. Except for the summer months, the Quinets lived in seclusion until the last years of their stay in Switzerland; but, always, during the season of clement weather friends and admirers made the pilgrimage to the exile's retreat. After 1865 Quinet found increasing pleasure in the society of Geneva's beau monde, and the harshest weeks of winter came to be spent in that city. During the final year of the Second Empire he did a considerable amount of writing

3 2 vols.; Paris: Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie, 1870.

4 Michelet disapproved strongly of Quinet's mixing in such circles. Mme. Quinet, in Edgar Quinet depuis l'Exil, and Mémoires d'Exil (2 vols.; Paris: Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie., 1868-1870), gives a detailed account of the uneventful years of exile.
for the opposition press.

Sedan was the signal for Quinet's immediate return to France. News that a provisional government had been established reached him on September 5; within forty-eight hours he arrived in Paris. During the siege which followed, Quinet's constant and passionate appeals to the people for continued resistance always bespake the absolute certainty of eventual victory.  

In the elections of February 1871 "the only collective influence was that of the clergy;" the most unexpected result, the resurrection of the Legitimist party, "was chiefly explicable" by their intervention. The enemy had not changed. Running as a representative of the party demanding a continuation of the war with Prussia, Quinet was paid a stirring tribute by the electors of the Seine. The Department sent forty-three members to the National Assembly, and Quinet was fifth on this list. Only Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo, Gambetta, and Garibaldi received more votes.

5 For these appeals, a number of which were in the nature of handbills, see Quinet, Le Siège de Paris et la Défense nationale (Paris: Lacroix, Verboeckhoven et Cie.,1871).


7 Ibid., I, 212-213; Ch. Seignobos, Le Déclin de l'Empire et l'Établissement de la 3e République, VII, 282-283; and Mme. Quinet, Edgar Quinet depuis l'Exil, pp.390-391.
The new Assembly met at Bordeaux. In a state of illness which seemed almost certain to be fatal, Quinet left Paris, and arrived at the seat of the government in time for the first full meeting of the new body. Garibaldi, realizing that further resistance to the Germans was impossible, left for Caprera on the evening of the first day the Assembly met, after having been refused the privilege of addressing the body by the anti-republican majority which controlled it. Before departing he turned his quarters over to Quinet.8

Mustering what energies remained to him Quinet resisted any peace settlement which signed away Alsace-Lorraine. Debate on this issue was held on March 1. Henri Martin, Brisson, Delescluze, Floquet, and Clémenceau had put down their names to speak for a continuation of the war. When the hour came they all waived their right to do so. Jules Simon wrote: “What could they have said after such speakers as Victor Hugo, Edgar Quinet, Louis Blanc?”9

In spite of his broken health Quinet moved to Versailles with the National Assembly, and continued to be

8 See Mme. Quinet, Edgar Quinet depuis l’Exil, pp.392-393; and Simon, op. cit., I, 70-74.

9 Simon, op. cit., I, 168. Every individual named here knew, or had corresponded with, Quinet before 1870.
present at every sitting of that body. He was made the
nominal head of Gambetta's organization, the République
française, and frequently addressed its meetings. Quinet
continued to write. L'Esprit Nouveau, which appeared
in November 1874 and was the last of his works published
during his lifetime, went through three editions within
one month. His health improved in 1873, but the end
was near. What was, in so many respects, the most
satisfying experience of his life, was destined to be
brief. Although the period was again one of political
reaction, monarchy was not reestablished, and although
his party was in the minority, its day was approaching.
Above all else, within that party Quinet was paid the
deference and the respect which he knew was just. 10

Suddenly and without warning, on March 27, 1875, Edgar
Quinet died. On his desk over one hundred letters awaited
reply. Republicans and democrats of Spain, Argentina,
Italy, Portugal, England, Germany, Greece, and Switzerland
were represented in that correspondence. 11 When the news
of the death reached Garibaldi he wrote that Edgar Quinet
would have an immortal cult in the hearts of Italians,

10 Mme. Quinet, Edgar Quinet depuis l'Exil, pp. 415-433.
11 B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 20202 bis, "Inventaire
and of free men of all nations. 12 Portuguese republicans sent word from Lisbon.

We cannot forget that Edgar Quinet is an apostle and emancipator of all persecuted and crushed nationalities....

He was one of our most revered friends, in all things he has the right to our gratitude. 13

In the year of the one hundredth anniversary of his birth one of the principal streets of Bucharest was renamed in Quinet's honor. 14 A Roumanian statesman was profoundly certain "that the name of the hero would live eternally in the grateful hearts of the Roumanian people." 15

Quinet was above all a patriot and a religious thinker. That the essence of his nationalism was emphatically nearer to that embodied in Wilson's Fourteen Points than to that of Hitler and Mussolini, or even that of Barrès, is at least suggested by this European reputation. It has, in fact, been said of Michelet that he held the political principles which were adopted at Versailles in 1919, 16 But if Quinet's

12 Quinet, Vie et Mort du Génie grec, p. 298.
13 Ibid., p. 304.
15 Ibid., pp. 68-69.
16 Haac, op. cit., p. 37.
(and Michelet's) thought is maligned historically when interpreted as being a direct line precursor of twentieth-century totalitarian philosophies, it must be remembered that Delcassé and Clémenceau were of the party in France most influenced by Quinet's form of French patriotism. True, they too represented it but poorly, adequately enough only to suggest that the Versailles Treaty is not exactly the place to end the search for examples.

Haac writes of Michelet that, in spite of consecrating his life to the history of his fatherland, he belonged to the cosmopolitan tradition, believing only that no other nation served humanity so well as did France.17 This last brings us much nearer to the reality. Quinet's disciple, Chassin, summed up his master's place by saying that he had given birth to a new genius, one which was neither German nor Italian, but French, "that is to say universal."18 Quinet could have put it no better. His cult of the nation was never independent of eternal values, but France was the chosen vehicle, hers was a mission "for the glory of the world."19

17 Ibid., p.33.
18 Chassin, op. cit., pp.30-31.
The danger in renouncing French nationalism was the consequence certain to result for all humanity. For example, Spain and Italy were necessary to European society; they would be reborn only if France showed the way. If France receded a single step, if she denied her Providential role, "the world would be thrown into confusion."20 "Only France had the religion of justice, the passion for justice."21 But France was not always true to herself.

In the years between 1851 and 1870 Quinet was disheartened and angry that so many of his Republican friends cheered French diplomatic and military successes.22 When, in July 1870, only ten members of the opposition in the French Chamber voted against war credits, he cried out, "Where is hope?"23 Should France betray her mission to fulfil and complete for all of humanity the promise of 1789, her role could not be filled by another, but Quinet never followed the fatherland in error. "My

20 Quinet, l'Ultramontanisme, p.145 and Les Révolutions d'Italie, pp.69-70.
country, right or wrong" was completely foreign to his outlook. Indeed, between 1830 and 1875 France had few harsher critics than Edgar Quinet.

Selflessness and dedication to a universal ideal was the demand he made upon his people. France failed again and again to fulfil the destiny he thought was hers, but Quinet continued to believe that the world's best hope was in his fatherland.

Three-quarters of a century later victory has gone to new barbarians. Quinet would almost certainly agree with his mid-twentieth century countrymen in this evaluation. Has the Roman Church been to blame? If not Quinet was in error. His only logical position would have to be that French leadership has failed to establish itself because the nation could not free itself from the Catholic tradition. Would a Protestant France have changed all of modern history? To ask the question is to answer it.

On one of the frequent occasions during Quinet's lifetime when it was suggested that his conversion to Protestantism was desireable Mme. Quinet made the retort:

It is possible that men are not satisfied with the religious faith of Edgar Quinet, but you may rest assured that the good Lord is quite content with it.

She was also witness to the fact that Quinet privately as well as publicly reiterated that he did not wish to make France Protestant; that he believed the date too advanced. Napoleon's opportunity was lost forever.\textsuperscript{25}

Yet an early twentieth century Protestant admirer of Quinet wrote:

\begin{quote}
That religious revolution so ardently desired by Quinet, and which I wish as well, I hope that it might evolve out of a synthesis of the living forces of Protestantism, of free thought (one of whose leaders is E. Lavisse) and socialism (one of whose chiefs is Liebknecht).\textsuperscript{26}
\end{quote}

Calvinism, Lutheranism and Methodism were little less distasteful to Quinet than was Catholicism, and that there was no real European equivalent of American Unitarianism was Kaspar's explanation for the fact that Quinet never declared himself a Protestant. Quinet did know the work of Emerson, Channing and Parker, and prided himself that his own position was so nearly identical. During the American Civil War he hoped for Lincoln to speak out more clearly on the slavery issue, "as would be worthy of the country" of those religious thinkers.\textsuperscript{27}

Not that one need cross either the Rhine or the Atlantic

\textsuperscript{25} B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11831, "Journal Quinet," VII, 300.


\textsuperscript{27} B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11826, "Journal Quinet," II, 269.
to discover the essence of his religious faith.

Émile, "C'est la plus bel ouvrage de Rousseau:" and in it one finds Quinet's Protestantism. In France, however, the broad foundation for such a faith did not exist. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the most tragic event in the French past for having destroyed the necessary base. Separation of Church and State, and a State monopoly of education was thus the most satisfactory, or only, solution possible. The school was to inculcate the secular faith of the Revolution, and a religious transformation be accomplished in this fashion.

The practice of intolerance had to wait until such time as a State monopoly of education had done its work, until the proper climate of opinion had been created. When Cavour's program, "l'Église libre dans l'État libre," seemed to be having some appeal for French anti-clericals, Quinet made the retort: Autant vaudrait dire: Émancipez le Czarisme. Le Czar libre dans la Russie libre! For, on the subject of Catholicism, Quinet was a fanatic, which is to say that he was a fanatic pure and simple. In his own faith reposed truth, all which was antagonistic to it was evil and false. If Quinet's nationalism was neither intolerant nor exclusive, his religion was both.


and took precedence. He could not bear dissent, or compromise.

A faith in the authority of natural reason, man's free will, and a conscience through which God spoke in terms of immutable verities combined to form Quinet's religion. To choose deliberately to make man's essential sinfulness an article of faith, to thus deny the efficacy of reason, to preach resignation, to bolster all of this with appeals to superstition and to ignorance was simply evil. Ignorance could justify such a faith, in the absence of ignorance only perversity or an interest in keeping society in obedience or in chains explain adherence to it.

The belief that sanity is not statistical is based upon this faith in natural reason, and in the knowledge that environment can corrupt the reasoning capacity in most men. Quinet was fanatical in the conviction that truth had been revealed to him, but was not serene in this certainty. The prevalence of error in the world, and its repeated victories over truth in France itself, did not cause him to doubt. Instead his emotionalism and dogmatism were increased by these accidents of circumstance.

Quinet was proud of the unity of his whole thought, and not entirely without reason. Taine characterized the
speech of the Revolution by writing that facts had no place in it:

Never facts; nothing but abstractions, a stringing together of sentences on nature, reason, the people, tyrants, liberty -- giving the effect of so many inflated balloons crowding and bouncing one another fruitlessly in space. If one did not know that it all culminated in practical and terrible results, one would believe himself before a diversion in logic....

This, he believed was the "final formula and the last word" of the spirit of French classicism. The great virtue of the French, according to Mme. de Staël, was the degree to which they could be expected to set about applying abstract truth in the material world. Two and two must always be four. In this, as in most things, Quinet belonged to the Eighteenth century. Divorcing himself permanently from the cosmopolitanism of Mme. de Staël, otherwise he was more than true to her heritage. He learned the wisdom of intolerance, he might have discovered its justification in her views on religion.

In the midst of the uproar and the passionate criticism which followed the publication of la Révolution, Quinet gave evidence that this had not escaped him. He replied to a friend's comment regarding Mme. de Staël:

Yes I believe that *cette belle âme inspirée* is on my side in this thing, and that she

30 Taine, op. cit., I, 315.
looks down on Veytaux with one of her kind
and indulgent glances.

What must be kept constantly in mind is the place
Quinet holds in the Revolutionary tradition. Even the
quasi-critical Hans Kohn writes:

Michelet and Quinet were no longer there to
witness it -- the former had died in 1874,
the latter in 1875 -- but the light of the
liberal and humanitarian tradition which
they had so faithfully tended burned on....

In Quinet's case it is hardly possible to speak of
genuine liberalism. Not only his conclusions prevent
one from doing so, there is also the fundamentally im-
portant matter of his methods. A part of the liberal
tradition is a belief in the practical wisdom of intel-
lectual integrity and ruthless self-criticism. This is

31 Quinet, Lettres d'Exil, III, 76-77. Seillière (op.
cit., 91-101) is correct in his statement that Quinet answered
friends who were critical on that score by denying that
he meant to preach intolerance; but that he took back
nothing in replies to other friends who approved of this
aspect of the work. Seillière's further contention, that
Quinet was more violent on this subject privately than
in print, is not borne out by the letters he cites, not
even in the cases where his citations prove to be related
to his argument. See Quinet, Lettres d'Exil, I, 149-154,
for an 1852 letter to Mazzini, and ibid., II, 249-251,
for an 1862 letter to Bataillard, both of which suggest
the wisdom of using force against the Catholic Church.

Rereading de l'Allemagne in May 1861 Quinet found that
it contained "cent fois plus d'originalité que les grands
ecrivains qu'elle (Mme. de Staël) analyse." B.N., Nouv.
acq. franc. 11825, "Journal Quinet," I, 152-154. His
first and last love were the same.

32 Kohn, op. cit., p. 76.
the theory. The fact, in so far as Quinet is concerned, is something else.

The Catholic Church with its evil doctrines seemed to Quinet to be the strongest force barring the dissemination of the Revolutionary faith among all classes of the French nation. He attempted to make history prove that tragedy was in store for France if this force were not destroyed. The ordering of history to his purposes was part of his grand strategy, and serious historical comment is rarely to be expected from him. By common consent la Révolution reveals him at his best on this score. Quinet's method for pursuing truth may be judged by observing him at work, and the most indulgent critic could do no better than to chose the volumes in which he summed up his thought on a subject which had consumed his interest during most of his life. Praise from Aulard for this work was the height of paradox.

Late in the year 1861, after a period of several weeks during which Quinet spoke repeatedly of the need to "uplift, enlighten, and rehabilitate" the people, he turned to the writing of la Révolution. Previously he had conceived a work which he thought to entitle Épîtres au Peuple, modeled on Paul, but discarded the notion in favor of the study now in question.33 Croce

spoke as a Liberal in his statement that "true history always strikes a warlike note for the battles of life."\textsuperscript{34} But this cannot be made the sole criterion, if "true history" is to exist.

Mme. Quinet contended that her husband did some preparatory work on the Revolution before 1857 while in Brussels. In December 1861, with the histories of Blanc, Barante, Thiers, de Tocqueville and Michelet as his guides and sources, Quinet took up the work in earnest:\textsuperscript{35} The manuscript was ready for the publisher in August 1863, but the personal papers of the conventionnel Baudot came into his hands just as Quinet was preparing to send it off to Paris.\textsuperscript{36} Fitting these papers into the scheme of his work took the author until January 1864.\textsuperscript{37}

A note to Michelet's history, at the end of the final volume, was the only comment Quinet made on any of the

\textsuperscript{34} Croce, \textit{op. cit.}, p.56.

\textsuperscript{35} B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11826, "Journal Quinet," II, 279. Quinet's small private library was his sole resource.

\textsuperscript{36} B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11830, "Journal Quinet," VI, 6.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., fol. 74. The work did not go on sale in Paris until November 17, 1865. Within eight weeks three editions had been sold out (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11832, "Journal Quinet," VIII, 12). Quinet sold the manuscript outright for 15,000 francs, the highest monetary return he ever realized from a single work (B.N., Nouv. acq. franc. 11831, "Journal Quinet," VII, 178.)
studies which preceded his own. Michelet, upon whose labors so much of Quinet's history was based, found this unforgiveable. When the former made known his displeasure, Quinet replied dishonestly, but in a fashion which revealed a great deal. "Science," after all, was a word he had used frequently in his career.

My practice was to follow somewhat the Cartesian method. I abstained from reading the works which had preceded me in the field. As for your admirable history, I feared it particularly. In rereading it I might well have become discouraged and discontented with my own.

Thus I abstained systematically from rereading a work which no one admires more than I do.

Eight hundred pages on ten years of history, Quinet would have had Michelet believe, had been written out of his head. This was near enough to the truth. Chronology and other "facts" might be found in the secondary accounts. Around this framework Quinet fitted his preconceived message. The past, like other men's ideas, existed to be shaped to a particular end. Ruggiero

38 Michelet wrote: "Thiers, Lamartine n'ont fait aucune recherche. Louis Blanc, avec sa petite collection de Londres, n'a pu même me combattre qu'en me copiant. Seul, dans ce travail de sept ans, j'avais exumé la Révolution des Archives. Je ne dis pas cela par une sotte vanité, mais pour marquer ce suprenant oubli de celui qui seul avait travers les voies" (Mme. Quinet, Cinquante ans, p.321). For the most part Quinet copied Blanc, while refuting him. In the seven subsequent editions during Quinet's lifetime he did nothing to meet this criticism.

wrote of the Liberal's concern that the rule of reason not degenerate into the rule of dogma, and of the necessity "to insure that the triumph of truth shall not close the road to the laborious process by which truth itself is reached." The laborious process, in so far as Quinet was concerned, was for the rest of humanity. He personally, with those who shared his convictions, knew truth, at least to the degree to which it had been revealed to the mind of man. The problem for the present was to raise the nation to the high plateau on which he and his circle stood. With this accomplished, the future might then be free.

The leading anti-clericals of the Third French Republic were the disciples of Edgar Quinet. A religious reformation did not take place in France, but the dissemination of Quinet's anti-Catholic program assisted in making possible the republican majorities of the Third Republic. For almost two generations of French politics the parties of the Left could be marshaled under the banner of anti-clericalism. Combination after combination was formed in which the sole common principle was antagonism to the Catholic Church. Quinet's greatest importance lies in his formulation of the doctrines and prejudices which aided to bind these men together.

40 Ruggiero, op. cit., p.399.
Brisson, Meline, Gambetta, and Ferry are only a few of the more conspicuous leaders of the Third Republic who owed a significant debt to Quinet. In 1882 Jules Ferry left the office of Minister of Public Instruction. His bill, which made primary education free, compulsory and secular, had become law that year. Vacating his offices and assisting at the installation of his successor, Ferry picked up a volume by Quinet and remarked: "Celui-là, je l'emporte, c'est mon breviare." The 1882 education bill was a first step. The culmination came with the separation of Church and State in France. It is not sensible to state that Quinet contributed to making France "anti-religious," even if, as is doubtful, it could be shown convincingly that France later became less or more religious than in his day. But there can be no doubt that the steps taken previous to the First World War, in the direction, at least, of his minimum program, did little or nothing to

41 At the age of twenty Brisson was inspired to a more fervent anti-Catholicism by reading Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde, and addressed himself to the author. Quinet replied: "You who are young, take the flame of life which is seized from our hands and carry it forward." Quinet, Lettres d'Exil, I, 240. See ibid., II, 171 for an 1862 letter to Jules Meline, which contains this typical statement: "Continuez, Monsieur, vous et vos jeunes amis. Soyez notre espérance et notre consolation." Quinet received hundreds of such letters, and never failed to reply in this same vein.

achieve the result he expected from such a policy. For, as important as were his errors in interpreting the past was his blindness to the world of his own day. What has so appropriately been called the "generation of materialism" followed upon his death. Yet Quinet demanded a Reformation such as had never occurred. He appealed to the middle class to enroll in a crusade which demanded sacrifice and promised no material reward. In the end he asked for a dictatorship of religious idealists who were to come to power on a program which damned the material selfishness of the poor equally with that of the rich.

Quinet's final acceptance of intolerance was one of his most interesting aspects. Here he was truly prophetic. Not that a dictatorship of idealistic, temporarily, authoritarian, liberals was ever more than a mad dream, but because he lost his liberal optimism in the face of experience. What seemed to be the firm establishment of democratic liberalism in Western Europe came after his death, but Quinet foreshadowed a later awakening. He once stated, while declaring his willingness to give ground on all other points, that the essential necessity was freedom of thought. This was the base upon which his "modern spirit" rested. That freedom he sacrificed to Truth.
In discarding a basic principle Quinet did not desert his fundamental faith, and this is important. Man was good, only the Roman Church corrupted him. Proper environment need only be established and given time. All hope was not abandoned, but Edgar Quinet, in embracing the doctrine of intolerance, became a captive of a tradition, an example who lends support to his own overstated but sometimes penetrating analysis of the French experience.

Nineteenth-century France was exceedingly rich in men who missed greatness, but who were highly endowed with talent and intelligence, men whose work remains significant for its intrinsic merit, and today has a real value beyond that which it possesses as source material which aids in understanding the spirit of the time and place in which it was produced. Renan, Proudhon and de Tocqueville might be named to such a group. Quinet falls short of such company. In his influence upon the political aspects of French history he had a greater significance than any of these men. Eloquent and talented, he put his life into an attack upon the most powerful enemy in France of his own religious creed. The weapons he provided fell to more realistic men, men with political rather than religious ends in view.
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* References to works which appear in this volume are to other editions.
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PART VI. THE ENLIGHTENMENT


PART VII. MISCELLANEOUS


Cahiers de la Quinzaine. (July, 1903).


I, Richard Howard Powers, was born in Brockton, Massachusetts, April 26, 1919. I received my secondary school education in the public schools of Pensacola, Florida, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania. My undergraduate training was obtained at The Ohio State University, from which I received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1948. From the same university I received the degree of Master of Arts in 1949. In 1948 I received an appointment as University Scholar in The Ohio State University, where I specialized in the Department of History. During the year 1949-1950 I served as a graduate assistant in that department. During the year 1950-1951 I received a Fulbright award for study in France where I did research on my dissertation subject. I received appointment as an instructor in the Department of History at Southern Methodist University in 1951.