

OXFORD



John McManners

Church and Society in
Eighteenth-Century France

The Religion of the People and the Politics
of Religion

Volume 2

The Oxford History of the Christian Church

Edited by
Henry and Owen Chadwick

This page intentionally left blank

Church and Society in Eighteenth-Century France

Volume 2

The Religion of the People and the Politics of Religion

John McManners

CLARENDON PRESS · OXFORD

1998

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Bangkok Buenos Aires Cape Town Chennai
Dar es Salaam Delhi Hong Kong Istanbul Karachi Kolkata
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Mumbai Nairobi
São Paulo Shanghai Taipei Tokyo Toronto

Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press
in the UK and in certain other countries

Published in the United States by
Oxford University Press Inc., New York

© John McManners 1998

The moral rights of the authors have been asserted

Database right Oxford University Press (maker)

First published 1998

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced,
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press,
or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the appropriate
reprographics rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction
outside the scope of the above should be sent to the Rights Department,

Oxford University Press, at the address above

You must not circulate this book in any other binding or cover
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Data available

ISBN 0-19-826963-3

Contents

<i>Abbreviations</i>	vii
III THE RELIGION OF THE PEOPLE	
22 From Baptism to the <i>Requiescat in pace</i>	3
23 Liturgical Worship	40
24 Sermons	58
25 The Curé's <i>Prône</i> and Parish Missions	78
26 Religious Practice	94
27 On the Margins of Official Religion	119
28 Confraternities	156
29 Popular Religion and Clerical Reformers	189
30 The Dark Side of the Supernatural	221
IV THE CLERGY AND MORALS	
31 The Confessional	241
32 Commercial Loans and Lotteries	263
33 Sexual Passion	277
34 The Theatre	312
V CROWN AND PARLEMENT: JESUITS AND JANSENISTS	
35 The Jansenist Quarrel	345
36 <i>Unigenitus</i>	353
37 The Appeal to a General Council	370
38 From the Regent to Fleury	398
39 The Changing Face of Jansenism	423
40 Fleury's Repression and the Interventions of the Parlement	456

41 The Mid-Century Crisis	481
42 The Jesuits of France	509
43 The Fall of the Jesuits	530
VI THE RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND THE ISSUE OF TOLERATION	
44 The Huguenots: The Great Persecution	565
45 Cruelty and Compromise, 1700–1774	589
46 Lutherans and Jews: Routine Intolerance	626
47 Towards a Grudging Toleration, 1774–1789	644
VII THE CRISIS OF THE <i>ANCIEN RÉGIME</i>	
48 The Twilight of Jansenism	661
49 The Political Role of the Bishops	679
50 The Revolt of the Curés	705
<i>Notes</i>	745
<i>Index</i>	830

Abbreviations

Primary Sources

- D'Argenson R.-L. de Voyer, marquis d'Argenson, *Journal et mémoires*, ed. E. J. B. Rathery (9 vols., 1859–67).
- Bachaumont L. P. de Bachaumont, Pidanset de Mairobert, and Mouffle d'Angerville, *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de la République des lettres en France* (36 vols., 1779–89).
- Barbier E.-J.-F. Barbier, *Chronique de la Régence et du règne de Louis XV, 1718–1763* (8 vols., 1857–8).
- Grimm F.-M. Grimm, *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et politique*, ed. M. Tourneux (16 vols., 1871–80).
- Guyot P.-J. Guyot, *Répertoire universel et raisonné de jurisprudence civile, criminelle, canonique et bénéficiale* (64 vols., 1775–83, + 14 vols. supp. 1786).
- Luynes C.-P. d'Albert, duc de Luynes, *Mémoires du duc de Luynes sur la cour de Louis XV*, ed. L. Dussieux and E. Soulié (11 vols., 1860–5).
- Marais M. Marais, *Journal et mémoires*, ed. M. de Lescure (4 vols., 1863).
- Métra L.-F. Métra et al., *Correspondance secrète, politique et littéraire* (18 vols., 1781–90).
- P.V. Ass.* *Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée Générale du Clergé*
- Saint-Simon Louis de Rouvroy, duc de Saint-Simon, *Mémoires* (21 vols., 1829).
- Saint-Simon (Pléiade) Louis de Rouvroy, duc de Saint-Simon, *Mémoires*, ed. G. Truc, Pléiade (9 vols., 1950).
- Voltaire, *Corresp.* Voltaire, *Correspondance*, ed. Th. Besterman (101 vols., Geneva, 1953–65).
References to this edition unless stated otherwise.
- Correspondance*, new augmented edition by Th. Besterman (135 vols., Paris, 1963–77).
- Voltaire, *Œuvres* François-Marie Arouet, Voltaire, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. L. Moland (52 vols., 1877–85).

Periodicals

- Am. Hist. Rev.* *American Historical Review* (Washington)
Amis Chinon *Les Amis du vieux Chinon: Bulletin* (Chinon)
Anal. cist. *Analecta cisterciensia* (Rome)
L'Anjou hist. *L'Anjou historique* (Angers)
Ann. *Annales. Économies. Sociétés. Civilisations.* (Paris)
Ann. Acad. Mâcon *Annales de l'Académie de Mâcon* (Mâcon)
Ann. Bourgogne *Annales de Bourgogne* (Dijon)
Ann. Bretagne *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest* (Rennes)
Ann. Clermont-Ferrand *Annales de Clermont-Ferrand* (Clermont-Ferrand)
Ann. dém. hist. *Annales de démographie historique* (Paris)
Ann. Est *Annales de l'Est* (Nancy)
Ann. Haute-Provence *Annales de Haute-Provence* (Dijon)
Ann. hist. Rév. fr. *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* (formerly *Revue historique de la Révolution française*) (Paris)

Ann. internat. crim. *Annales internationales de criminologie* (Paris)
Ann. Malte *Annales de l'Ordre souverain militaire de Malte* (Rome)
Ann. Midi *Annales du Midi* (Toulouse)
Ann. Normandie *Annales de Normandie* (Caen)
Ann. rév. *Annales révolutionnaires* (Société des études robespierristes) (Paris)
Ann. Soc. Cannes *Annales de la Société scientifique et littéraire de Cannes et de l'arrondissement de Grasse* (Cannes)

Ann. Soc. Rousseau *Annales de la Société Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (Geneva)
Ann. Soc. Saint-Malo *Annales de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de l'arrondissement de Saint-Malo* (Saint-Malo)

L'Année canonique *L'Année canonique* (Inst. cath. fac. de droit canonique, Paris)
Arch. Église Alsace *Archives de l'Église d'Alsace* (Strasbourg)
Arch. Hist. Soc. Jesu *Archivum Historicum Societatis Jesu* (Rome)
Arch. juives *Archives juives* (Paris)
Bibl. École Chartes *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* (Paris)
Le Bugey *Le Bugey* (Belley)
Bull. Acad. delph. *Bulletin (mensuel) de l'Académie delphinale* (Grenoble)
Bull. ann. Cluny *Bulletin annuel des amis de Cluny* (Dijon)
Bull. Auvergne *Bulletin historique et scientifique de l'Auvergne* (Clermont-Ferrand)

<i>Bull. Belley</i>	<i>Bulletin d'histoire et d'archéologie du diocèse de Belley</i> (Bourg-en-Bresse)
<i>Bull. Com. Nîmes</i>	<i>Bulletin du Comité de l'art chrétien de Nîmes</i> (Nîmes)
<i>Bull. Com. Paris</i>	<i>Bulletin du Comité d'histoire et d'archéologie du diocèse de Paris</i> (Paris)
<i>Bull. Comm. Seine-et-Oise</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Commission des antiquités et des arts de Seine-et-Oise</i> (Versailles)
<i>Bull. Diana</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Diana</i> (Montbrison)
<i>Bull. Fac. cath. Lille</i>	<i>Bulletin des Facultés catholiques de Lille</i> (Lille)
<i>Bull. Féd. Franche Comté</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Fédération des sociétés savantes de Franche Comté</i> (Besançon)
<i>Bull. Hist. Med.</i>	<i>Bulletin of the History of Medicine</i> (Baltimore)
<i>Bull. litt. ecclés.</i>	<i>Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique</i> (Institut catholique: Toulouse)
<i>Bull. Lyon</i>	<i>Bulletin historique du diocèse de Lyon</i> (Lyon)
<i>Bull. méms. Soc. Côtes-du-Nord</i>	<i>Bulletin et mémoires de la Société d'émulation des Côtes-du-Nord</i> (Saint-Brieuc)
<i>Bull. méms. Soc. Ille-et-Vilaine</i>	<i>Bulletin et mémoires de la Société archéologique du département d'Ille-et-Vilaine</i> (Rennes)
<i>Bull. Soc. Aube</i>	<i>Bulletin (mensuel) de la Société académique d'agri- culture, sciences, arts et belles-lettres du département de l'Aube</i> (earlier <i>Mémoires</i>) (Troyes)
<i>Bull. Soc. Basses-Alpes</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société scientifique et littéraire des Basses-Alpes</i> (Digne)
<i>Bull. Soc. Bayonne</i>	<i>Bulletin (trimestriel) de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Bayonne</i> (Bayonne)
<i>Bull. Soc. Borda</i>	<i>Bulletin (trimestriel) de la Société de Borda</i> (Dax)
<i>Bull. Soc. Bretagne</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'histoire et archéologie de Bretagne</i> (Rennes)
<i>Bull. Soc. Draguignan</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'études scientifiques et archéologiques de Draguignan</i> (Draguignan)
<i>Bull. Soc. Drôme</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie et de statistique de la Drôme</i> (Valence)
<i>Bull. Soc. Eure-et-Loire</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique d'Eure-et-Loire</i> (Chartres)
<i>Bull. Soc. Gers</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société archéologique, historique, littéraire et scientifique du Gers</i> (Auch)
<i>Bull. Soc. Guyenne</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société des Bibliophiles de Guyenne</i> (Bordeaux)
<i>Bull. Soc. Hautes-Alpes</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'études historiques, scientifiques et littéraires des Hautes-Alpes</i> (Gap)
<i>Bull. Soc. hist. mod.</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire moderne</i> (Paris)
<i>Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</i> (Paris)

<i>Bull. Soc. Meuse</i>	<i>Bulletin des Sociétés d'histoire et archéologie de la Meuse</i> (Bar-le-Duc)
<i>Bull. Soc. Montargis</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'émulation de l'arrondissement de Montargis</i> (Montargis)
<i>Bull. Soc. Morbihan</i>	<i>Bulletin (mensuel) de la Société polymathique du Morbihan</i> (Vannes)
<i>Bull. Soc. Morinie</i>	<i>Bulletin historique de la Société des antiquaires de la Morinie</i> (earlier <i>Mémoires</i>) (Saint-Omer)
<i>Bull. Soc. Nantes</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société archéologique et historique de Nantes et de la Loire-Inférieure</i> (Nantes)
<i>Bull. Soc. Normandie</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de Normandie</i> (Caen-Rouen)
<i>Bull. Soc. Oise</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société académique d'archéologie, sciences et arts du département de l'Oise</i> (Beauvais)
<i>Bull. Soc. Orléanais</i>	<i>Bulletin (trimestriel) de la Société archéologique et historique de l'Orléanais</i> (Orléans)
<i>Bull. Soc. Orne</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société historique et archéologique de l'Orne</i> (Alençon)
<i>Bull. Soc. Ouest</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest et des Musées de Poitiers</i> (earlier <i>Mémoires</i>) (Poitiers)
<i>Bull. Soc. Paris</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France</i> (Paris)
<i>Bull. Soc. Pau</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société des sciences, lettres et arts de Pau</i> (Pau)
<i>Bull. Soc. phil. vosgienne</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société philomatique vosgienne</i> (Saint-Dié)
<i>Bull. Soc. Sarthe</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'agriculture, sciences et arts de la Sarthe</i> (Le Mans)
<i>Bull. Soc. Seine-et-Marne</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie, sciences, lettres et arts du département de Seine-et-Marne</i> (Meaux)
<i>Bull. Soc. Sens</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société archéologique de Sens</i> (Sens)
<i>Cahiers hist.</i>	<i>Cahiers d'histoire</i> (Lyon: universities of Clermont, Lyon, and Grenoble)
<i>Cahiers hist. enseign.</i>	<i>Cahiers de l'histoire de l'enseignement</i> (Rouen)
<i>Cahiers Bazadais</i>	<i>Les Cahiers du Bazadais</i> (Bazas)
<i>Cahiers Vitrezois</i>	<i>Les Cahiers du Vitrezois: revue historique, archéologique et littéraire des Hauts de Gironde</i> (Paris)
<i>Cath. Hist. Rev.</i>	<i>The Catholic Historical Review</i> (Washington)
<i>Chron. Port-Royal</i>	<i>Chroniques de Port-Royal</i> (Paris)
<i>Church Hist.</i>	<i>Church History</i> (Chicago)
<i>Cîteaux</i>	<i>Cîteaux, commentarii cistercienses</i> (Achel)
<i>Coll. cist.</i>	<i>Collectanea cisterciensia</i> (Rome)

<i>Comptes Soc. Clermont-en-Beauvaisis</i>	<i>Comptes rendus et mémoires de la Société archéologique et historique de Clermont-en-Beauvaisis</i> (Clermont-en-Beauvaisis)
<i>Divus Thomas</i>	<i>Divus Thomas, commentarium de philosophia et theologia</i> (Plaisance)
<i>Eng. Hist. Rev.</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i> (London)
<i>Ensembles d'Écoles</i>	<i>Ensemble d'Écoles supérieures et Facultés catholiques (Fédération universitaire et polytechnique de Lille)</i> (Lille)
<i>Études rurales</i>	<i>Études rurales</i> (École des Hautes Études) (Paris)
<i>Études XVIII^e siècle</i>	<i>Études sur le dix-huitième siècle</i> (Univ. libre, Brussels)
<i>Eur. J. Population</i>	<i>European Journal of Population</i> (Amsterdam)
<i>Eur. St. Rev.</i>	<i>European Studies Review (European History Quarterly)</i> (London)
<i>Fr. Hist.</i>	<i>French History</i> (Oxford)
<i>Fr. Hist. St.</i>	<i>French Historical Studies</i> (Raleigh, NC)
<i>Fr. St.</i>	<i>French Studies</i> (Oxford)
<i>Genava</i>	<i>Genava</i> (Geneva)
<i>Hist. J.</i>	<i>The Historical Journal</i> (Cambridge)
<i>L'Information hist.</i>	<i>L'Information historique</i> (Paris)
<i>JAMS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Musicological Society</i> (Richmond, Va.)
<i>J. Eccles. Hist.</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i> (London)
<i>J. hist.</i>	<i>Journal historique</i>
<i>J. Interdisc. Hist.</i>	<i>Journal of Interdisciplinary History</i>
<i>J. Mod. Hist.</i>	<i>Journal of Modern History</i> (Chicago)
<i>J. Ren. Mod. St.</i>	<i>Journal of Renaissance and Modern Studies</i> (Nottingham)
<i>Lettres romanes</i>	<i>Lettres romanes</i> (Louvain)
<i>Maison-Dieu</i>	<i>La Maison-Dieu</i> (Centre de Pastorale liturgique: Paris)
<i>Mélanges sc. relig.</i>	<i>Mélanges de science religieuse</i> (Lille)
<i>Méms. Acad. Besançon</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Besançon</i> (Besançon)
<i>Méms. Acad. Lyon</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie des sciences, belles-lettres et arts de Lyon</i> (Lyon)
<i>Méms. Acad. nat. Angers</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie nationale des sciences, arts et belles-lettres d'Angers</i> (Angers)
<i>Méms. Acad. nat. Caen</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie nationale des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Caen</i> (Caen)
<i>Méms. Acad. nat. Dijon</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie nationale (impériale) des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Dijon</i> (Dijon)
<i>Méms. Acad. nat. Metz</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie nationale des sciences, arts et belles-lettres de Metz</i> (Metz)

<i>Méms. Acad. nat. Toulouse</i>	<i>Mémoires de l'Académie nationale des sciences, inscriptions et belles-lettres de Toulouse (Toulouse)</i>
<i>Méms. Comm. Côte-d'Or</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Commission des antiquités de la Côte-d'Or (Dijon)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Alais</i>	<i>Mémoires et comptes rendus de la Société scientifique et littéraire d'Alais (Alais)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Aube</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société académique d'agriculture, des sciences, arts et belles-lettres du département de l'Aube (later Bulletin) (Troyes)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Bretagne</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne (later Bulletin) (Rennes)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Cambrai</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'émulation de Cambrai (Cambrai)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Carcassonne</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société des arts et des sciences de Carcassonne (Carcassonne)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Côtes-du-Nord</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'émulation des Côtes-du-Nord (Saint-Brieuc)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Doubs</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'émulation du département du Doubs (Besançon)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Marne</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'agriculture, commerce, science et arts du département de la Marne (Châlons-sur-Marne)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Morinie</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de la Morinie (later Bulletin) (Saint-Omer)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Nord</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société centrale d'agriculture, sciences et arts du département du Nord (Douai)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Orléans</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société d'agriculture, sciences, belles-lettres et arts d'Orléans (Orléans)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Ouest</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société des antiquaires de l'Ouest (later Bulletin) (Poitiers)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Paris</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et de l'Île-de-France (later Bulletin) (Paris)</i>
<i>Méms. Soc. Rambouillet</i>	<i>Mémoires de la Société archéologique de Rambouillet (Rambouillet)</i>
<i>Méms. Trav. Fac. cath. Lille</i>	<i>Mémoires et Travaux des Facultés catholiques de Lille (later Bulletin) (Lille)</i>
<i>Mentalités</i>	<i>Mentalités: histoire des cultures et des sociétés (Paris)</i>
<i>Le Monde alpin</i>	<i>Le Monde alpin et rhodanien (Nyons)</i>
<i>La Montagne Sainte-Geneviève</i>	<i>La Montagne Sainte-Geneviève et ses abords: Société historique et archéologique du V^e arrondissement (Paris)</i>
<i>Music & Letters</i>	<i>Music & Letters (Taunton)</i>
<i>Neophilologus</i>	<i>Neophilologus (New York)</i>
<i>Nice hist.</i>	<i>Nice historique (Nice)</i>

<i>Nouv. Rev. Champagne et Brie</i>	<i>La Nouvelle Revue de Champagne et de Brie</i> (earlier, just <i>Revue</i>) (Châlons-sur-Marne)
<i>Pays d'Ange</i>	<i>Le Pays d'Ange</i> (Lisieux)
<i>Population</i>	<i>Population</i> (Paris)
<i>Provence hist.</i>	<i>Provence historique</i> (Marseille)
<i>Province du Maine</i>	<i>La Province du Maine</i> (Le Mans)
<i>Rev. Alsace</i>	<i>Revue d'Alsace</i> (Strasbourg)
<i>Rev. Anjou</i>	<i>Revue de l'Anjou</i> (from 1880; earlier titles included <i>Maine-et-Loire</i> and <i>Maine</i>) (Angers)
<i>Rev. Auvergne</i>	<i>La Revue d'Auvergne</i> (Clermont-Ferrand)
<i>Rev. Bas-Poitou</i>	<i>Revue de Bas-Poitou</i> (Fontenay-le-Comte)
<i>Rev. belge phil. hist.</i>	<i>Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire</i> (Brussels)
<i>Rev. bénédictine</i>	<i>Revue bénédictine</i> (Abbey of Maredsous, Belgium)
<i>Rev. Bordeaux</i>	<i>Revue historique de Bordeaux et du département de la Gironde</i> (Bordeaux)
<i>Rev. Champagne et Brie</i>	<i>Revue de Champagne et de Brie</i> (revived as <i>Nouvelle</i>) (Châlons-sur-Marne)
<i>Rev. Clergé fr.</i>	<i>Revue du Clergé français</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. Comminges</i>	<i>Revue de Comminges</i> (Toulouse)
<i>Rev. études juives</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i> (Société des études juives) (Paris)
<i>Rev. fr.</i>	<i>La Révolution française</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. Gascogne</i>	<i>Revue de Gascogne: Bulletin de la Société historique de Gascogne</i> (Auch)
<i>Rev. Gévaudan</i>	<i>Revue du Gévaudan, des Causses et des Cévennes</i> (Mende)
<i>Rev. Haute-Auvergne</i>	<i>Revue de la Haute-Auvergne</i> (Société des lettres, sciences et arts de la Haute-Auvergne) (Aurillac)
<i>Rev. hist.</i>	<i>Revue historique</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. armée</i>	<i>Revue historique de l'armée</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. droit fr.</i>	<i>Revue historique de droit français et étranger</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. ecclés.</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique</i> (Louvain)
<i>Rev. hist. écon. sociale</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire économique et sociale</i> (earlier <i>Annales</i>) (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. Église Fr.</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire de l'Église de France</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. litt. Fr.</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. missions</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire des missions</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. mod. contemp.</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. religions</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. hist. théâtre</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire du théâtre</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. internat. enseign.</i>	<i>Revue internationale de l'enseignement</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. Libournais</i>	<i>Revue historique et archéologique du Libournais</i> (Libourne)

<i>Rev. Lyon</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire de Lyon</i> (Lyon)
<i>Rev. Mabillon</i>	<i>Revue Mabillon</i> (Ligugé)
<i>Rev. Maine</i>	<i>Revue historique et archéologique du Maine</i> (Le Mans)
<i>Rev. monde cath.</i>	<i>Revue du monde catholique</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. mus.</i>	<i>Revue musicale</i> (Paris) <i>Rev. Nord</i> <i>Revue du Nord</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. quest. hist.</i>	<i>Revue des questions historiques</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. Rouergue</i>	<i>Revue du Rouergue</i> (Rodez)
<i>Rev. sc. hum.</i>	<i>Revue des sciences humaines</i> (Lille)
<i>Rev. sc. philos. théol.</i>	<i>Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques</i> (Paris)
<i>Rev. Soc. Villiers-sur-Marne</i>	<i>Revue de la Société historique de Villiers-sur-Marne et de la Brie française</i> (Villiers-sur-Marne)
<i>Rev. Socs. Haute-Normandie</i>	<i>Revue des Sociétés savantes de Haute-Normandie</i> (Rouen)
<i>Rev. Versailles</i>	<i>Revue de l'histoire de Versailles et de Seine-et-Oise</i> (Versailles)
<i>Rev. Vivarais</i>	<i>Revue historique, archéologique et scientifique du Vivarais</i> (Annonay)
<i>Soc. sau. hist. arch.</i>	<i>La Société savoissienne d'histoire et d'archéologie: Mémoires et documents</i> (Chambéry)
<i>St. 18th C. Culture</i>	<i>Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture</i> (Cleveland)
<i>S.V.E.C.</i>	<i>Studies on Voltaire and the 18th Century</i> (Voltaire Foundation, Oxford)
<i>Theol. Zeitschrift</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i> (Basel)
<i>Trav. Acad. nat. Reims</i>	<i>Travaux de l'Académie nationale de Reims</i> (Reims)
<i>XVIII^e Siècle</i>	<i>Dix-huitième Siècle</i> (Paris)
<i>XVII^e Siècle</i>	<i>Dix-septième Siècle: Bulletin de la Société d'études du XVII^e siècle</i> (Paris)
<i>Yale Fr. St.</i>	<i>Yale French Studies</i> (New Haven)

III The Religion of the People

This page intentionally left blank

22 From Baptism to the Requiescat in Pace

I Baptism, Confirmation, First Communion

The laws of both Church and State made baptism obligatory. An exception was made for the children of Jews, Turks, and pagans; heretics like the Calvinists, who baptized their own, could be compelled to resort to the ministrations of a Catholic priest, though only by special decree of the public authority; if this happened, the child had to be brought up in the Roman faith, if necessary by separation from its family. The royal declaration of 17 May 1724 imposed fines on parents who failed to have their infants baptized within twenty-four hours, while episcopal ordinances specified the permissible delay before ecclesiastical penalties were incurred (in the diocese of Autun in 1712 it was reduced from six days to two).¹ The full baptismal office as fixed by the Council of Trent was lengthy, and could be a trial in cold weather (the Enlightenment provided the inevitable scientific treatise on the dangers of using cold water, and the *Rituel* of Paris authorized heating it).² Such circumstances might make it advisable for the baptism of a sickly baby to be delayed—and there were many in this age of terrifyingly high infant mortality. There was therefore an emergency rite consisting of the pouring of water on the child's head in the name of the persons of the Trinity; this *ondoïement*, containing the essential matter of the sacrament, was followed in due course by the baptism proper.

The emergency ceremony could be performed by the midwife; in this case two witnesses were required, and the curé had to be informed. There was no need for the head to have emerged from the womb, and in the courses of obstetrics organized for midwives in the late eighteenth century, information was given on how to blow in water.³ They were also taught the grimly explicit rules of the casuists: baptize a monster if the head is recognizably human, and perform double lustrations for Siamese twins.⁴ Levret, the master surgeon who delivered the grandson of the duc de Croÿ, performed the *ondoïement* before he began to use his instruments; the duke, not

entirely convinced of the validity of the action, got the curé of Saint-Sulpice to come and repeat it.⁵ His concern was understandable. According to the theologians, an unbaptized infant could not go to eternal bliss, the outward symbol of its deprivation being exclusion from burial in consecrated ground; but if the rite had been performed, salvation was assured. 'Quoi qu'il en soit', said the duc de Luynes of a dying child, 'il a été baptisé: il est heureux.'⁶ Hence the desperation of families when the child was stillborn or the midwife had miscalculated the time available—rushing the pathetic little corpse to a shrine where 'miracles' of temporary resuscitation took place to enable the sacred formula to be effectively pronounced. It was the bounden duty of all Christians to bring unbaptized adults to the font to save their immortal souls, and there were vagabonds who made a living by recounting stories of how they had been deprived of the means of grace, earning themselves free board and lodging while they were instructed before the ceremony.⁷

Ordinary folk almost invariably obeyed the rules, and the baptism took place on the day of birth or the day after. A godparent who lived at a distance would come to the house beforehand to be ready.⁸ The great, however, proceeded in a leisurely fashion to organize a resplendent gathering for the appearance in church, having the brief emergency rite immediately and the formal ceremony later. Christophe de Beaumont, the future archbishop of Paris, was born on 26 July 1703, *ondoyé* on the 29th, and baptized on 10 August.⁹ For the duc de Croÿ, born in 1718, the delay was six weeks.¹⁰ The daughters of Louis XV, packed off to the abbey of Fontevrault to save expense, were left an astonishing length of time without formal godparents or Christian names (presumably as a further economy measure). Two were baptized at the ages of 11 and 12, when the sacrament was succeeded immediately by confirmation and First Communion; the other two were brought to the font at the earlier age of 8, because their health seemed to be deteriorating.¹¹

The choice of godparents¹² (a minimum of two, one male and one female) was important, enabling a family to reach out, making alliances, though forethought was needed, since acting in this capacity created 'spiritual affinity', precluding marriage. This was the tragic, anticlerical twist in the plot of Voltaire's *L'Ingénu*: the splendid Huron could not marry Mlle de Saint-Yves because she had stood sponsor for him at the font when he was converted. The law courts were watchful to prevent rigorist clergy hindering families in their choice: in 1736 the archbishop of Aix published synodal ordinances authorizing curés to turn away godparents who were

notorious for evil life or absence from Easter communion—the parlement immediately initiated the procedures of the *appel comme d'abus* against him.¹³ A parish priest might improve his pastoral connections or help a luckless family with no friends by acting as godparent himself¹⁴ (the law of the Church, however, did not allow monks or nuns to act, with the peculiar exception of a regular who was an archbishop). On rare occasions, an institution would send a representative as a gesture of corporate sponsorship of the child, as in 1745 the six great guilds of Paris did to do honour to the secretary of the lieutenant-general of police.¹⁵ People who mattered might make the baptism an occasion for a demonstration of sophisticated humility, the child being held at the font by a beggar, or one of the godparents drawn from the local poor. Thus Montesquieu's mother nominated a simple peasant, 'so that [her son] would better remember that all men are equal before God'.¹⁶ A family servant might be given the honour: Pierre-Louis de la Rochefoucauld, the future bishop, had two old retainers of the ducal house by him when he was baptized in 1743.¹⁷ A variant was to have a servant or a tradesman patronized by the family—or, in the case of an army officer, a soldier in his regiment—to act as a stand-in: thus the son of a noble of the robe of Dôle, born in 1763, had for godparents his paternal grandfather and his maternal great aunt, and they were represented at the ceremony by a wig maker and a milliner.¹⁸ By a reverse gesture bridging the social divide, the very great might offer to act as godparents to the children of ordinary people, more especially their employees. There is a story of such an offer coming uncovenanted in a country place near Saumur in 1777. The postmaster asked a traveller to wait for his relay, as the horses had been sent to bring guests to the baptism of a child; not only did the unknown visitor assent, but he offered to be godfather. When asked by the curé for his name and rank, he replied, 'Joseph, Empereur'—it was Joseph II, the Habsburg Emperor, touring incognito.¹⁹

Protestants brought their children to their chapels for baptism on the first Sunday after birth; this was their rule, though some delayed to the second or third. For them, the essence of the rite was the integration of the new arrival into the worshipping community. Constrained by synodal statutes and fearful of delays, Catholics came to the parish church within twenty-four or, at most, forty-eight hours.²⁰ The family and friends would accompany the parents and godparents, and the children of the village would gather to see them go by. At the church porch, the curé would meet them and ask the godparents to name the child—it had to be a recognized name from

the saints and martyrs of the Church, and except with aristocratic families, it always was. Before entering the portals, the priest pronounced various exorcisms, shutting out all evil and ill will, as it were, from the place of the final ceremony. Then they would all gather round the font; a brief exhortation would be given, and three anointings would form the prelude to the pouring of water on the child's head in the name of the Trinity, the sacramental act. The godparents gave the child a white linen bonnet, the *chrêmeau*, a treasure to keep for life, for its loss would be regarded as a portent of ill luck. The bell would be rung as the family departed, and the godfather had to throw coins or other offerings to the village children waiting at the door. For two or three weeks the mother—if this was economically possible given family circumstances—stayed at home, before going back to the church for her purification—the *relevailles*; here, the curé would pronounce a blessing and celebrate a mass of thanksgiving on behalf of the mother and her child, with prayers for their future preservation and happiness. Thereafter, she would rejoin the ordinary life of the village, and could resume sexual relations with her husband. It was as well, when taking up the pattern of ordinary life again, not to rest too many hopes upon the new infant, for a quarter of all children died before the age of 1, and another quarter before the age of 8. At best, the odds for reaching adulthood were even.

While baptism was obligatory and universal, confirmation was neglected and episodic. Though medieval authorities had declared it a sacrament—according to Aquinas, instituted by Christ himself—the theologians of Trent had been reticent, being chiefly concerned with restoring the sacrament of the altar to its central place in the Christian life. Though it was customary to receive the laying on of hands (generally accompanied by anointing with the chrism) before the First Communion, it was not a necessary prelude, and there were parishes where the number of communicants far exceeded the number of the confirmed.²¹ In the chronicles of the Annonciades of Fécamp we find the mother superior informing the visitor that several nuns have not been confirmed, while on another occasion a social call from a bishop provided the opportunity for him to lay hands on two nuns and various boarders and servants.²² Tronson, superior of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice and adviser of so many of the prelates of the reign of Louis XIV, urged the bishop of Limoges to use the laying on of hands as a device of evangelism: warn the curés well beforehand, so that they can instruct their candidates or, better still, send a task force of friars ahead to preach a mission, with

a confirmation as its climax.²³ But theologically and pastorally, there was still no clear concept of the role of confirmation or of its place in education for the Christian life.

Since this was a sacrament which could be administered only by a bishop, there was another reason why it was neglected: whether from cogent or scandalous preoccupations, many bishops were unable to make regular visits to their parishes, and few of them had suffragans to take their place. Even when an episcopal visitation was held, there was a great deal of business, so there might not be time for a confirmation ceremony. There were places where the inhabitants had almost forgotten that the rite existed, like the disciples at Ephesus described in the Acts of the Apostles, who 'had not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost'. In 1739, a curé of the diocese of Reims recorded in his register that there had been no confirmation in his area for fifty-nine years. This was an extreme case, but even when bishops made regular confirmation tours, there might be sizeable intervals between them; at the end of the *ancien régime* the curés of Toul were required to present candidates every eight or nine years. This inevitably meant large numbers. At Ecurey from 1755 to 1789 there were five ceremonies with from 40 to 108 candidates, the average being 74; at Montiers-sur-Saulx in 1773, 1780, and 1789, the candidates numbered 68, 128, and 189, and this for a parish of 1,100 souls.²⁴ The range of ages was wide, from 6 to 24.²⁵ Strictly speaking, 7 was regarded as the minimum, since this was taken as the point when childish misdemeanours became sinful. A memoir writer described how, at this age, but having the misfortune to look younger, he was taken to the church of Saint-Etienne at Toulouse by his mother and their parish catechist for confirmation; the prelate refused to believe he was old enough, and dismissed the argument that 'he knew his catechism'. 'Il faut qu'il s'en souvienne,' said the bishop, and boxed his ears.²⁶ Often, the candidates of several parishes were brought together for a single ceremony; then, especially when a number of years had gone by since the last occasion, there would be an immense concourse of candidates of assorted ages, with their relatives and friends surging around in the background. In 1739, the curé of Sermiers set off with his parishioners at three in the morning in the rain to march to Courtagnon for the confirmation conducted by the suffragan of the diocese of Reims, the bishop of Joppa. There were ten parishes gathered—no one had confirmed in any of them for half a century. 'The excessive crowds made devotion impossible . . . Our poor parishioners could hardly walk for the whole of the next day.'²⁷

Not everyone would look back on their confirmation as a

spiritual experience. Chateaubriand did—confirmed by the bishop of Saint-Malo on the terrace of the tumble-down family château of Comburg, along with the local peasant boys and girls.²⁸ By contrast, Choudieu, the Angevin anticlerical, remembered how he misbehaved, provoking bishop de Grasse to lay hands on him more forcibly than the liturgy prescribed.²⁹ By individual initiative, a curé might make a confirmation into a pastoral occasion in spite of all the confusions. At Helfaut, after the laying on of hands, a white bandage was wrapped round the brows of the candidates; after three days they reported to the curé, and he removed it and recorded their names in a register.³⁰

Confirmation was haphazard: vaguely necessary, though any time would do, and it did not lead to anything. The indispensable ceremony marking the entry into full Christian responsibility was the First Communion. In the seventeenth century, general agreement had been reached on the age span between 10 and 14 as the time when a child could first approach the altar.³¹ Some dioceses instituted a fixed rule: Arras at 10, Beauvais, Auxerre, and Carcassonne at 11, Bourges and Autun at 12. At the Royal Court, 12 or rather later was preferred; an exception was made for the 10-year-old duc de Bourgogne in 1761, for he was dying.³² For Philippe d'Orléans, the future duke (and later champagne revolutionary 'Égalité'), the age was 14. This was an affair of protocol and splendour. He confessed to the senior vicaire of Saint-Eustache, then the curé called on him at the Palais Royal to check if he was sufficiently instructed. After going to the church and receiving communion, he adjourned to the office of the churchwardens to eat a symbolic crust of the *pain bénit*. Then he proceeded to high mass, where he was accorded the honours of incensing and the presentation of the gospels to kiss. Proceedings ended with his *valet de chambre* giving the curé 600 livres for alms to the poor and a gratuity to the town drummers—'however small their connection with this ceremony, these gentry make an occasion of everything'.³³

Young people coming to their First Communion had normally been making their confessions from the age of 7, the age when moral responsibility began. The theologians gravely urged curés to keep a close eye on children, requiring them to confess frequently, and at the same time consulting with parents and teachers to decide when the conscience had become mature enough to receive the Sacrament.³⁴ Yet, in the parishes practically all of them trooped to First Communion at the same age, for only rigorist priests would be willing to incur the wrath of parents whose offspring were excluded.

Routine acceptance, however, was offset by the rise of extra observances and ceremonies. A retreat for children would be held before-hand—a half-day or so in the villages, though a well-off family in town might send a daughter for a month or two to a convent in preparation.³⁵ The custom of dressing the girls in white began at Rome in 1725, and soon became general; orphanages and charitable committees provided decent clothing for children whose parents could not afford it. The day of First Communion became fixed as Easter Sunday or, preferably, one of the Sundays immediately following, and bishops laid down detailed ceremonies for the occasion. In the diocese of Autun, there would be high mass with the *Veni Creator* sung and the curé exhorting the new communicants before they came to the altar, and they would have to attend vespers that night for further instruction. The next few months had to be a period of pastoral vigilance, for, said a theologian, ‘the time immediately following the First Communion is the critical time in the whole life . . . regulating conduct until the day of death’.³⁶

II Catechism

In all but the most neglected of parishes the young people coming to their First Communion had been drilled in their catechism.³⁷ This instruction was regarded as one of the indispensable tasks of the curé, whether performed in person or by a deputy. In 1655 the bishop of Autun called on churchwardens to denounce their parish priests if they were negligent. Eleven years later, the new bishop prescribed catechism classes for all children from All Souls to St John the Baptist, and schools were to have sessions every Wednesday and Thursday. From 1690, every Sunday was to be a catechism day except during harvest. Three years later the clergy were instructed to refuse absolution in the confessional to parents who failed to send their children, and to schoolteachers who neglected the Wednesday and Thursday classes.³⁸ There were similar rules in other dioceses. At Toul in 1686, catechizing was prescribed for all the Sundays through Advent to Easter, and it was reported that only very few curés were backsliders. For the clergy of Bâle, every Sunday of the year was a class day, except when the weather was atrocious or in the case of families who could prove the necessity of absence for cattle minding; since the rules of the diocese ordered all from the age of 7 to 25 to attend, it was not surprising that complaints were made of older class members absent in taverns or on shooting expeditions.³⁹ The usual

sanction to enforce attendance was the withdrawal of the consolations of the confessional from parents who allowed their children to play truant. At the turn of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, Archbishop Colbert of Rouen, living in luxury himself but an enforcer of the authority of the Church, made a point of insisting on this discipline on his visitation tours, so that news of his coming led to manifestations of parental zeal; 'the catechism is taught as prescribed,' he found in one place, 'and fathers and mothers attend themselves to ensure their children do so'.⁴⁰ His contemporary, the bishop of Tarbes, went further in Draconian legislation: all adults had to know their catechism, otherwise their parish priests were to deny them absolution and refuse to call their banns of marriage.⁴¹ In 1724 a royal edict reinforced the ecclesiastical penalties with secular fines for absence; instances of curés invoking this sanction are rare, but can be found. Itinerant and seasonal workers could slip through the net: in the fishing ports, the clergy complained that boys hastened to get off with the fleet, thus escaping instruction.⁴² But in rural France generally, attendance at catechism was well-nigh universal, as much because of the measured routines of village life as from ecclesiastical fulminations.

The manuals on which instruction was based were the products of a tradition dating from the theologians of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. From them and their definitions, inventions, plagiarisms, amendments, and partisan insinuations, an inventory of necessary content and an established pattern of presentation had been formed. Luther, Calvin, Canisius, the Council of Trent, Bellarmine, and Borromeo provided the models. Bellarmine's shorter and longer versions (1597, 1598) were translated and adopted in the dioceses of Avranches (1601), Toul (1610), and Bordeaux (1621), and left their impress on the catechisms devised by episcopal theologians elsewhere. Cardinal Richelieu's handbook for his diocese of Luçon ran through twenty editions from 1618 to 1667. Bourdoise's triple manuals (one for the very young, one for candidates for First Communion, and one for older people) drawn up for the parish of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, were adopted for the whole diocese of Paris in 1646, with only a few emendations. They were then taken up in Coutances, Laon, and elsewhere, while variants appeared at Lyon, Poitiers (1715), and Gap (1730). Vincent de Paul's compendium of doctrine for evangelistic use was chosen at Agen, Chartres, Sarlat, and Saintes. In 1674, the bishop of Puy got the superior of his seminary to write an independent diocesan manual, and Bossuet produced his own for Meaux in 1687. Translations into provincial

languages appeared: in Oloron in the early eighteenth century into Béarnais and Basque.⁴³ The abbé d'Heauville in 1669 devised an easy-to-remember digest in verse; it was reprinted at Tarbes in 1701, and in other places later.⁴⁴ Short of persuading Bossuet and La Fontaine to collaborate, a venture of this kind was not likely to win episcopal approval, and the problem remained: how could catechisms be made interesting? With all their virtues, so far, they had been tedious with their scholastic divisions, insistence on technicalities, and obsession with refuting heresy—so said the abbé Fleury, in his *Catéchisme historique* in 1685. Certainly, he had found a better formula, as his 478 editions up to the end of the eighteenth century witnessed.⁴⁵ First, he told a story, the only way, he said, ‘to engage the attention and capture the imagination’. Secondly, his overriding object was to concentrate the mind on the love of God: ‘tout le catéchisme se rapporte à l'amour de Dieu’.⁴⁶ He gave a simple narrative of the scriptural story from the Fall to the Redemption, and reserved to the end a summary of doctrine, including the Lord's Prayer, Creed, and Commandments, by now universally agreed on as obligatory for learning by heart. His innovative approach was influential, though too often what he said was included without much omission of established doctrinal material. Even so, the presentation of doctrine was being transformed by a dramatic Jansenist intervention, majestic in theology, though with some of its force deriving from a sombre doctrine of election.⁴⁷ In 1676, the bishops of La Rochelle, Angers, and Luçon, all with the Christian name of Henri, all Jansenists, collaborated to publish a version anticipating Fleury in using Christian history as a framework. From God, the Fall, the coming of Christ, and the Redemption, they moved on to sins and virtues, the Commandments, divine grace, the Church, and the ‘quatre fins dernières de l'homme’. The theology was harsh, but it emphasized the drama of the Fall and the austere splendour of the final destiny of man, the adoration of God without reserve or intermediary. The creation of the ‘three Henrys’ was overtaken in 1702 by an even more powerful work devised by the Oratorian Pouget for Colbert, bishop of Montpellier, hero of the war against the bull *Unigenitus*. It had thirty editions in eight years. There were orthodox competitors, notably by Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons, then archbishop of Sens. But Colbert prevailed in the sense that many neutral bishops adopted his formulations, though omitting those with extreme predestinarian implications.

By the end of the seventeenth century, catechisms were legion: no fewer than twenty new ones had been issued between 1670 and

1685.⁴⁸ The objective, said La Chétardie sardonically, seemed to be to have a different one for each parish and school.⁴⁹ This vast production had all but exhausted the gambits of theological presentation and pedagogical ingenuity. Yet in the eighteenth century, the process of rewriting and would-be improvement continued in the dioceses—by the end of the *ancien régime*, no fewer than 129 diocesan catechisms had been published since the mid-seventeenth century. In the dioceses of La Rochelle and Angers the version of the ‘three Henrys’ was abandoned by succeeding bishops because of its Jansenist associations. Bishop Le Peletier of Angers produced his own 143-page manual in 1697; it was disliked by the curés as too taxing for the understanding of children, so Bishop Michel Poncet replaced it with something simpler.⁵⁰ Grenoble under Le Camus followed the manual in use in Agen (410 pages); the new bishop in 1712 wrote his own (512 pages); his successor produced an abridgement; then in 1728 it was back to Agen again, albeit in a shortened form.⁵¹ Boulogne in 1730 began to use a conflation of the formulas of Toulouse and Montpellier; Bordeaux changed in mid-century, then again in 1769. From 1719, Arras used a Jansenist version from Nantes, then changed it, and finally in 1765 had an entirely new one commissioned by a prelate who spent most of his time at Versailles but wished to demonstrate vicarious zeal. At Lyon, Bishop Montazet, a Jansenist at a time when the movement was declining, produced catechisms in 1767 and 1785 along the lines of those of the three Henrys and Colbert of Montpellier; an orthodox pamphleteer hastened to tell the world that these were ‘not the true sentiments of the clergy of Lyon’.⁵²

One reason for these many changes was that the bishops seemed to regard it as a matter of pride to be known as innovators, the zealous because they believed in it, the idle because setting theologians to work on a revision was an undemanding way of demonstrating pastoral concern. Another reason was schism in the Church, as ever an inspiration for theological productivity. In some dioceses, a statement of doctrine was needed as an instrument for the conversion of Protestants; a model was produced at Strasbourg in 1685, full of the biblical citations beloved by the heretics, but uncompromising on the inadequacy of faith alone and the necessity of good works, on the Real Presence, and on the infallibility of the Church.⁵³ Meanwhile, Jansenists and orthodox were incorporating their idiosyncratic doctrinal approaches, while the recriminations aroused by their disputes drove uncommitted theologians to exercises in fine tuning to ward off censures from one side or the other.

Paradoxically, the chaos resulting from multiplicity was a further reason for adding new manuals to old. Curés could not evade the obligation to hold catechism classes, but some were tempted to make do with any old volume they happened to possess. ‘They use those of their choice and their fancy,’ complained the bishop of Fréjus in 1753.⁵⁴ This was his reason for putting together a new diocesan version, printing a sufficiency of copies, and enforcing its use. As the bishop of Lombez said in 1750, introducing his new catechism: his priests were using all sorts of handbooks, so that parishioners were bewildered; in future, all must teach from his definitive volume.⁵⁵ In the rush for innovation, theological errors could be made, some serious enough to necessitate a revised edition. In 1777, the new bishop of Lombez, who, like his predecessor, had issued a catechism, frankly admitted: ‘in spite of our vigilance, inexact propositions . . . have crept in which might offend the piety of the educated and lead the simple into error’. So his clergy had to invest in his corrected version. The bishop of the newly created diocese of Nancy published his catechetical handbook in 1785, but corrected it in the following year after sending a questionnaire to his curés to test their views. In the meantime, his fellow prelate in the other new diocese of Saint-Dié found that his catechism of 1779 was too long; an abbreviated volume was still too ponderous, so there had to be a third in 1787.⁵⁶ The eighteenth century being the age of encyclopedias and dictionaries, the theologians enjoyed joining in the competition for exhaustive compilations and demonstrating their mastery by cramming all Christian doctrine between two covers. Hence Diderot’s story of the abbé de Bragelongne, the devout geometer of the Académie des Sciences, who arrived there one day with a catechism which he had composed for his fellow academicians. ‘Messieurs, you all want to be saved, I am sure. *Eh bien!* It’s merely a question of believing the contents of this little book. You see, Messieurs, it is not much to ask! Isn’t it very convenient to have all your religion portable and available in your pocket?’

‘If I had to depict stupidity,’ said Rousseau, ‘I would choose the spectacle of a pedant teaching the catechism to children.’ In his view, it was a useless activity anyway, since he regarded religious education as unsuitable for anyone under 15 years of age: ‘a child who believes in God is necessarily an idolator or, at least, he sees God in anthropological terms’.⁵⁷ The theologians were not unaware of the difficulty. Their catechisms imposed on the memory propositions about God: it would be the task of a lifetime to interpret them into progressively more sophisticated shades of meaning. Nor

could they themselves hope to escape from anthropomorphism, adhering all too closely as they did to the biblical texts on wrath and judgement. Besides, catechisms were practical documents, laying down the performance of tangible actions of moral conduct and outward observances, a framework within which character could develop.

This was an age when theologians were not meant to be imaginative or creative: they harmonized, codified, and set in context historical texts—the Scriptures, the Fathers, and decisions of the Councils. Their catechisms did not stray beyond accepted boundaries. Yet there was significance in what they emphasized. As against hopes of corporate observances bringing corporate redemption, they wanted to rivet on to the minds of individuals the sense of their high personal responsibility for working out their salvation under the shadow of God's judgement. As against Protestants and other heretics and the forces of free thought and undisciplined living, they wished to affirm the authority of the Church. And above all, they wished to lead the people out of the quasi-magical world of potential providential interventions in material affairs into a Christocentric devotion fortified by the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. The tripartite division which came to prevail in the diocesan catechisms in the eighteenth century laid emphasis on the sacraments as central in Christian living. First came the truths of the faith, probably presented in the historical mode of Fleury; then came the Commandments, including those of the Church as well as the ten proclaimed on Sinai; third came the sacraments. Belief, conduct, then the gift of the power and will to think and do, through the sacramental observances. The Council of Trent had seen the sacraments as the mysteries of the Church, but Bellarmine had shifted the focus: they are essentially the means of grace within the Church.⁵⁸ The Christian is incorporated into the Body of Christ by baptism; his growth therein is ensured by confirmation; his conduct is supervised by confession; marriage sanctifies his sexual passions; extreme unction reconciles him to God at death; and, above all, the Eucharist is his continual nourishment within the redeemed community. Yet, while the means of grace are his for the taking, the shadow of judgement hangs over him. The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century catechisms uncompromisingly presented the menace of Hell.⁵⁹ There were no concessions to childish fears. In some of the less sophisticated, there are references to the implacability of God and the indifference or, even, the joy of the saints at the suffering of the damned. Extreme Jansenists ascribed these horrors to God's arbitrary

predestination. 'Why does God treat them so?' The Montpellier catechism of Colbert answers: 'for us it is an impenetrable mystery. All we know is that he treats some with mercy and others with justice.'⁶⁰ Jansenist pamphleteers lay in wait for catechisms of their opponents which attenuated this code of doom. Paul-Albert de Luynes, in his revisions for his diocese of Sens, declared unbaptized infants to have gone to happiness, though deprived for ever of the beatific vision; not so, said the Jansenists: they have gone to eternal damnation.⁶¹

Obedience to the hierarchical Church is a theme of all the catechisms, one sharply etched by Bellarmine and carried on thereafter, useful as an engine of controversy against libertarian Protestant concepts. As between the Jansenists and the rest, however, there was a significant divergence of emphasis.⁶² To the 'three Henrys', the Church is 'all believers, the Holy People . . . with Christ as their Head'. This would not do for the new anti-Jansenist bishop of La Rochelle, who threw out his predecessor's catechism and substituted his own, which spoke of 'the Church under its legitimate pastors, more especially the Pope'. The Jansenist catechism of Auxerre in 1734 manoeuvred neatly: 'the Church is the assembly of the faithful who, under the authority of legitimate pastors, form a single body of which Jesus Christ is the head'—the Pope might be assumed to be included, but is not specifically mentioned. The phrase 'legitimate pastors' enshrined a convenient ambiguity. When Bernis was producing his catechism for Albi, he was hoping to be given the French embassy to Rome; to be selected by Versailles, he had to be Gallican; to be accepted at Rome, he had to conceal the fact. 'The Church under the rule of its legitimate pastors' was his salvation, and he spent the rest of his days dining cardinals and enjoying prestigious ecclesiastical intrigues.⁶³

In the second half of the eighteenth century, the diocesan catechisms show a moralizing tendency. In the earlier versions, often following the patterns of Canisius or Rome, the moral teaching was subsumed in the Commandments, and these not especially prominent in the impact of the whole.⁶⁴ But when the tripartite division prevailed, morality was included alongside the sacraments as two of the three basic divisions. This was equally so in another form of tripartite division which was coming in, exemplified in the Grenoble version of 1786: 'what the Christian is obliged to believe, what the Christian must do and not do, what the Christian must know'. This pattern was to carry on in the nineteenth century. The moralizing tendency might be taken to arise from the influence of

the Enlightenment as a step towards making Christianity more acceptable because the dogma has been 'submerged'.⁶⁵ Yet the persistence of the structure into the next century suggests that it was a question, Enlightenment or not, of sheer usefulness, adaptation to the pedagogical end. It is easier to educate by starting from the individual and his needs and duties before explaining lofty truths and mysterious secrets. Besides, the moralizing tendency in Tridentine Catholicism was there—in no one more evident than in Bossuet—before the thought of the Enlightenment could exercise its influence. Once the doctrinal and sacramental emphasis of Trent had been accepted in the Church, there was a natural tendency to turn to morals as a theme; as against Calvinists and Jansenists, it was important to stress the necessity of works as well as faith, while orthodox Catholic morality must be demonstrated to be severe as against Jansenist and Protestant challenges.⁶⁶

The official documents of the *ancien régime*, whether royal edicts, episcopal pastoral letters, or catechisms, are not forthright guides to actual practice. A catechism was a prestigious, comprehensive display of theology and pastoral concern. What people learned depended on the catechist, who was more likely to be concerned with the necessity of performing the Easter 'duty' and making a good confession beforehand than with describing the processes of grace mediated through the sacraments. The curé's authority in the village would be more significant than the Pope's sway over Christendom, and there is reason to believe that the harrowing visions of Hell were only picturesque incidental shudders in the catechism classes of curés and vicaires.

Ideally, the catechism was taught in classes graded by age. Bourdoise's three versions had been one for those of tender age, one as a preparation for First Communion, and one for older people, and this model had been followed by other theologians. If there was only one version available, selected items would be abstracted for beginners.⁶⁷ Bossuet suggested that the sign of the cross and its significance came first, then a few basic rules of conduct, then the solid learning by heart of the Creed, Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, and the commandments of God and the Church. This was severe enough for infants, but Colbert of Montpellier went further and proposed that children should learn to read with the catechism as their textbook. An obvious principle for division of classes was: one for preparing candidates for confirmation up to the age of 7, and another preparing them thereafter for First Communion. Confirmations, however, were rarely regular enough to enable the curés to

follow through this logical progression, and while the approach of First Communion was an opportunity to hold tests of diligence, the young people remained, at least in theory, under instruction for the next few years. At Lyon, Montazet ordered his curés to hold two classes for successive age-groups, and within each group to keep the boys and girls separate. This system worked well, for in all the big parishes, there were many helpers. Catechisms in France were an activity in which minor ecclesiastics, nuns, seminarists, members of confraternities, tertiaries of religious Orders, and pious laymen and laywomen collaborated.⁶⁸ Only in tiny parishes would the curé preside in person; in most, he would come in to inspect and make a few interrogations. If a vicaire was in charge, he would sit in a high chair, intervening occasionally to give general explanations, while others heard the repetitions and did the routine teaching. Senior pupils did the same subordinate work in schools. There were many copies of catechisms and abstracts (*feuilles de catéchisme*) in print for the benefit of these auxiliaries. An inventory of a bookshop in Grenoble in 1735 showed 600 full catechisms, and another in Rouen in 1759, 12,000.⁶⁹ True, fewer were published after mid-century, just as fewer pious legacies to pay catechists were made, but this is probably because the whole instructional system had become part of the accepted routine of parish life.⁷⁰

The catechisms adopted the form of question and answer: ‘c'est la base de tout enseignement,’ said the preface of one of them.⁷¹ It was an axiom of the educational psychology of the day that learning was encouraged by the spirit of rivalry—easy to encourage with quick-fire questions. The rules of the écoles de Saint-Maur instructed the mistresses to conduct ‘a kind of dispute or, at least, a generous emulation.’⁷² The nine schools of Charles Demia in Lyon held a tournament (set at carnival time to keep the pupils away from the temptations of the masquerades); each school sent four teams, one for each section of the diocesan catechism, and the object was to capture the flags of opponents by winning the battle of the questions.⁷³ Schoolmasters and, in parishes, the curés from time to time invited parents to be present at catechism competitions; Vincent de Paul had recommended this strategy, for parents want to be proud of their children and would be incited to coach them. Indeed, Claude Fleury and Bossuet had declared that the best understanding of the catechism came from teaching at home, fathers and mothers instructing children, and masters servants. It was a nice principle of churchmen, however, not to shame older people by showing up their ignorance in front of the young. The interrogations were addressed to the

children, and only if a difficult question remained unanswered were the adults asked for suggestions.⁷⁴

When children grew up, they remembered their triumphs in the competitions of catechism classes. Mme Chastenay had been above these encounters, sent privately to the curé of La Madeleine to prepare for First Communion, 'having studied several catechisms, especially that of Montpellier'.⁷⁵ But Marie-Jeanne Phlipon, who, as she complacently records, always won first prize, was delighted to recollect how she defeated the curé. He was accustomed to sweep in and question one or two children, 'whose mothers swelled with pride'. Once, 'with a victorious and malignant air', he swooped on Marie-Jeanne asking, 'how many orders of spirits are there in the celestial hierarchy?' and was crestfallen when she rattled off the answer.⁷⁶ A friend of Restif's father was known as 'Touslesjours' until his dying day, because this was the answer he had given to the question, 'how many times must I forgive my neighbour?' Restif himself, an enthusiastic attender at catechisms to meet the girls, remembered how he had joined two of them in giving interesting answers. 'Are we allowed to tell a lie as a joke?' 'Yes,' said pretty Adine roguishly, 'I tell them every day.' Jeanette Rousseau, older than most because she was already a communicant, gave the answer from the book: 'No, out of respect for God.' Asked for something additional, Restif volunteered the danger of forming evil habits and the gospel warning that an account of every idle word must be rendered on the Day of Judgement.⁷⁷ We may guess that these sorts of memories and the religious phrases so laboriously learned by heart in catechism classes bulked larger in the minds of most people than all the tales in the tracts of the *Bibliothèque bleue*.

III Marriage

The laws of Church and State interlocked to define and preserve the institution of marriage, though there was tension between them.⁷⁸ According to the Church, a marriage was founded on the free choice of the two parties. This was established in the canon law of the twelfth century, with the proviso that absolute indissolubility was suspended until the union was consummated. By the canons and the revision of the Council of Trent in the decree *Tametsi* of 1563, the Church required three callings of banns, and when the man and woman took their vows, it had to be in the presence of the parish priest and two or three witnesses. Even so, if the marriage was

clandestine and these rules were broken, the mutual consent still made the marriage valid. There were certain impediments. Some, like failing to have the banns called, could be dispensed without too much difficulty (these were the *empêchements prohibitifs*); others, the *empêchements dirimants*, were serious—lack of consent, being under age (14 for males, 12 for females), impotence, the existence of a previous marriage or of vows of chastity—these disqualified from approach to the sacrament. Consanguinity up to the fourth degree (that is, to great-great-grandparents) was another grave impediment, though dispensation might be available for the further margins of the relationship. The Church was not just applying the code of Leviticus (18: 6–18); the theologians argued that it was fulfilling the ‘law of charity’, preventing people from locking into family and tribal groups and encouraging them to reach out into new alliances, increasing understanding and friendship among Christians. There were also two highly unsatisfactory but often waived hindrances. One was the impediment of ‘spiritual affinity’, precluding union between godparents and the children they sponsored at the font; the other was the impediment of ‘public honesty’, by which a former betrothal prevented marriage with a member of the same family.

Provided there was no undisputed *empêchement dirimant* in the way, the man and woman plighting their troth were themselves the ministers of the sacrament, and their mutual consent made them one for ever. In the rite of the so-called Norman fashion used in the North of France, the priest asked the question: ‘Les futurs se veulent-ils?’, and in the rite used in the South and in Champagne and Alsace, the question was: ‘Les futurs s'aiment-ils?’ The key words of promise in the liturgy of the diocese of Meaux were: ‘Je X . . . , donne à toi, Y . . . , mon corps en loyal mari’, with the reply: ‘Je Y . . . , donne à toi, X . . . , mon corps en loyale femme’, and the man adding: ‘Et je le crois’. In Reims it was: ‘Y . . . de cet anneau je vous épouse, et de mon corps je vous honore, et de mes biens je vous doue.’⁷⁹ These words were the heart of the liturgy, the essence of the sacrament.

As for the nature of the union, the handbooks of the confessional and the treatises of Christian moralists reveal the highest possible view of the institution of marriage allied to a low and grudging view of sexual intercourse. Women are suspect: they arouse demonic passions, their imaginations are inconstant, the ‘curse of Eve’ overshadows them.⁸⁰ The family is the sphere in which the Devil chooses to exercise his utmost efforts; its pleasures are dangerous. The Christian wife does well to reflect that ‘husband, children,

friends and all just associations are only for salvation'.⁸¹ The purpose of sexual relations is austere: in the words of Bossuet's catechism, 'to multiply the children of God' and 'to remedy the disorders of concupiscence'. A few fanatics even held that the remedy itself was a venial sin, since concupiscence is being willingly assuaged in the sexual act. The pleasures of intercourse are circumscribed, with unusual positions, visual satisfaction, and imaginative enjoyment in anticipation or retrospect forbidden. Abstention is recommended, except with the coarse proviso that the wife should not refuse her husband if there is a danger that he will turn to fornication. Contraception is forbidden.⁸² Given these severities, it is not surprising to find writers who describe marriage as a cross to be borne, an object-lesson to encourage monastic vocations. These opinions, however, come from celibates, most of them dwelling in the cloister and, from one side or another of the Jesuit–Jansenist divide, competing to demonstrate their rigorism. It is impossible to believe that their views represent what was actually said by parish priests in village confessionals. They knew their people, had to win their confidence and live among them—they had to be realistic. Consciously or instinctively, we may imagine their advice following the alternative tradition in Christian thought running contrary to the gloom of the majority of the casuists. Coming from Aquinas, Martin le Maistre (1490), and the Spanish Jesuit Sanchez (1602), it was embodied for the modern age in St François de Sales's 'advice to married people'. Like the others, he preached the wickedness of contraception and praised chastity as the highest vocation, but he approved of the pleasures available to mankind on the margins of the solemn necessities; just as eating is diversified and enhanced by happy conversation, so the sexual act provides 'reciprocal and legitimate satisfaction'. One may assume that the curés accepted this understanding view in the confessional: it would have been unrealistic to do otherwise.

By contrast to the gainsaying attitude to sexual relationships officially prevailing among so many casuists, the catechisms and other religious writings taught uncompromisingly that husband and wife were joined in a sacred unity symbolizing the bond of love binding Christ to his Church. 'Marriage is a great sacrament,' said François de Sales; 'it is honourable to all, for all and in everything, . . . in all its parts. Even virgins should honour it in humility.' Through marriage, a man and woman become 'one flesh'. United, they were equal in the Pauline sense, for while the man was the head, he had to cherish his wife as himself, as Christ cherishes his

Church. A confessional manual of 1713 asks the wife if she listens to her husband's 'advice and remonstrances'—there is no reference to 'orders'. The ecclesiastical courts treated husband and wife alike—'conjugal chastity ought to be equally respected by both parties'; so the wife could make her petition for separation on grounds of her husband's adultery, as well as for ill-treatment, heresy or as pursuing a joint application to allow one of the parties to follow a religious vocation.⁸³

By contrast to the Church's doctrine of mutual consent, the social order, at least in its upper reaches, was founded on the arranged marriage, and choice in practice was restricted to the right (allowed by civilized parents) to refuse a particular proposal. The sons of great aristocrats married early, being free from economic constraints and having lineages to perpetuate. The dowry (possibly an immense sum coming with a girl from the new nobility of wealth) was a crucial factor, the other being family alliances. There was a world-weary justification for following material advantage coming from Montaigne: marriage was not for love, but for 'family and posterity', and it was 'a kind of incest' to employ 'the extravagances of amorous licence in the venerable and sacred marriage bond'. Probably, for many the formula was to accept, without love, someone you could come to love.⁸⁴ Against these views, the theologians were insisting on genuine consent. 'God no longer allows love to be lost amidst the multitude,' said Bossuet, describing the transformation in the world wrought by the institution of marriage; 'he re-establishes it in its natural course by making it reign over two united hearts.' Not that the theologians supported unregulated reckless choice, or abandonment to passion. What they wanted was, in Bourdaloue's phrase, 'la sympathie des cœurs'; 'in how many of the marriages contracted every day,' he asked, 'do we find this affinity of personalities?' Sons of the financial bourgeoisie and rich merchants tended to marry in their early thirties—late, for prudential reasons. The same worldly factors operated, but they tended to choose younger women, and some, their future riches secure, made a choice of beauty and character. The lesser bourgeoisie in all their variety of strata cared a great deal about the money available, though in the trading sector and among artisans, a wife who could pull her weight in shop or counting-house was a treasure. The peasants married late, averaging 28 for men and 26 for women. When a partner died, a second marriage followed quickly, for life was short, and the economic situation which had made the first union possible facilitated the second. In rural France, the choice was freer; when a couple were in

their late twenties, and the parents, or one of them, had died, the pattern of village life helped appropriate liaisons with public opinion approving—in 70 per cent of country marriages, both parties came from the same village. But the calculation of worldly gain was never far away. The son of a rich farmer might court the local beauty, otherwise the number of sheep or cattle a woman owned, the tools of the trade left by her father or late husband, the savings a serving-girl had amassed in her long wait before marriage could be decisive. But it was not a world of loveless unions. Love, they said, comes afterwards, and often it did. Families did the best they could to establish their children. For most, the only way to improve their lot was by a favourable marriage, and children rarely objected to arrangements ensuring their future prospects.

The law of the State conflicted with the rules of the Church in that it backed the arranged marriage, affirming the domination of the father over the child—and, indeed, of the husband over the wife. Since the end of the sixteenth century, the royal government had legislated to regulate marriage, moving away from the ecclesiastical doctrine of consent. By ordinances of 1579 and 1639, four witnesses, as against the two or three of the Council of Trent, were required, and a man under 30 and a woman under 28 could not marry without parental consent. In 1680 and 1685, measures were taken against Protestants, forbidding their marriages to Catholics, and outlawing marriages outside the kingdom. By an extension of the prohibition of mixed confessional unions, in the colonies marriages between blacks and whites were banned. In 1697, a rule to prevent clandestine weddings was promulgated: the curé was not to be present unless at least one of the parties had qualified by six months' residence in the parish. In the following year, measures were taken against an ingenious manœuvre to circumvent the law, invented by one Gaulmine. Since the curé was simply required 'to be present', Gaulmine, accompanied by his bride, his witnesses, and a notary, cornered his parish priest and pronounced the vows in his presence before he could escape. By the edict of 1698, a marriage was valid only if the curé actively co-operated, 'joining' the couple and pronouncing the nuptial blessing over them. The king had, as it were, turned theologian, and made the priest the minister of the sacrament. It was still possible to elope to a place where the king's writ did not run—say, to the papal enclave of Avignon, and to take advantage of the Church's acceptance of mutual consent making the marriage. But the State did its best to discourage such adventures of free choice: the parties were disinherited, and one or another could be in

danger of being charged with the capital crime of 'abduction', this being the presumption when there was a considerable disparity of fortune. The exceptions to the authority of parents over children allowed and disallowed by the State are instructive. The Church permitted young people of the age of reason to embrace a monastic vocation; the State did not. On the other hand, a young man could defy his parents and join the army.

As against the Church's view of the equality of the partners, by secular law the wife was under the husband's tutelage.⁸⁵ By the *droit coutumier* of the Midi, she retained control of her own property, but her husband administered the dowry; while by the law of the North and centre, he controlled everything, his wife's property included. In Normandy and Brittany, the woman could not make a last will and testament without permission. True, in high society the danger of being oppressed and defrauded could be minimized by the bride's family hiring expert lawyers to tie up her finances in the marriage contract. There were no legal sanctions against an adulterous man, while an adulterous wife could be shorn and locked in a convent for two years; at the end of that period, if her husband would not take her back, she was likely to be there for life. If her offence had been committed with a servant, he was sent to the galleys; otherwise, the paramour in the case was not liable to any serious penalty, perhaps banishment from town for a year. Because of the scandal and ridicule, men of social standing became less and less disposed to resort to the courts against their wives (there were only four cases before the Châtelet in Paris in the first fourteen years of the reign of Louis XVI). What they did instead was to apply to the king for a *lettre de cachet* confining their marriage partner to a convent on grounds of conduct prejudicial to the family honour. In an extreme case, this could happen to a husband—if it was someone like the Marquis de Sade—though it would need a concerted effort by his wife's family and, probably, his own. The law courts could declare a separation, 'séparation de corps et d'habitation'. A woman could take the initiative in asking for this, but it had to be a case of outrageous mistreatment—attempted murder or aggravated adultery—that is, bringing mistresses into the family home and the family bed. For a woman, the legal process was difficult: she had to retire to a convent while her petition was heard, and if she won, she would almost certainly have to continue living in cloistered seclusion afterwards, for she could not remarry and was considered to 'be in a state of widowhood'. Petitions were rarely successful. True, for the 55,000 inhabitants of Toulouse, between 1786 and 1788 thirty-seven

were approved; but a more usual figure is that for Rouen (population 85,000): here, thirty-six applications came to the secular courts between 1780 and 1789, but only four were granted.⁸⁶ When the Revolution legalized divorce (September 1792), women were finally put on a genuine equality with men.

The Church strove to make the sacrament of marriage a ceremony of dignified solemnity.⁸⁷ For the majority of ordinary people, the time of year when a wedding was possible was dictated by the seasonal incidence of work. In the country, the grain harvest from mid-July to mid-August and the wine harvest from September to October ousted social activities from the calendar. In the fishing ports in the North, July, August, and September, the months between the two annual sorties of the fleets, were the only time the men were available. In the provinces of migratory labour, the Auvergne and the Limousin, two-thirds of the weddings were from June to September—it was harvest time, but the men had to be home to gather it. To the close seasons for marriage the Church added the four weeks of Advent and the eight weeks of Lent, times of penitential discipline. Within each week, Friday, the day of the Lord's death, and Sunday, the day of his Resurrection, were also excluded. Since families and communities liked to extend festivities over more than a single day, this effectively cancelled out Thursday and Saturday, leaving Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday as the days for marrying. While enforcing limitations for religious reasons, bishops denounced popular taboos arising from superstition, like the notion that May was an unlucky month. The time of day decreed by diocesan statutes was from sunrise to noon, presumably an attempt to ensure sobriety. Rich families wanting to indulge their preference for a romantic midnight service by candlelight had to apply for an episcopal dispensation.

Before the formal preliminaries to a wedding began, there were, according to social class and locality, negotiations on practical matters between the two families. The young people might have reached an understanding, or maybe it was being organized for them. It was proverbial, as an *avocat* of Caen said in mid-century, 'that what is called love is a blind guide'; it was a question, he said, of the man finding an economical, hard-working partner who would educate the children, and of the woman finding a man who could support her. These were matters which the two families looked into and, more especially, into the economic contributions the two sides would have to make. In the countryside, there were established rituals for the negotiation. Father and son might proceed to the

house of the girl; they would be offered refreshment, but the father would say, 'We have not come here to eat or drink but to ask the hand of your daughter'—the son might add, 'We have been in love for a long time'. Then the girl's family would pay a return visit to check on the viability of the household she would be joining—looking into the barns and the linen chest and, even, the dung heap (good manure being a sign of careful husbandry).⁸⁸ If both sides were satisfied, there were three solemn preliminaries to the church service. The *fiançailles*, betrothal, was an exchange of promises, regarded as binding, though they could be abandoned by mutual consent or if some grave difficulty arose. Then the banns had to be called in the parish church three times, always on a Sunday or a saint's day; depending on the incidence of ecclesiastical festivals, it was possible to complete the process in eight days, though it might take three weeks. The bishop could dispense from banns, though the royal government would only allow him to pretermit two callings—there must always be one. Then, a few days before the wedding, the contract would be signed. Most families, even those with few possessions, resorted to this formality (95 per cent in Lyon, 60–75 per cent in Paris). There was a custom in some places, and a temptation in all, to enjoy sexual intercourse once one or all of these preliminaries were completed. The bishops did their best to end the practice. The Jansenist prelates who ruled at Alet and Pamiers in the early eighteenth century banned the *fiançailles* altogether. In other dioceses regulations were issued: the ceremony must take place in the church porch, and no more than two or three days before the wedding. By canon law, the whole object of the *fiançailles* was to give time for the happy couple to achieve the right dispositions for receiving the grace of the sacrament; limiting the time interval sacrificed spiritual instruction to the need to set a hedge against fornication. There was, however, a better way of preparation: that was to make a confession and communion a few days beforehand, and some episcopal statutes made this an obligation.

When the long-awaited day came, it was filled with folk observances as preludes and epilogues to the sacramental ceremony.⁸⁹ The bridegroom and his youthful entourage would go to the house of the bride's family, where the frolic and badinage of *la fiancée cachée* would be enacted: the bride would hide and have to be found, disguise herself among her companions and have to be detected, or run away and have to be caught. Then the procession⁹⁰ would form, the musicians leading, the bride on her father's arm, the groom with the two mothers, then the train of attendant young men and women,

distinguished from the throng by festooning themselves with ribbons. The bride would be dressed predominantly in red (white was coming in, but only in high society); she would wear a lace apron, symbol of approaching domesticity, and be crowned with flowers. Somewhere on the road, the youth of the place would hold up the march with a barrier, demanding the *droit de pelote* and threatening derisive accompaniment if the hand-out was stingy. The parlements of France (with the exception of Aix) tried unsuccessfully all the century to stop this exaction, symbolic of the final attempt of the *jeunesse* to prevent two of its members escaping to maturity. By custom, the procession was late in arriving at the parish church. Here, the happy couple would take their place standing under a canopy held aloft by their attendants. The curé would bless the ring and a handful of coins the bridegroom was to present to his bride (the rich might have a special gold medal struck for the occasion). Then came the mutual promises, the heart of the sacrament. The groom put the ring on the bride's finger, hoping to slide it into place in one movement, since if he failed, it proverbially signified that his partner would rule the roost. The curé then pronounced the nuptial blessing. This was the moment when the illegitimate children of the couple, if there were any, would come forward and be legitimized by incorporation in the Church's final gesture of benediction. Diocesan statutes laid down regulations to enforce decorous conduct during the ceremony—no chattering, laughter, or suggestive or comic asides. Early in the century the bishop of Toul banned the distribution of bread soaked in wine during the nuptial blessing—it disfigures the diocesan liturgy and destroys its uniformity.⁹¹ The *Rituels* of other dioceses forbade bringing violins and other musical instruments into the church, some even in the procession. The curé was also required to deliver a homily on the significance of marriage as the indissoluble bond signifying the union of Christ with his Church; the *Rituel* of Angers also recommended the addition of a threat of excommunication against anyone who might be trying to cast a spell over the marriage, to make the husband impotent or the household disharmonious.

After signing the register in the vestry, the bridal throng left the church, as they went throwing small coins or handfuls of grain to the children of the village. Often enough there was a breakup of organization at this point, as many adjourned to the local tavern, a practice censured by the bishops. In due course, all reassembled at a banquet in the house of the girl's father, when the new husband served at the tables, while his friends stole a shoe of the bride to

prevent her from running away and a garter to be cut up and auctioned piecemeal. Songs would follow, not without innuendoes, ending with the *chanson de la mariée*, warning her of future tribulations. There would be dancing, with the bride leading the ball and dancing in turn with the young men of the escort. Far into the night came the *escapade des mariés*: the happy pair would escape to the bedroom and be followed there by the young people in comic masks offering them *la rôtie*, a soup laced with wine and spices supposed to be aphrodisiacs. After that, intrusions were not allowed, though in parts of Brittany there could be a check on the improbable custom of abstaining from sexual pleasure for two or three nights, 'les nuits de Tobie'. These concluding ceremonies were out of favour with the clergy (except, perhaps, the emulation of the restraint of the patriarch of the Apocrypha). They even had reservations about blessing the marriage-bed, unless it was done in quiet circumstances well before the carnival had started. In 1681 the bishop of Chartres ruled that only the parents of the bride and bridegroom and two or three respectable old people could be present, 'ut risis aut ludica inhonesta non admisceant'.⁹² What was approved, however, was the custom of having a mass on the following day for the dead of both families. One did well to pray for ancestors when making provision for posterity.

Other observances concerning weddings involving victimization and threats to public order were under the ban of both churchmen and magistrates, with small effect. When an ill-matched or unpopular couple married, there would be discordant music banged on pots and pans outside their window—the *charivari*. On the days following ordinary weddings there would be forays of youth to the house of the new couple, demanding gifts of wine or gloves or a cartwheel to roll down a hill, insisting they come out to dance on the village green or to perform ridiculous actions, or proposing to kidnap the husband to parade him on an ass facing backwards. Fulminations against these traditions might be effective, but only for a year or two. As for ordering the parish priest to stay away from the banquet once his role in the church was over, this—a few Jansenists apart—was not the style of the curés of old France. They regarded their presence when the wine was flowing as part of their duty.

IV Death

Death was an ever-present reality in eighteenth-century France.⁹³ A man was likely to have seen half his children die before they reached the age of 10, and, if he reached the age of 70, to have outlived all his contemporaries. It was not possible to look forward, as we do, to a predictable life span. Medical science was skilled at reading symptoms and predicting the end, but could offer few means of postponing it. Just as death was an everyday sight, so its memorials were manifest in the churches and churchyards, the places where the parishioners gathered for sociability and communal business. In the chancel were the burial vaults of the family of the *seigneur haut justicier* and of a few other nobles enjoying a traditional privilege, and the memorial tablets of former curés, while in the nave were the tombs of families rich enough to afford the fees. Superstition had it that proximity to the altar would guarantee a better resurrection, and as the belief waned under the denunciations of the clergy, family pride took over to ensure the custom continued. The parishioners generally were buried in the churchyard, a few in individual plots, but most in the *fosse commune*, a deep trench kept open until its complement of corpses was reached, then filled in. Somewhere in church or churchyard, in a crypt, colonnade, or niche, bones and skulls would be piled up in an ossuary, for to find space for more bodies, the others had to be dug up once the flesh had rotted away.

Though this was not a society obsessed with death, it was one in which it was impossible to avoid being conscious of its shadow and its arbitrary empire over humankind. Death was also pushed into the forefront of the mind by the grim doctrine of the theologians: salvation depended on a man's dispositions in his final hour—an evil man could be saved by a last-minute repentance, and a just man lost for ever by falling away at the end. In practice, the manuals about dying put forward considerations to show that this apparent injustice could hardly come to pass; how could true repentance and love of God be found after a wicked life and in the pain and panic of the end? Surely God would make allowances for a lifetime of virtuous endeavour? Yet, if the standard doctrine of the decisiveness of the last hour was faltering, it remained official, and a Christian was not entitled to take risks, let alone add presumption to his other sins needing forgiveness. It was important to prepare for dying, to rehearse for it, to ensure that the wiles of the Devil were anticipated and guarded against.

For those who had a modicum of education and a certain leisure, there were numerous handbooks to advise, exhort, and warn, mostly written by members of religious congregations, especially the Jesuits. This literature was essentially a creation of the seventeenth century; it contains echoes of earlier writings—St Augustine, Gerson, and Erasmus—but its systematization and intensity are new, and it supplanted its predecessors. The *De preparatione ad mortem* of Erasmus had a Latin edition in 1685 and a French one in 1711, but a classic of the reign of Louis XIV, Père Crasset's *La Douce et la sainte mort* ran through forty editions in the eighteenth century, and another, *L'Ange conducteur*, had at least a dozen. From 1600 to 1675 the presses turned out 105 new titles; there were no fewer than sixty for the following twenty-five years, and another thirty-eight in the twenty-five after that; thereafter, from 1725 to 1800 there were only thirty-three. It does not follow that a decline in the production of new titles means that these sorts of books were in less demand, for some, like Père Crasset's *Pensez-y bien* were often reprinted. When the provincial printers were freed from restrictions in 1775, there was a flood of religious reprints, especially in the North and East and in Brittany and Normandy; one in ten concerned preparation for dying. Pocket editions were being devised, and a new emphasis came into titles, speaking of 'method' with adjectives suggesting the endeavour was not as difficult as some imagined—'short', 'easy', 'abridged'. One imagines that the popularity of the genre was declining, but a steady market remained, none the less. A Christian of ordinary piety would need a volume—perhaps two—as a resource when worried, as health failed or an outbreak of pestilence drew near. Dom Morel's 500 dense pages would be too ponderous, and the *Pensez-y bien* with its anecdotes and menacing title at once too naïve and too frightening; *La Douce et la sainte mort* and *L'Ange conducteur* had comforting titles and, discerningly read, reassuring contents.

At their worst, the manuals of preparation used the weapon of fear remorselessly, urging meditation on judgement, Hell, and the worm-infested corruption of the grave: at their best, they incorporated apprehension into routines of daily prayer, self-examination, and charitable endeavour, averting the paralysis of fear, inspiring to Christian activity. Inevitably, the prayers they proposed on retiring to bed reflected on the ending of life, for the analogy between sleep and death was inescapable; but they did not allow fear to dominate the patterns of intercession with obsessive self-centredness. Fiery youth, perhaps, did well to brood on life's transience, but for those of advancing years, the mind should turn to God's infinite mercy. In

the more theologically literate guides, the certainty of salvation was allied to the obligation of self-sacrifice, not by the dictates of fear, but by the example of the passion of Christ; those who were his shared in the victory he had won on the cross, and they heeded his call to share in his burden, in the Pauline phrase, 'to fill up what was lacking in the sufferings of Christ'. In repudiating the use of the weapon of fear, Bergier, the leading theologian of the last generation of the *ancien régime*, went so far as to suggest that the books of preparation for death were really meant to combat the Protestant heresy of predestination and the relaxed morality of certain Catholic casuists, and to warn the debauchees of the cities; they were not for ordinary Christian believers and the hard-working inhabitants of the countryside.

In any case, to appreciate the role of fear in the Christianity of the age, one needs to remember that devout students of the books on death would also be those who attended regularly at the confessional, and were likely to have a spiritual director. There was an instinctive division of labour among the clergy, the preachers and writers proclaiming the menace of judgement, while the confessors conveyed assurance and consolation. In the instance of Canon Boursoul of Rennes (who fell dead in the pulpit at Easter 1774) we see the same person filling both roles. As a preacher, he was famous as the proclaimer of 'terrible truths'; but as a confessor, he wrote to a pious lady assuring her of her father's salvation and of her future meeting with him in Heaven. Speaking of his own approaching end, Boursoul shows confidence allied to fear, but not the fear of torment in the usual sense: 'O God, I love you, and I fear Hell only because the sweet liberty to love you is there lost for ever.'

Problems concerning 'certainty' and its role at the end of life haunted the writers on spirituality from the mid-seventeenth century onwards: the refusal to aspire to reward in Fénelon's *pur amour*, the reduction of doubt to a minuscule point cocooned over by devotion in Père Grou, and Père Milley and Père de Caussade sublimating the desire for assurance in their doctrine of 'abandonment to the Divine Providence'—one of the high points of Christian spirituality. It is impossible to know to what extent these considerations were explored in the advice of directors to the devout laity. Education and leisure, as well as piety, were conditions for eligibility to leave the beaten path of dedication and climb the vertiginous crags. There was a custom for ladies of good family (and sometimes men) to decide to pass their final years in retreat in a monastic house; perhaps they meditated on death, though often they were economizing, to leave

the family heritage intact, or seeking tranquillity along with material comfort when the social whirl had become too demanding. Sometimes in high society a *dévoté* would let it be understood death was a preoccupation by adopting the practice of meditating before a skull; painters had cherished the gesture, and Louis XV's queen made it fashionable—not that we may suppose she was insincere, for religion was her only support in a court where the function of queen was in practice exercised by a condominium of mistresses. For most people, retreats from the world, the higher flights of spirituality, and excessive gestures were all impossible. They had their prayers, assisted by resort to one of the handbooks of preparation for dying—and, above all, they were fortified by membership of a confraternity in which the intercessions of all supported the lonely individual, in this life and the next. It was a throw-back to the early days of Christianity and a collective salvation of the people of God, adapted and routinized to suit less fervent days—regarded as indispensable by both the clergy and the mass opinion of ‘la religion populaire’.

The king of France did not allow his subjects to die as they pleased; although they were departing for a far country beyond his jurisdiction, they were to set off with passports in order. By royal declarations of 1712 and 1724, renewing regulations of the law courts dating from the early fifteenth century, on the second day of a serious illness, the physician had to remind his patient of his duty to send for a confessor, and if this was not done, the curé must be informed. The Church imposed severities on the corpse and memory of those who died unshriven: depending on the circumstances, ecclesiastical ceremonies might be withheld or curtailed, and burial in consecrated ground forbidden. Special provision was made for soldiers and sailors going into battle. Since time would be lacking for individual confessions, chaplains pronounced a general absolution before the fighting began, and, it was said, at the moment of death there was a ‘penitence of blood’ seen by God alone and crying out for his forgiveness. Given the unpredictability of life and the doctrine of the decisiveness of the last moment, few were inclined to question the indispensability of the confessor at the end. ‘Absolution, miséricorde!’ was the cry of the victims crushed in the panic at the cathedral of Mâcon when the roof began to fall. When her son was killed in the wars, the duchesse de Longueville did not ask if he had died quickly and painlessly, but if he had had time to seek forgiveness. ‘Ah, mon cher fils! Est-il mort sur le champ? N'a-t-il pas eu un seul moment? Ah, mon Dieu, quel sacrifice!’

The Catholic observances of dying began with confession and

absolution, then the reception of the last communion, the viaticum, then extreme unction, and, finally, the recitation of the 'prières des agonisants'. These procedures, measured, ceremonious, evident to all in street and *quartier*, angered anticlericals and unbelievers as redoubling the terrors of dying and affirming the domination of priests. This *appareil*, as the term went, was regretted by sentimental deists, entranced by Rousseau's description of the radiant death of Julie in the *Nouvelle Héloïse*: no minister gives guidance, for a good life is the only preparation needed; terror is banished, for a child falling asleep in the bosom of a loving Father has no fear of the moment of awakening. Yet few of the critics died in accordance with their unbelief. Polite society did not approve of the sensation caused when some *libertin* or *esprit fort* spurned the ministrations of the Church. A sceptic—a Montesquieu, an abbé de Saint-Pierre, a Buffon—had a duty to pay tribute to the social decencies, the institutional framework of morality, and the traditions of his nation, conforming, maybe, with a tinge of irony. Even Voltaire skilfully stage-managed the performance of a calculated minimum. Outrageous defiance and would-be defiance, crumbling, insincere conformity, and the details of its manœuvres were matters for the gossip of the Parisian salons, but over most of the country and for all classes, the rituals of the deathbed were the accepted routine, to be organized for one's family and friends and accepted for oneself when the fatal moment came.

One of the duties of the confessor was to check that a last will and testament had been made. According to the precepts of the Church, this should have been done in health, at leisure; but probably half the penitents had neglected to do so, and if their possessions were worth the expense, a notary would be called. The confessor would warn of the importance of ensuring that the wife and children were duly provided for, and appropriate legacies made to servants (public opinion was coming to insist on fair rewards for loyal service; the pious duc de Croÿ left five times as much to pension his retainers as for masses for himself and his wife). The poor must not be forgotten, while, to avoid the danger of anticlerical censure, legacies to churchmen were to be discouraged. 'If you leave [your wealth] to the clergy,' said a Jansenist, 'they will spend it in good cheer; if you give it to the poor, they will pray for you, and you will have merit in the sight of God.' The confessor might have to decide if the dying man ought to make some public reparation, whether for a lifetime of bad example or some particularly heinous offence. What more corrupting example could there be than one set by a king? Louis XIV and

Louis XV authorized a statement to the assembled courtiers asking pardon for the scandal they had caused. A resident mistress might have to be sent away, a notorious enemy reconciled, a lease to a gambling-house terminated, a bonfire of indecent pictures made. An author might be required to disavow some of his publications, a musician some of his compositions—Montesquieu adopted the formula of declaring he had written against religion solely out of a desire for singularity. A stock story told of more than one deathbed was the confessor burning a manuscript while the author whispers to his friends where to find the other copy. These public gestures of reparation were exacted from the great, whose offences had been talked about; for lesser people and for hidden crimes, charity might incline the confessor to let the secret go with his penitent to the grave. What should be done if a nurse confessed to substituting one child for another many years ago, or a married man admitted to being a priest who had abandoned his vocation and built up a second identity? The substitution of the infants was revealed, to the benefit of the legal profession; but while the erring priest wanted to be publicly humiliated as a final penance, his curé thought rather of the wife finding her marriage null and the children illegitimate. Parish priests knew their people, and could assess which wrongs ought to be righted publicly and which could be righted secretly, and they would be careful of a family's honour.

The spiritual writers warned confessors not to threaten a dying man with the imminence of judgement. Perhaps, in dealing with an obstinate sinner, a word might be dropped about damnation, but then only in a preliminary exhortation. The priest was to speak of resignation, consolation, and hope, pointing to Christ on the cross, his blood 'fortifying the soul against the last assaults of the Devil'. The manuals of the confessional, so often insisting on an impractical rigorism, urged generosity at the end. Any priest, whether furnished with the bishop's licence or not, could give absolution, and there were no *cas réservés*. There were to be no inquisitional questions: the confessor was not sitting in judgement on the dying man so much as 'praying with him and for him'. The fear of death was assumed to be an inspiration for true contrition. Though the priest must do his best to bring his penitent to reconciliation with God, he was not assessing the value of his penitence. Ignorance of the faith did not matter, provided a promise was given to seek instruction in the event of recovery. Absolution would certainly be given to a man who had lived a respectable life, and even one who had no better recommendation than nominal adherence to the Roman faith and whose dispositions

were not satisfactory was likely to qualify so long as he was not in a state of mortal sin. If the dying man was already unconscious, he should be given absolution if he had sent for a priest, and conditional absolution if someone was prepared to vouch that he would have wished to do so. Only to notorious impenitent sinners did the Church refuse its last rites. Against this background of generosity and consolation, Archbishop Christophe de Beaumont's refusal of the sacraments to dying Jansenists stands out grotesquely in its uncharitable insensitivity.

After the confessor had departed, there were two solemn ceremonies to be performed, conferring divine grace upon the dying man. The viaticum, like all communions, demanded the submission of the soul to the will of God and offered union with the risen life of Christ; this last reception of the Sacrament, as its name implied, was the preparation for the journey from earth to Heaven 'in the hope of eternal life'. After, came extreme unction; as in all anointings of the sick, it implied a plea, a desperate hope, for the healing of the body, but in this case it had come to be regarded as a supplement to the confession, an additional opportunity to do penance for the misuse of the bodily senses, and an indemnity for sins forgotten. As such, it completed the preparation for communion, and in strict liturgical logic ought to have preceded it. But by a papal ruling of 1614, the traditional order of precedence had been reversed, and the anointings now came last; the intention probably was to take away any suggestion that priestly absolution might need reinforcement. Only the curé of the parish or his deputy could administer the viaticum. The Sacrament was carried through the streets in procession, testifying to the faithful that one of their number was departing from the world, prompting them to pray for him and for themselves as destined to the same fate. The Church exhorted those who were able to do so not only to pray, but to follow the procession into the house, a pious work earning forty days' remission from Purgatory. The procession was in accordance with rank: a train of clergy and liveried lackeys with torches for the great; for the poor, a dingy canopy carried by two urchins, the clerk with handbell and lantern, the hobbling beadle and the priest with the ciborium. In the countryside, there would be less ceremony still—the curé accompanied only by the man who worked his fields acting as escort and holding his horse's bridle. Mercier, who gives such a disillusioned picture of the viaticum going through the slums of Paris, also describes a zealous priest taking the Sacrament into the hovel of a poor woman as if it was a palace. Beneath the outward splendour or

shabbiness were the eternal simplicities—for those who believed, the hope of salvation.

The priest arrived again, in surplice and purple stole, bringing the consecrated oils for extreme unction. He would sprinkle holy water and give the dying man a crucifix to kiss; there would be prayers and litanies, then the seven anointings were given, beginning at the eyes. They constituted a farewell to the body, a last gesture of total resignation. As death drew near, the priest, or whoever else was staying on as companion, would ‘speak only of the goodness of God’; the spiritual writers recommended the murmuring of scriptural texts: St Peter's ‘Lord, thou knowest that I love thee’, St Paul's ‘it is better to depart and be with Christ’, the Seven Words from the Cross, ending with the ‘Into thy hands I commend my spirit’. At the moment of death there were the *prières des agonisants* calling on Christ to deliver by his passion, death, and resurrection, on the angels, prophets, martyrs, and saints, rising to the final vision of the heavenly Jerusalem in the prayer of commendation, ‘Depart, O Christian soul’.

The Church's ceremonies of dying were social observances as well as religious ones. There were obligations to family and station to be fulfilled. In high society, visitors crowded into the room, paying their respects to the individual and the relatives, seeing and being seen, some there merely from brazen curiosity. This custom of awaiting death in public declined in the eighteenth century, being incompatible with the growing sophistication of human relationships, the new intensity of the cult of *sensibilité*, and the recommendations of the best religious writers. True, there was a Christian sense in which dying was a public affair, evident in the encouragement to all to follow the viaticum into the house, and in the requirement for the clergy to give an exhortation before the administration of the last communion, and again before extreme unction; these discourses were for all present, and even if they were addressed to the dying man, they were meant to be ‘overheard’. The sovereign remedy against despair at the end—the idea was reaffirmed by Erasmus and adopted by all the spiritual writers—was the presence of fellow members of the household of the Church, demonstrating their sympathy and offering their prayers. Confraternities of Pénitents had a duty to attend at the death bed of a brother, and when a Trappist died, all the monks of the house gathered round as he lay on straw and ashes awaiting the moment of departure. A pious Christian had a reciprocal duty to the faithful who thus fortified him: if he could, he ought to deliver some edifying sentiment, calculated to

strengthen the listeners in their religious allegiance. In the Oratorian Jean Hanard's *Les Belles Morts de plusieurs séculiers* (1667) solemn farewells to family and servants are recorded, and from novelists it seems these 'derniers adieux' were frequent, albeit often in terms of simple practical advice. But while the Church used the death scene as a lesson to the living, in the eighteenth century it became the rule to leave the dying man in peace after the last sacraments had been given: only the priest and the wife and children would remain. The abbé Fillassier (1726), an expert on prayer, laid on the clergy or, in their absence, the closest friend the duty of choosing the time for ordering all visitors to depart, though encouraging them to continue with their prayers elsewhere. Christian dying was then focused on its essential, the relationship with God.

The funeral liturgy in France, with its local varieties, was based on the revision of Pope Paul V in 1614. The full office consisted of matins (including three nocturnes) and lauds, with a conclusion of the Pater and a prayer for forgiveness. The rubrics, however, allowed abbreviation; the first nocturne, consisting of three psalms and their antiphons, responses, the Pater and a lesson from the book of Job, could be followed directly by the conclusion. No doubt this was the usage for most ordinary funerals. Then came the requiem mass, austere celebrated without the Pax; at the end, the clergy stood round the bier to say the *Non intres in iudicium*, the *Liber*, the Kyrie and the Pater. There was a further ceremony at the graveside, ending with the *Requiescat in pace*. The architect of the liturgy of 1614 had been Bellarmine, who constructed it like an additional chapter to his *De arte bene moriendi*, a warning to the living as well as a farewell to the dead. There was the triumphalism of the *In paradisum* and the hope of the Pater and the Benedictus contrasting with the penitential bass of the *De Profundis* and the *Miserere* and the thunders of the *Dies irae* and the *Libera*—'Deliver me, O Lord, from eternal death in that great day, when heaven and earth are swept away, the day of wrath and desolation, the day of bitterest judgement'.

While the Church warned and prayed, the community affirmed its solidarity and sympathy in social rites bound up with the religious ones. The first duty of the mourning household was to inform the parish bell-ringer, who tolled the bell to announce the news to the village or urban *quartier*. The body was left with face uncovered and flanked by candles; visitors came to sprinkle holy water and console the family. In country places, the peasants gathered that night in a *veillée*, eating toast soaked in sugared wine, singing litanies, telling

stories of the dead man, and jesting. Nothing like a good fireside and death in the house, it was said, to bring folk together. The funeral began with a procession to the church, led by the confraternities to which the dead man had belonged (or hired to attend by the family). The corpse, unless dangerously infected, was carried in a shroud or coffin on the shoulders of bearers, a last service from friends. There was a grim solidarity too among the poorer majority, for they were buried together, crowded in the *fosse commune*. When the ceremonies were over, there was a funeral repast; some dioceses forbade the clergy to attend, since drink flowed, and there was speculation about money and remarriage. Friends not invited to a wake adjourned to the tavern.

The great left the land of the living with different arrangements corresponding to their rank. Mourners were invited by handsomely printed *billets d'obsèques*; the procession had many clergy, monks, confraternities, lackeys, and files of orphans and poor (all suitably remunerated), and multitudinous candles and torches were carried. The body might lie in state in the church in a catafalque, the ornate superstructure ablaze with candles, and the walls would be adorned with hangings, most often black (though it was white for virgins) and diversified with coats of arms. In the end, there was burial in the church or in a chapel or in a family vault, with a sophisticated marble monument to follow.

Customs were changing. Churchmen had long objected to having the worldly pomp of funeral monuments in their sanctuaries. In 1745, Porée, a canon of Caen, published *Lettres sur la sépulture dans les églises*; churches, he said, should speak of life and hope, while cemeteries ought to be sited away from habitations and lined with cypress trees and sober monuments, speaking only of death and its solemnity. He added a further consideration deriving from discussions proceeding in the medical profession: the 'pestilential vapours' emanating from corpses were a menace to health and, if they included, as might be, an aura of the evil passions of the dead, to morals also. In 1737, the parlement of Paris had set up a panel of medical experts to consider the health hazard, and Voltaire applauded the design of the magistrates to put an end to this 'war of the dead against the living'. Horror stories circulated of deaths caused by exhalations when burial vaults were opened, and a further enquiry by the parlement listed Parisian churches where the *fosse commune* was left open for four months, a year, and, in one case, no less than three years, with over 600 corpses to date. A parliamentary edict proved ineffectual. A few progressive bishops acted unilaterally

to enforce instant reform in their dioceses. Finally, in 1776, the Royal Council ordered the ending of the practice of burials in churches (allowing a few exceptions), and directed parishes to establish new cemeteries away from centres of population. Buying new land and gating and walling it in, as the laws required, was expensive; so churchwardens, reluctant to have to levy a rate on the parishioners, made continual excuses and seized every pretext for delay. In Paris, the case for the reform was alarmingly established when the organic debris of ages from the deep trenches of the Cimetière des Saints-Innocents seeped into the cellars of nearby houses and mephitic odours crept into the colonnades where stall keepers sold old clothes and books and letter writers plied their trade. In 1785, the Council ordered the deconsecration of this hallowed plague spot and the removal of the bodies, bones, and monuments, a task carried through during the winter nights of the next two years by the light of torches and bonfires—macabre scenes recorded in the paintings of Hubert Robert, the artist of ruins and human transience. Entrepreneurs and publicists of the pre-Romantic cult of melancholy produced schemes for elaborate necropolises with trees and colonnades, statues and sombre ingenuities; but in fact, nobody wanted to spend money on the new graveyards. The effect of the legislation was to cause municipal wrangling, complaints from proprietors against compulsory purchases and from citizens from having to finance them, anticlerical feeling (shown in the desire to try to obtain the land from ecclesiastical proprietors), and general ill will, and, in Paris at least, to ensure that most of the mourners went away after the church service, leaving the priest, his acolyte, and the coffin-bearers (probably half drunk) to make the journey through streets and rutted lanes for the final interment.

The great cemetery reform had served the cause of hygiene, but done nothing for religious feelings. Funerals in eighteenth-century France had always been prone to the incongruous blending of sadness and spiritual reflection with worldly embarrassments and scandals. There were battles among the laity for precedence, with jostling in processions and leap-frogging forward of chairs and prayer stools; there was the rivalry of monks and canons with curés for the right to preside (the law was on the side of the parish priests, but there were always debatable cases)—corpses kidnapped, holes knocked through party walls to smuggle out coffins, interruption of chants, swipes with incense boats, and prods with processional crosses, lost hats, torn surplices, and an aftermath of lawsuits; there was inebriated laughter from the scruffy nominal ecclesiastics who

earned a pittance by attending; overcharging and double charging by the *jurés crieurs* who were the undertakers for the more expensive urban funerals, and there was universal complaint of the rapacity of the curés in exacting their fees, though indeed more and more of them chose not to collect or were unable to do so. The most hilarious jests, the most comic incidents, the most ludicrous manifestations of pride, the most startling demonstrations of inequality, the meanest exactions of the times, were found in association with death and its celebration. With conformity well-nigh universal, religious and social observances so interlocked, and families and communities on public display with all their pride and rivalry, incongruous incidents were inevitable. The picturesque, and sometimes unedifying, realities of the observances of death under the *ancien régime* were a far cry from the hushed tones of the spiritual authors reflecting on man's latter end, and the pre-Romantic writers haunted by the magic of lonely grief beside graves on rocky headlands in the sea or deep in forest glades.

23 Liturgical Worship

I

One of the principal tasks of the reforming clergy was to educate the laity into intelligent participation in the liturgical services. In the great collegiate churches the splendid music rolled on as a background to silent private devotion, but in the parishes, efforts were made to encourage the congregation to join whole-heartedly in the singing. The office-book of the Parisian parish of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois (1745) laid down orderly procedures: the choir would sing the first verse of a psalm or canticle, then the congregation would join in: 'there is a bell hanging above the chancel which will be rung immediately it is evident that the sacred harmony of singing which ought to reign between the choir and the congregation in the nave has broken down. This will be the signal for the congregation to keep silent, to listen to the choir and to conform to it. This practice is in use in many churches in Paris'.¹ Numerous treatises on plainchant were published in the eighteenth century, so it was no longer a mystery to laymen. One of these handbooks, written by curé Léonard Poisson, of the diocese of Sens, inspired his archbishop to produce an *Antiphonaire paroissial* in 1765. The rubrics were in French: 'those in the parishes of both town and country who are in good voice may be able, by using the book, to learn the chants of the Church in the privacy of their own homes'. Eight years later, the archbishop produced an *Office divin abrégé* for laymen who wished to follow for themselves a programme of daily devotions modelled on the worship of monasteries and cathedrals.²

It was impossible for the offices recited by monks and canons to become familiar to everyone; their length and multiplicity, said Duguet, in his *Traité de la prière publique* (1713), would inevitably lead to frustration and boredom. Nor were they essential. It was the Eucharist which was at the heart of the Christo-centric piety which the clergy were teaching. Above all else, the people were encouraged to attend mass. There was the absolute obligation to confess and communicate at Easter, and laymen who aspired to serious church-manship

ought to approach the Sacrament more frequently, though only after serious preparation. Non-communicating attendance at mass as an act of worship was, almost everywhere, the standard religious act for every Sunday. For their part, the clergy were to celebrate the mysteries with deep reverence. On visitations bishops would check on the decency of altar plate and linen; they might also insist on having a sanctuary lamp always burning, and encourage the foundation of a confraternity for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament.³ On the other hand, they might suppress excessive resort to benediction with the Sacrament, as encouraging over-familiarity and serving as a substitute for attendance at mass.⁴ The Jansenists led the way in guarding against using the Sacrament as a prestigious symbol; in the service of *salut* (exposition, prayers, and benediction)⁵ they would keep the Host hidden in the ciborium, not displayed in the monstrance, in conformity with the theological arguments and precedents set forth in curé J. B. Thiers's *Traité de l'exposition du Saint-Sacrement de l'autel*. The assemblies of the clergy in the seventeenth century had taken an austere view, limiting 'exposition' to the feast of Corpus Christi and at other times only for grave reasons. By the eighteenth century, the practice of dioceses varied. Some allowed the display of the Sacrament only at Corpus Christi (the canons of Saint-Jean at Lyon added to this the two days of their patron, John the Baptist). Others added the whole octave; thus, if the Assembly of the Clergy was meeting in Paris at the season of Corpus Christi, they would carry the Host in solemn procession on the last of the eight days, the second order of clergy with candles, and the bishops each with a personal acolyte.⁶ In other dioceses, permission extended to twice a month or every Sunday. At Saint-Martin's of Liège, an old custom was retained: at noon everyday a priest on the tower held aloft the monstrance in blessing over the city below. Mgr de la Motte of Amiens was unusual in believing that reverence for the Eucharist was fostered by frequent services of Benediction, and he allowed *salut* daily after evening prayers.

Though the clergy continually said masses, whether for their flock or to fulfil foundations for the souls of benefactors, every single occasion was to be marked by deepest reverence. Dr Collet's *Examen et résolution des principales difficultés qui se rencontrent dans la célébration des SS mystères* (1762, approved by the bishop of Montauban in 1753) was a minute and fastidious guide for the celebrant.⁷ He 'must be morally sure he is in a state of grace' through confession; if, even while wearing the vestments, he remembers an unshriven incident, he must disrobe and confess again if that is possible; if no confessor is

at hand, he must make a desperate attempt to achieve an act of perfect contrition. If 'to avoid scandal and meet people's expectations' he has to celebrate forthwith, he must remember that he has assumed a serious burden on his conscience. Beforehand, he must have said matins and lauds and spent some time in meditation. When celebrating, it is mortal sin to fail to add water to the wine, to omit the Elevation or the Fraction, to abstain from communicating in both kinds, to forget to purify the paten after the communion. Those who approach the altar as servers must be decorous, and a woman must never perform this office—'the Tempter would profit by the circumstance to sow trouble'. There was to be no conversation in the sacristy before or after mass; 'how can the pious layman at the threshold of the sanctuary, preparing to meet his Maker or giving thanks to him for the gift of himself, listen to such talk with edification?'

The Jansenists, so stern about the perfection of the dispositions required to receive communion, led the demand for understanding participation by the congregation. In their view, the canon of the mass ought to be said aloud—hence Cardinal Fleury's rule: a priest who said the prayer of consecration 'à voix intelligible' was a suspect who could not be promoted.⁸ In the missal drawn up for Bossuet at Meaux, the Jansenist abbé Ledieu put the 'Amen' at the end of the prayer of consecration in red letters, to be said by the congregation, with the assumption that they had heard it.⁹ Works of theological polemic on his 'Amen' were published in 1710 and 1718 by the abbé de Vallement and the Oratorian Le Brun. But the Jansenist red lettering did not triumph for long, since when Cardinal de Bissy became bishop of Meaux, the missal was withdrawn. There was a comprehensively Jansenist parish at Asnières, near Paris, run by the curé Jacques Jubé, who organized his liturgy according to the advice of Nicolas Petitpied, the leading scholar of the party. Not only did Jubé read the canon aloud, he also excluded all those he deemed unworthy from attendance, including, on a famous occasion, the mistress of the regent. He went too far, however, in suppressing the singing of the *Domine salvum fac regem* at the end of mass, replacing it with *In te, Domine, speravi*; this was regarded as a 'republican' gesture, and in 1724 he had to flee to Holland.

France was ahead of the rest of the Catholic world in appreciating the revolutionary implications of the invention of printing and throwing open the mysteries of religion to the laity, recognizing their right to read for themselves, free from clerical control. From 1566, Frenchmen had their own vernacular translation of the Bible,

that of ‘the doctors of Louvain’. It was, in fact, by René Benoist,¹⁰ an enterprising curé of Paris, confessor to Mary Stuart and to Henry IV (on the eve of his coronation) and the idol of the market women. He had followed the Genevan version, but emended the crucial texts—as in the words of institution of the Eucharist—where Catholic doctrinal claims conflicted with Calvinist ones. Condemned by the Sorbonne and authority generally, Benoist's translation was validated by doctors of the theological faculty of Louvain, hence its familiar name. Revised editions were published in 1608 by Pierre de Besse and in 1621 by Père Frizon.

Vernacular translations of the Bible¹¹ were banned by Rome, not in the proceedings of the Council of Trent, but in subsequent rulings of Roman congregations and the Index. These prohibitions could not apply in France, being excluded by the Gallican liberties. But while Trent assumed translations would exist, Regula IV (24 March 1564) was designed to make their reading difficult for the laity. A layman must have permission from his bishop in writing, and the bishop was supposed to satisfy himself by consulting the curé or confessor to be sure that access to the Scriptures would not be harmful to the individual concerned. Monks needed the permission of their superiors. Absolution was to be refused to readers who had not received the authorization, and the diocesan authorities were to take action against booksellers who sold a vernacular version to a non-authorized buyer. The Louvain Bible and its adaptations of 1608 and 1621 claimed, deviously enough, to be issued under the authority of Regula IV of Trent—presumably it was not for the translators to toil round the bookshops and interrogate the faithful to see if episcopal warrant in writing was forthcoming. At the instance of Richelieu, Jacques Corbin in 1643 produced a further revision of Louvain, announcing that its errors had been corrected and especial care taken to weed out Calvinist mistranslations; thanks to its august sponsorship, this was a sort of national Bible, and Corbin did not trouble to invoke Regula IV.

The next step was to drop all pretence and declare that the translation offered was for all. There was no need, said Véron in his preface to his New Testament (1647), for bishop, curé, or confessor to agree—‘la lecture de la Bible en français non défendue à aucun’. Michel de Marolles, putting out a New Testament two years later, was equally forthright. An attempt to shore back the approaching landslide was made by Nicolas Le Maire, in *Le Sanctuaire fermé au profanes* (1651), giving a reasoned defence of Regula IV strictly interpreted. The Church allows only ‘the worthy’ to read its Scriptures,

and there are few in this select category—‘artisans and women’, for example, are excluded. This ruling is doctrinally justified because tradition is the essential source of authority—there was a period after the ascension of Christ and before the gospels were written when tradition alone held Christians together; it is also true to religious experience, for men come to faith not by lonely readings of a text, but by instruction given within the community of the faithful. Two years later the French bishops themselves commissioned a translation of the New Testament from the Oratorian Denys Amelote; they were taking over the leadership of the forces of Gallicanism, out-facing both Rome and the ultramontane doctors of the Sorbonne. Amelote's preface (1660) was a masterpiece of diplomacy. His translation was not, of course, to be read without authority. He agreed with Trent that the Vulgate was ‘authentic’, and declared this must be so because it was based on a now lost and uniquely reliable Greek original. Even so, there were other Greek texts which had their own degree of authenticity, and he had consulted them when the Latin of the Vulgate was obscure. It looks as though the bishops really intended their New Testament to be read by all. Of the four prelates who wrote approval notices to accompany Amelote's version, only Coutances referred to the need for authorization, while Saintes, Amiens, and Bayeux implied that all the faithful could read the volume, Bayeux enthusiastically exhorting them to do so.

The Jansenists next entered the field of biblical translation—the Psalms in 1665 (from the Hebrew) and the New Testament in 1667. They not only said that the New Testament was offered to all; they declared that it was obligatory for all Christians to read it. The victory of the ‘open Bible’ came with the sinister drive of Louis XIV to convert the Huguenots. With the co-operation of the archbishop of Paris, the secular authorities distributed 150,000 copies of Amelote's New Testament in the wake of the visitations of the dragoons from 1685 to 1687; in addition there were copies of translations of the psalms, the ordinary of the mass, and the decrees of the Council of Trent—all, equally with the Bible, subject to the Roman ban on vernacular versions. They were all straight translations—no Catholic commentary or explanation. How was it possible now to deny to Catholics what was freely offered to Protestants?

The breakthrough in biblical translation had been followed by French versions of the breviary and of the ordinary of the mass. From the mid-seventeenth century the lead was taken by the Jansenists. In 1650, Port-Royal published the offices in French—*Les Heures de Port-Royal*, with the psalms taken from the Hebrew for

greater accuracy. Nine years later followed the *Office du Saint-Sacrement*; then in 1660 Joseph de Voisin published a five-volume translation of the *Missel romain*, the text in Latin and French, with notes and commentary in French alone. The vicars-general of Paris authorized it; the Assembly of the Clergy, the Sorbonne, and the Royal Council condemned it. Pope Alexander VII joined in with an astonishing brief of 12 January 1661, not only censuring the ‘son of perdition’ who had made the translation, but also ‘rejecting, condemning and interdicting all translations that may be made of the book of the mass’.¹² This was greeted with incredulity in France, especially as Rome had just given permission for the ordination of native priests in the Far East who did not know Latin. This strange incident served to confirm the Gallican Church in its progress towards making the liturgy accessible. Voisin's translation was freely sold, and in 1662 he went on to publish an *Office de la Semaine sainte* which included a translation of the canon. Arnauld, writing in defence of Voisin's *Missel*, declared that the ordinary of the mass had already been translated five times, in 1587, 1608, 1644, and 1651 (this time under the patronage of the archbishop of Paris), and also in the same year into Catalan; what was new now was that the right of the faithful to worship intelligently was being recognized. As with the New Testament, the necessity of instructing the supposedly converted Protestants swept away whatever inhibitions remained among Catholics about circulating the ordinary of the mass in the vernacular. Finally, in 1688, Le Tourneux produced a complete French breviary. He had already been in trouble for his *L'Année Chrétienne* (1682), objected to by the papal nuncio because it contained a translation of the mass. Now the foes of the Jansenists, including the archbishop of Paris, rallied to censure his breviary. They argued that the prayers were meant to be private for the clergy; the psalms diverged from the Vulgate; the hymns were printed in both Latin and French but on separate pages, suggesting the intention to have them sung in the vernacular when this became feasible; the calendar showed Jansenist bias in curtailing the feasts of the mendicant Orders. The story goes that Louis XIV asked Racine why he had not written hymns for the Church; ‘I have’, the poet replied, ‘but they were condemned’—they were in Le Tourneux's breviary.

The Gallican Church moved into the eighteenth century with a growing class of educated laymen attending its services with intelligent comprehension. They knew the Bible as a wide sweep of information, a storehouse of ideas, and a coherent narrative of

salvation, instead of being confined to a direct acquaintance limited to the epistles and gospels for Sundays and feast-days. For their use in 1673, Bishop Vialart of Châlons published a litany using intercessions and responses derived from the Bible, and similar books of devotion, scripturally based, followed from other authors.¹³ The new educated worshipper could also follow the prayers of the mass directly and with exactitude, no longer relying on memories of instruction concerning the Eucharist or in saying the rosary. The number of those worshipping with full awareness was widened by the publication of works giving clear explanations, like curé Claude Varmerot's *Le Bon Paroissien, ouvrage qui contient l'office de l'Eglise en latin et en français* (Toul, 1735). Books of this kind multiplied, especially in the second half of the century, and these supplemented the analyses given in the diocesan catechisms.¹⁴ Specific teaching was given in the evangelistic mission campaigns in the parishes. Père Badou of the Doctrinaires would have a priest celebrating mass at the entrance to the choir while he himself stood alongside explaining the rite as it unfolded.¹⁵

The idea of celebrating the mass in the vernacular was abroad, but there was little support for it. In *De l'importance des idées religieuses* (1788) Necker recommended it, but he was a Protestant, and the abbé Royau responded with asperity: 'The Church would be inundated with defective translations and the faithful would be exposed to dangerous errors in faith and morals.'¹⁶ The *cabiers* of 1789 of Paris *extra muros* and of the parish of Fosses (Seine-et-Oise) asked for all the services of the Church to be conducted in French. 'Most of our inhabitants cannot read,' said the redactor at Fosses; 'that means they do not understand the prayers read out in church, so they get bored and gossip as if they were in the street'. At this time a curé called Carré published his *Culte public en langue française* addressed to the new National Assembly; now we have political liberty, he said, let us exercise our right to use our own language—liturgical reform as a demonstration of patriotism.¹⁷

II

If the laity were to participate intelligently in divine service, there was all the more reason to ensure that the content of the mass and the offices was theologically sound and devotionally edifying, free from superstition and infelicities, dignified in language and of reasonable length. In this age of scepticism and wit, the clergy were self-conscious about their liturgies: while they must speak with no

uncertain voice to the faithful, they must not present easy targets for the ridicule of anticlericals and unbelievers. These considerations, along with the progress of scholarship, made the age of the Enlightenment in France a period of liturgical reform. The previous century had seen the widespread acceptance of the Roman breviary and missal, papal rulings having prescribed their use except in dioceses where the local customs had a continuous history of over 200 years. France was suspicious and Gallican and provincial loyalties were strong, but a uniform revised liturgy offered an escape from chaos; in the early years of the century Vincent de Paul saw seven or eight priests celebrating at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, every one using a different rite.¹⁸ Many old diocesan books were out of print, and the copies still in use were disintegrating; a ready-made alternative represented a quick replacement and a saving in printing costs. To conciliate opinion, bishops issued separate propers for the cult of the saints dear to the locality. Even so, there could be trouble. A lawsuit of 1600 drew a dividing line between the reforming bishops and the Gallican parlements. The abbess of Ronceray in Angers appealed to the magistrates of Paris against her bishop's suppression of the Angevin breviary, and the parlement declared the episcopal ordinance void on the ground that such changes 'could not be made without the authority of the king'. The Assembly of Clergy of 1605 protested, and voted a subsidy to encourage the widespread distribution of the books of the Roman liturgy.¹⁹ What had been an improvement in 1600 appeared inadequate—rebarbative even—eighty years later to minds moulded by the new expertise of historical study and by the logical and stylistic exigencies of the early Enlightenment. The Roman breviary contained the offices of saints whose exploits were legendary and, indeed, whose very existence was improbable. The scriptural passages were not according to sound learning; the version of the psalms did not correspond to Jerome, the Septuagint, or the Vulgate. There was too much to recite, and the language lacked elegance. As doggerel verses composed after dinner by some clerics of the University of Caen had it: 'the Latin is archaic, . . . the style Gothic', and the offices so long that they were either 'gabbled in a rush . . . or slept through in a stupor'.

Bien mieux vaudrait en avoir peu,
Et le dire avec plus de feu.²⁰

In 1680, the liturgical scene was transformed by the publication of a new breviary for the diocese of Paris. Strictly speaking, it was not the first venture into novelty, for three years earlier, Henri de Villars,

archbishop of Vienne, had sponsored a more radical model; but it was the Parisian version which became well known. The archbishop of Vienne had 'operated almost as if there had never been a breviary at all before this', wrote a liturgiologist in 1734; 'the only rule he consulted was to instruct and to edify'.²¹ What was apocryphal, false, or embarrassing was thrown out; the homilies were chosen from the best patristic authors; the versicles and responses were from Scripture, and the collects from old sacramentaries. By contrast, Nicolas Chastelain, canon of Notre-Dame, who was chairman of the Parisian revising committee, was cautious; but he called in the theologians of Vienne to assist, and adopted their approach.²² The style of the Latin was improved, the biblical passages all taken from the Vulgate, and forty legends in the Roman breviary were omitted—St Denis the Areopagite was no longer described as the founder of the church of Paris, and Lazarus was deprived of episcopal rank; quotations from the Wisdom books of the Old Testament taken as referring to the Virgin Mary were removed, as were phrases implying her corporeal assumption into heaven. St Peter was the prince of the apostles, but his feast was demoted to the category of 'fêtes solennelles mineures'. The success of their new breviary emboldened the theologians of Paris to publish a new missal five years later; it was to be a model for all French revisions of the eighteenth century. The graduals sung at mass were all scriptural; the strophe in curious Latin about St Denis carrying his head after his execution was suppressed;²³ the Wisdom lessons no longer figured in the masses of the feasts of the Virgin; and the traditional identification of 'the woman who was a sinner' with Mary Magdalen was abandoned.

The general chapter of Cluny had decided to produce a new breviary for the monasteries of the Order in 1676; the Parisian experts were called on for help, and in 1686 the new work was published.²⁴ It threw off all constraints of allegiance to the Roman model. Readings from the Fathers replaced the legends of the saints; feast-days falling on Sundays were suppressed or transferred; the Conception lost its octave, and the 'Purification' was changed to the 'Presentation'. The focus turned away from the Virgin and the saints, and was directed to the life of Christ; to Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost, the major festivals of his incarnation, two more were added: Epiphany and the Ascension. Most of the Popes were excluded from the liturgical calendar, and, as at Paris, St Peter lost his high solemnity. The liturgiologists of Paris and Cluny were fortunate in being able to call on a hymn writer of judicious taste and

linguistic fluency. J.-B. Santeuil, canon regular of Saint-Victor, was simple and petulant, ‘a child with greying locks’, who wandered round the churches of Paris naïvely basking in the pleasure of hearing his own compositions—‘but what vivacity! What elevated sentiments! What Latinity!’ In 1693, the bishop of Carcassonne asked him to write hymns to St Nazaire and St Celse, the patrons of his cathedral: ‘all that is sung here in their praise is redolent of the coarseness and ignorance of past centuries’, he said, ‘while everything you compose does honour to this Augustan century’.²⁵

The influence of the Parisian reform was quickly evident in the neighbouring dioceses. Sens, whose dean had been a colleague of Canon Chastelain, introduced a new breviary in 1702 and a new missal in 1715, both along Parisian lines. Auxerre, Bayeux, and Blois adopted Chastelain's breviary, and Troyes plagiarized it. Orléans²⁶ printed new liturgical books, though chiefly under the influence of Cluny, while Rouen, at a more leisurely pace, completed a well-considered version between 1728 and 1733.²⁷ The pastoral letter of the archbishop of Sens introducing his new breviary was a manifesto of the liturgical reform movement.

We have followed the ancient rites of our church, restoring those that had fallen into oblivion . . . We have suppressed hymns of a crude style or of defective versification, and we have added others more elegant in form and more fitted to augment piety. In the lessons and lives of saints, we have retained only those texts whose authenticity has been verified, for we are persuaded that it is much better to pass dubious recitals over in silence, even if they are favourable to morals. The Church, which is the pillar of truth, cannot make use of accounts which are not certain.²⁸

Jansenist scholars, demolishers of legends, zealous for Scripture, and connoisseurs of austere prose, dominated the changes in Nevers and Troyes, and had some influence on Massillon's new breviary for Clermont.²⁹ The bishop of Nevers led the way in devising a new, Christo-centric liturgical calendar. Sunday, the day of the Lord's resurrection, was never usurped from its own epistles and gospels by the observances of saints, except for the Virgin, Peter and Paul, and the patron saint of the individual church; as Augustine had said, ‘the star must expect the sun to eclipse its light—a saint rejoices to hear his Master praised’. Advent and Lent were rendered more severe, uninterrupted by saints' days except those of the first class.³⁰ At Troyes, the Jansenist flavour of the missal led the cathedral chapter to appeal against it to the metropolitan, the archbishop of Sens; the king forbade the parlement to intervene, and the missal was finally

withdrawn. By contrast, at Autun and Toul, new books were published in the old Roman pattern. The *Missale Romano tullense* of 1718 was a reprint, though with the addition of proses for thirteen feasts dear to the diocese and three complete masses for local saints; the bishop, however, had scholars working on a new breviary, intending to produce his own idiosyncratic version later on.³¹ The bishop of Autun, zealous for orthodoxy, turned to the Jesuits for the revision of his breviary; it appeared in 1728, and was ridiculed by the Jansenists for its errors and pious credulity; even so, it was put on the Index because the preface prescribed its exclusive use—Rome would not countenance the specific exclusion of its rites.³² At Cambrai, the Roman books were in use almost everywhere, for the ancient local breviary and missal had become unobtainable. The archbishop, the vocationless, illegitimate son of the regent, reprinted them without amendment, in spite of the warning of his cathedral chapter that they were full of apocryphal tales and errors, never having been revised since 1545. As a result, the churches of the diocese stayed with Rome as the lesser of two evils.³³

Liturgical reform was under way, but chaotically. Mésenguy, principal of the Collège de Beauvais in Paris, in 1735 published some reflections on its progress, *Lettres écrites de Paris à un chanoine de l'église cathédrale de xxxxx concernant quelques réflexions sur les nouveaux Bréviaires*.³⁴ He applauded the changes, but with two reservations. First, he was concerned about the 'esprit de système' of the reformers; their rule that all responses and readings had to be from the Bible limited inventiveness in devotional expression, and led to bizarre manœuvres to make scriptural passages relevant. For example, the theologians of Sens had used the story of King Josiah having stones rolled over the mouth of the cave where five enemy kings were hiding as a prefiguration of the entombment of Christ, and those of Bourges had taken the daughter of Pharaoh making provision for the rearing of Moses by his mother as a parallel to the angels reassuring Joseph about providing a home for Mary. Mésenguy's other main reservation arose from the sheer success of the reformers in so many dioceses. In the past, wherever you went in France, divine service was uniform and comprehensible, but now everything is different; even versicles and responses which have been retained have often been transposed to different offices—say, from first vespers to lauds. Naturally, the reformers had concentrated on the breviary and the missal, with the result that in most places, the new books were out of step with the old antiphonaries, graduals, and processions, tempting many clergy to hang on to the old Roman

rite just to avoid complexities. At the time he was writing, Mésenguy was on the archbishop of Paris's committee working on another new breviary, and he proposed that all the other dioceses should adopt it, restoring uniformity over the whole country.

The Parisian breviary of 1680 had been issued by a worldly—not to say scandalous—archbishop. The new version of 1736 was commissioned by Vintimille, a luxurious prelate whose idleness, as it happened, encouraged the production of a liturgical masterpiece. Strictly orthodox himself, Vintimille left the work to three experts who were Jansenists—Mésenguy, the Oratorian Vigier, and Coffin, rector of the University of Paris and a hymn writer of genius, passionately adoring the ‘Great Master of all hearts’ who ‘commands the secret springs of human thought and will’. His verses included the essence of Jansenist devotion: Bishop Colbert of Montpellier was delighted—Vintimille, he said, was like Balaam in the Old Testament, who came to curse Israel, but was constrained to bless. Even so, by their situation, the liturgiologists were debarred from pushing to partisan extremes. What was best in the innovations in so many dioceses was annexed, but the exaggerations of the ‘esprit de système’ were passed over. To some extent they followed Foinard's *Analyse du Bréviaire ecclésiastique* (1726), a proposal to knit together all the parts of every office so there would be ‘un rapport sensible et une convenance naturelle qui pût exciter et soutenir l'attention’, while avoiding his portentous solemnities like reading selections from the canons of ecclesiastical law.³⁵ The hymns of Santeuil and Coffin replaced excessive resort to the Psalter, and the process of curtailing the dominance of the saints over the calendar was completed, the octaves of several feasts being abolished. Vintimille's insouciance, so helpful to judicious reform, had a consequence of another kind. Wanting a sumptuous edition to glorify his episcopate, he commissioned the best artists to provide a dozen illustrations—Boucher, in alliance with Philippe le Bas, the engraver. Boucher's women, saints or sinners, were always ‘gentilles petites caillettes’.³⁶ For more reasons than one, the Parisian breviary of 1736 became famous.

III

With the publication of this handsome four-volume breviary and the missal which followed two years later, Paris was bidding for the liturgical leadership of France. The goal was all the easier to attain

since, by now, the Roman breviary was not only obsolete (Benedict XIV in 1741 set up a revising commission, but nothing was done³⁷), but had also become an object of partisan controversy. There had always been a Gallican prejudice against ultramontane influence in worship, and this had been inflamed by a gesture of brinkmanship by Benedict XIII. Pope Gregory VII, who had brought the Emperor Henry IV to barefooted penance in the snow at Canossa, was a symbol of the great claims Rome had once enforced against secular sovereigns. In 1606, he had been canonized, and from 1719 special readings for the offices of his day had been authorized for use in the Benedictine Order—at the end of the second lesson for the second nocturne, the story of his triumph at Canossa was recalled in the prose ‘Contra Henrici imperatoris’. Benedict XIII in 1728 had issued a decree of the Congregation of Rites authorizing the use of these offices in the universal Church.³⁸ There was a storm of protest. In Venice, Parma, and Holland the secular authorities banned the recital of the Hildebrandine liturgy. The police of Paris visited the printing presses to prevent the publication of a supplementary page to the Roman breviary. The Jansenist bishops and the parlements of Paris, Rennes, Metz, and Bordeaux denounced the decision of the Congregation of Rites as a threat to the sovereignty of the French crown. Coming eight years after this outcry, Vintimille's breviary was welcomed by the secular as well as the ecclesiastical establishment. The parlement of Paris suppressed a Jesuit tract complaining that it diminished the status of the Virgin Mary,³⁹ and the French ambassador at Rome made it clear that any papal pronouncement against the Parisian liturgical books would be unacceptable to the king.

By 1770, in the span of a generation, the Parisian breviary and missal (or close derivatives) were being used in half the cathedrals of France, while the Roman books were used in a quarter of them. Considerations of edification and scholarship were not the only factors involved: the Roman survival owed something to the expense involved in changing, just as the Parisian progress was partly due to availability and the savings ensured. In 1759 the archbishop of Cambrai suggested to his cathedral chapter that the time was ripe to change to the Parisian breviary, not only because it was ‘the most succinct and the most judiciously organized’, but because ‘there are already sufficient copies in print to furnish all the diocese, together with the relevant chant books’.⁴⁰ The metropolitan province of Auch was interesting in that the archbishop and his ten suffragans met to consider the options. In 1744 they agreed to produce

a new *Rituel*, completed and published ten years later; it was the old provincial version of 1701 with some anthems taken from Rome and some new hymns from Paris. With encouragement from the other prelates, the archbishop, in 1753, produced a breviary and a missal very close to those of Paris, though with a few items he regarded as Jansenist omitted and with half a dozen local saints added. In deference to scholarship, Martial was no longer described as an apostle and Saturnin as a disciple. The monks of the diocese of Auch disliked the change, so their prelate allowed them to stay in their old ways; the parish clergy, however, welcomed it.⁴¹ Couserans and Bayonne followed Auch (so too did Mirepoix, a diocese outside the area and under the superiority of Toulouse). The eight other dioceses of the province of Auch delayed, 'waiting for a time when they would be able to afford the expense entailed in the change'. In 1772, Dax could afford it and abandoned Rome, but went directly to Paris; the bishop, Le Quien de Laneufville, newly come to the diocese, consulted his cathedral chapter and his parish clergy in synod, and decided that 'the rites of Paris are almost impossible to improve on'.⁴² Other French dioceses, like Fréjus, Belley, and Bazas delayed long in deciding, changing only in the 1770s and 1780s. Of the Breton sees, Saint-Brieuc and Nantes adopted the Paris books in 1775. The canons of Dol asked their bishop to do the same, but there was a hold-up in the hope that the bishop of Rennes would produce a special revision for the province.⁴³ He decided against, so Dol turned to Paris, while Rennes adopted the liturgy of Tours, in each case with a proper preserving the celebrations of the local diocesan saints.

In two great dioceses, liturgical revision inclined more to the Jansenist side than Vintimille had allowed in Paris. At Strasbourg, Cardinal Armand-Gaston de Rohan in 1742 published a *Rituel* modelled on Rouen, not Rome. It severely curtailed the number of saints' days, and put various processions into a new category: 'not to take place without the bishop's permission'. 'Febronius' (the German prelate, author of an attack on papal power in 1763) regarded it as 'a manifesto for a purified Church'. Malvin de Montazet came to the see of Lyon in 1758, and devised a breviary and a missal of an overtly Jansenist nature. The canons of Saint-Jean refused to use them, and embarked on a costly lawsuit. A curé of the diocese recorded their failure with glee: 'they had against them an archbishop who is the outstanding genius in the kingdom. For my part, seeing Mgr has won his lawsuit, I have bought the new breviary, missal and processional; as for the chant book, it will be

some time before it is used in the countryside, because the peasants are accustomed to the Roman musical settings.⁴⁴

Other dioceses made changes drawing on Paris and various of the many other possible models. The bishop of Coutances, a self-indulgent prelate hated by his clergy, produced a breviary in 1741, probably because it was an easy way to show pastoral concern, while the bishop of Toul in 1748 gave his diocese an original and solidly scriptural version out of zeal. Rieux left Rome in 1771, Bazas and Montauban in the following year (the dean of the cathedral denouncing this Gallican gesture in a published diatribe of 397 pages), Sisteron in 1777, Saintes in 1783 (without venturing into originality, simply adopting Poitiers). Archbishop Henri de Fleury, coming to Cambrai from Tours in 1775, tried to make the Roman books obligatory, but his canons refused; so in 1780 he negotiated an agreement with the papal court to be allowed to ally some local materials to the basic Roman texts. He died a year later, and the project foundered. At Toulouse,⁴⁵ Loménie de Brienne, ambitious and unbelieving, found an archdiocese sunk in liturgical disarray. From 1590, the Roman rites had been used, together with additions of propers of saints, mostly local, in 1699, 1724, and 1744—three lots of separately printed offices, with some curés possessing them and some not. He produced a new breviary in 1770, scriptural, austere, and based on the best ancient precedents; a missal followed seven years later, then a processional, diurnal, octavier, and *Rituel*. Introducing the *Rituel* to a synod in 1785, he made a moving apostolic declaration on the importance of liturgical reform: these books, he said, constitute ‘a code of fellowship and charity, the practical daily proof of the love of God for man’.

The reformers had preserved the most significant of the local feasts in so far as they had backing from sound scholarship. Some of the great Parisian parishes also had their old usages, and their curés took steps to rescue them as the tide of liturgical innovation rolled on. The *Offices propres à l'église royale et paroissiale de Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois* was published in 1745, and the *Office de Sainte-Marie Madeleine à l'usage des paroissiens* four years later. In this latter volume, the curé, Louis-Charles Cathlin, had added sixteen lessons from Scripture and the Fathers suited to his patronal festival. In 1760, the curé of Saint-Merry at his own expense printed a volume of 244 pages containing offices supplementary to those of Paris, with some of the prayers given in both Latin and French.⁴⁶ What was done in an expensive way in the capital was repeated in simpler forms in the provinces. Parishes or monasteries boasting a unique devotion or

pilgrimage site would have a handbook of prayers and litanies for it, brought up to date and rewritten in more sophisticated taste by some eighteenth-century curé or canon.

Although Cluny had dramatically produced a revolutionary breviary, and the Genovéfains in 1705 abandoned the liturgy of Rome for Paris, most monastic institutions hesitated to change. The Benedictine congregations of Saint-Maur and Saint-Vanne, while retaining some of the old formulas peculiar to certain abbeys, obeyed the ruling of the Congregation of Rites in 1615 imposing the Roman breviary.⁴⁷ The pastoral urge to make the offices more comprehensible and immune from anticlerical ridicule did not outweigh the torpor of customary routine and the convenience of saying the responses by heart. The purges of Jansenists operated by royal commissioners had silenced those who would have been most disposed to innovation. Maurist scholarship, meticulous and solid, did not turn easily to matters liturgical, lacking the flair and imagination for devotional writing. This was evident in the seven manuscript volumes completed in 1726 by Dom Louis Geslu containing drafts of a new liturgy.⁴⁸ It was in tune with the reformers in its numerous hymns and the rearrangement of the psalms into patterns of coherent themes, but ran into absurdity by slicing up Scripture into morsels twisted out of their true meaning to fit the gospel for the day. Dom Geslu seems to have realized that he was producing a mere historical curiosity, exhorting his successors ‘to keep all these writings in a place exempt from mice and other such insects, which in a short time would do much damage to the volumes because of the great amount of flour glue employed for the binding which attracts these animals’. In 1777, the Congregation of Saint-Vanne produced a new breviary, a standard reformed work, full of Scripture and excluding legends. The Maurists, who had been at work on a similar project since 1766, failed to publish until 1787. Theirs was based on methodical principles, the winter readings concerning creation and the Fall, with spring devoted to the Redemption, summer the Trinity, and autumn to prayer, while each day of the week had its specialist theme. But it lacked inspiration, and, for such a scholarly congregation, showed little knowledge of tradition. Three years after its appearance, the abbeys were closed, and the sound of their devotions died away.

Jansenists and Gallicans rejoiced to see Rome ousted and legends overthrown, but liturgical innovation could go both ways. The priority of the feasts concerning the life of Christ was ignored by the bishops of Brittany, who put on the office of the Guardian Angels on

the eve of the Epiphany, with a *salut* after the vespers of the day as a perpetual thanksgiving for the escape of Louis XV from assassination.⁴⁹ In 1765, the queen herself intervened in the calendar by requesting the Assembly of Clergy to promote the devotion of the Sacré-Cœur, unscriptural and ultramontane. The bishop of Amiens led the way, making the feast one of obligation, falling on the Sunday following the octave of Corpus Christi. Some other bishops followed suit, including Christophe de Beaumont of Paris.⁵⁰ The offices were those of the Roman rite, and the day chosen ran contrary to the rubric of the breviary of Paris by which Sundays could not be usurped by other festivals. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* was eloquent in disapproval:

By what caprice does M. de Beaumont abandon the rite of his own church, adopting the Roman form in the new offices he introduces? Most of the churches of France, which used to have no other breviary or missal but those of Rome, realizing that bad taste and inaccuracies abounded in them, substituted their own breviaries and missals, or took those of the church of Paris. Yet in this age of a general reform in a matter of such importance, M. de Beaumont is starting a reaction and wants to bring his church back to the Roman liturgy, which others have abandoned with such very good reason.

Having done so much to promote liturgical change, the Jansenists now wished to stop the process. In January 1789 the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* complained of Archbishop de Juigné's changes in the *Rituel* of Paris. 'Our bishops are veritable weathercocks. They seem to count for nothing all the ancient traditions and they flatter themselves they will start new ones dating from the mid-18th century.'⁵¹

The Gallican liturgical books of the eighteenth century were an attractive blend of elegance and austerity, of old provincial usages and the traditions of the universal Church, pruned in accordance with the findings of the scholarship of the day. The Holy Week ceremonies were especially moving.⁵² The blessing of the palms in the missal of Poitiers (1767) retains the curious and forceful old formula, 'that all who bear these palms may be so filled with the grace of thy benediction that in this life they will overcome the temptations of the Old Enemy, and appear before thee in the world to come with the palm of victory and the fruits of good works'. After this came the anthem *Pueri Hebraeorum* from the Roman missal, and a procession to the cross in the cemetery, where the deacon read the Palm Sunday gospel; then came the anthem *Ave Rex noster* and the prayer 'We greet you our king, Son of David,

Redeemer of the world'. The same ceremony in Paris began with the procession of the reliquary of Sainte-Geneviève to the abbey, where the palms were blessed, then on to the prison, where the archbishop knocked on the doors with his cross, pronouncing the verse, 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates', with a choirboy, an alto, and a baritone continuing the psalm. Then a prisoner was released, who carried the train of the archbishop's robe to the portals of Notre-Dame. By Vintimille's missal, the Parisian churches marked Maundy Thursday with the pronouncement of a general absolution upon all the congregation—it is a survival of the discipline of the early Church, though it must not be taken as sacramental absolution. It is a prayer answered by a most salutary blessing.'

In the richer cathedrals and collegiate churches, these and other ceremonies were tied in with the music and newly devised architectural settings of this most splendid age of public worship. In ordinary parishes, the changes were accepted more slowly than the bishops and their theologians imagined. Peasants and artisans knew the old responses and musical settings, and did not easily learn new ones. In the little town of Sainte-Suzanne in the diocese of Le Mans, a new curé arriving in 1771 found his church had no chant books, even though the diocese had printed the new offices and made their use obligatory in 1748—he paid for two new books himself.⁵³ The variety of observances which Mésenguy had complained of still prevailed, the grouping of some dioceses around the Parisian rites being matched by new inventions in others. A traveller would still not be sure which version of the mass or the office he would find. In the 1780s, Dr Saint-Romans of the Dominicans of Paris, slipping into dotage, would celebrate mass with three different missals on the altar: Paris, Rome, and a peculiar institutional one.⁵⁴ The clergy of Le Mans in 1789 petitioned 'that there shall be for the whole kingdom the one and the self-same rite and one breviary for both regulars and seculars, with the profits from the printing thereof accruing to the State'.⁵⁵ It was the same old quest lured on by the mirage of uniformity. If the National Assembly had sponsored the project, those who had three missals on the altar would have needed four.

24 Sermons

I

There were sermons innumerable in eighteenth-century France, not only for the festivals of religion—Sundays, saints' days, the Lent and Advent series, weddings, funerals, and the taking of monastic vows—but also for every civic and national occasion, for the beginning and end of term in universities and law courts, for blessing the flags of militias and regiments and laying the keel of warships, for marking the commemorative days of academies, guilds, and confraternities. There were large congregations: the pious to be edified, the respectable to maintain their status, the fashionable to see and be seen and collect talking points for their salons (Mme Geoffrin died of a cold caught in a draughty nave), sceptics to rejoice in gaffes of naïveté or intolerance, connoisseurs to savour the oratorical style, and the ordinary majority because it was one of their few forms of entertainment—the *canaille* attend, said Voltaire, for the same reason they go to a public execution: they get in without paying. Sermons provided raconteurs with some of their best anecdotes. There was Cardinal Luynes, archbishop of Sens, who preached the same sermons to peasants as he gave to intellectuals, exhorting them to eschew velvet cushions and tassels, and warning them against the philosophes ('Stupid girl', said a woman to her daughter who was dozing off, 'falling asleep instead of listening to Monseigneur telling us about Saint Voltaire and Saint Rousseau'). There was the abbé Hervier, a disciple of Mesmer, who hypnotized some of his congregation; the abbé de Boismon, waxing eloquent on the beauty of Mary Magdalen, then becoming tongue-tied when he got to her repentance; the preacher in the provinces who complimented the bishop's sister-in-law on her complexion by censuring her unnecessary use of rouge; the Capuchin preaching on the death of the dauphin and apostrophizing his wife: 'Dites-nous, O princesse de douleur, si le Dauphin fut pour vous un prince de bel amour'.¹ By contrast, there was the triumph of Père Caffé, the improviser, who accepted the challenge of the bishop of Metz to preach on a subject

named in a sealed envelope; opening it in the pulpit, and finding only a blank sheet of paper, he announced his text as 'Vanity of vanities'. Then there were the incongruities of accident: the Capuchin who turned up to preach the panegyric of St Teresa and was too fat to get into the pulpit; the abbé Prévost retiring sadly because he thought the congregation was whistling at him, when it was only a blackbird; the exclamation from a small boy when the preacher said he would recapitulate: 'Quoi ma mère, il va recommencer!'—the first of many reservations about religion made by Bernard Fontenelle in his century-long lifetime.²

Preachers were generously rewarded. A poem by a Jesuit in 1682 suggested that success in the pulpit opened the way to bishoprics: 'qu'il prêche, c'est ainsi que l'on devient prélat'.³ Other qualifications, notably aristocratic birth and administrative experience, were more important, but preaching might attract the notice of the Court and the possibility of royal favour. Certain sermons in particular counted—the series delivered at Versailles in Lent and Advent, funeral orations on the great, the annual panegyric of St Louis at the Academy, and the decennial sermon on St Augustine at the Assembly of Clergy. It was his eloquence in the pulpit which brought the abbé de Beauvais to the bishopric of Senez in 1774, a surprising breakthrough for a commoner.⁴ Perhaps Marbeuf, bishop of Autun, who was given the *feuille des bénéfices* in 1777, hoped to promote others, for the story went that he commissioned the new bishop of Senez, 'comme homme de métier et grand connoisseur', to stay in Paris to give his opinion of the preachers of the various Lenten sermons.⁵ Commoners, barred from the episcopate, were recognized in other ways. The abbé Poulle, rewarded by the king with a rich abbey for his panegyric of St Louis in 1748, gave up preaching thereafter except for invitations to the Court; 'la poule engraisnée ne chante plus' was the malicious observation. Claude Fauchet gave the St Augustine sermon, and was awarded a royal pension of 200 livres; his St Louis sermon attracted another of 1,200; sermons at Court in 1778 yielded another 1,500 a year, and a later dramatic oration in the Royal Chapel provided an abbey in Brittany.⁶ By contrast with these famous and well-rewarded figures, the abbé Séguy, after delivering a brilliant funeral eulogy of the duc de Villars in 1734, turned his back on the glittering possibilities before him, and retired to provincial obscurity in his canonry at Meaux.⁷

The preachers of Lent and Advent courses (*stations*) were paid; to obtain the services of one of the renowned orators, the fee was high: the cathedral of Bordeaux paid the abbé Clément 1,200 livres and

700 in expenses.⁸ But for a sizeable town parish, about 300 would be suitable. The Parisian church of Saint-Merry gave 150 for Advent, 500 for Lent, and 100 for sermons in the octave of Corpus Christi. The money might be drawn from the chair rents. At Saint-Sulpice the importance of the particular sermon was reflected in the price of the seats: the *fermier* of the lease levied 1 sou, 3 deniers, for a chair on an ordinary Sunday, 3 sous for each Lent and Advent occasion, 6 sous for Easter Day, and 12 sous for Good Friday. The new parish of Saint-Louis d'Antin, set up in 1782, adopted the simplest method of all. Lécouflet, a master engraver, bought the lease of the seating, and not only paid the preachers directly, he also chose them himself.⁹ In some places, the honorarium was put up by the municipality, the town officials inviting applications and making the appointments.¹⁰ There were disputes. Saint-Mihiel in Lorraine paid 331 livres for Lent and Advent and a simple sermon at New Year, with 18 to the curé for entertainment; the town pressed for a reduction to 215 overall.¹¹ In 1780, Saint-Pol (diocese of Boulogne) failed to pay the monks who had provided the sermons for the year, and abolished the courses altogether. At Aubais (Nîmes) the rule for Lent was three sermons a week, but the citizens insisted that they were entitled to five, and got their way by threats of disturbances.¹² There was a point at which the remuneration available would not suffice to bring in someone from outside; 100 livres would only be enough for a friar from the local convent. At Givry (Reims) with only 530 communicants, the fee was simply the collection, so the Lenten sermons were given on Fridays by a visitor who was preaching in other churches during the rest of the week.¹³ However, the orator always had to be fed well. In an abbey, 'la collation du prédicateur' was an excuse for entertaining numerous guests and sampling various wines.¹⁴ In the Franciscan convents, said a curé, the friars compete to be invited to preach a Lenten course: 'for 40 days he will enjoy . . . the little compliments of vicaires and minor clergy, will sit down at well-furnished tables where they will offer him the choicest morsels . . . He may very well never fast at all, and Lent will end all too quickly for him.'¹⁵ At Aubais, five sermons or three, there were compensations, for every Sunday in Lent the curé and his sister and the more prosperous parishioners took turns in providing a collation with wines and liqueurs, and if the preacher showed his gratitude by contributing 'a magnificent almond tart made with his own hand', so much the better.¹⁶ It was a matter for surprise in a convent when an austere visiting preacher sent a message before him: 'no special menus'.¹⁷

The sermon was a well-established genre, and there was an abundance of technical advice available. Certain special occasions, the experts warned, presented peculiar difficulties. The discourse when monastic vows were taken was too predictable—it always ended by saying the world is evil and it is wise to forsake it. The panegyric of a saint was ‘the rock of shipwreck for preachers’, since the information available was likely to be insufficient to make a good story.¹⁸ As for the funeral oration, refuse to do it, for ‘the great, the sublime, the dramatic, the pathetic and the marvellous’ must all be there, and the eulogy of the dead man has to be combined with an attempt to convert the hearers. One must hope that the recital of virtues, real or non-existent, will touch their hearts, and that an account of worldly achievements will prompt the reflection that they end in dust and ashes. And what if there were no achievements and, instead of virtues, vices? One preacher commemorating the duc d'Orléans in 1786 was ridiculed for praising his notable acts; another was censured for insolence in apologizing for not being eloquent on the grounds that there were no great deeds to provide inspiration. The debauched career of the regent presented a major challenge to the ingenuity of preachers—one solved it by praying for ‘a prodigy of mercy’. One funeral sermon on Louis XV blamed Fleury for failing to teach him his duties; another declared that, while the people are not entitled to murmur against their sovereign, they may keep silence, ‘et son silence est la leçon des rois’.¹⁹

For all sermons there was a general rule: they had to be written out in full, then learned by heart—so said the abbé Gauches in 1712 and Père Albert in 1757.²⁰ The text was necessary to avoid the vagaries of instant inspiration, the memorizing to allow freedom of gesture. Perceptively, Gauches saw the danger of a failure of memory lay not so much in the details as in retaining the broad headings in due order, so he recommended associating each with a visible feature in the church, an altar, a picture, a pillar, taken in succession. Even in the parish churches of the provinces, relying on a manuscript was regarded as falling short of the ideal. The curé of Notre-Dame of Sablé recorded of his predecessor, who died in 1780: ‘he wrote with precision solid instructive discourses which he read out in the pulpit, feeling that he lacked both the memory and the confidence to do otherwise’.²¹ Canon Baston condemned this received wisdom. ‘It is singular, almost inexplicable, that preachers have the manuscript in their pocket and are ashamed to pull it out. If you write everything,’ he added, ‘read it; if you don't write it, speak by inspiration. I myself much prefer the evangelical trumpets to sound in this second

manner. Choose a subject, meditate on it, become infused with it—and speak.²²²

Baston's exhortation to meditate was, in fact, the obligation laid down by the experts for all sermons, written or inspirational. The interior dispositions of the preacher were crucial to his effectiveness and the salvation of his own soul. He had to know his theology, 'for not only must he avoid error, he must also have the assurance that he is not mistaken'. Some fail in the pulpit, said the abbé Trublet in 1755, because they do not know enough about religion, and some because they do not know the world enough, though the worst defect of all is to know the world too well. The founder of the Missionnaires de Beaupré laid down the rules of preparation for his evangelists:²³ never preach a truth unless you have put it into practice in your own life; pray about your theme and use the sacraments as an aid to your prayers, inflict mortifications on yourself with the intention of achieving complete sincerity, learn off your manuscript kneeling all the while; and when your preparation is complete make an act of humility. Prayerful preparation, said Gaiches, can transform mediocre talents into effective ones, for the devotion in the heart will show through in the presentation—the word he uses is 'onction', meaning by it consoling grace, not 'unctuousness', though there is a nuance of smoothness, a hint of calm.²⁴ In worldly activities, men look forward to achieving evident results; the preacher must deny himself this hope and satisfaction. 'God demands an account of the work and not of the fruit of the labour.'²⁵ 'Servir sans se mettre en peine de l'événement,' said a bishop.²⁶ The preacher is simply a channel for God's grace: just as 'in baptism it is Jesus Christ who baptizes', so in the sermon it is Christ who is giving the message. Père Milley, the Jesuit mystic, wrote to a friend one Easter Monday to tell him how he had finished his Lenten course without loss of voice or concentration. 'I am using my first moment of rest to write to you about him who is the only true rest. He made use of me during Lent . . . It is his affair, not mine.'²⁷ Massillon warned his clergy that in the pulpit they were God's instruments, and expendable ones at that. 'To complete the number of his elect God employs instruments which he afterwards regrets having used, having turned to them for this one use alone.' 'It is not what He effects *by* us can give us comfort, it is what He effects *within* us.'²⁸ It was possible to convert many, yet be oneself a castaway. These were high and rarefied ideals. Often the dispositions of the routine preacher must have been those of the worldly—though sincere—canon of Notre-Dame: 'the wicked man is not converted, we make a lot of noise to

no purpose, but we at least stop him falling asleep in the sermon—assuming he is there in the first place.²⁹

Not every impressive oration was original—why should it be? ‘The pious commerce in sermon manuscripts’, said the author of the *Nouvelles Observations sur les différentes méthodes de prêcher* (1757), is not necessarily a scandal. A priest burdened with pastoral duties who assimilates the work of others and delivers it with conviction is surely justified, and in any case, ‘the propositions of a sermon are a sort of common possession to which the whole world has a right: they are a foundation on which anyone is entitled to build’.³⁰ Canon Baston at Rouen said it was common for preachers to draw on Bourdaloue, Saurin, and even Archbishop Tillotson, and this was better than inflicting their own ‘feeble compositions’ on their congregations.³¹ The prince de Ligne wanted the borrowings advertised beforehand—announce that some sermon of a famous orator will be read out, and ‘people will say “today we are going to hear Bourdaloue”, in the same way as they now say, “we are going to hear Corneille at the Comédie-Française”’.³² Or, perhaps, the revelation of the source could come later, a device used by a preacher in the provinces, winning applause for his Lenten course, then in the last sermon, on ‘Restitution’, admitting his borrowings.³³ Best limit plagiarism to the works of the dead, of course, lest the actual author be in the congregation. The trade in sermons by the contemporary ghost writers was, however, principally a resort for the idle and vocationless. Clergy would sidle up to the boutique at Mont-Saint-Hilaire; ‘que voulez-vous M. l’abbé?’; there were scripts for every occasion—the Immaculate Conception was difficult and tended to be more expensive.³⁴ Bishops were justifiably too busy to compose all they published or preached, but it was the idle ones who most often solicited vicarious inspiration. Archbishop Vintimille of Paris used Père Hercule of the Doctrinaires, and his hearers grew to appreciate ‘the labours of Hercules’.³⁵ ‘My dear *archiprêtre*, do take in hand the task of writing something for me for the parish priests’ retreat. Choose some subject concerning the sacerdotal life and let it take rather more than half an hour to read. Best wishes’—an injunction from Bishop Jacques de Grasse of Angers who spent most of his time in Paris.³⁶ The vocationless abbé d’Arty, son of the prince de Conti and of a granddaughter of Samuel Bernard the financier, was pushed into the limelight by his aunt, Mme Dupin, who got him selected to preach the St Louis sermon before the Academy in 1749 and the funeral oration of the duc d’Orléans three years later. The first was written by Voltaire, the abbé marking in the divisions and

adding an 'Ave Maria' at the beginning and an 'Ainsi soit-il' at the end; the second was a composition of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.³⁷ These were plagiarisms organized by influence in high society, but there were distinguished writers who had gone into the commercial sermon market when times were hard. Sébastien Mercier lived on the trade in his early days, and Diderot once got 300 écus for half a dozen. It was a lie, said the wits, that the highly connected abbé de Roquette, chaplain to the princesse de Conti, preached other people's sermons: they were his, he bought them.³⁸

Once the orator had his sermon by heart, he could concentrate on the presentation, and this turned essentially on appearing 'natural'. This was contrived by art and ingenuity. True, he must follow the dominant traits of his own personality, but he must also fit in with the expectations of his audience: 'each epoch has its fashion and one must conform to the reigning fashion if it tends to edification'.³⁹ The gestures could not be left to chance and instinct; they had to be rehearsed beforehand. There were preachers, indeed, who went to great actors—Baron early in the century and Talma later—for lessons, for the stage had its stylized gestures evoking customary emotional responses. Mechanical formulas, however, were not recommended; there must be 'a certain disorder'.⁴⁰ Even so, there were a few simple rules: never lift a hand higher than the shoulder; never perform acts of mimicry (say, of playing an instrument or fencing), and use the gesture with a single hand only to express scorn. Having achieved a 'natural' mien, the preacher then had to go a little further, conveying an impression of the faith that was in him. 'An air of conviction convinces.'⁴¹ But what is this 'air of conviction'? Not confidence, for 'an appearance of confidence inhibits persuasion, since it seems as if assurance is covering up the lack of good arguments'; indeed, best appear 'a little timid'. It was all very difficult.

Fitting in with the expectations of the audience meant that a sermon should be of a standard length and structure—knowing what to expect in broad presentation, the listener would be able to concentrate on the content. The consensus for length was three-quarters of an hour.⁴² The abbé Gaiches doubted if lungs or memory could be expected to last longer. Père Neuville, the Jesuit, lasted for one and three-quarter hours at the funeral of Cardinal Fleury, but the career of such an eminent churchman and statesman demanded circumstantial eulogy. The duc de Luyne would note in his journal if an oration at Court ran to the hour, and at this length the leading citizens in a country congregation would be afflicted by bouts of

ostentatious yawning.⁴³ As an old joke had it, the promise of the help of the Holy Spirit was given with a time limit: 'it shall be given you in that hour (*in illa hora*) what ye shall speak' (Matt. 10: 19).⁴⁴

The standard full-dress sermon began with the exordium (the *exorde*), a short explanation of the text and a statement of the main points to be dealt with. The congregation 'had to know where it was being led', but not given too explicit a direction lest some relaxed attention, thinking they had learned enough already.⁴⁵ This introduction ended with a prayer for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and an Ave Maria (should the preacher address Our Lady asking her to intercede for the gift of the Spirit on his behalf? Opinion was divided as to the propriety).⁴⁶ This initial stage might be the place to launch the 'compliment' if there was to be one, though it might be kept to the end. It was a saccharine business little suited to a religious occasion. Ending a panegyric of Charles Borromeo by complimenting the local bishop as having all the pastoral virtues of the saint himself was indefensible, though the abbé Trublet was proud of his ingenuity.⁴⁷ At Court, the compliment was compulsory, but a preacher might retain his integrity with double-edged deference. 'No one has the right to ask you to account for your actions,' Père Elisée told Louis XV in 1763, 'though you owe such an account to France which loves you, Europe which observes you, and to God who will be your judge.'⁴⁸

Thereafter, the sermon was organized in 'divisions', normally two, with two or three subdivisions in each. The experts on pulpit oratory postulated them, but unenthusiastically. Obviously, they were not indispensable—Demosthenes did not know them, and Cicero resorted to the device in only eight out of fifty-six harangues; even so, Massillon had thought them important, and the congregation had grown to expect them—and at the lowest level of argument, the set breaks at least enabled the speaker to clear his throat. Provided the whole presentation was held together in a unity, they could do no harm. From mid-century, however, the old systematization began to collapse, and Massillon's authority waned before that of Fénelon, the advocate of spontaneity. The *Journal de Trévoux* in 1749, Gros de Besplas and the abbé Bassinet in 1767, and the abbé Maury in 1779 recommended allowing the sermon to flow naturally, free from structural constraints. 'The first apostles knew nothing of these symmetrical procedures of worldly eloquence,' said Lamourette in 1791.⁴⁹

The working of the 'divisions' in practice had not, in fact, constituted a strait-jacket of artificiality—they were simply an aid to

logical presentation. One of those invariably using them was Père Jard, the leading Parisian orator when Noailles was archbishop. His Ash Wednesday sermon⁵⁰ began with the text, 'When ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance'; the exordium stated the intention to deal with those who ignored the rule of fasting or broke it in secret. Then came the invocation and the Ave Maria. Part One listed the worldly arguments against fasting. In the first subdivision, Jard refuted those who say it is an optional piety by citing the Fathers and the Councils. Secondly, they say the rule is not for all; true, the Church allows exceptions, though ask yourself, if you are in poor health, is it because of your luxurious life-style? Thirdly, the Church gives no reasons for its demands. But the reason, surely, is obvious: the Church is preparing us for our Easter communion by 'a communal and social fast'; in any case, explanation or not, the Christian has his orders and has to obey. Part Two expounds the Christian ideal of fasting. It is penance for past sins and subjugation of the body to enable us to resist future temptations. We are required to reinforce it with charitable actions, the positive side of self-denial. Above all, Lent is not the occasion of 'a dry, Judaic fast forced on us without affection'. We are paying a cheerful tribute to God, and he will reward us in eternity. By contrast to this Ash Wednesday sermon, in Jard's discourse on the Prodigal Son⁵¹ the two divisions are differently handled; in One, he leaves home, and in Two he comes back. In each part, his adventures are set alongside the events of our own lives. The 'far country' is our lot when we have drifted away from Bible reading, the sacraments, and sermons; life as a swineherd is the slavery to which sin reduces us; the return to the Father can be our return—pray God we do not delay it. For the most part, preachers kept the divisions very simple: Part One, the saint's life and conversion, Part Two, how we must imitate him; Part One, humility is ridiculed by worldly men, Part Two, the benefits we derive from the practice of this virtue.⁵² In this elementary form of self-evident compartments, the divisions served as the plan of most sermons, and the congregation 'knew where they were going'. Canon Mondrain of Notre-Dame, who preached well, laughed at the pseudo-technicalities of the orator's art while conforming to them. 'Every man to his task. Ours is to go up into the pulpit and there pronounce an exordium up to the Ave Maria, to recite two points and have a good cough in the interval between them, then to send off our listeners to eternal life while we, for our part, go off to the buffet lunch.'⁵³

II

There was agreement in the eighteenth century that the great age of the sermon had been the reign of Louis XIV. The abbé de Beauvais's *Sermon sur la Parole de Dieu* and La Harpe's essay on eloquence looked back to the towering figures of those days: Bossuet, whose sublime insights gave him the majestic stature of the Old Testament prophets, Bourdaloue with his luminous reasoning, Fénelon the mortal reflection of the 'divine sweetness' of Christ, Massillon's imaginative and vibrant sensitivity.⁵⁴ Succeeding generations could not hope to rise to the heights of this golden age of oratory, but they inherited and emulated its splendours. The unfocused ranting, boastful and profane erudition, and buffoonery of earlier times⁵⁵ was gone for ever. The great age had not only bequeathed examples of preaching of genius, it had also established the sermon as a genre in its own right, an art-form of deep religious significance.⁵⁶ It was an expression of love towards Christ: as St François de Sales said, Peter was not asked for complex intellectual adherence, but simply, 'Lovest thou me?' To Bossuet, it was a sacrament, with Christ himself offering sustenance to the faithful, as in the Eucharist. Style was not an attribute to be cultivated—'it comes of itself, drawn by the greatness of the theme'. The preacher, speaking on behalf of his Master, had to convey a simple and direct message. 'The preacher', said Fénelon, 'is to be inspired with a great idea and put it forward very simply.'⁵⁷ During the eighteenth century, this doctrine of directness and simplicity was redefined and sublimated to a higher plane: the appeal must be to the imagination and the emotions, *le cœur*. The sermon was 'not a pool, but a raging torrent', sweeping along the will, annihilating the reason. 'L'homme c'est le cœur,' said Surian bishop of Vence in his discourse on being received into the Academy in 1733. In a controversy with D'Alembert, which degenerated into a feud, on the subject of 'academic eloquence', the abbé de Boismonst defined the role of the sermon as an appeal to the emotions by the use of every device of style and presentation—'vice has become ingenious so we must become ingenious to combat it'.⁵⁸ Men were not argued into belief or morality. 'Le prédicateur doit être toujours plus pathétique que raisonneur,' said the abbé Trublet in 1755.⁵⁹ 'Eloquent zeal enlightens only by inflaming,' said the abbé Poulle; 'it employs the quickest and most sure way to strike at the heart; it resolves everything—reasonings, images, reflections—into feelings.'⁶⁰ Among the sources of the pre-Romantic cult of *sensibilité*, the sermon is as important as any.

With this ideal of the direct appeal to the heart and the great examples of the oratory of the classical age to emulate, it may seem surprising that the eighteenth century did not produce the highest flights of pulpit eloquence. It was partly a question of the variable incidence of genius; but there were other reasons. In the early part of the century, preachers were still weighed down by the inhibitions of the rhetoric taught in the *collèges* as the culmination of a classical education, with its moralizing, comparisons, examples, antitheses, figures of speech, stilted adjectives, and stylized ornaments. Most of the leading Jesuit preachers had themselves taught rhetoric, and could not escape from its thrall. Even as the prestige of the orators of the *grand siècle* was overwhelming their case, there were pedants at the beginning of the century who still strove to constrict the sermon within the ancient regulations of the schools. The last exponent of the reaction was Dr Gibert, a former rector of the University of Paris, who published a plea for rhetoric in 1730. Having taught the rules of eloquence for forty years, he said, and being satisfied the early Fathers had used them, he had no time for Fénelon's 'improvisations . . . and so-called simplicity'. By then, however, his cause was lost, and Fénelon was in the ascendant.⁶¹

The trouble was, however, that the great preachers were not there to take advantage of the new opportunities. The Jansenist–Jesuit warfare ended the careers of some of the most fervent orators.⁶² Of the Jansenists, old Dom Jérôme, the Feuillant; Père Jard and Père d'Ardenne, the Doctrinaires; and Gaspard Terrasson and Boyer, the Oratorians, were silenced. Boyer, banished to Rodez, came back to Paris and preached on 2 July 1729 in Saint-Eustache to thunderous applause; he was promptly exiled again, and finally died a prisoner in the fortress of Vincennes. The Oratorian tradition of pulpit eloquence withered away, so they could hardly produce adequate sermons for their central chapel in the rue Saint-Honoré when the wheel of fortune turned and the Jesuits were evicted. Of the Jesuits, Griffet, Le Chapelain, Papillon du Rivet, and Geoffroy were banned in their prime; the most famous of them all, Charles de Neuville, elegant to the point of affectation, yet outspoken and courageous, was already worn out by twenty-five years of tense self-revelation masked by the old rhetorical formulas. When, in 1774, the Jesuits were allowed in the pulpits again, they produced two of the most significant preachers of the reign of Louis XVI: Lanfant and Beauregard, conservative exponents of the faith, who abandoned the Jesuit tradition of denouncing the sins of the highest in the land. In the atmosphere of malice and suspicion prevailing in the theological

world after *Unigenitus*, certain subjects and turns of phrase were dangerous, and certain biblical texts had become partisan property; preachers who had no thought of enlisting under either the Jansenist or the Jesuit banner, became ultra-cautious, their trumpets giving the uncertain sound which discourages battle preparations.

The sermon driving directly at the heart would eschew self-important displays of learning. ‘The public does not ask us to pile the Fathers upon the Fathers, authors upon authors, and to offer a long string of ill-digested texts,’ said the Cordelier Père Poisson in 1732; ‘it wants us to fuse together into our own thought the substance and spirit of the great writers and to present our reflections in a lively style.’⁶³ Erudition was necessary, said Gaiches, to ensure conciseness and clarity, and to avoid leaving gaps in the argument; but it must be concealed.⁶⁴ Citations within a process of reasoning should be limited, allowing the congregation to ‘glimpse’ the proofs rather than seeing their totality; furthermore, always remember that the appeal is essentially to authority, and this means the Bible—‘les citations décisives sont celles de l'Écriture’. Père Albert said the same: by all means cite proofs, but ‘il faut les appuyer sur l'autorité inébranlable de l'Écriture sainte’.⁶⁵ This had been the method of Bossuet and the secret of his originality and force, and the more solemn listeners to sermons in the eighteenth century complained if the preacher fell short of this massive recourse to Scripture.⁶⁶

The hushed consensus of reverence for the Bible was refreshingly broken in 1767 by Gros de Besplas, in his *Essai sur l'éloquence de la chaire*.⁶⁷ Bossuet, he dared to say, towering as he was, had faults. When Louise de la Vallière took the veil, his discourse went on and on about ‘the adornments of the daughters of Zion’ and the disasters hanging over them, an excursus lacking in both *gravitas* and relevance. This was his style, swept along on a tide of biblical allusions. He has too many imitators today. Texts are tortured out of their true meaning; the Protestants are superior to us here, admits Gros de Besplas, for they take the common-sense meaning, interpreted by what comes before and after (though they go into excessive detail, even to grammatical analysis). In so many Catholic pulpits, quotation follows quotation, with embarrassing clashes of style, for the biblical authors were from differing backgrounds, from shepherds to courtiers. Some books of the Bible date from the ‘times when the nations were still in their infancy’, so their content is alien to us; Leviticus and Numbers, for example, are full of usages now mere curiosities; we should cite only what concerns ‘the first principles of morals and dogma’. There should be economy, even in the use of

the indispensable gospel texts: they should form the corner-stones of the building, not its walls and ornaments. Take Fénelon for your model, rather than Bossuet; instead of heaping biblical allusions on your congregation, illuminate for them the ways of spirituality, and charm them: 'for Fénelon, the hair shirt is interwoven with flowers'.

Considering this was the age of Voltaire, there were surprisingly few sermons devoted to Christian apologetics.⁶⁸ A few discourses proved the divinity of Christ by piling up texts and adducing miracles and prophecy, or established the Resurrection from the continuing progress of the Church and the constancy of the martyrs; but they were rare. The arguments of sceptics were not rehearsed and confuted, but treated with disdain or pity. However, in a sense there was a mainstream of apologetic argument in the sweeping assumptions that faith alone can satisfy the aspirations of human nature, and that without religion, morals would collapse; 'the cause of Christianity is the cause of society,' said the abbé Poulle. There was agreement that the main purpose of a sermon was, not to attack unbelief, but to denounce immorality, not to enumerate the arguments for believing, but to bring the hearers to generous moral conduct. Do not 'prove' the existence of God, said the Jesuit Foix in 1687, or people will complain you are taking them for atheists, and keep off predestination and the immortality of the soul, subjects of disputation by Jansenists and sceptics.⁶⁹ Père Albert divided sermons into those on 'morals' and those on 'the mysteries', by which he meant Christian doctrines, and even in speaking of the 'mysteries', preachers should not offer proofs: on the contrary, the doctrines were to be explained in the context of how God works through them and the obligations they impose on us. The difficulties of belief are not our subject, Gros de Besplas laid down; 'we preach to the majority and the greater number do not doubt'. Marmontel, halfway between Christians and philosophes, from both points of view recognized that sermons must be about morality:

Dogma must be established in principle and never discussed. In a Christian congregation the unbelievers are so few that it is not worth while attacking them. Best suppose one is talking to minds already convinced of the truth of the premisses, and concentrate upon the consequences dogma has for morals. It is a question of inspiring men to kindness, tolerance, charity, temperance, equity, honesty and love of peace and to strengthen the bonds of society and nature.⁷⁰

This line was generally followed, and it was commonly said, whether in satisfaction or in censure, that 'morale' was the dominant theme

of sermons. 'Instead of discourses to explain the mysteries', complained Gaspard Terrasson, 'preachers seem to abandon the instruction of the just, and occupy themselves only with bringing back and converting sinners.'⁷¹

In so doing, they were conforming to the spirit of the age, and making the argument for Christianity at the point where there was general concern. 'Le goût pour la morale est un des caractères de notre siècle, tout frivole qu'il est à d'autres égards,' said the abbé Trublet—'the inclination to be preoccupied with moral conduct is one of the characteristics of our century, frivolous as it is in other respects'. 'It enters into every conversation, it figures in every publication, whatever the subject and in whatever manner it is treated.' The pulpit, of course, approached the theme in a different fashion from the world. Moral conduct was shown to follow from Christian belief, and the shadow of the Last Judgement was its sanction; sin was a deadly serious matter, requiring God's forgiveness earned by deep penitence. The experts warned the preachers to go carefully, however. Ridicule vice by all means, but make people detest it, rather than laugh at it; do not declaim to pious assemblies 'as if they are a gang of convicts'; do not denounce the sins of high society in rural hamlets; remember that ordinary folk hear the Word of God only on Sundays, so do not focus narrowly on minutiae.⁷²

'Morale' was a theme widely defined. Gaiches went beyond the word itself to declare: 'la grande étude du Prédicateur, est celle du cœur humain'.⁷³ No doubt he was following what the gospels said was the source of all wickedness; 'from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness' (Mark 7: 21, 22). The sermons of the eighteenth century deserve attention as documents of psychological and social analysis. The preachers did not exhort to moral conduct in a platitudinous fashion; they sought the origins of human sin and frailty in the heart, and in the pressures of society. The solemn experts on pulpit eloquence had reservations about these ventures into picturesque and worldly circumstance, and in particular about the favourite device of fashionable orators, 'the portrait'—the courtier, the courtesan, the magistrate, the monk, and many more described in their life-style and with their particular temptations. Gaiches lamented the parade of knowledge of theatre-going, gambling, and worldly pastimes. Père Albert complained of attempts to rival Theophrastus and La Bruyère, of over-elaboration, depicting vices few had heard of.⁷⁴ These descriptions, said Joly, were like the

ornaments on a Gothic building, detracting from its lofty splendour.⁷⁵ ‘Always new portraits and character sketches,’ said a journalist in 1768, ‘a style far removed from the language of the Fathers.’⁷⁶ True, though, if a Doctor of the early Church had been in the pulpit, the crowds who flocked to sermons would have stayed away.

The sanction of morality was God's judgement. Death and Hell were crucial themes. ‘There are more sinners to scare than there are just to encourage, conversion begins with fear, and you have preached ill if you have done no more than preached agreeably.’⁷⁷ Some of the orators spoke of the infernal regions in literal terms, incurring a certain ridicule. But most appreciated that their eloquence would be more resonant with menace if they avoided specific, disputable horrors and spoke only of abandonment and separation from God. Massillon and Poulle evoked the bitterness of this eternal divorce in imaginative crescendo.⁷⁸ For them, the tragedy was one of remorse, the soul drawn up to the light by the yearning for God that came too late, then falling back into the abyss of darkness. Massillon even depicts God as showing himself more splendidly to the reprobates than to the elect, so that ‘his love torments them more than his justice’. So certain were the theologians of the day that the destiny of the soul was irrevocably fixed at death that they were unable to see how the yearning of the damned for God ought, on Christian premisses, to give hope for their eventual salvation. As it is, ‘they cry into the void and eternity answers them’. Poulle's *Sermon sur la Foi* eschews apocalyptic details, and speaks in doom-laden generalities rising to a sweeping baroque grandeur. While the elect work out their salvation with trembling and fear, worldly men unthinkingly follow the social round,

and all the while the mystery of justice moves on . . . The designs of God come to fruition, the prophecies are accomplished. The suffering Church militant, purified more and more by the fires of tribulation, moves away to merge with the Church triumphant; the centuries race by, and in the darkness the day of Judgement draws near. It comes. The thunderous voice that breaks the cedars of Lebanon resounds into the depths of the graves; ‘O dead, arise!’ Faith is no more as time comes to a stop, the universe crumbles, Nature dies. God manifests himself. Everything is now eternal, vice and virtue, punishment and reward. Where will the ungodly be found? Where will we be?

Yet, even with the sternest advocates of the weapon of fear, it was axiomatic that the total effect of the sermon should be consoling.

After the declaration of judgement must come an offer of hope. ‘Il faut toujours offrir au pécheur une planche pour se sauver.’⁷⁹ As the century progressed, consolation began to take over; damnation figured less in fashionable sermons, and was more and more confined to evangelistic mission campaigns. The demonstrations of Voltaire and Diderot that eternal punishment was incompatible with the love of God must have caused the preachers unease; more significantly, as Romantic *sensibilité* took over in literature and conversation at the end of the *ancien régime*, they saw how the appeal to the heart was more effective, as well as more Christian, if they did not resort to the visceral emotion of fear. ‘Must we admit that gratitude and love make only passing impressions on our soul? Must fear alone constrain us? O shame! O sadness!’⁸⁰ There was also pressure on the professionals of the pulpit from the clergy engaged in the pastoral ministry, identifying themselves with their people. ‘I appear before you’, said Bishop Poncet de la Rivière to a congregation of his diocese, ‘not to preach judgement, but to face it myself . . . From the moment I became a priest, I was no longer able to damn myself or to save myself alone.’⁸¹ In 1770 the Assembly of the Clergy issued a recommendation that the threat of eternal punishment should not be overused—it was to be taken as applying only to those ‘who blaspheme the name of the Most High’.⁸² In 1787, a curé denounced the Capuchin missionaries: ‘are they really the envoys of Christ, who was the kindest of men? Hard and disseminating fear, they refuse to believe in the simplicity and good faith of the peasant and damn him with casual ease; they speak of Hell as if it is for others and not themselves.’⁸³ By then, except for the mission forays into the parishes, declamations about Hell were few. A sceptical journalist congratulated the clergy on their new, sophisticated awareness:

Even our preachers, except for a few tub-thumpers without talent, are quite temperate; intelligently, they have realized that the tone of the century, its mental assumptions, the current of opinion, have to be taken into account in the religious system, and that the moral colouring of the eighteenth century cannot be that of early times, and to conserve what is basic they have to protect it by forms and accessories to flatter and seduce. Thus they rarely mention hell, vengeance, eternity.⁸⁴

‘Y a-t’il encore des cendres de qualité?’ asked Bossuet.⁸⁵ In the dust of death, there is equality. Sermons followed the Epistle to the Romans in enjoining obedience to the powers that be; but they also appealed to the many instances in the Old and New Testaments of prophetic denunciation of social evils, and one of the reasons for

proclaiming Hell was to hold the vengeance of God over the oppressors of the poor. Some orators (perhaps surprisingly, they were Jansenists) looked back to a primitive golden age of complete equality. 'Our forefathers, from whom both nobles and commoners are descended,' said Soanen, 'were scattered over the countryside . . . with no clocks but the sun, no lights but the stars, no houses but shepherds' huts. They cared for each other and, in a state of innocence now vanished, they lived at peace.' Then came the Fall, and the rival families seized the goods of the earth for themselves—'and it seems at first sight astonishing', says Gaspard Terrasson, 'that the disparities in the share-out were so enormous, some deprived of almost everything, others overflowing with riches'.⁸⁶ The censures of the preachers against the rich of our fallen world were too savage to be dismissed as homiletic commonplaces. 'The pitiless rich drink deep in a golden chalice the blood of the widow and destitute' (Clément); 'their palaces are founded on injustice, the stones of their houses are cemented by the blood of the poor' (Pérussault); 'it is well known that greater wealth is almost always the result of usurpation' (Terrasson).⁸⁷ The egalitarian rhetoric which took Claude Fauchet to a career as a revolutionary agitator was there in his sermons under the *ancien régime*. 'Contemptible men unworthy to serve as parish sacristans monopolize honours . . . They have no justice behind them, only retainers, no soldiers, only valets, their only claim to consideration is their gold, . . . they oppress the *bas peuple*, the name they dare to give to those who constitute almost the entire population.'⁸⁸ There is no ideology of social change here, no willingness to use force to bring it to pass; but the indignation against injustice and the sympathy for its victims which were to inspire modern socialism are there in full flow in the sermons of fashionable preachers before the Revolution. Unable to invoke physical force for leverage, they used the threat of God's judgement, undoubtedly at the end, but before even then. 'What right have you to be vain about the gifts God has given you?' asked Père Elisée. 'Soon, the sovereign dispenser of all worldly things will take back his gifts, his breath will blow upon your proud race and your descendants will be the infamy of their age; he will sweep away your riches like dust; the earth will swallow up your insane grandeur, and the debris of your loftiness will become an eternal monument to your annihilation.'⁸⁹

The pious with alarm, and the sceptics with amusement, complained of the fashionable ecclesiastics who went along with the philosophes giving sermons 'which could be delivered equally at Paris, London or Constantinople'.⁹⁰ There are variants of the

witticism, and more than one candidate for the credit of inventing it. An early formulation is in the Jesuit *Mémoires de Trévoux* in March 1715: a sermon ought to be ‘a solid explanation of the mysteries’, said the writer, ‘not fragments of moralizing adorned with a flowery style, something that could be recited in a mosque or a temple of idols with hardly any change’.⁹¹ From 1760, the lamentations of the pious redoubled. What was peculiarly Christian in theology was being passed over in silence: ‘on ne prêche plus guère que la religion naturelle’.⁹² Sermons ‘are marginally Christian with the gospels as accessories’. Or, worse still, the preachers avoid citing the gospels at all, ‘lest they be taken for plagiarists and copyists’, said a curé ironically.⁹³ They talk of ‘la Patrie’—our earthly country, not our heavenly one. They talk of humane and charitable conduct, saying nothing of suffering, humility, scorn of the world, and the docility of faith. ‘Serve our fellow men,’ they say, never think of adding that ‘every man is the temple of Jesus Christ.’ They are becoming philosophes themselves.⁹⁴ Louis XVI joined in the chorus: ‘if the abbé Maury had preached a little about religion, he would have given us something about everything’.⁹⁵ There were complaints in the provinces about ‘vain declamations and philosophic maxims’. At Nancy there was the story of the pious citizen who enlivened the conversation by offering a money prize to whoever detected a mention of the name of Christ in a sermon of the superior of the Lazarists, the city’s most distinguished preacher.⁹⁶

The relations between preachers and philosophes were ambiguous—in one sense foes, in another, collaborators in the promotion of enlightenment. An example is the running entertainment which polite society derived from the annual panegyric of St Louis, delivered in the chapel of the Louvre on 25 August in the presence of the Academy. As a saint, and even more as a king, Louis could hardly be treated irreverently, but an attitude had to be taken to the Crusades. Given the progress of historical criticism, it was impossible to laud these expeditions as straightforward Christian heroism: the question was, how far would the preacher venture in the opposite direction? From 1764, the philosophes virtually controlled the Academy, and sought out orators who would incline to their views. ‘J’ai quelque lieu d’espérer qu’un jour il sera un prélat assez philosophe,’ wrote Voltaire of a possible candidate; ‘you can entrust Saint-Louis to him for next year.’⁹⁷ On the other hand, the public expected all the recognized masters of ecclesiastical eloquence to appear in due course. Though a great deal of intrigue, irony, and pious denunciation were churned around over these choices, it was

all something of a game: in 1773, the bumbling duc de Nivernais, in charge of Academy business, forgot to make arrangements for a nomination until two days beforehand, so the honour of preaching had to be touted around the clergy of Paris.⁹⁸ The extreme sermon on one side was the abbé Bassinet's performance in 1767, judged scandalous. Arrayed in a black cope, he had no text, made no sign of the cross, did not cite Scripture or refer to God; he described the crusades as 'absurd' and the crusaders as 'debauched and pious brigands'.⁹⁹ Two masterly performances handling the theme with decorum allied to brilliant brinkmanship were those of the abbé Maury in 1772 and, above all, Claude Fauchet in 1774.¹⁰⁰ The crusades, said Fauchet, were 'just and useful'. The deliverance of the Holy Land was the ostensible motive, but this, he conceded, would not by itself render the cruel fighting legitimate. The real motive was to stem the Saracen tide threatening to engulf Western Europe, sweeping through North Africa to Sardinia, Sicily, and the Italian mainland. Seeing the danger, the Popes, 'profiting from the ancient spirit of devotion to the sacred monuments of our redemption', called on the feudatories of the West to campaign against the invaders. This was all the more judicious, since the warlike seigneurs needed a conflict to occupy them. 'Could one render a more important service to the tillers of the soil, to the good and useful subjects of the kingdom, than to send far away the tyrants who oppressed them?'

Though preachers and philosophes were on opposite sides, the relations between them were, for the most part, courteous. Le Chapelain, who thundered against these 'devils in human form', was one of the few exceptions.¹⁰¹ At the other extreme, the abbé de Boismonit went too far in congratulating the opposition for 'ending superstition and fanaticism'. The civilized middle way was represented by the abbé de Beauvais; let the unbelievers begin by practising natural virtue, he urged, and let the Christians show them sympathy—like St Paul on the Areopagus, we must philosophize with the philosophers, for it is unreasonable to ask them to believe on the authority of our 'divine oracles', when they do not accept their authenticity in the first place.¹⁰² On their side, the writers of the Enlightenment, while encouraging a certain 'de-Christianization' of the sermon, did much to improve it; nor did their scepticism preclude a genuine desire to do so. In a private letter, Voltaire rejoiced in the progress of pulpit eloquence: 'the most boring of our preachers today is Demosthenes in comparison with all those from Saint-Rémi to Père Garasse'.¹⁰³ Diderot 'discovered' Père Elisée and

helped him to overcome the handicaps of a weak voice and hesitant gestures, to become one of the orators of the age. If Christian sermons there had to be, let them be good ones. The wits of the Enlightenment censured forced analogies, grotesque metaphors, pompous Latin citations, over-ornate rhetoric, and, above all, uncharitable ecclesiastical controversies. 'For kings and peasants alike,' said Voltaire, 'I would always speak of morals and never of controversy. God forbid that I should explain concomitant grace, the efficacious grace which can be resisted, the sufficient grace which does not suffice, or whether the angels who ate with Abraham and Lot had bodies, or if they just pretended to eat.'¹⁰⁴ Sermons were none the worse because the clergy feared ridicule. As always, preachers adopted the jargon, literary devices, and emotional overtones current in their age. They spoke of the 'Être Suprême', the 'Législateur des Chrétiens', 'citoyens', 'âmes sensibles'. The novels of the day were their sources for 'portraits' and knowledge of the temptations and intrigues of the world. The atmosphere of their sermons was the atmosphere of the Enlightenment; even so, their substance was, mostly, formal, severe, and Christian.

The tendency to concentrate on questions of morality and humanitarian generosity was at once a reflection of the Enlightenment and of the drive of the Counter-Reformation, striving to bring conduct into line with belief. The great pulpit orators were aware of the precise point where preaching about conduct diverged from the 'bienfaisance' of the philosophes. Le Chapelain once told a congregation that he knew what they wanted to be told—that is, the purely human grounds for moral behaviour—but this, he said, was what he had no intention of giving them. The abbé Clément, in his *L'Influence de la religion*, denounced those who thought morals could be reduced to the precepts of reason. It was the heart of the Christian apologetic that men would never be good and society could never be peaceful if God was neglected. The abbé Trublet, reflecting the views of the older school of divines, complained his fellow churchmen were 'failing to preach the love of God because they were too busy preaching the love of mankind'. True, but unfair. The preachers were striving to show how the love of mankind is a derivative from the turning of the soul to God which is the heart of religion.

25 The Curé's Prône and Parish Missions

I

By canon law, the ministry of the Word was entrusted to the bishop.¹ He gave authority to preach in his diocese, though noting that the additional consent of the parish priest would be required. This episcopal permission could be withdrawn, without necessarily giving reasons. In 1780 the story went the rounds of Paris that the abbé de Boulogne, interdicted from the pulpit without explanation by the archbishop, had won the prize for a model sermon offered by the diocese, submitting his entry under the name of a friend.² On the positive side, the bishops ordered the curés to preach regularly in their parishes. The normal formula, as in the *Rituel* of Paris, was a homily every Sunday at the main mass of the day; along with diverse announcements and some official intercessions, this was known as the *prône*.³ The statutes of the diocese of Boulogne, less exacting, prescribed a minimum of one Sunday in three, the discourse to last from a quarter to half an hour; if a parish had two churches, the sermon could alternate between them. A priest who lacked the art of composition was authorized to read something.⁴ On a pastoral visitation in the diocese of Rennes in 1742, more precise instructions were given: 'the *prône* is to consist, not only of the reading of the prayers in the *Rituel*, but also and essentially it must be a familiar exposition of the Gospel of the day and of some other point concerning Christian morals, for the instruction and edification of the people'.⁵ The bishop of Amiens, who had ordered weekly homilies in 1748, added a rider in 1777: there must be no relaxation at harvest season, though time could be saved by having a low instead of a high mass, and by keeping the message brief.⁶ He was being unrealistic. Able-bodied peasants, men and women, had to be in the fields when the sheaves were being garnered. In October 1789, curé Barbotin, a deputy to the Estates General, wrote to the monk who was *locum tenens* of his parish: 'it is useless to preach during harvest and, indeed,

on the Sunday after, but otherwise, I beg you to say something to them from time to time'.⁷

Prône began after the gospel at mass with prayers for the departed, the Pope, the king, and the local seigneur; thereafter, though not necessarily in that order, came the sermon, the notices about the religious events of the coming week, announcements concerning parish affairs, the banns of marriage, and if an episcopal ordinance had just been issued, it would be read out; also, if the bishop had circulated a pastoral letter, it would take the place of the sermon, though the curé might add comments about it. Among the announcements might be advertisements of leases to be renewed and seigneurial instructions to tenants, as to trim their hedges, sweep their chimneys, or keep their dogs tied up.⁸ From 1695, curés had been excused from having to read out secular notices, and from 1698 this was extended to ordinances of the government, though many still followed the old custom, and sometimes a royal order reimposed a specific obligation. In 1708 and 1731 the king ordered the rereading at *prône* at two-monthly intervals of the ordinance of 1556 concerning declarations of pregnancy (a precaution against infanticide); this was still being done in the diocese of Troyes in 1785.⁹ A demand of this kind caused a sensation in 1787; Calonne had a highly political *avertissement* read in the pulpits of Paris, making ironical remarks about the Notables and calling on the people to support the king in spite of them. 'Even in Boston,' said Lafayette angrily, 'this appeal would be classed as seditious.' When, in 1790, the National Assembly, proudly taking to itself the old rights of the Crown, prescribed the announcement of its decrees at *prône*, an article in the *Journal ecclésiastique* fulminated against the order. 'To do this at *prône*—at what a time! At the moment when the awesome sacrifice is briefly interrupted for the sole purpose of reminding us of the greatness of him to whom it is offered—what! In the very moment when the faithful ought to be forgetting the world and all the things of the world . . .', and so on, pious wrath fuelled by right-wing sentiments.¹⁰

The homily at *prône* was informal, without exordium, divisions, or compliment. Instructions from on high, as in the *Rituel* of Limoges, said the length was 'not to exceed half an hour'. (This was the limit imposed on the Protestant pastors of Strasbourg by their consistories, on pain of fine for exceeding it.¹¹) But the call from below was for less, and a quarter of an hour was the realistic span. Prolix discourses, said an expert on matters pastoral, 'drive a man from his parish church to seek for a low mass far away, so as not to run the risk of

having to listen to a deadly *prône*.¹² Women and servants had no time, anyway. Restif de la Bretonne had a saintly brother he describes as the ideal curé; even so, his parishioners complained of his long-windedness. Apparently, he deliberately kept on and on, 'to keep them from frivolous and dangerous amusements'—no doubt that was why they wanted brevity.¹³ In some places the men of the congregation had a system which gave certain insurance against boredom, going out of mass at the beginning of *prône* and coming back for the Consecration.¹⁴

Generally, the curé would use his quarter of an hour to expound a text from the epistle or gospel, though he might decide to diverge from custom to preach on some matter which had arisen in the parish, or to offer a course of continuous instruction extending over a few Sundays. The experts advised sticking to a single point and using Scripture to illustrate it. 'Do not think about elegance,' was a bishop's recommendation to his clergy; 'better talk like a rustic than be ineffectual.'¹⁵ There should be a written text, said a treatise on pastoral techniques, committed to memory; this, said the author, should not be too great a burden, since the discourses could be repeated at three-year intervals, for by then no one remembers them.¹⁶ In the seminaries, the students were coached in preaching, submitting a sermon to be discussed by all the others, emended in the light of criticism, then learnt by heart and delivered in the seminary chapel.¹⁷ Preparation of a parish sermon could be facilitated by referring to one of the published collections, like curé Girard's *Les Petits Prônes ou instructions familières principalement pour les peuples de la campagne* (Lyon, 1760)—there were others by Hébert, the curé of Versailles, by Lambert, Ballet, Mangin, and Chevassu. However, in many a poor vicarage books were in short supply, and ancient volumes passed on from long ago ensured that archaic theological arguments were still retailed to rural congregations. During the Revolution a curé recorded that he had just burned three or four volumes of sermons he had inherited from an old Capuchin—discourses 'larded with fabulous tales more calculated to discredit religion than to establish it'.

In some parts of France the mass of the population spoke generally in patois or, at least, a local dialect. The parish priest would transact business with his bishop, government officials, and well-educated parishioners in French, but to be effective pastorally, he would need to use the local tongue. An enquiry in the early days of the Revolution¹⁸ revealed that sermons were given in the provincial language in Brittany (though in some towns two parallel Lenten

courses were offered, one in French and one in Breton¹⁹), in the vast area of Languedoc (except in the towns and their close hinterland), along the Pyrenees and in the Jura Mountains. In rural areas around Bordeaux, the catechism was taught in patois, but the curés did not venture to preach in it. In Alsace, a priest needed to know German and, except in the more distinguished parishes, offer sermons in it.²⁰ Around Saint-Omer, the old dialects had almost vanished, though someone was found who, as a boy, had heard the curé trying to preach in Picard, 'de la manière la plus risible'.²¹ It could be that 'la religion populaire' survived more certainly in parishes where French was not the natural language and where the curé was insufficiently bilingual to impress his ideas on his people.

Did curés fulfil their preaching duties? Notorious slackers would be caught on episcopal visitations. In 1748, the bishop of Amiens described with astonishment how the inhabitants of one village had asked him, in the presence of their curé, for permission to sell the pulpit of their church as being 'a useless piece of furniture'. He had also heard priests saying that 'a good catechism class' was all that was needed.²² According to the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* in 1746, neglect of preaching was widespread: 'There is no instruction given in most of the parishes, or if there is, it degenerates into satire or comedy.'²³ This was an austere Jansenist verdict. Probably, it was the poor quality of sermons, rather than their absence, which was the thrust of the censure. Such was the verdict on the curé of Paray-le-Monial: 'he does not preach and when he does everyone wishes he hadn't'.²⁴ When the complaints of congregations are specific, there is one representing lay opinion the world over—they are being asked for money. He preaches only twice a year, it was said of a curé of Burgundy, and then only to exhort to prompt payment of tithe.²⁵ In a village in Alsace, the people made two oddly contrasting allegations: first, their curé subjected them to furious tirades of 'vengeance and insult', and second, 'he makes all sorts of jokes and comic remarks to excite his listeners to laughter and to pass the time more agreeably'. In another parish of Alsace, the curé talked of antiquarian curiosities, 'of the pikes and bows and arrows that were used before the invention of gunpowder, instead of teaching the principles of the Christian faith'.²⁶

If there had been a village scandal, it would be denounced at *prône* with moralizing reflections—as at Aubais, where a citizen won a white-wine drinking contest, killing himself in the process.²⁷ But a running commentary on local life with exhortations to obey and subsidize the clergy could become an abuse of apostolic relevance. A

comic sermon in Breton for All Saints' Day is an instructive parody.²⁸ In précis, it runs:

Today I'll repeat last year's sermon with new additions. Saint Matthew was converted because the Lord Jesus turned the gold in his sacks into dry leaves. So he gave away his money except for some given to a priest for masses. When he was old, a sea-bird fed him with a fish every day, and he finally flew up to heaven with a crow going ahead with a candle on its tail to light the way. Nothing like this will happen to you. True, you go to mass on Sundays and saints' days, but the young men only go to ogle the girls and the older people to sleep. You didn't give anything to the poor at the church door when you came in; remember, for each sou given you get 100 sous in heaven. Found masses for the souls of your parents so your children will do the same for you. Emulate Nonn Kerdouber who sent his curé a twelfth part of his butter, and likewise when he killed his pig. Tonight, the souls of sinners return to earth and float around, so do not put out the fire, and leave food on the table for them. A word about drinking. When the Lord Jesus was preaching, he saw some men drinking in a church and drove them out with a stick. Lord Oedipus went to the tavern after mass, got drunk, and killed his father and married his mother. Annaie Gurisan has lost her heifer—find it for the poor woman. Six little piglets have been killed by wolves, so go out after them with your dogs or you'll lose your cattle this winter. Jacques Kergribel—why don't you send your youngest to catechism? You know what happened to your eldest daughter, you let her wander the woods with boys and she got pregnant. If I am harsh on you, it is because I love you, like beating cream to make good butter. You there! Don't put snuff in your piggy nose while I am talking to you! Beware of death: 'the worms are in your impure bodies already' in the name of the Trinity, Amen.

No doubt there were idiosyncratic sermons in rural hamlets, the *prône* reflecting the milieu and the educational standard of the parish priest. In any case, it was not easy to preach every Sunday to simple folk, keeping the message austere and concentrated on essentials. The vicaire, applying for a parish of his own, who promised to tell all parishioners of 'the Master who died for them', the poor of 'the consolations of God', and 'to open up the abyss of Hell' before the sinners,²⁹ would not have made much impression without a fund of illustration and anecdote. The situation was entirely other in important parishes, especially in the towns. Here, the curé would have a university degree, and would be under the scrutiny of educated people. The sermon notes of curé Boumard of Angers³⁰ contain discourses for all the Sunday gospels, courses on the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments, outlines of Christian doctrine from the creation, and expositions of the discipline of the

Church on fasting, confession, praying before the Holy Sacrament, and the observance of Sunday. Peasants working in the fields on a Sunday were struck down by lightning—true, this was long ago, in AD 829, but the lesson remains. Boumard makes no concessions to the Enlightenment, condemning riches and theatre-going and dismissing Jews, Calvinists, and virtuous pagans as lost—if they are indeed virtuous, it is because of pride. One thing these notes cannot convey is the genial informality of the relations of a town curé with his flock. Dr Robin of Angers gave learned discourses, but full of light-hearted asides, often enough mocking the canons of his local chapter. Once he interrupted his *prône* to ask one of the congregation who lived near to his country cottage to take a message about a leg of mutton for his supper that evening; a call to penitence after a bad harvest concluded: 'luckily the vineyards have done well so we'll make up for it in wine'. Robin's sermons drew a packed audience; one wonders how many there were in Boumard's congregation.

A curé did well to be entertaining and topical and not to preach at great length, for in the towns people could go elsewhere. Everywhere there were the formal sermons of the Lent and Advent courses and others for special occasions, and the pulpits of the great collegiate churches were occupied by the professionals, and sermon tasters could go there to hear them, complete with exordium, divisions, compliments and well-rehearsed rhetoric. *Prône* was different; it was a communal occasion when the parishioners met their curé, informally, but in the shadow of the Sacrament of unity, to hear his explanations of the spiritual and secular business of their community.

II

A journal of the Restoration period, *L'Ami de la Religion et du Roi*, described the century before the Revolution as 'un siècle missionnaire', the reference being to campaigns of evangelism in the parishes, not to overseas ventures.³¹ Two factors combined to make these missions the most dramatic mass demonstrations of the age of the Enlightenment: the grip of the Church on the minds and morals of men was faltering, so the targets for missionary zeal were more evident than they had been; but the domination of the clerical establishment was still intact, so that the campaign was an event supported by all who mattered locally and drawing a high-universal attendance.

The technique of missions had been perfected, and the institutions of specialists who conducted them had been formed, in the course of the seventeenth century. The Jesuit houses pursued their tradition of working with and infiltrating vocational groups, from high society down to galley-slaves. Vincent de Paul founded his Prêtres de la Mission in 1632 to convert the countryside, organizing meetings at first light and sunset to avoid interrupting work, and teaching children in the afternoons. By his death in 1660, his Parisian house of Saint-Lazare had conducted 700 campaigns. The fathers of the Oratory and Jean d'Eudes, who left them in 1643 to pursue his own specialist vocation as an itinerant preacher, developed methods summed up in Eudes's *Avertissements aux confesseurs missionnaires* (1644) and Bourgoing's *Directions pour les missions qui se font à la Congrégation de l'Oratoire* (1646). Their object was intensely moral, to bring their listeners to make a general confession to complete all previous ones, and to reconcile all their enmities.³² The Capuchins were the dramatic popular orators. Père Honoré at the age of 70 was at Tarbes in 1682, preaching twice a day for a fortnight, brandishing a crucifix or a skull, and weeping floods of tears. In the intervals between his sermons, his assistants held lively sessions of questions and answers. Thousands poured in from all around, so that the bakers, working night and day, could not supply them all with bread.³³ Brittany had its own evangelists with picturesque methods.³⁴ Dom Michel Le Nobletz died in 1640, handing on his handbell and collection of pictures to the Jesuit Julien Maunoir, who taught by songs, mnemonic devices, and processions of costumed figures. His tradition was taken over by Louis-Marie Grignon de Montfort, a charismatic figure beloved by many and suspect to ecclesiastical authority. At Grignon's death in 1715, René Mulot reorganized his followers into a congregation, popularly called the 'Mulotins', and acquired a central house at Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre in 1722. There were numerous groups of missionaries of local significance elsewhere: the Chapelains de Notre-Dame de Garaison, the Prêtres Missionnaires de Beaupré, the Doctrinaires of the Maison de Saint-Rome at Toulouse, the Gardistes of Avignon, the Missionnaires Royaux of Alès, originally founded to convert Protestants.

A curé might decide to conduct a mission himself. There was a sensational example at Fontelles in Franche Comté in 1784—ten days on the theme of 'eternity', with the church draped in black and 3,000 people processing carrying the wooden crosses destined in due course to mark their graves.³⁵ But few curés could muster the ruthlessness to terrorize their people so. In the diocese of Vannes there

was a co-operative system for recteurs and their vicaires to leave their usual work for a time to concentrate on evangelizing a single parish.³⁶ More simply, an individual parish priest might declare a season of renewal and give a course of simple 'converting' sermons. A four-volume collection of these was published at Lyon in 1750, 'to help Messieurs the curés to become missionaries in their parishes'.³⁷ When the experts descended to conduct a full-scale campaign, the curé might choose to be one of their helpers—there were good reasons for co-operating; 'a mission is necessary in a parish so its recteur can gain a deeper knowledge of it,' said a parish priest in Brittany when the Muloins were coming.³⁸ On the other hand, there were those who preferred to stay detached, whether lacking sympathy with the methods employed or because the missionaries discouraged them. In any case, numbers of local clergy had to be called in as auxiliaries, especially to hear confessions. When Bridaine preached at Montpellier in 1743, he had a team of eighteen, including the dean, two canons, and five curés. 'I am worn out by the labours resulting from the success of the mission conducted by the Capuchin fathers,' wrote a priest of Nîmes in December 1783. Normally, he spent his time writing learned essays on scientific subjects; but, he said, 'people are crowding to the confessionals. So for the whole of this month I have abandoned my studies to devote myself to the salvation of souls. My essential duty, the duty which confers honour upon me, is to be a priest, and I would always sacrifice my own wishes to the obligations imposed by the priesthood to which the Lord has seen fit to call me.'³⁹

Some bishops took the lead in promoting parochial missions in their dioceses.⁴⁰ Early in the century, the archbishops of Besançon and of Tours were accustomed to send a team of evangelists ahead, before they arrived on a pastoral visitation. A less charitable episcopal stratagem was to send a team of evangelists into a Jansenist parish; this was done in Bayonne in 1739 and 1751, and Dax in 1745. These forays could be scandalous, the missionaries ignoring the curé, refusing to allow him to join in their work or to eat with him. In 1751, encouraged by the bishop of Autun, the Jesuits held a mission at Armes near the boundary with the diocese of Auxerre, where the Jansenist bishop Caylus reigned; people trekked over the border to receive orthodox (and easier) absolution, and to join in singing canticles in which 'the world' was replaced with 'Caylus'.

'Monseigneur, always with a legitimate excuse, cannot preach in person, but sends his missionaries,' said a curé sardonically.⁴¹ This was unfair, for bishops, with the exception of those with tiny dioceses,

could hardly have had time for preaching tours. Yet prelates are found occupying the pulpit at missions,⁴² normally giving the closing sermon—bishop Souillac of Lodève winding up the November 1755 campaign in his episcopal city, Massillon at Clermont in 1740, Bertin of Vannes at Rochefort in 1748, and similar sermons by the bishops of Dié, Dax, and Saint-Claude. We do not know the length of their discourses, except for Souillac, who lasted for two and a quarter hours. At Rochefort, Mgr Charles-Jean de Bertin not only preached; he also stayed for the whole nineteen days, supervised the renewal of baptismal vows and the erection of a commemorative cross, and paid all the expenses. A few bishops were regular missionaries. François de Jarrel de Gayec had been a naval officer, then at the age of 26 joined the Chapelains de Garaison: appointed bishop of Aire in 1735, he went out every year with three preachers conducting missions from All Souls' Day to the first week of Lent. Bishop La Motte of Amiens was another, using the Lazarists in the countryside in winter and the Jesuits in the towns in summer, regularly turning up himself to process and to preach. On 11 July 1773 at the age of 91 he opened his last mission from the pulpit of his cathedral.⁴³ When it was vacation time for his seminary, Urbain de Hercé of Dol used its Eudist directors together with selected parish priests as a mission team which he directed in person. His triumph in his first campaign was long remembered; a congregation of 8,000 burst into tears at his dolorous cry of 'Vae tibi Corazin, vae tibi Bethsaida!'⁴⁴

Missioners had to be lodged and fed, and their projects involved incidental expenses. They preferred not to be beholden to the parishioners, lest they were tempted to spare rich potential contributors from their denunciations, or to waste effort on fund raising. For a particular need, a donor might come forward, as the bishop of Belley in 1749 brought the Missionnaires de Sainte-Colombe from Vienne to his episcopal city from Easter to Pentecost at his own expense;⁴⁵ prelates as diverse as the apostolic Urbain de Hercé of Dol and the sceptical Loménie de Brienne of Toulouse did as much for their dioceses.⁴⁶ The ideal, however, was a calendar of regular missions for each parish: in the diocese of Fréjus they were supposed to come at decennial intervals.⁴⁷ This needed 'foundations' providing a recurrent income. A legacy to the diocese of Lombes in 1676 provided for a mission every fifteen years in five parishes; another in the diocese of Rieux in 1700 paid the salaries of three priests who were to spend five months of the year in evangelization. In the early eighteenth century the bishop of Dax brought in the Lazarists to run a second seminary to give instruction in pastoral techniques to

vicaires; the institution soon accumulated legacies to pay for missions in a dozen places.⁴⁸ Some testators left money to an institution to go into a general fund; others specified particular parishes. As an obligation coming round every ten or a dozen years could be forgotten, the will might make provision for a plaque on the wall of the church porch as a reminder. A widow in the diocese of Nîmes in 1737 laid down stringent conditions—every ten years from the first Sunday after Epiphany to the fourth inclusive, to be conducted ‘by the Récollets and nobody else’, and the curé to give benediction with the Sacrament and recite a *De Profundis* for her soul every evening of the campaign.⁴⁹ A minor noble, ‘formerly a captain on the galleys at Marseille’, in 1714 founded missions ‘in every place where I have caused scandal’—a total of a dozen in six different dioceses.⁵⁰ From the registers of the Prêtres Missionnaires of Beaupré, it seems legacies came especially from the clergy. After Law's Scheme had devastated the capital of the earlier foundations (a crisis met by doubling or tripling the intervals between missions), there was a new buildup: of the thirty bequests recorded between 1720 and 1780, half came from curés, mostly for evangelization in their own parishes (perhaps along with adjoining ones). Seven other bequests were from clergy outside the parochial ministry. By 1780, there were eighty parish campaigns coming round at twenty-year intervals and supported by a total income of 20,000 livres.⁵¹

The aim of a mission was to make individual conversions. The theme of the Church tended to be neglected in favour of emphasizing the responsibility of the lonely soul facing the terror of God's judgement. But the style and ethos of each group of missionaries was idiosyncratic. Grignon de Montfort⁵² was the apostle of the simple and poor. His talks were informal, inviting questions and interruptions; at times he would stop and call for silent prayer while he held aloft a crucifix. There were elementary object-lessons: after getting children to put up a hand to confess to a particular sin, he would lead them all outside to a bonfire of straw symbolizing the vengeance of Hell. His message, like that of all the other preachers, was Christocentric, but he concentrated on the Passion and the Cross, not the Resurrection—along with fear, he used pathos as the spur to repentance. His listeners were exhorted to perform practical actions committing them to reformation in the sight of their fellows—a communion, a vow, joining a confraternity of the rosary. By contrast, the Doctrinaires were cerebral, appealing to the intellect.⁵³ Unlike the Montfortians and the Jesuits, the centrality of Christ for them meant the virtual exclusion of the Virgin; the six cycles of

prayer they recommended were to Christ, the Trinity, the Passion, the Love of God, the Guardian Angels, and the Holy Sacrament—there was no special place for Our Lady. Devotion to the Eucharist was to form the basis of a new, amended life, visiting the Sacrament daily and communicating frequently. Their gospel of conduct was in positive terms: honest labour was a universal obligation, and no one was dispensed from it.

The Jesuit mission techniques were more adaptable, for they targeted particular social groups for specialized evangelism.⁵⁴ Their preaching was in a standard mould, centred on the Eucharist and the amendment of morals, with an overall pattern of the exercises of St Ignatius; but the level of approach was adjusted to suit the particular class of hearers. Sometimes, these were Protestants, and due attention was given to Protestant reservations about Catholic doctrines. Or the missionaries would descend on the galley-slaves in Toulon, Marseille, or Bordeaux—a captive audience in every sense, with hardly a man daring not to confess. They would go to the garrison towns—Douai, Lille, Embrun, Dole—to conduct missions to the soldiers: there was one at Dole annually. In some towns, there was a campaign to reach the destitute, with half a pound of bread dispensed to every attender at the morning and evening sermon; in others there were very early and very late sessions for ‘carriers of sedan chairs, valets and lackeys’—for a while afterwards, servants would refuse to take their masters in chairs or carriages to ‘les lieux suspects’. For the rich and well-educated, the mission cadre was the exclusive Jesuit confraternity, with a ‘retraite spirituelle en forme de mission’. Characteristically, the Jesuits would concentrate manpower on strategic objectives. In their general mission to the town of Lyon in 1712, twenty-three experienced preachers came in, and they had the staff of the three Jesuit houses in town as back-up; and for their jubilee mission of 1734, their two famous orators, Pérussault and Segaud, arrived to give the keynote sermons. Prestigious local families were called on to set an example—great ladies were conscripted to take catechism classes and to lead processions of women and girls.⁵⁵ It was fashionable, as well as edifying, to attend Jesuit missions.

How often should evangelistic campaigns be held in any particular place? Their cutting edge would be blunted if they were too frequent. In a parish in the papal enclave of Avignon there was a fund providing one annually; the Oratorians, who were responsible, declared that ‘it is regarded by the most part of simple folk as just a yearly routine’, and they wrote to Rome recommending a change to

six-year intervals.⁵⁶ The received wisdom was that ten years was about right to appeal to every generation.⁵⁷ In practice, however, the timing was largely determined by the availability of money, whether from *ad hoc* gifts or established endowments. The duration of a mission was about three weeks in the country and five in the towns, where the population was more numerous and several parishes would be grouped together. It was a long time, but ordinary people had their work to do, so the main events would take place early in the morning (perhaps starting at 4 a.m.) and at night. Also, different days were allotted to different groups of people. Two Capuchins evangelized a small village in 1768 over a period of 23 days;⁵⁸ on 11 April there was a general procession, then a few days 'retreat' for women and girls, ending with a procession of all 400 of them; then, after the Sunday observances, a five-day 'retreat' for men, again ending with a procession; then on 1 May a general procession of all 800 parishioners with crowds coming in from nearby villages; thereafter, three days for winding up the mission, with communions, renewal of baptismal vows, restitutions, reconciliations, and the planting of a commemorative cross. This was very much the pattern everywhere. The 'retreats' for men and women separately had the practical advantage of leaving someone at home all the time to look after the house, infants, and domestic animals, and the moral one of enabling the missionaries to 'explain to each class its special obligations with a detail that could not be given if the whole population was listening'.⁵⁹

The spirit of fervour and collective commitment was intensified by the impact of the processions and the mass chanting of canticles. Grignon de Montfort had specialized in grim and picturesque processions representing the march of Jesus to Calvary, but by 1770, the Muletins had abandoned them. 'A false delicacy has prevailed,' wrote their superior, 'so that we would be censured if we tried to put on these pageants of religion—they would excite the ridicule of those claiming to be the wise ones.'⁶⁰ Bridaine, the greatest of the evangelists, used the procession as a prestigious mass demonstration of the Christian allegiance of the community. In Clermont on the night of 3 April 1740 he had an aristocratic lady carrying a cross leading the girls—all in white and veiled, crowned with flowers and carrying candles—and then came the older women with candles. A chevalier of St Louis was the cross-bearer for the men, the officers of the army garrison all following; then the youth of the city, then the monks of the five monastic houses, followed by the secular clergy from the seminarists to the canons of the three collegiate

churches. This was the prelude to the centrepiece of the march—the bishop bearing the Holy Sacrament under a canopy carried by four prominent citizens. Behind came the files of the red-robed *cour des aides*, the magistrates of the *présidial* and the *sénéchaussée* and the mayor and aldermen, with a multitude of ordinary citizens in the rear, thousands marching by torch and candlelight in the darkness.⁶¹

The missionaries brought with them their handbooks of canticles. Some of these had been published by dioceses, as at Castres, Rodez, and Auch (in French and Gascon). Others were the work of the missionaries themselves—Maunoir, Grignon de Montfort, Badou, Bridaine. There were rousing choruses, like Bridaine's verses for 'Christian soldiers',⁶² or sombre dirges, like Grignon de Montfort's 'Il faut mourir', 'Dieu perdu, tout est perdu'. With sinister gusto, Père Badou had a chorus calling on the denizens of Hell to reveal its grisly secrets:

Dites-nous, dites-nous
Quels tourments endurez-vous?

Often, the tunes were already well known in the secular context—Badou had 'La Passion de Jésus Christ' sung to the music of 'Les Folies d'Espagne'.⁶³ In his *Manuel de la Mission* (1702) Père Albert warned against these incongruities and the dangerous images they evoked. His exhortation went unheeded: the missionaries had no intention of allowing the Devil to monopolize the best tunes.

Once the atmosphere was created, gestures of individual commitment were called for, though made at collective ceremonies. There would be the renewal of baptismal vows, the communions of men, the communions of women (all preceded by the making of individual confessions). Sometimes, the curé had reserved the First Communion of the children to take place in the mission season. Towards the end, there would also be a call for the ending of feuds and lawsuits, with a committee of clergy and lawyers to provide advice and arbitration. Some wrongs were righted anonymously, through the 'tronc des restitutions indéterminées'.⁶⁴ Almost always, the final climax was the planting of a commemorative cross to remind the parishioners of the amendment of life they had promised. At the revolutionary festival of the Federation of 14 July 1790, a rural commune unanimously voted to mark the place where they had taken their oath to the Nation with just such a cross—regenerated individuals fortifying their allegiance with a gesture of collective commitment.⁶⁵

In the sombre, highly charged atmosphere of the campaign, the

lightning strikes effecting conversions were the sermons of the leading preacher. Jacques Bridaine, the most famous, was typical of the others except in his unique charisma. After minor preaching forays, in 1732 he conducted his first major mission at Marseille; thereafter, until his death in 1767 (stricken down with the stone in the course of preaching), he evangelized the whole country except the North, the West, and Normandy, in a series of 256 set-piece missions, together with isolated sermons at places on the route of the journeys.⁶⁶ On arriving at the town to be evangelized, Bridaine would pay a courtesy call on the leading citizens, and get together a large choir of girls; this done, he and his team kept apart from society, emerging only to preach, confess, and organize. He was an arresting figure,⁶⁷ big and handsome, with a voice that could be heard in houses 500 paces away, doors and windows closed. As he declaimed, sweat soaked his surplice and dripped from the sleeves. All was dramatic: he would hold a lighted candle in intercession, put a halter round his neck in sorrow, produce a skull in menace, and, maybe, bedeck it with a wig and ribbons, come down from the pulpit and lament over a coffin, stop and suddenly demand mass gestures of allegiance and penitence. Death was his obsessive theme. In his first preaching success in 1725, as a deacon of 24 years of age, he had reduced a frivolous congregation to tears with his 'Remember, O man, thou art but dust!' His plan for a four-day course for women was: day one, death; day two, judgement; three, Hell; the fourth was to be devoted to less fearsome subjects. The plan of a standard sermon ran from mortal sin to delay in conversion, final impenitence, the death of the sinner and his doom, when 'the Angel of Death locks the soul in Hell and breaks the key'. 'Every day remember your end', he would say. 'Do you not sleep in the bed in which you must die? Do you not lie down between the sheets that will form your shroud? Do you not hear the terrifying sound of the bell that will one day tell the town that you are no more?'⁶⁸ In 1751 he was called for the first time to preach in Paris, in Saint-Sulpice. The archbishop, the prince de Conti, the duc de Richelieu, and the fashionable world filled the church. 'I have sown fear in the minds of simple faithful souls whom I ought to have consoled', he began; 'but here, I see before me only the great, the rich, the oppressors of suffering humanity, audacious and hardened sinners. Ah! it is here alone that I ought to preach the sacred Word in all its thunderous power; it is from this pulpit that I must show you, on the one side the death which menaces you, and on the other the majesty of the God who comes to judge you.'⁶⁹

But Bridaine did not evoke emotion in a void: he channelled fear

into the specific purpose of creating a conviction of sin. The innocent is condemned to die, but the executioner cannot be found; then, from the crowd, a volunteer steps forward. 'You shudder with indignation, my brothers! Each and every one of you is that cruel man. There are no Jews now to crucify Christ, but you stand up, you say, "I'll do it, I'll crucify him.'" ⁷⁰ The conviction of sin was to lead to tangible public acts of commitment, embracing enemies, kneeling before a crucifix, renewal of baptismal vows, performing an *amende honorable* with a rope round the neck as a criminal had to do before execution, piling gifts for the poor on the missionaries' cart, throwing doubtful books or pictures on a bonfire, gathering round the commemorative cross, making the mission confession and communion. As a tourist in Rome for the jubilee of 1750, Bridaine saw the throngs of pilgrims swayed by emotion and was dissatisfied—'but I do not hear anything about a general confession, about reconciliation, still less of restitution'. He wished to leave a town with its old feuds reconciled, with a new spirit of charity towards the poor, and with a remembrance of commitment to a different future.

Inevitably, Bridaine's dramatic repertoire invited ridicule (though there are at least two stories of sceptics who scoffed at his rhetoric and died within a few days). 'He sometimes stays three hours in the pulpit,' said the chronicler of local affairs in Lyon; 'he storms, he thunders, he gesticulates, tears his surplice and consigns everybody to damnation.'⁷¹ The Capuchin analyst of the art of preaching was contemptuous of Bridaine's 'monkey tricks'—*singeries*, and declared he was effective only with the common folk. Capuchin missions, he said, are more civilized, the sermons uninterrupted by groans and the debates by laughter.⁷² If the parish priest had invited the missionaries, he was likely to approve of them; but if some recurrent foundation or his bishop had dictated their arrival, he might be critical. The theology of their diatribes might be unsound, their moral teaching over-rigorous, their emphasis on the Cross detracting from the parochial cult of adoration of the Holy Sacrament. On these grounds the curé of Saint-Pierre at Moulins stayed away from Bridaine's sermons, even going to a concert instead of one of them, and preached against his doctrinal errors after he had departed.⁷³ There was also the question of the parish priest's authority, seemingly suspended during the evangelistic campaign. 'With easy assurance they move into our pulpits and confessionals,' said a curé; 'they change, reform, abrogate the penances we impose; they give themselves out to be infallible judges and the only good directors of conscience left in the world.'⁷⁴ And once the prophetic team had left,

what improvement was to be seen? For a few months the men cease to work or go to the taverns on Sunday, says a parish priest, then they go back to their old scandalous behaviour.⁷⁵ When the Jesuits used to come here, sighed the recteur of Piriac, near Nantes, in 1779, all was well, but the Mulotins are a scourge. Living on starvation rations in their headquarters at Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvre, they swarm out like locusts in groups of eight or nine into the parishes. 'In the end, what does their zeal avail? They thunder, they stir up, they sow fear by their ingenious devices, they turn people's heads, but do they convert?'⁷⁶

Sometimes, the missionaries themselves admit failure—interest lukewarm, lawsuits unresolved, theatrical productions triumphing as a counter-attraction; once, sensationally, a mysterious band of men with cudgels evicting the priests from their confessionals.⁷⁷ Mostly, however, the preachers managed to point to indications of success⁷⁸—a vast concourse making acts of contrition or resolve, priests from neighbouring parishes pouring in to join in the final processing, two of the richest young men in town converted and seeking ordination, a lieutenant-colonel of dragoons who had not approached the sacraments for forty years breaking down at the story of the Prodigal Son, the officers and soldiers of the garrison joining in and shaming the bourgeois citizens who had refused to participate. The rush to make confessions was the most gratifying indication—extra priests drafted in to cope, the confessionals besieged from two hours before sunrise, penitents waiting all night in church, keeping warm round braziers of burning coals, men climbing into the building and sliding down the bell ropes to be first to be shriven. Or there would be the practical results—a great lawsuit between curé and inhabitants wound up, a school endowed, a confraternity founded, a vote to close all but one of the taverns, the youth of the place swearing to abandon their riotous demonstrations outside the houses of newly married couples on the first Sunday in Lent. Massillon, the court preacher who had austere exiled himself to his diocese, wrote to Fleury in 1740 paying tribute to Bridaine's mission in his episcopal city. 'Invite him to preach at Versailles,' he said; 'he would transform the atmosphere. Clermont is a town entirely renewed, and I will die without regret now that I have seen the incredible blessings with which God has favoured this mission.'⁷⁹

26 Religious Practice

I

By the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, all Christians who had reached ‘the age of reason’ were to confess and communicate in their parish at Eastertide; the bishops of France defined this period as running from Passion Sunday through Easter to the second Sunday after. The penalty for disobedience was, in theory, excommunication, involving exclusion from marriage, from acting as a godparent in baptism, from the mark of the cross in ashes on Ash Wednesday, and from Christian burial. At the end of the seventeenth century a synod of the diocese of Autun laid down procedures:¹ the curé was to pray publicly for the recalcitrant parishioner, then exhort him, first with solicitude and then with threats; after this the diocesan ecclesiastical court would take over, and issue three warnings in writing. If these failed, the excommunication would be fulminated at the *prône* of the parish mass. There is no record that this was ever done, and if something like this was done elsewhere, it must have been very rarely. In the diocese of Rouen,² the last formal censure had been issued in 1562. A few precisians among the clergy would have liked to see the old discipline enforced. In 1741, the curé of the cathedral of Lodève reported to his bishop: ‘a large number of parishioners do not present themselves at Easter, in contempt of the ordinance of the Church, which prescribed excommunication for those who break its just and holy laws’.³ Most curés, having very few of their flock breaking the rule, did not share his exasperation, though when the bishop arrived on a visitation, names might be mentioned just to make backsliders realize that their ungodliness had not gone unnoticed. From Savoy, where the canons were enforced, came the story of the reluctant communicant: ‘eh bien, je pillerai le tiers et le quart comme les autres, et puis j’irai faire le bon bougre à l’église’.⁴ Formal action, as distinct from social pressures, was counter-productive. The coercion of Protestants had raised in the minds of the clergy the issue of sacrilegious communions, and they did not wish to get into that moral quagmire again.

Apart from the bigger towns, up to about 1770, the fulfilment of the 'Easter duty' was almost universal. Studies of the provinces of Normandy, Picardy, Languedoc, the Limousin, the Mâconnais, and Champagne, of various dioceses and a multitude of parishes, tell the same story: 'practice', says Gabriel Le Bras, 'was never more general than from 1650 to 1789'.⁵ True, curious pockets of communal resistance can be found. Universal conformity reigned in the diocese of Châlons, but between 1741 and 1751, four villages were different—only 100 out of 588 potential communicants present in one, 200 out of 600 in another, 108 out of 400 in the third, while at Laizicourt, everybody confessed, but two-thirds of them did not communicate.⁶ One may speculate that traumatic local incidents (a tithe war, the suppression of a confraternity) may have been involved, leading to a breakdown of relations between curé and parishioners. But cases like these are rare. The diocese of Tréguier had 100,000 inhabitants and only thirty absentees in a typical year. 'About fifty communicants' replied a curé to a questionnaire from the bishop of Montpellier; 'all except one have satisfied their Easter duty'. These figures were typical for rural France.⁷

It is interesting to see who stayed away. A few were boastful unbelievers, indulging in 'impious discourses', saying 'Hell is full and there's no longer anything to fear', hanging around the church door and laughing at the faithful.⁸ But there were not many *esprits forts*. More often the absentee was the village idiot, as likely to be a nuisance if he came to church as if he stayed away.⁹ Others were those who did not go to confession as they knew they would not qualify for absolution, being tied up in irreconcilable quarrels, having deserted their wives, or being involved in some other notorious public scandal.¹⁰ By contrast, there were cases of estranged married couples getting together again to be able to confess and perform their Easter duty, then separating once more for the rest of the year.¹¹ In some places the recalcitrant were former Protestants. 'Their forced conversion', said a curé of the 500 or so in his parish, 'had not advanced the faith and hardly added any to the Church.'¹² 'Many' of the 130 'crude and rustic' nominal communicants of Saulchy (diocese of Amiens) were never seen at the altar, and these were all ex-Calvinists; so, too, most of the absentees in the town of La Rochelle.¹³ Tavern-keepers, old soldiers, down-at-heel rural noblemen, and characters in knock-about occupations like bargees and sedan-chair carriers were other typical entries on the curé's lists of defaulters. A few not on the lists were those who kept up their public pose of defiance while ensuring they could claim to have

obeyed the rule if they were challenged, by making their annual confession without taking the Sacrament.¹⁴ Altogether, those who failed to fulfil their Easter duty were marginal figures, notorious, but counting for nothing in the life of their village or *quartier*.

Small towns were normally as conformist as the countryside. In Douai (Anjou) Yves Besnard remembered the crowded high mass, with the bourgeoisie marching proudly in to their reserved seats; in Sainte-Suzanne (Maine) the abbé Marquis-Ducastel rejoiced in the attendance of his people, with the more prosperous citizens setting a good example—if any were absent, it was not because of ‘philosophic principles’, but simple negligence.¹⁵ By contrast, there was Clamency, where in 1774 the archbishop of Auxerre found half the communicants, including many of the richer families, absent at Easter.¹⁶ It was a startling case of pastoral neglect, for some absentees had not attended for thirty years, and the young people in their twenties had still not made their First Communion. In the big towns, the Clamency figures were the usual case, but the reason had nothing to do with the failure of the clergy. In Rouen and Bordeaux only a quarter to a half of the legal communicants fulfilled their obligations.¹⁷ Paris was worse; in the parish of Saint-Sulpice it was only one in ten. In 1759, Diderot said the decline in practice in the capital had been evident since the beginning of the century;¹⁸ it would seem that the deterioration raced ahead in the latter decades of the *ancien régime*.

The decay of religious allegiance in the cities was what the preachers,¹⁹ moralists, and Rousseauists expected: vice flourished in these vast agglomerations divorced from the natural pursuits and honest relationships of the countryside. Yet it was also true that the cities were centres of dignified worship, enlightened piety, and scrupulous devotion such as were rarely found in hamlets and villages. The papal nuncio in 1766 reported on the rampant ‘libertinage, deism and irreligion’ of Paris; yet, he said, ‘There is no city in the world where you find such a sound, true and robust piety and so many persons, especially those of high society, putting religion into practice . . . Among simple citizens and among the nobility (especially the women) a solid piety reigns.’²⁰ Twenty years later Mercier drew a similar contrast: in Paris you find debauchery and innocence side by side, like black veining in a block of white marble. Amid the crowds, people find their own kind and reach their own level, whether for good or for evil.²¹ The picture he gives is of a vast multitude among whom religion holds a glittering nominal sway, but the tone of society encourages those who wish to

escape from its constraints to do so without fear of embarrassment. At the procession of the Fête-Dieu, 'you would think Catholicism has not a single enemy'—in every street the children play at being priests in paper chasubles, parading monstrances made of tin. Yet no one presses for religion to be taken seriously. 'Provided you have your children baptized, pay the poor-rate and give the *pain bénit* when your turn comes, no one asks about your beliefs.' There are few households now, he says, where arguments about Jansenism and Molinism are heard; it is bad form to rail at a priest or make a shocking observation, and only the lowest of the low, the *garçons perruquiers*, make jests about the mass. In this atmosphere of tolerance and indifference, says Mercier, the 'beau monde' has given up going to mass, except that some appearance at church on Sundays is necessary to impress the lackeys. True, the 'petit peuple' still go to mass, and on so many major occasions on Sundays and feast-days the churches are full: three-quarters of the congregation consists of women, and among the men there are many 'riennistes'. As a journalist, Mercier liked sensational statements and pessimistic moralizing, but what he says helps to explain how members of the educated classes were drifting away from religious practice.

But the explanation of the decline of Easter duty among the mass of the people has a different explanation, though a town would have to be studied trade by trade, class by class, and parish by parish to give detailed confirmation. At the beginning of the century a curé of Rouen explained the already evident phenomenon of urban alienation from religion; 'the true parishioners are meticulous in fulfilling their Easter duty, but there are many others, poor and wretched, who come from outside; they live irresponsibly and for years on end they do not go to confession'.²² There was a continual stream of migration into the big towns, accelerating from mid-century.²³ Towards the end of the *ancien régime*, 40 per cent of the population of Bayeux and Nancy and 50 per cent of Caen had come from outside. The figures were more startling in Paris: in the faubourg Saint-Germain 78 per cent of the men had been born outside the capital. The effect of rootlessness was seen in the crime figures: four-fifths of the violent incidents noted by the Parisian police from 1765 to 1785 were committed by the newcomers.²⁴ The impact was similar on the figures of religious conformity: the newcomers were the absentees. Those who came in on the margins of the tightly knit social and religious parochial communities were not integrated. Urban defection from religious practice preceded industrialization; it was a phenomenon of rootlessness, not of unbelief.

There was another obligation of religious practice, laid down by the Clergy of France in 1645: attendance at mass on at least one Sunday out of three was required. In fact, most ordinary people went well above this minimum. When it suited them, as in 1789, petitioning about the new organization of parishes, they argued from the assumption that everyone had to attend every Sunday. Thus, from a village near Rennes came the complaint that their seigneur had insisted on having mass at the impossible time of noon, 'putting the parishioners to the effort of going to morning mass at neighbouring parishes, and this in bad weather, so the day of rest is sometimes more laborious for them than working days'.²⁵ Another petition of 1789 said two Sunday masses were needed, for 'if there is only one, all the servants want to go to it and the cattle have to be kept locked up'.²⁶ On similar grounds a parish had asked the Commission des réguliers to spare their local monastery: the low mass celebrated by the monks catered for those who could not go to the parish high mass—the nursing mothers who could not take their babies to such a long service, the servants left behind to mind the cattle, and the men nominated to stay on guard 'to watch for accidental fires and for robbers who profit by the times of divine service to break into houses and pillage'.²⁷ It was true enough that high mass was the thieves' opportunity: a man who had been absent would be the first suspect when there was a break-in.²⁸ Just occasionally attendance would thin out. Only a few broken-down old folks would be available at harvest time, and in fine weather the young might be tempted by hunting or amorous dalliance in the hedgerows.²⁹ But on most Sundays everyone was there—it was the major social occasion of the week. A Breton expert on epidemics complained of the crowds in country churches spreading disease. 'The peasants arrive all hot . . . and pile in one upon another; you can judge the effect on the atmosphere of the breaths of so many assembled, among them numerous people infected by diseases which they transmit to the others—the effect also of the vapours steaming up from dirty clothes soaked in sweat and rain in the heat of so many breathing and of the noonday sun'.³⁰ The curé of a country town described his church as packed on Sundays and solemn feast-days, everyone standing with no room to kneel, while others congregated outside, 'exposed to the inclemency of the weather and, what is worse, distractions and wandering thoughts'.³¹ He persuaded his parishioners to enlarge the building. This general turn-out at high mass on Sundays was the assembly which made the village into a community. They all heard the current news and the calendar of

coming events in the curé's *prône*, and afterwards they gathered outside to exchange views and transact business. This was the hour of potential flashpoint, for in such weekly concourses accumulated grievances were recited and rumours from neighbouring parishes passed on; hence the origins of so many of the anti-feudal *jacqueries* of 1789—from mass to the march on the château.³²

Clearly, not all those crowding to Sunday mass harboured thoughts of brooding piety. In superior town parishes some present out of social duty would have sceptical reservations. 'You are present at mass without knowing where you are,' wrote an aristocrat to his son, newly out of the Jesuit *collège* and full of doubts. 'You barely incline your head at the Elevation and, often, if nobody told you the mass had finished you'd just stay there, immobile.'³³ But the vast majority gave unthinking acceptance. Because the Church was such an integral and dominating factor in social life, it exercised great power, but the price it paid was that its most sacred mysteries were treated as commonplace and routine. If mass went on for a long time, there was resentment. In 1767, the bishop of Amiens found the inhabitants of nearby parishes resorting to the low masses of an abbey: 'that's what they want, low masses, brief ones; as for the Word of God, confession and communion, there is no question of them, except when the need is pressing'.³⁴ The fisher folk of Frontignan on the south coast were described as 'assiduous in attending mass', but irreverent in the course of it, 'and leaving in great numbers after the Elevation'.³⁵ It was more usual to slip out for a break during the sermon. In 1746 a curé complained that his flock melted away during his homily, to lie on the grass in the cemetery until he was finished, all the while leaving their children to play where they liked, even up to the steps of the altar; when they were in the service, they gossiped and took snuff.³⁶ Twenty years later another parish priest painted a similar picture: the gallery round the church was a playground for the children and a refuge for pipe smokers; some pushy characters seated themselves on the balustrade round the choir, while drunks and some who 'came merely out of habit' sat down and leaned back on the font to talk; there were even some who 'commit impurities there that I dare not put into writing'.³⁷ Dogs were a nuisance. In 1706, the bishop of Toul denounced them in a pastoral letter: 'our churches are full of dogs, which interrupt the ministers of Jesus Christ by their barking and distract serious folk from their prayers, soiling the decorations and filling the church with excrement and filth, things the very Turks would not allow in their mosques'.

These scandals and confusions abounded in town churches as well as country ones. The children were as ever a nuisance. At Sainte-Croix of Nantes, they were put in a side gallery, where they amused themselves by spitting on the worshippers below—a projecting plank was installed to interrupt their line of fire.³⁸ Army officers did not come to church if they could help it, though they might rendezvous at a mass before fighting a duel; if their colonel ordered them to attend, they took their dogs with them, lounged with their feet up, and laughed at the preacher.³⁹ And in town churches there were always pickpockets, making their haul at the most devout moments of the liturgy.⁴⁰ In 1726, at Notre-Dame of Paris, they engineered noises in the repairing scaffolding and started the cry that the roof was cracking; in the *saute qui peut* following, watches, canes, purses, snuff-boxes, and handkerchiefs vanished.⁴¹ When order was kept, it could be by disorderly means. At the cathedral of Digne in 1737, there was crying from the baby in the arms of a second-hand dealer called Gassend, and the cobbler Jacques Roman was taking the collection. ‘The aforesaid Jacques Roman, who was collecting with a plate in the aforesaid church, had the malice, in passing the aforesaid Gassend, to give a blow with the plate which he had in his hand to collect alms, on the head of the little innocent, to the great scandal of those who saw him do so.’⁴²

Citizens who were pillars of society added their quota to disturbances in churches by their disputes about precedence. ‘One of the evils of our century’, said a curé, ‘is that nowhere is rank more stubbornly asserted than in the house of God, the very place where humility is especially enjoined upon us.’⁴³ Ironical advice for a *président à mortier* of the parlement of Brittany included: ‘take care not to stand during the gospel; the king, princes, everybody in the Christian world stands but not *présidents à mortier*—this is one of the finest privileges of our ermine robe!’ Another warning: ‘no self-abasement, even in the house of God; when kneeling, scorn seats and pews [as aids] and have a lackey pushing through the throng, making a great deal of noise, bringing you a cushioned velvet prayer stool’.⁴⁴ Those with lesser distinction but regarding themselves as superior to the rank and file might assert themselves on a big day by jostling their way among the clergy in the choir, prepared to assault the verger if he objected. On one occasion at the church of Saint-Jean at Rennes they succeeded to such effect that the municipal and government officials had to have seats put out for them in the sanctuary, and the copes of the clergy were smeared by the muddy shoes of the intruders.⁴⁵ The preachers censured these contests for

pride of place as 'the abomination of desolation in the temple'; the other chief misdoings they deplored, so far as polite society was concerned, were conversations and coquetry. A pretty girl, said Marivaux, goes to church to show herself off: she finds a prominent place near the altar, and reveals her charms delicately, by instalments, turning her head to look at the pictures on the walls ensuring her bright eyes are noticed, adjusting her head-dress to reveal a nicely rounded arm.⁴⁶ In 1754, the abbé Joannet made a plea for every church to follow the example of Saint-Nicolas at Paris and appoint an official to turn out ladies whose dress was provocative.⁴⁷ A lady of fashion of a frivolous bent might draw attention to herself by distracting the preacher by making faces at him, even in the Good Friday sermon.⁴⁸

Since, as a social obligation, everyone went to church, the congregation brought its social hierarchy, feuds, worldly concerns, yearnings for companionship, and sense of the ridiculous into the nave when it came to worship. The people were deeply attached to their religious observances, as was made evident in the rush, after the revolutionary de-Christianization of 1793–4, to reopen the churches. This was so in the Burgundian department of the Yonne with its anticlerical zeal, as in the Limousin, where the irreligious masquerades had been unwelcome.⁴⁹ There was a demand for the services to be said, even if laymen had to recite them. People flocked once more on pilgrimage to the old healing shrines, and they rang the bells again. ('Ces foutus messieurs ne sont pas capables de nous empêcher de sonner.') But it was the old religious cadre of existence they wanted, without anyone trying to make them diligent in its observances, let alone pious, and without having to pay out anything to support the clergy. As a disillusioned curé said, 'they want the mass but not the Sacrament'.

Attendance at mass on Sundays and communion at Easter was the normal basic practice. Some people also took the Sacrament at three or four of the other great feasts of the year. From the tenth to the sixteenth century, this had been the pattern of Western Christianity. After the Council of Trent, churchmen were campaigning for a change of attitude, making the Eucharist the heart of devotion. 'Ought one to be satisfied with communicating only at Easter?' asked the catechism of Nantes early in the eighteenth century; 'this must be done more often, striving all the while to make oneself worthy. It is to be desired that no Sunday or saint's day should pass without the faithful coming to nourish themselves on this heavenly bread.'⁵⁰ This substantially represented the position of the Jansenists. Though their

rigorism tended to keep the average worshipper from the altar, their ideal was one of frequent communion.⁵¹ For those who strove for perfection, Arnauld, Nicole, and Quesnel regarded daily reception as the rule: just as the body must be nourished by food daily, said Quesnel, so must the soul. This meant strict daily preparation, though Nicole ruled that a new confession was not needed for each approach to the Sacrament—it was sufficient to have a conscience clear from all but venial sins. The nuns of Port-Royal communicated on Sundays, saints' days, and Thursdays, a pattern not confined to the Jansenists, for the Visitandines did the same, while the Ursulines, without a firm rule, inclined to the ideal of daily. A lay person out and about in the world could hardly have maintained the dispositions required by Port-Royal; Mme de Sévigné, Jansenistically inclined, communicated five or six times yearly.⁵² François de Sales recommended two, three, or four times a month on the Sundays, but not daily, unless the confessor, together with other experts on the spiritual life, were consulted and gave united agreement. The Jesuits were inclined to leave the question of frequency to the guidance of individual directors of conscience. At the end of the seventeenth century, Père Gabriel Daniel took this view, though he thought twice a month was generally appropriate. Père Pallu in 1739, with the analogy of food for the body as his guide, urged frequency, a view leading to the disastrous book of Père Pichon six years later, *L'Esprit de Jésus Christ et de l'Église sur la fréquente communion*. Pichon emphasized the benefits rather than the preparation; here, he said, is 'almost the only method of salvation most people can make use of', a method which can be followed 'without forsaking the world, without ruining your health, without leaving your family, your commerce or your employment'. There was an outcry: forty French bishops condemned him, and the Jansenists rejoiced. He had been recklessly stating, without due precautions, one side of what had become the established view of the theologians. The Sacrament was to help those who were sincerely striving to become better. Two unimpeachable rigorists said so. To Père Condren of the Oratory it was 'not a recompense, but a help', and to Massillon, 'an aid to fortify us'.⁵³ In 1748 the bishop of Amiens summed up the still-rumbling Pichon controversy for his clergy. Frequent reception of communion requires intense preparation, and daily is out of the question except for those whose devotions had been subjected to 'extraordinary tests'. On the other hand, Jansenist severity is mistaken, and confessors should not resort to delay of absolution. The Eucharist is 'the bread, not only of the strong, but of the weak'.⁵⁴

The reception of the Sacrament at Easter was a gesture of adherence to religion as indissolubly bound up with the social order. ‘Nearly all these communions’, said the bishop of Autun in the mid-seventeenth century, ‘are a matter of custom. What fruit do we see of them?’ In the case of some, they would mean more; but stern moralists were wont to declare that for others they meant even less. Massillon spoke of sacrilege: ‘the altar is the scene of more crimes than the theatre’.⁵⁵ Attendance at Sunday mass was a gesture of a similar kind to Easter duty, less demanding as confession was not required, but much more a matter of free choice—easier to perform, but meaning more. To an austere unbeliever like Turgot it meant too much, and he stayed away. ‘They say he does not go to mass,’ Louis XVI complained. ‘Sire, the abbé Terray (notably dissolute) goes every day.’ One would get much nearer to an assessment of interior adherence to Christianity in the numbers of those who followed a rule of life based on regular reception of the Sacrament—if only the statistics were available. This was the contemporary criterion of devotion, adopted as cover by Billard, the cashier of the Farmers General, who was milking their funds for a dozen years while ostentatiously communicating twice a week—‘the skilful game of billiards’.⁵⁶ Being a disciple of Père Pichon and communicating frequently would not, of course, be ranked higher in the scale of spirituality than following the advice of François de Sales and Père Daniel and approaching the altar once a fortnight: the degree of preparation thought necessary would be a more reliable indication. Here, we are far from the manifest outward action and the possibility of statistical evaluation. In a spiritual dialogue published in 1778, Anastase declares true devotion to consist in fervour to serve God and fidelity to duty. Félicité is surprised, having assumed it to be long sessions with a spiritual director, going to sermons, dressing differently from other people, receiving communion daily, and reciting long prayers.⁵⁷ The historian has Félicité in his footnotes, while Anastase probably escapes him. In any case, there are few statistics of communions apart from the Easter duty; a curé may provide a figure, or the number of Hosts furnished to a particular church or churches may be known.⁵⁸ Even if there were statistics, for their interpretation a knowledge of the rule of life of individuals would be necessary, whether they followed the spirituality of frequent or infrequent reception. As for the degree of preparation, the information is lost behind the secret of the confessional.

II

The statistics of Easter communions in France today show massive areas alienated from religion—they are part of the ‘mission field’. Catholic France is marginal: Brittany, Normandy, and Anjou, a segment in the North-west, the Massif Central, and some of the southern Alpine districts, and a stronghold in Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche Comté. The great cities, the Paris basin, the Centre, and the South are non-practising. Compared to the mass performance of Easter duty under the *ancien régime*, the figures for Easter show no such regional differentiations. Historians therefore comb the eighteenth century for other indicators, pushing back into the pre-revolutionary past in search of the origins of the two Frances.⁵⁹ In the nature of the case, each indicator shows a different aspect of religious allegiance: none of them can go directly to the totality of the commitment. Equally, there is difficulty in disentangling religion and custom, for this was a social order in which human relationships evolved and secular business was transacted within a religious cadre; often, one can only guess at the relevance of the religious reference in the minds of ordinary people. The payment of rents in kind was usually, if twice a year, at Christmas and St John the Baptist's Day; if four times a year, at Easter and St Rémy's Day as well. When the government advised peasants how to heat grain to prevent mildew, the instructions were to reach a temperature when a lump of butter melted during the saying of an Ave and a Pater. Taverns often had an image of the Blessed Virgin above the door with the legend, ‘Je suis la mère de mon Dieu et la gardienne de ce lieu’, or a notice, ‘Au nom de Jésus, bonne bière, bonne eau-de-vie’.⁶⁰ A high mass was regarded as the appropriate celebration for every sort of secular occasion, not only in law courts and universities, but to fete the return to the home port of a privateer laden with plunder.⁶¹ Workers like miners invariably signed themselves with the cross when going into danger.⁶² Peasant women everywhere wore a crucifix around their necks, gold or silver according to the prosperity of the family, and designed within the artistic fashion prevailing in the province: embossed and maybe jewelled in Normandy, with circular studs in the Île de France, dangling on a long chain in Champagne; more elaborate ones had the figure of Christ in the centre with fleurs-de-lis at the end of each arm. They were a family's last resort against destitution; it was a matter for execration when a grasping seigneur who won a lawsuit against his tenants distrained not only on their furniture, but on the golden

crosses of their wives.⁶³ No doubt the sign of the cross in danger and the crucifixes around the necks of women were often an inspiration to genuine religious feeling in workaday life; no doubt the images at tavern doors and the holy days of rent payments were virtually meaningless.

Today, the most decisive indicator of religious allegiance would be how people spend their money, for conspicuous waste on religious objects has passed out of fashion. But under the *ancien régime* the inhabitants were obliged to repair their parish churches, and tithe and ecclesiastical property paid the clergy. We do not know about collections and the alms boxes in churches, though the indirect evidence is that little was contributed. Another device used in the modern period is to look at the delays in bringing children to baptism, providing evidence of how seriously the rule of the Church is taken; but in the old France, virtually everybody conformed to the regulation. The first names parents give to their children are a possible indicator, but in the eighteenth century practically all Christian names were genuinely Christian. The standard law dictionary said that curés were to prevent the introduction of pagan novelties,⁶⁴ and in 1674, the archbishop of Paris had laid down the rules: no more than two names and these to be 'as used in the Church and known in its offices and in the ecclesiastical martyrologies'.⁶⁵ If the godparents insisted on a name outside this range, the curé was authorized to choose a godly alternative in defiance of their wishes. In the town of Montfort forty years earlier, a citizen had called his daughter 'Phéline'; he was brought to book by the bishop, who had the registers searched, and finding no precedent, changed the name to 'Félix'.⁶⁶ Noble families occasionally introduced classical heroes among the Christian saints, but ordinary families were strictly conformist. Besides, children were normally called after their parents, grandparents, or godparents—maintaining the continuity of Christian reference through the generations. The favourite names for girls were Marie, followed by Anne, Catherine, and Marguerite; for boys Jean, closely followed by Pierre, Jacques, and (through the influence of the Franciscan religious orders) François.⁶⁷ It could be that as time went on, the reforming clergy were diverting families from minor saints to biblical ones: in Amiens, Joseph had 2.9 per cent of the total in 1691 and 13.3 per cent in 1791, and Jean-Baptiste rose from 16.1 per cent to 20.5 per cent.⁶⁸ Only with the high Revolution was tradition swept away and singularity, especially of an anticlerical kind, encouraged; children were called after flowers, fruit and vegetables, abstractions like liberty and equality, heroes of republican

Rome, or, most desperate of all, revolutionary demagogues like Marat.

The psychological constraints on the naming of children did not apply to the naming of ships.⁶⁹ Up to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the names of merchant vessels had been lay; thereafter the Virgin and the saints had taken over. From about 1630, however, the fashion was changing. By 1686, at Dunkirk and Le Havre, the Christian invocations were down to 60 per cent and at Saint-Valery-sur-Somme to 43 per cent, though they still held up at 90 per cent at Boulogne. By 1770, laicization had triumphed; invocations of the Virgin were rare, and the saints now had only 26 per cent of the shipping at Fécamp, 25.5 per cent at Cherbourg, 20 per cent at Dunkirk, and only 8.5 per cent at Le Havre and 4.5 per cent at Saint-Valery-sur-Somme. By contrast, the fishing fleets remained mainly loyal to Christian terminology: in 1770, nearly all at Fécamp, nearly half at Dunkirk, and over half at Dieppe and Boulogne. We should pause, however, before regarding the naming of these boats as evidence of devotion. The saints prominent in the prayers of fishermen and their wives (like Ronan, Gildas, and Tudy on the Breton coast, and the Virgin everywhere) were rarely used, and of the saints that were, there is a correlation of between a half and two-thirds with the Christian names of their owners. Unlike the fishing boats, the merchant ships were not the property of their captains, but of capitalists ashore, and these monied men were the inventors of imaginative non-religious mottoes, like *Les Deux Amis*, *Le Sans-Souci*, and, from freemasonry, *La Liberté* and *L'Harmonie*. No doubt, it was out of pride that the master of a fishing smack displayed his own name on the prow; though, when the tempest raged, we may imagine that he prayed to his own patron saint to join with the Mother of God to save him.

The creeping laicization evident in the naming of merchant ships can also be seen in the *ex votos*—the thanksgiving and memorial tablets put up by sailors in chapels by the sea in gratitude for some mighty deliverance or in fulfilment of a vow.⁷⁰ At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Virgin had predominated in their addresses and pictorial motifs, her only rivals being St Anne in Brittany and Christ bearing the cross in La Rochelle. The influence of the Christocentric devotion favoured by the reforming clergy may be seen in the change in the presentation of the Virgin beginning about 1650: she is shown bearing in her arms the infant Jesus—the focus of salvation has shifted. From the mid-eighteenth century the lay emphasis takes over: the scenes presented change; it is the

danger on the sea that is shown, the sailors no longer with clasped hands in the posture of prayer, but striving to avert disaster; the 'celestial space', normally on the left, where the Virgin and saints look down from Heaven is reduced. The overarching canopy of the heavenly protection is less evident, and the overwhelming menace of the peril more obvious. This realistic recognition that some escape, while others go down, may not represent a distrust of Providence so much as a different view of its operation.

While *ex voto* plaques may reflect the fashion prevailing among craftsmen as much as the religious convictions of the sailors who commissioned them, at least they are evidence of the devotional gesture jointly chosen by patron and artist at a particular moment. The same cannot be said of devotional objects recorded in the inventories after decease of the household furniture of ordinary people: among their few possessions, the most valuable were probably heirlooms—a deduction concerning religious allegiance might be generations out of date. On the other hand, pious bric-à-brac brought back recently from pilgrimages would probably go unrecorded. Even so, if there was a rise or fall in the number of religious objects in a chronological series of inventories, a broad inference might be drawn. Books were rare, but where they are found, religion has pride of place over the other stand-by handbooks on law, horticulture, and medicine. Where there were pictures in peasant and artisan houses, in the provinces they would be religious: the favourites were Abraham ready to sacrifice Isaac, Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, the descent from the cross, the Virgin (probably Notre-Dame-de-Secours), and a saint of intercessory powers—sombre drama allied to a yearning for consolation.⁷¹

As engravings became cheaper (as a result of using copper plates), they figured more often in inventories, so that a statistical analysis becomes meaningful. The figures for Paris in the eighteenth century⁷² show half the subjects as being religious, not so many in the mansions of nobles and the richer lawyers, but more in the houses of modest families. The half share of religion remains steady, with something of a dip in the graph after the mid-century, and a greater one on the eve of the Revolution. The religious pictures are mostly recorded as having been on display in the main bedroom; for the serious-minded this was the obvious place for meditation at the last waking moments of each day; by contrast, was there a rising tendency to think that piety should not be too openly advertised? Apart from a range of Old Testament stories, the dominant themes were representations of Christ, especially in his sufferings, and of

the Virgin, usually with the child Jesus in her arms. There was a predilection for scenes of repentance, dramatic and encouraging because we know God accepts the sorrowing sinner: the penitent Magdalen was the most popular saint; Peter was generally shown after the sound of cock-crow had broken his heart; and the only parable chosen is the Prodigal Son. Taking pious objects into account as well as pictures, 70 per cent of households had a point of religious reference—that is, all except the very poor and, oddly, a third of the clergy. Perhaps those who frequent churches feel less need of devotional reminders at home, but there is a simpler explanation: the priests bereft of such pious furnishings were mostly in lodgings, not in houses of their own. In statistical calculations, crucifixes are a difficulty, many individuals having them without the fact being recorded after their death—the treasured objects having accompanied their owners to the grave. The listing of crucifixes and holy water stoups in a series of inventories at Coutances seems to provide a classic example of laicization: in 1750–3, one house out of two had a crucifix and holy water stoup, in 1786–9 only one out of four. It was magistrates, notaries, farmers, old ladies, and widows who usually possessed these pious objects, while nobles, merchants, and artisans did not; interestingly, ecclesiastics seem to have banished them altogether from their lodgings. Was this evidence of a decay of spirituality, or of a growing reluctance to be pious ostentatiously?

Wherever there is a rule of conduct—like the Catholic Church's ban on contraception—there is a possibility of a statistical test of religious allegiance, and the progress of demography is providing more and more evidence about the spread of contraceptive practices in the eighteenth century. Calvinist Geneva is an example to set against Catholic France. From 1700 to 1750, 35 per cent of upper-class families, 32 per cent of middle-class, and 30 per cent of working-class families were using methods of family limitation, mostly *coitus interruptus*. This, no doubt, reflects Calvin's insistence that children should be conceived responsibly, though due weight should be put on superior economic circumstances, higher standards of literacy, political freedom, and the atmosphere of the city-state.⁷³ In France, except in the very highest social circles, figures like the Genevan average cannot be found. But contraception was coming in, and the pattern of its origins and diffusion is emerging. There is a broad coincidence with certain areas where religious practice was faltering, especially in the cities and among the anticlerical peasants of the Paris basin. It is also clear that the Revolution led to a rapid increase, though this was probably due more to the dangers,

privations, and uncertainty of life and the massive conscription than to the breaking of the mould of religion and tradition. Yet the incidence of family limitation cannot easily be interpreted in terms of defiance of the Church. There is reason to suppose that the clergy did not try with insistence or conviction to use the confessional to encourage compliance with the rules, while their people did not regard the adventures of the marriage-bed as a fit subject for the interference of the priest. Practitioners of family limitation were no doubt aware of their divergence from ecclesiastical standards, but probably not conscious of defying them or, indeed, of doing wrong at all.

One peculiar window into men's souls, however, is provided by the findings of the demographers concerning the incidence of conceptions in Lent.⁷⁴ The month of March—Lent—marked a low, all the more surprising as there was a rush of weddings in February to beat the Church's ban on marriage in the penitential season.⁷⁵ It is not the case, however, that those who exercised some restraint in Lent were obeying an official precept of religion, for the ban on weddings did not extend to a ban on sexual intercourse—except among the Jansenists, who were censured by the orthodox for adding to the sum of human tribulations, like the Pharisees who 'bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders'.⁷⁶ The Lenten low in conceptions must be the result of ordinary people recognizing that the penitential season and the approach of the Easter confession required a certain turning to self-discipline. In Lent, the clergy and the police controlled their diet, but the people themselves made a contribution to austerity under the marital blanket where the authorities could not see them.

Other possible indicators of religious allegiance come from the vast accumulations of wills surviving in lawyers' offices.⁷⁷ These were crucial secular documents for family relationships and the structure of property holding, and religious documents in the formulas they used and, to some extent, in the legacies they prescribed. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the preamble to a last will and testament was an expression of religious devotion, sometimes lengthy: there might be an invocation of the Trinity, a recommendation of the soul to God, the Virgin, and the testator's patron saint and guardian angel, an appeal to the redemption mediated by Christ, a statement of resignation to the divine will and of the wish to live and die in the Catholic, apostolic, Roman faith, prayers to the saints to keep despair and the Devil at bay, and for wisdom in the disposal of earthly possessions. By mid-century, preambles of this florid

devotional insistence were becoming less frequent. One Angevin notary gradually whittled down his pious phraseology until by 1774 he was using the simple formula, 'Au Nom de Dieu, Amen'.⁷⁸ Vovelle describes how the terms of devotion disappear from the wills of notables in Provence, except in Nice (just over the border), an area of strong traditionalism. Marseille is an extreme case of the abandonment of the old conventions. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, 90 per cent of wills used the rich Christian formulas, and only 5 per cent were limited to the simple invocation of God. By the eve of the Revolution, the positions were reversed, only 5 per cent using the old formulas, and 66 per cent using the simple invocation—with 22 per cent having no religious reference at all.⁷⁹ In Paris, the evolution to simplicity and brevity was even swifter than at Marseille. Chaunu notes that the appeal to 'the merits and death of Jesus Christ' and to 'the Son of God' declined, being replaced by purely deistic formulas. These could have their own peculiar elevated resonance, replacing baroque forms with those of the Enlightenment: 'I acknowledge my belief in the Supreme Being [*Être Suprême*] and the immortality of the soul, I render to my Creator the worship that is due to him, and I beseech him to grant me a place in the number of those in eternal happiness.'⁸⁰

The evolution of the preamble is a pointer to a shift in thought. Yet its significance is ambiguous. For certain people it must represent a move from insistence on revelation to a less demanding and sentimental deism, or a conscious turning towards 'laicization'. Alongside the secularization of social mores, however, there was a growing sophistication and refinement of religious attitudes. To persons of scrupulous piety, baring one's soul before a lawyer's clerk may have come to be seen as a pompous exercise destructive of true religious feeling. Theologians and liturgiologists were urging the faithful towards Christo-centric devotion; such a devotion, austere expressed, without reference to saints, guardian angels, or even the Virgin, seemed more expressive in spiritual intensity and more elevated in literary form than the elaborate enumeration of helps and protectors. Mgr Beaupoil de Saint-Aulaire, bishop of Poitiers, in his *Rituel* of 1776, provided a specimen preamble of this severe kind: 'Firstly, I recommend my soul to God the Father almighty, beseeching him by the infinite merits of his adorable Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, to bring it to eternal glory, and as soon as it is separated from my body to find a place for it in the ranks of the blessed.' Some no doubt chose a simpler form of preamble because they no longer accepted the credal implications of the old formulas, while some

chose simplicity for reasons of religion and good taste. But one suspects that most people did not care either way; the change was hit upon by lawyers choosing economy, facility, and a universally viable formula that would offend no one and fit the stylistic requirements of a more sophisticated age. In the second half of the century, 40 per cent of wills of men in Paris and 45 per cent of those of women were drawn up by the notaries when the testator knew that death was imminent.⁸¹ In the shadow of the end and with the confessor pointing towards an eternal destiny, would it matter to them to have their hopes and fears put on record in a worldly document? The clergy, so ready to denounce the encroachments of the world, and the writers of the books on preparation for dying, so meticulous in their requirements, seem to have ignored the question of the piety of preambles. The sweeping changes in phraseology demonstrate the breaking of the mould of tradition and the slipping away of secular observances from routine deference to religion, but they cannot confidently be used as an indicator of religious allegiance.

More significant than the wording of preambles to wills was the content of legacies. One of the manifestations of the surge of piety in the seventeenth century was the growing tendency of testators to leave an income to found masses for their souls. The peak in Paris came between 1680 and 1720 in the wills of men, and between 1680 and 1730 in those of women.⁸² Vovelle's analysis of the testaments of nearly 2,000 notables of Provence tells the same story: a high about 1720 in both the number of individuals who ask for masses and the average number of masses stipulated. From 1680, however, throughout the country there had been a change in the liturgical specifications. The fashion had been to make a foundation in perpetuity, the details of ceremonies often being elaborate.⁸³ The vigil with the nine lessons might be a prelude, and the vespers of the dead an epilogue, and the mass a high mass with deacon and subdeacon, many candles, the singing of the *Dies irae*, and the distribution of the *pain béni* at its conclusion. It was in rural communities that this sort of pomp tended to be asked for; in the towns, low masses generally prevailed. From 1680, foundations in perpetuity went out of fashion. Religious institutions were reluctant to add to their calendar of obligations, and the progress of inflation and other economic vicissitudes, or even the sheer weight of accumulated duties, were persuading bishops to issue ordinances consolidating foundation masses on a lower tariff.⁸⁴ Disconcerted at the prospect of these 'spiritual bankruptcies', testators turned to prescribing a specific number of masses within a limited period. Legacies for high masses with ceremonial became rare: a

larger number of low masses could be had for the same investment. The change has been called ‘a naïve ruse against Transcendence’, but at least pride was being eliminated. Once the peak of 1720 was reached, however, masses both high and low began to go out of fashion with testators. The change began among the educated—nobles, magistrates, office holders, richer merchants, and, significantly, the clergy. The decline was steady, then, from 1760, rapid (Nice, always traditional, was again an exception proving the rule). What had been the general custom among the upper classes was scaled down, and was chiefly found, in a modest fashion, among better-off artisans and peasants.

Here is evidence of a decline in piety or, more correctly, of a particular form of piety, for the Jansenists and some of the more enlightened clergy were expressing reservations about masses for the souls of the dead. They could hardly accept the Protestant denunciations of the unedifying calculations and abusive exactions of the system, but their insistence on the Eucharist as the focus of worship accorded ill with a multiplication of masses which could so easily be misunderstood as a mechanical, magical manoeuvre. In practical terms, it was impossible to be complacent about the demands made on the time of the worthy pastoral clergy, and the encouragement of the not so worthy priests living on windfall ecclesiastical income. It was also a question of interpreting the theology of prayer for the souls in Purgatory: were those who could not afford to found masses thereby put at a disadvantage? The Jesuit Toussaint Bridoul in 1650 had dealt with the problem in his *Boutique sacrée des saints et vertueux artisans*; poverty and hard labour, he said, generate a sober life leading to Paradise, so masses are not needed.⁸⁵ But everyone knew that there were artisans driven to drink and violence by poverty—what of them? A more serious difficulty arose from the question of which sort of prayer is likely to be the most influential in the court of Heaven. On the one hand was a priest, to whom the testator meant nothing but his fee, making intercession when offering the Eucharistic sacrifice; on the other, the same bequest might have fed, clothed, and warmed numerous poor people, who would fervently bless the memory of their benefactor. ‘If you give (your legacy) to ecclesiastics, they will spend it on good cheer’, said a Jansenist bishop; ‘if you give it to the poor, they will pray for you, and you will have merit in the sight of God.’⁸⁶ A book on pastoralia published in 1762 advised curés to discourage dying penitents from founding masses—point out to them that they are subsidizing idle ecclesiastics, and suggest allocating the money to

those who take catechism or visit the sick⁸⁷—the royal government, in its extortionate way, seemed to take the side of the more austere theologians, for at the beginning of the eighteenth century the laws of mortmain were extended to legacies for the foundation of masses; the *droit d'amortissement* was to be levied at the rate of two years' revenue.⁸⁸ (In 1751, in response to lobbying by the Assembly of Clergy, a limited concession was made, the tax being halved on foundations which were to run for no more than fifty years.) Thus charitable donations, unlike the foundation of masses, were tax-free spiritual enterprises.

The decline of masses shows the decline of a particular type of piety—to what extent was charity its specific Christian substitute? While benefactions in wills illustrate the evolving moral tone of society, the evidence is difficult to use as a statistical indicator of religious fervour. During the eighteenth century, the number of masses prescribed by the nobles of Brittany declined, while their charitable legacies increased.⁸⁹ Is the reason a change in religious attitude, or the growing force of the Enlightenment ideal of *bienfaisance*, or both operating together? The duc de Croÿ left five times as much to his servants as for masses (as well as further sums to the poor on his estate).⁹⁰ The Enlightenment criterion of the moral elevation of a last will and testament was generosity to servants—this was the test Voltaire applied to others and others applied to him. The duke was a man of solid piety, and no doubt he was conforming to the directions of the theologians; but, equally, he was fitting in with the ideas of the unbelievers. In the wills of Paris, masses were declining without a corresponding rise in charity—does this mean that with the collapse of the old type of piety religion itself was failing? Probably, but there were two considerations working the other way. During the century testators were coming to show more trust in the goodwill of their heirs; the details of funeral arrangements and the degree of pomp and ceremony were being left to them—probably also the commissioning of masses and the dispensing of charity.⁹¹ Furthermore, the theologians ruled that charity in the course of life was of much greater merit than charity left until after death. To postpone one's gifts to the point when no personal sacrifice was involved detracted from their worth in the eyes of God.

An indicator of religious allegiance might be expected to provide information in one or more of three modes: chronological evolution, geographical distribution, and variations among social classes. The lists of ordinations in the diocesan registries offer a pattern of sharp variation under all three headings.⁹² Clerical vocations rose to a

peak in the mid-eighteenth century, then came decline, becoming more rapid in the 1760s and reaching a low in the 1770s; there was something of a rise in the 1780s, and a new fall was beginning on the eve of the Revolution. The diocese of Rouen reached its highest number, ninety-nine, in 1760; three years later the figure was halved; from 1780 to 1789 the average was fifty-three a year, with a high point of seventy-three in 1785 and a low of thirty in 1788.⁹³ There were exceptions to the pattern; the rise continued through the second half of the century in the dioceses of Coutances, Saint-Brieuc, Vannes, and Metz, also in individual communities like the town of Niort; on the other hand, the fall was continuous through the 1780s in Rennes, Le Mans, and Bordeaux. The Assembly of Clergy in 1775 ascribed 'the dearth of priests' to the rise of the 'esprit philosophique'; and no doubt the sceptical anticlerical temper of the age was partly responsible. But there were other explanations. Bishops were demanding higher standards, and moralists were doing their best to force candidates to examine the purity of their vocations. Because of the government's determination to freeze out the Jansenists by denying them ecclesiastical promotion, the sons of austere families of the legal and professional classes turned aside from the barriers of inquisitorial formularies and limited horizons to think of useful public service elsewhere. The expulsion of the Jesuits in 1764 deprived the Church of the educational services of some of its most fruitful motivators of vocations, and, together with the activities of the Commission des réguliers, spread a feeling of uncertainty about the future. As civilization advanced, commerce and the law became more attractive (there was a rush into the law schools in the decade 1760–70). By contrast, the inferior ecclesiastical posts of *habitués*, vicaires, and the minor clergy of chapters appeared dull and unrewarding, while in some dioceses, promotion above this level was becoming more difficult—the curés and recteurs were living longer. In the diocese of Tréguier, where there had been twenty-five ordinations a year, the number was thirteen a year from 1715 to 1748, eighteen from 1756 to 1766, seven for 1771–8, and a dozen for 1782–9. The little seminary had as many pupils as ever, but some were leaving after taking the tonsure—seeing that a wait of about thirty years was likely before promotion to recteur, this was not surprising.⁹⁴ The reason for the rise of the overall figure of recruitment in the 1780s was the advent of the sons of poorer, more ordinary families taking the place of the sons of notables—doctors, *avocats*, judges, officials, rentiers, and prosperous merchants—who no longer found in the Church a career to match their expectations.

In the first half of the century, half to a fifth of the clergy in most dioceses had been drawn from the families of these notables—they could afford to pay for the necessary education and the clerical ‘title’. For the most part, these families lived in towns (defined as places with 2,000 or more inhabitants). Of the priests in the Bordeaux diocese who had been born there, 55 per cent came from the great port itself. The city of Lyon provided 30 per cent of its diocesan total, Rennes 26 per cent, Nantes 22 per cent. The smaller towns produced more ordinands in proportion to their population than the country areas around: in the diocese of Autun, six times as many. In the course of the century, the sources of recruitment changed. The towns became less important (Lyon's share fell to 18 per cent, Nantes to 10 per cent), while rural candidates increased in numbers, especially in the Alps, Pyrenees, Massif Central, Normandy, Brittany, the Boulonnais, and Bas-Poitou. As the notables fell away, the better-off peasant families came in, often with collective subscriptions from relatives to guarantee the ‘title’. The change in the social origins of the priesthood was completed by the impact of the Revolution. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a unique period in which the parochial clergy had a higher social status and more influential connections than in the age before and the age following.

The geographical incidence of ordinations shows certain areas as reservoirs of recruitment. While in the diocese of Paris there were seven vocations for each 10,000 inhabitants, and in that of Bordeaux six, Autun had twenty-one, Rouen twenty-five, Embrun thirty-one, Lisieux thirty-five, Rodez thirty-six, Coutances thirty-eight, and Avranches forty. The dioceses producing the large numbers furnished the barrenness of others. In 1790, 22 per cent of the clergy of the Paris area came from Normandy. The archbishops of Bordeaux had to draw more than 40 per cent of their priests from outside; half of these came from the dioceses of Rodez, Saint-Flour, Tulle, and Périgueux, a third were from Gascony, and many of the others were Irish. The more attractive benefices in the city went to local men, while more than half the parishes in the Landes, poorly endowed and in a forbidding milieu, were filled by outsiders; even so, there were always unfilled vacancies for vicaires.⁹⁵ On a smaller scale, within dioceses there were enclaves of high recruitment. The town of Rennes provided its bishop with over a quarter of his priests,⁹⁶ the town of Bordeaux over a half of those locally born, and these mostly from four parishes. In the diocese of Lyon the areas of La Bresse and Le Forez were nurseries of vocations: here there were

villages seeming to specialize in producing ordinands, and families whose sons always went into ecclesiastical careers. The bishop of La Rochelle ruled over 321 parishes, but over half of his priests came from 71 of them in the *bocage* country of the Mauges.⁹⁷

These disparities in the grouping of vocations seem too extreme to be susceptible of a single explanation, unless it is of a very broad kind and reinforced by circumstances varying with locality. There is no correlation with literacy, and while the availability of places for education towards the ordained ministry in the dioceses of Coutances and Rodez must have been a factor, similar facilities elsewhere did not produce the same results. Though there is a correlation with areas free from Protestant dissent and with those where the clergy had been successful in founding confraternities under their own control, it would be hard to prove that the reservoirs of recruitment were communities fostering a more intense piety than elsewhere. But in most instances, two simple material factors are present. There was a high density of minor clerical posts in Normandy, Embrun, and Rodez, presumably an encouragement to ordination, though if further promotion was hard to find (as at Tréguier), this incentive might avail little. More importantly, the areas of high recruitment were, mostly, poor areas with excess population; from them there was an emigration of labourers and artisans as well as of priests.⁹⁸ The ordinands here came from agricultural families, the sort of recruitment which was to take over the parochial ministry as the notables left it. These areas fertile in vocations in the eighteenth century correspond, very approximately and with all sorts of exceptions (e.g. the dioceses of Rennes and Vannes), with areas showing a high level of Easter communions in the twentieth century. Though it might seem that the tradition of producing priests ought to arise from a milieu of pious conformity, the effect might be the other way round, generations of vocations locking a multitude of families into the life of the institutional Church. Because to certain social classes and in certain places the Church provides a superior career, it does not follow that the sincerity of individual vocations is called in question; the light on the Damascus road is an oddity—inspiration normally descends within a climate of familiar assumptions.

In the eighteenth century, the old Christianity of gregarious conformity maintained by the inertia of immemorial custom and the sanctions of power, with Church and society so interlocked that all activities from charity to carnival were included in the religious cadre, was in decline. On issues important to sovereignty, the secular authorities had established their domination, and at strategic

points in society the laity were claiming autonomy. From their side, the clergy were involuntarily hastening the process by insisting that official and folk religion be transformed into a religion of individual piety: they were hanging on to the universal conformity, while setting conditions which only a minority could ever have been persuaded to accept. The process by which the old monolithic Christian order was being eroded needs a name; probably the best to use is 'laicization', reserving 'de-Christianization' for the drastic purposive attacks of the Revolution. The indicators available for the eighteenth century show a drift, rather than a drive, a tentative but ultimately ineluctable setting of a current. The formal Easter duty was collapsing in the big towns; the names of saints were vanishing from merchant ships, and secular motifs came into *ex voto*; people became less willing to demonstrate their piety in household furnishings or to adopt elaborate religious preambles in their wills; and they were choosing to make legacies to causes other than the foundation of masses for their souls—a decision supported by the progressive clergy. Beginning with the upper classes, contraception was being practised in breach of the rule of the Church, though it is probable both clergy and people had little respect for the rule from the start. The most significant indicator of all is the incidence of ordinations. The 'notable' candidates were phasing out, and a lower social group was coming in, and the change in the social status of the ministry accelerated the already evident concentration of vocations in certain areas. Here, for the first time, is seen the beginning of the map of the two Frances: the Catholic margins and the alienated heartland.

Yet we cannot say that the slow process of 'laicization' under the *ancien régime* was leading inevitably to this result. The cataclysm of the Revolution was decisive. The oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy at the beginning of 1791 forced the clergy to decide between the Church and the new patriotic order, a choice they did not wish to make and which statesmanship could have avoided. Reluctant choices, made, so often, with only the logic of individual conscience or loyalty to colleagues or families, led to a permanent division in many areas, imposed against the grain of routine historical development. The sale of Church property was an immense social overturn. Those who bought the land at the auctions became members of a vast vested interest committed to the cause of the Revolution and opposition to clerical influence. Those too poor to buy were embittered, and some became factitiously inclined to the cause of religion and reaction. Before 1789, the peasants of the Sarthe had been tough, independent haters of the nobility and

hostile to the clergy, yet in 1793 they were *chouans*, guerrilla fighters against the Revolution.⁹⁹ There had been a great deal of ecclesiastical property for sale in their area, and they were sufficiently well-off to buy it, but they had been beaten at the auctions by the bourgeoisie of the towns.

Under the pressures of a war for survival and fear of dissidence and treachery, the Revolution went on to frantic attacks on Christian beliefs and practices and on the clergy: this was new, a genuine ‘de-Christianization’: the fanaticism of a day and of a minority which could never be revoked—a poisonous, ineradicable memory.¹⁰⁰ The mass of evidence thrown up by the events of the winter of 1793 and the spring of 1794 has been mastered by Vovelle—the addresses to the Convention, the closing of churches, the confiscation of bells and silverware, the implantation of the religion of Reason, the masquerades when priests were forced to abjure their orders and to marry. He has produced a map of the de-Christianization; in broad outline and with many exceptions, it has affinities with the map of the oaths taken to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy and the map of indifference to the Easter duty as it appeared in the two decades following the Second World War. These events of Year II of the Republic are described as hammer-blows struck while the iron was hot by reason of the schism over the clerical oath, ‘the formative event’. They mark the beginning of a ‘Jacobin France’ opposed to ‘a clerical and counter-revolutionary France entrenched in its options by the sheer intensity of the persecution to which it has been subjected’.

27 On the Margins of Official Religion

I

To the reforming clergy, some of the traditional pieties of Catholicism had become marginal—useful and aids to spirituality, but not central to the faith, and in need of oversight. Processions, the cult of relics, and pilgrimages (along with encouragement of hermits) were devotional exercises much loved by ordinary folk, so that censorious curés and ironical philosophes were tempted to describe them as constituting their only religion. The clergy recommended and played their part in these exercises, but the more active bishops and austere curés wanted to control and refine them, removing superstitious overtones and occasions for merriment, and instilling the idea that the end must be individual conversion, manifested in making a confession, communicating, or at least attending a high mass. Perhaps many curés did not insist too much and went cheerfully along with their people. One hopes so, for obtaining social enjoyment from a nominally religious observance has its own sort of edification, and many people in processions, on pilgrimages, and venerating relics were anxious for divine help in desperate circumstances. The blind, the halt, and the lame in the New Testament were not asked for spiritual dedication, but only if they believed.

I Processions

According to a visitor from the provinces in 1787, the chief tourist attractions of Paris were the water machine at Marly, the château of Mme du Barry, the morgue at the Châtelet, and, above all, the processions: 'Nous ne fimes autre chose que courir Paris pour voir les processions.'¹ Every parish had its calendar of parades in honour of some special day, some cherished relic. Every 3 July the parishioners of Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles went to venerate the statue of Notre-Dame

de La Carolles, stabbed by a drunken soldier of the Swiss Guard three centuries ago. In 1743, clerical reformers replaced the ceremony with a dignified high mass, but the people continued to make their bonfire of the effigy of the offending soldier, with the police in attendance to ensure that the mannequin was not dressed in the sacrosanct royal uniform.² Of greater antiquity and wider geographical scope was the march, on 1 May every seven years, of the monks of Saint-Denis and the inhabitants of the seven neighbouring parishes to the abbey of Montmartre. Drummers led the long cortège, and the nuns of Montmartre sent their dependent clergy to the village of Clignancourt to escort their visitors over the last lap of the journey. After high mass, the two abbeys regaled all who had marched with bread, fish paste, butter, and eggs.³

The official world added to the pageantry of the streets, for the magistrates of the law courts, the municipal aldermen, and the dignitaries of the University were considered to have a duty to edify the populace by turning out in splendour, with the clergy offering prayers and exhortations, to mark the beginning and end of sessions, terms, and tours of duty. And on the orders of the king they had to turn out on the feast of the Assumption, taking part in the 'procession of the vow of Louis XIII', who had dedicated France to the Virgin—a vow renewed by Louis XIV and Louis XV.⁴

Paris also had vast processions of all the inhabitants. In time of plague or other grievous menace, the parlement would order the reliquary of St Geneviève to be taken to Notre-Dame: it was a gesture of penitence and intercession, with all citizens demonstrating their unity in adversity in the presence of the patron saint of their city. Barbier, the worldly diarist, describes the ceremonies of early July 1725.⁵ For five days before the major celebration, there were marches of individual parishes to Notre-Dame and on to the abbey of Sainte-Geneviève. 'Whether it is from personal interest to try to ensure the goods of this world or from devotion to the saint, I have never seen such pious and solemn processions, both by the numbers of people and the quality of the bourgeois, both men and women, who followed their parish processions.' In addition, there were the forays of the monastic houses and the two grim cortèges of the institutionalized poor and the inmates of the hospital prison of the Salpêtrière. Then came the great day when the reliquary of St Geneviève came forth, processions converging from every *quartier* of the city to accompany the saint on her journey to Notre-Dame for the culminating high mass. After this, the canons of Notre-Dame with their reliquary of St Marcel led the procession back to the

abbey for part of the journey; when they turned back, the throngs melted away, and St Geneviève went on to her accustomed resting-place accompanied only by the magistrates of the Châtelet; since by then it was late, they stayed with the canons regular to dine.

There were similar mass assemblies when Rome proclaimed a year of jubilee. 'Le jubilé est ouvert,' wrote a Parisian diarist in 1729; 'nous ne voyons que processions'.⁶ When the instructions from Rome arrived, each diocesan bishop had the duty of prescribing the acts of piety necessary to qualify for the plenary indulgence and the absolution for sins within the *cas réservés*. In 1751, the archbishop of Paris offered a choice between two methods: one, to pray in four different churches every day for a fortnight, the other to march in four processions to Notre-Dame and three to other churches.⁷ The first was popularly regarded as boring, while the second was interesting and sociable, as well as traditional. On an ill-fated day of this jubilee of 1751, in the course of a rain storm, the processions of fifteen parishes converged on Notre-Dame, and there were many injuries in the chaos. These were observances when the formal piety prescribed by the clergy provided opportunities for the sociability and the expression of yearning for celestial protection characterizing *la religion populaire*. The crowds were undiminished at the jubilee of 1776. A journalist was astonished at this 'religious effervescence' setting at nought the philosophes, 'who recognize no other gods but liberty and net productivity'. 'This Jubilee has retarded the triumph of reason by more than 20 years,' said a sceptic.⁸

What was true of the capital was true of France generally. Every village had its days when religion toured the streets amid scenes of communal celebration and its united demonstrations of public penance in times of disaster. The fishing villages on the coast could not do justice to the days which elsewhere were processional favourites, like the Fête-Dieu and St John the Baptist, for the fleets were then on the high seas; but they made up for it by having processions at Christmas and Epiphany.⁹ The optimum-sized communities for pageantry were the towns of about 20,000 inhabitants, big enough for a rich variety of observances, yet sufficiently limited to have a well-organized traditional calendar fitting them all together. In Angers (34,000 population) the cathedral canons went on tour nineteen times a year, and the six other collegiate churches, the seventeen parishes, and the various monasteries had their days for perambulations, often separate, sometimes interlocking and coordinated, and every occasion with its idiosyncratic feature, a relic carried in state, the Shrove Tuesday ox with laurel wreath and

gilded horns, the dragon with lolling tongue and flapping wings at Rogationtide.¹⁰ There were also, as everywhere, the additions as circumstances required—for propitious weather, for cessation of pestilence, to collect money for the local hospital or for ransoming the slaves of the Barbary coast, or to celebrate a jubilee.

Everywhere, the most splendid procession of the year and the one with most intense theological significance, was that of the Fête-Dieu, Corpus Christi. The Sacrament was borne round town in state, with halts at various ‘stations’ or ‘repositoires’, all the while venerated by the crowd and shedding benedictions on all who worshipped. In most towns, the ceremonies were a unity with all parishes collaborating. Paris was too big for this, so separate parochial processions circulated, needing careful demarcation arrangements—for lack of them, in 1722, the march of Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois ran into that of Saint-Eustache, particularly unfortunate, as the young king was accompanying the first and the regent the second.¹¹ Every householder had to adorn the front of his house with tapestry or hangings on pain of fine; strategic streets were roofed over with canvas against sun or rain; all the music that could be commandeered, municipal, military, or ecclesiastical, accompanied the cortège, and the *repositoires* were magnificently decorated, the inhabitants of the various *quartiers* or the members of the various guilds competing in expenditure and ingenuity. The wealth of the goldsmiths usually prevailed in Paris, their altar in the place Dauphiné outdoing the others. Even in a small town, no effort was spared. In Villedieu-les-Poêles in 1767, the three *repositoires* took a month to build, though the results were unfortunate. One, a colonnaded palace where Pilate was to be shown sitting in judgement on Christ, was abandoned, because the curé thought it ‘looked too much like a fairground side-show’; another, with a lace-covered altar hung round with chandeliers and hearts of gold and silver, was adjudged too ostentatious; the third, a pile of rocks with a grotto occupied by a hermit ringing a bell, with stuffed birds and animals all around, was thought ridiculous by some, especially when the artificial stream dried up just before the procession arrived.¹²

The procession of the Fête-Dieu, with everyone of importance in the community, clergy and laity, marching in full official splendour, in some towns was diversified by a traditional pageant. At Angers, the guilds and corporations paid for 12 *torches*—ornate structures carried on hurdles by a throng of porters, housing a tableau of at least fifteen life-sized wax figures depicting a biblical incident; two or three would be from the New Testament, the others from the more dramatic pages of the Old. ‘Twelve pageants of History in large Wax

Work,' said an English visitor in 1701, 'but too Romantick for so August a Solemnity.'¹³ Even so, they were decorous, which was hardly the case at Aix,¹⁴ where the religious event was framed in a programme of tournaments and interludes devised in the early fifteenth century by the good king René of Anjou, comte de Provence, extending from the Monday after Pentecost to the Saturday after Corpus Christi. On the eve of the Fête-Dieu there was jousting with halberds and a procession of pagan gods and goddesses. Early in the following morning there were the antics of the 'jeux des diables'; devils in black tights, masks, and horns chased king Herod with pitchforks, and tried to kidnap a child dressed in white from the tutelage of her guardian angel. The angel was much belaboured, but had an iron plate on a cushion on his back under his robes to ensure he won in the end. The Sacrament passed by late in the morning in a massive cortège of all the great and all the guilds. There was an interval of an hour, then the live pageants went by. Among them was the golden calf (on a pole) with Aaron and the Jews and an angry Moses (including, oddly enough, some Jews tossing a cat in a blanket), the queen of Sheba and Solomon, the Magi and their star, the apostles and evangelists, with a skeleton Death bringing up the rear. 'These doings', wrote Mme de Sévigné in 1671, 'are so profane that I cannot understand how your saintly archbishop can put up with them. True, he is an Italian, and this fashion comes from his country.'¹⁵ Marmontel was in Aix on a day when bad weather prevented most of the mummers from turning out, but he saw Solomon and the queen of Sheba and the Magi (represented by drunken porters) and was astonished that the people of Provence could take these absurdities so seriously.¹⁶

In theological theory, the procession of Corpus Christi ought to have been the most reverent of the whole year: in practice, it was a carnival. At Angers, when the Sacrament staged for two hours at a chapel overlooking the city and a sermon was preached, the municipal officers and their guests were absent, having adjourned for a celebratory lunch. At Aix, the cathedral canons entertained the municipality to dinner after the high mass, the invitation being handed to the officials in their pews immediately after the Agnus Dei. Ecclesiastics did not suspend their feuds for the sacred procession. In Paris in 1752 the curé of Montmartre announced beforehand that he would not go to the second *reposoir* because the neighbouring curé was claiming it was in his parish—but the bearers of the canopy and of the ropes around the platform of the Host trapped him inside the sacred enclosure and forced him to go on,

waving fists under his nose. Lower down the social scale, the customary way to end the day was in the taverns. Even during the procession there was irreverence, gossip among the fashionable who had hired strategic windows to watch being matched by downright 'indecent' in the crowd. 'The streets are full of the curious and dissipated,' said the police at Montpellier in 1783, 'and you see people sitting nonchalantly on chairs even as the procession is passing.'¹⁷ Reforming bishops issued synodal statutes making regulations to eliminate scandal, but changes could rarely be enforced, and certainly not in the established processions of the cities. As the aldermen of Angers told their bishop in 1741 when he wanted to modify the order of march: 'This procession is not a purely ecclesiastical ceremony, but a mixed one or, rather, it is the procession of all the inhabitants.' They were being precise in their definition. It was not an affair controlled by churchmen; nor was it an amalgam of two celebrations, a serious religious one and its frivolous secular counter-part—it was the entire population expressing itself both religiously and humanly in a simple, customary, communal observance.

II Relics

Relics were part of the official religion of the old France. The theologians recommended them to the reverence of the faithful, their arguments coming from Jerome and Augustine, as systematized by Aquinas and confirmed by the Council of Trent. All bodies are meant to be temples of the Holy Spirit, and those of the saints and martyrs have been supremely the Spirit's dwelling-place. Their mortal remains are therefore dear to us. These fragments and the objects the saints have touched and used are our continuing link with them. They gave themselves to Christ, and they are now united with their Master. When we reverence the relic and the saint, our reverence is paid through them to Christ.

These beliefs were reflected in the customary liturgical observances. On the great feasts, churches brought out their reliquaries and displayed them on the high altar. The cathedral of Angers had the arm of St Maurice its patron enclosed within a representation of the saint in armour, a silver image of the Virgin looking down at two kneeling angels presenting her with a lock of her own hair, and a statue of St Martin holding a crystal phial containing the blood of Maurice and some of the Christian soldiers of his legion martyred by the pagan emperor.¹⁸ In reserve, there were other less prestigious

legacies from the past, 'an abundance of reliques', said a sceptical English Protestant, 'the tooth of one saint, the bone of another etc., whose names I have quite forgotten as well as he had, of some of them, that shewed them to us'.¹⁹ In processions, a relic in its jewelled shrine would be carried in state. On six occasions in the year, the cathedral clergy of Angers followed their bones of St Séréné, to be met from the other side of town by the monks of the abbey of Saint-Serge with their bones of Bishop Godebert. The canons of Saint-Laud displayed their fragment of the True Cross for public adoration on the first Friday of every month and carried it in various processions. At the rival church of Saint-Martin, the head of St Loup had meteorological powers, and it was brought out for display when prayers for propitious weather were ordered. Every city in France had a multitude of relics in its churches, displayed or borne in procession on certain days in the calendar, or brought out on special occasions of communal intercession. The most famous of these, a 'national' relic as it were, was the body of St Geneviève, patron saint of the capital. In times of crisis, the parlement would order the grand procession of the saint with all its subsidiary processions. If the danger was less overwhelming, the procession would not be ordered, but the reliquary would be left open in the abbey church for citizens to come and offer their private prayers. If the king was grievously ill, this was the invariable practice. During the last illness of Louis XV, few came to intercede for him, since he had long outlived his early popularity. News of his end came, and the wits ridiculed the abbot because his relic had proved inefficacious. 'Why are they complaining?' he said grimly, 'he's dead, isn't he?'²⁰

The cult of relics was more than a prolongation of past customs, for throughout the century, churches obtained new supplies by gift, transfer, exchange, or purchase. The suppression of monastic houses by secular reformers meant that new homes had to be found for the relics displaced from the abandoned chapels. Thus the parish church of Rouvres in 1771 got the fragment of the True Cross from the priory of Époisses of the Order of Grandmont, and the Clarisses of Poligny in the Jura Mountains obtained the body of St Colette brought from Gand by nuns driven out by the Emperor Joseph II. These were occasions for community celebrations; the parishioners of Rouvres went to Époisses in procession singing the *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*, and the whole town of Poligny gathered to welcome the arrival of the exiled nuns and their prestigious saint.²¹ There were legal procedures for multiplying relics by subdivision: with the bishop's permission, the reliquary was opened, the appropriate piece

extracted, and a certificate detailing the proceedings was enclosed with the new relic in a box with official seals; at the church of reception, another solemn document of verification was drawn up when the box was opened.²² These ceremonies required distinguished witnesses. In 1742, when the Cluniac priory of Souvigny sent a fragment of the tibia of St Odilon and a small square from the vestment of St Mayeul to an abbey in Westphalia, the commissioner of the bishop of Clermont, the officers of justice, the leading citizens of the town, and a chaplain of the archbishop of Cologne were present.²³ At the Sainte-Chapelle in 1749, the president of the Cour des Comptes, his legal officials, and three or four of the canons were in attendance to see a goldsmith saw off a few inches from the two-foot-long section of the True Cross. The duc de Luynes, who had a nephew in the chapter, was also there, and persuaded the officials to give him a tiny fragment for his own personal collection.²⁴

The central depository of relics providing for all Christendom was Rome. The Pope made prestigious gifts to royalty and to favoured ecclesiastical institutions. In 1741, the queen of France received the head of Onesimus, the slave whom St Paul sent back to Philemon;²⁵ and in 1784, the Filles-Dieu of the rue Saint-Denis were granted the entire body of St Victoire—crowds flocked to see it exposed in their chancel, and in deference to refined taste, the nuns had the withered face covered with a mask of wax.²⁶ According to the Second Council of Nicea (AD 787), a new church could not be consecrated until a relic was available for incorporation in its altar; it was usual to apply to the Pope for one. In view of his own Christian name, Voltaire felt that some reminder of 'Saint-François le séraphique' would be suitable for the church he built for his tenants at Ferney, and through the sardonic good offices of Choiseul, a few strands of the saint's hair shirt were obtained.²⁷ Pilgrims to the Eternal City purchased relics, and if the certificates of authentication were convincing, when they returned home, their parish church might accept them into its spiritual treasury.²⁸

The queen and the duc de Luynes could collect relics by influence: the best that ordinary people could do was to seize an opportunity. Perhaps some relics would be offered on sale locally. Only two years after he had died at Rome in Holy Week 1783, disciples of Benoît Labre were selling clippings of his rags in the parish of Saint-Benoît in Paris. The police ordered them out; the faithful complained of this interference of the secular arm in an affair of piety; but the curé told them that this apostle of total poverty and perpetual pilgrimage had been a fraud, a crypto-Jansenist.²⁹ A less

respectable opportunity came when a chance discovery revealed potential relics available to those who were first to snatch them; a Roman tomb is unearthed on a building site, or a medieval tomb in a cathedral is opened by an inquisitive canon, and a crowd assembles, intent on 'pious brigandage'.³⁰ Worse still, the funeral of an ecclesiastic with a reputation for sanctity could lead to a riot of relic hunters; at Lyon in 1729, when Père Céleron, a hero of Jansenism, was carried to his grave, his white hair was pulled out, and a gruesome zealot with a sharp instrument nearly succeeded in getting away with an ear.³¹

It was said that contact with relics brought spiritual benefits, in the form of protection from the wiles of the Devil, and material aid in healing for the body. Touching medals and chaplets on the reliquary made them agents for transmitting these gifts; in this way, a sceptic visiting a shrine might pass on to his wife and daughter the virtue they believed in and he scorned.³² Perhaps the dispositions of the faithful coming with their chaplets were the crucial factor in entitling them to blessings; if so, the good folk Saint-Simon describes hastening to the funeral casket staging at Notre-Dame-de-Liesse were rewarded for their good intentions—otherwise not, for it contained the worldly duchesse de Mazarin.³³ Aquinas had cited the continuous history of miracles wrought through the agency of relics as one of his arguments for their place in the worship of the Church, and eighteenth-century theologians had a collection of scriptural references (notably 2 Kings 13: 21 and Acts 19: 12) as proofs of their efficacy to heal. The classical case of recent times, medically attested beyond doubt, was the healing of Marguerite Périer on Friday 24 March 1656—her disfiguring lachrymal ulcer cured at the touch of the crown of thorns. She was the niece of Pascal, and the Jesuits contested this 'Jansenist' miracle; but in the eighteenth century the Dominican Pope Benedict XIII adopted it as the definitive proof that miracles are prolonged into the modern age; from then onwards, both sides of the warring factions in the Gallican Church accepted it. The great set-piece of healing by relics was enacted in Paris every year at midnight on Maundy Thursday, the eve of the Passion, when the True Cross of the Sainte-Chapelle was brought out to cure epileptics and the insane; from all quarters of the capital they flocked together, and one by one they were carried—or conducted if they could walk—to the sacred object, their mouths guided to kiss the reliquary by the priest who presided. Occasionally, there was a cry of 'Miracle!', and all who came were at least given money.³⁴ Individuals who went on pilgrimages to pray for healing

would touch the relic of the saint of the shrine, or the rock on which he had preached, slept, or prayed, according to the custom of the place. If a pilgrim convincingly claimed to be cured, the guardians of the shrine would take the depositions of witnesses, and draw up a memoir for publication, as, in 1701, did the monks of the priory of Saint-Guingalois at Château-du-Loir, with the local curé's signature attesting their story.³⁵ Anticlericals watched to see if prestigious recoveries were followed by relapses—remarkably quickly in the case of the chevalier de Courton in 1760. After nine days of prayer wearing a shirt rubbed against the reliquary of St Geneviève, he was suddenly cured of his gout; crying 'Miracle', he fell on his knees, bumped himself, swore, and was back with his gout again.³⁶

To many, relics were an aid to devotion. Mercier saw simple Parisians in tears before the mortal remains of St Geneviève: 'at that moment I respected these observances adapted to the limits of the intelligence of the common people and, even more perhaps, suited to their misery'.³⁷ To many more beyond the devout minority, relics were symbolic spiritual possessions, treasures of the local community, bringing it protection and, if not protection, prestige. In the fire at the abbey of Saint-Rémi at Reims in 1774,³⁸ the monks rushed their most prestigious relics away from the flames and the depredations of the horde of plunderers—the bones of their saint to the abbey of Saint-Nicaise and the *Sainte-Ampoule* (containing the oil of Clovis used at the coronation) to a parish sacristy. Immediately, the people of the suburb turned out in force to demand the return of their treasures; armed with lanterns, they escorted them back in the middle of the night, and 4,000 of them attended a service of thanksgiving on the following day. If a bishop on a visitation made sceptical enquiries about a parish relic, there could be trouble: Massillon once had his coach windows broken and was besieged in the sacristy.³⁹ Officials valuing church property during the Revolution ran similar risks.⁴⁰ To the ordinary people, relics were treasured possessions to be defended against outsiders; but, being old friends, they could be joked about, and there was room for scepticism about all the pious claims advanced on their behalf.

The clergy defended the rulings of the Council of Trent in formal terms, and went along with the traditional liturgical exercises concerning relics and were zealous in their defence as possessions of their foundation. Even so, they often lacked enthusiasm. In his vast theological dictionary (1788) Canon Bergier allots only seven columns to them out of nearly 7,000. He concedes there have been many impostures, and cites Thiers's famous *Traité des superstitions* for

those who want a long list of examples. The remedy for this evil is for pastors to exercise the utmost vigilance. While he cites the Council of Trent's 'God does much good to men through their agency', he does not enlarge on miracles, and those he cites are from long ago. 'Even the most authentic relics', he warns, 'must not be regarded as infallible means for bringing spiritual and temporal blessings to towns and individuals.' Liturgical observances involving relics must be restrained, for he is anxious about Protestant accusations that their cult is derived from pagan practices, and that Catholics 'worship' them. On the contrary, he says, we do no more than 'honour' them, and he cites Jerome: 'we honour them to worship Him whose saints they are'. Our salvation depends on our meeting with Christ, and in this meeting, relics are a marginal detail. Even if the saints themselves, let alone their bones, were present with us, we would not thereby be sanctified. If, when we come to judgement, we cite our familiarity with them, Christ may say to us, as he says to those who claim 'we did eat and drink in thy presence', 'I know not whence ye are' (Luke 13: 26).⁴¹

Bergier's call to pastors to be vigilant against fraudulent relics fitted with the enquiring temperament of the Enlightenment; the argument that long centuries of devotion legitimized them was no longer enough. On visitations, bishops could be strict in requiring proofs of authenticity; if these were lacking, the canonical procedure was to remove the relic from its stately housing, put it in a box marked 'reliques douteuses', and bury it without memorial beneath one of the altars of the church.⁴² In 1707, the bishop of Châlons, austere and Jansenistically inclined, on visitation at the church of Notre-Dame de Vaux, ordered the reliquary of the Saint-Nombriil to be opened. It did not need the verdict of the surgeon he had in attendance to prove this was not the sacred umbilical cord but a handful of gravel.⁴³ That was the end of a famous relic. But every parishioner of note signed a petition of protest at the loss of this prized and, no doubt, profitable local amenity. Such inspections are sacrilegious, they said, and the prescribed legal procedures had not been observed; if the bishop and his entourage had been disillusioned by what they saw, how was it that almost every day some miracle had taken place at this shrine? In 1727, the bishop of Autun, investigating another historically improbable relic, had the tomb of Lazarus in his cathedral opened. However, nothing incompatible with the legend was found; on the contrary, the exhumation revealed an inscription commemorating the translation of the bones from an old church of Saint-Lazare in 1147. Accordingly, the mortal

remains of the disciple who had been raised from the dead were exposed for veneration for a fortnight, then returned to their leaden coffin in the medieval marble tomb.

The clergy were aware that overmuch trust in relics and arguments from their efficacy were dangerous, for anticlericals found them easy targets for their gibes. There was a growing reluctance in Paris to hold the grand procession of St Geneviève, however terrible the weather: 'the monks of the abbey as well as the magistrates avoid having it . . . because of the embarrassment it causes'.⁴⁴ Journalists gave scaring pictures of the midnight sessions of Maundy Thursday at the Sainte-Chapelle: the cries, grimaces, convulsions, the strong-arm interventions of the porters and chair carriers hired to keep order, the duchesses gathered to see the spectacle—'une monstruosité'. The intrinsic improbability of some of the relics was worrying: the stones used to kill St Stephen, the boulder which fell on St Louis without hurting him, the bones of the prophet Isaiah, a bar from the gridiron of St Laurence, fragments of the manger of the Nativity, phials of the milk of the Virgin. Visitors to Rome knew how fragments of bone from the catacombs were cheerfully matched to the names of martyrs. There were, too, the multitudinous duplications gleefully listed by Protestants and sceptics. A guide-book to Paris⁴⁵ describes the five cupboards full of pious mementoes at the abbey of Saint-Denis; here, a tress of the Virgin was preserved—'in many other places hair of Our Lady is found, notably at the abbey of Chelles. Doubtless the apostles cut off Saint Mary's hair before her Assumption into heaven.' Also, there was an alabaster fragment from the water pot of Cana of Galilee—what of the complete one at Port-Royal (the writer might have added another at Angers, though, since the gospel has pots in the plural, the point was not worth labouring)? Other examples cited with relish are the seamless robe of Christ, still not divided, but certainly multiplied, reproduced at Argenteuil, Rome, and Trier, and the Holy Shroud at Besançon, exhibited on a balcony on Easter Sundays, though everyone knew it was at Turin. John Breval on tour in France in the 1730s saw it. 'It is so customary to find Duplicates of this kind in the *Romish* church,' he said, 'that the Romanists themselves, of the best Sense, acknowledge their Faith to be grown extreme cool with regard to Relicks in general.'⁴⁶ To the clergy, relics, without being dismissed, were becoming peripheral to the faith, defended with a partisanship bereft of religious enthusiasm; they remained a routine ingredient of popular religion, cherished by some, sardonically accepted by others, ridiculed by a few.

III Hermits

The hermits of eighteenth-century France might seem to represent the survival of an old tradition of popular religion: men who went into the wilderness to make their individual peace with God outside the formalities of the Church. If popular tales and sentimental novels are to be believed, in the depths of woods and mountains they cherished tragic memories or tended lonely graves, gave wise counsels to runaway lovers, and wielded apostolic cudgels in defence of helpless travellers. Yet in truth, they were not lineal successors of ancient tradition, for the old hermitages had been abandoned during the Wars of Religion, and a new generation of anchorites arose between 1590 and 1620, refounding the cult. The new hermits were principally in the North and East of the country; there were few in the centre and South.⁴⁷ The bishops were suspicious of manifestations of lay piety which escaped the control of the clergy. In the last quarter of the seventeenth century, the bishop of Metz and the archbishop of Reims suppressed hermits in their dioceses, as 'men of fraudulent piety, not being members of an organization overseeing their conduct'. Mgr Charles-Maurice Le Tellier of Reims acted with the peculiar ruthlessness which might be expected from a brother of Louvois with Jansenist inclinations, demolishing the hermitages and secularizing their inhabitants: Jean Didier, 78 years of age and said to be an exemplary character by his curé, was expelled like all the others.⁴⁸ In the century following, there were episcopal edicts against hermits in the dioceses of Soissons (1704), Bourges (1738), Verdun (1753), Langres (1780), and in at least three others; the visitation reports describe them as 'rogues', 'idlers', and 'for the most part of scandalous life, or at least, useless to the Church'. Those bishops who countenanced anchorites wished to keep them under tight regulations, like monks, except that their vows were 'vows simple', which could be abandoned, and were not enforceable in the civil courts. To be fair to the prelates with their zeal for regulation, the need for at least a modicum of rules was recognized by the hermits themselves. The group under the invocation of John the Baptist, founded by an ex-soldier in 1632, was soon given statutes in twenty-two articles by a priest who joined, Michel de Sainte-Sabine, and as the Institut réformé de Hermites sous l'invocation de Jean Baptiste rapidly spread through Dauphiné, Savoy, Lorraine, and Luxembourg.⁴⁹ Another well-known rule available for imitation in the eighteenth century was devised by a bishop of Boulogne in 1643 for a group of anchorites at Fléchinille in Artois; to this famous

community Michel de Sainte-Sabine dedicated his work of eremetical spirituality, *Le Paradis de la Solitude*. If a hermit did not belong to a group with one of the pre-existing rules, the diocesan bishop would invent one for him. The statutes of the diocese of Arras in 1746 warned curés not to allow hermits to establish themselves in their parishes unless they produced episcopal permission in writing, and the *Rituel* of ten years later made it clear that applicants for such authorization would have to submit their rule for approval.⁵⁰ It was common for a hermitage to have two inmates dwelling there in alliance—the plot of Bishop Jean-Pierre Camus's improving tale *L'Hermiante* (1623) concerned two soldiers, one Catholic, one Protestant, returning from the wars and setting up as anchorites together; in the end, it was the heretic who remained faithful to his vocation. In such a case of dual occupancy, the bishops of Besançon usually nominated one to be the 'superior' or 'visitor'.⁵¹ At Toul in 1773, there was a further tightening of organization, for all seventy hermits of the diocese, belonging to the two invocations of St John the Baptist and St Antony, were united into a single obedience, with the obligation to attend an annual general chapter.⁵²

The ultimate degree of episcopal regulation was reached in the diocese of Boulogne in 1782.⁵³ Mgr Partz de Pressy, having in the course of a visitation tour seen the diverse rules under which hermits were living, issued an augmented and standardized version for all to obey. They were to wear a robe of coarse linen with a hood and a black leather belt, and to carry a rosary. In their cell they had to have a crucifix and images of the Virgin, St Paul, and St Antony. Working with their hands, they must provide for their own sustenance, and if circumstances ever compelled them to beg, they must do so 'modestly'. It was assumed there would usually be two of them together, and that they would have a chapel, which must be kept clean. Except to attend chapel or to go to the parish church for mass, they were not to consort together, and they must try to work in or near their hermitages. They would never frequent the company of women, or go to taverns, or play cards or boule. The curé was to be their spiritual director, and to him or his vicaire they must make their confessions. With the confessor's agreement, they were to communicate once a month and on the great feast-days. On Sundays and saints' days they would be present at the high mass, sermon, vespers, and *salut* of the parish, spending the rest of the day in spiritual reading, notably the *Imitation* and the lives of the Desert Fathers. An ordinary day would begin at 4:30 a.m. in summer and 5:30 in winter, and all the offices from matins and lauds to vespers

and compline would be said in the chapel. Work would fill the hours between, except for dinner at 11:30 a.m. and supper at 7 p.m. (accompanied by pious reading). At 8:30 p.m. it was chapel again for New Testament readings and the litanies of the Virgin, and at 9 p.m. bed, 'thinking of death, sleep being its image, and reflecting that this may be your last night on earth'. What time could there be, then, for forays, adventures, rescues, seeking lost travellers, discoursing with troubled souls, advising star-crossed lovers, and melancholy reflections amid the sombre beauties of nature?

Given the severities of such a rule, who would be a hermit? True, provided these arduous programmes were actually obeyed. But in France of the *ancien régime*, most people acted according to the dictates of local opinion, rather than those prescribed from on high and visitation reports show how hermits, more than most, were a law unto themselves. In Lorraine, in an inspection of 1733, they were described as 'stubborn, independent, republican; one is an intriguer and a braggart, another a rascal and a cheat, another a fox; all are either mutinous or stupid'.⁵⁴ A few took to drink or womanizing; more went on poaching expeditions or collaborated with smugglers (probably none were actual highwaymen, though bandits liked to disguise themselves in the eremetical robe and hood). In 1722, the bishop of Vence was enraged to find the custodian of the mountain shrine of St Arnould presiding over mixed bathing in the sacred fountain under his charge. It was impossible to enforce the rules on men whose vocation required them to live solitary lives; provided they appeared respectable when they made their ventures into society, the rest of their doings escaped official vigilance. This was one motive to embrace the eremetical life, at least for peasants and artisans; it made them free from so many constraints, and took them out of the harsh grind of daily existence. In 1772, the curé of Ribeauville in Alsace reported on the three hermits in his parish, one good, the other two not; one of the dubious characters had been a weaver too lazy to work at his loom, the other, the son of a local winegrower, had gone away and come back wearing a Franciscan habit as an excuse to go begging.⁵⁵ With the robe, hood, and leather belt came the right to solicit alms, 'the privilege of importuning for bread without fear of the police'. The begging was not always 'modestly' done, as bishops prescribed. The hermit of Montjouis (Limoges) who earned his living by walking in funeral processions used to go round the market demanding fish and vegetables without payment, accompanied the while by his sister, 'la Recluse', dumb from birth and dressed in ghostly white, the terror

of all the children and a few of the adults.⁵⁶ Depending on the area and the tolerance of the inhabitants, a nest-egg could be accumulated. A hermit of Cassis near Marseille left the hospital a legacy of 300 livres, and his successor paid for panelling the wards ‘de quelque argent qu’il s’est épargné de ses aumônes’.⁵⁷ Some villages nominated certain days of the week when the local anchorite was allowed to come in and beg; on other days, he would solicit jobs to do. Unless, that is, he lived in one of the hermitages with a small endowment of property, enough to provide a garden to till or a meadow to graze a few animals. Fléchinille had arable land and a wood for timber, while La Buissière (Arras) had a garden and meadows.⁵⁸ The English traveller Wraxall found a group of hermits on a headland near Cherbourg cultivating a few stony acres ‘from which they procure with difficulty a miserable subsistence’. They showed him the cliff where Arthur of Brittany had been hurled down by order of King John of England; patriotically, he refused to believe them.⁵⁹ It was not impossible to find an anchorite employing a servant—no doubt cultivating the plot and maintaining the building because his master was too old to cope.⁶⁰ The life-style had its advantages. In a century when working men were worn out before they were 50 and hunger and privation shortened so many lives, hermits tended to live long. When parish registers record their deaths or the chronicle of gossip relates their adventures, it is not unusual to find they were septuagenarians or octogenarians.

Many hermits were under the patronage of a village or a municipality. There would be a contract to provide food or facilities for begging, though probably with the rider ‘without however undertaking to do the same for his successor’.⁶¹ The parsimonious administrators of local funds were always ready to take a chance to economize, even on minor expenses. When the last of the three hermits of Autun died in 1730, the town refused to recruit successors, and in 1755, the inhabitants of Saint-Pol-sur-Ternois (Boulogne diocese) decided to discontinue subsidizing its *frères* of the ‘Blancs Monts’ rule—‘they are of no public utility’.⁶² However, if the office was to be filled, it was done with solemnity. After the bishop had furnished his certificate of vows and letters of authorization, the town aldermen or village officials would preside over a ceremony of admission.⁶³ There would be duties prescribed—like carrying the parish cross in processions, making candles for its services, ringing the bells in the steeples, or going round at night with the handbell as the *sonneur des trépassés*, acting as cemetery warden, grave-digger, community barber, or running a hedge-school

for boys.⁶⁴ As Lent approached each year, the town of Avallon sent its hermit to diocesan headquarters to collect the usual episcopal permission to eat eggs in the penitential season, the fee for the return journey (200 kilometres) being three livres, hardly enough to replace the worn sandals. Abbeys and chapters also paid gratuities for the reliable carriage of messages, and the owner of a great estate might offer employment as a lodge-keeper.⁶⁵ This was a picturesque touch appealing to connoisseurs of romantic tales. To complete the effect of the 'English garden' of the comte d'Artois at Bagatelle in the Bois de Boulogne, with its 'medieval' tombs and 'Egyptian' obelisks, there was a hermitage and chapel of rough-hewn tree trunks, with a real anchorite in residence. Appropriately, he fell in love, and departed to join the army.⁶⁶

Often, the main duty of the friendly neighbourhood hermit was to be the guardian of the local shrine of pilgrimage, especially if it was in an isolated spot and at the mercy of vandals. At Sierentz in Alsace, it was the actual parish church which was at a distance from the village, so two hermits were maintained there for security. In the latter eighteenth century, thieves made away with the silver crowns and collars of the statues of the Virgin and the infant Jesus from Notre-Dame-du-Roc on a peak half a league from Castellane, 'profiting from the illness of frère Jean Péronne, hermit of the chapel'.⁶⁷ The anchorites of Arcachon near Bordeaux looked after a chapel on the coast with its thirteenth-century statue of the Virgin miraculously dredged up from the sea; since the sixteenth century the fishermen of the coast had contributed to the upkeep of the chapel and the hermitage (two cells, a large communal room and stables). It was a place of frequent pilgrimages to pray for those in peril on the sea.⁶⁸ From St Francis of Assisi, the idea of rebuilding a ruined shrine as a gesture of conversion had been a feature of eremetical lore. Under its inspiration, Claude Chanut, a priest who had survived a dangerous fall, in 1725 gave up his old way of life, and restored the chapel of Notre-Dame at Thoraise, taking up residence there to advise the troubled married couples who were accustomed to come on pilgrimage.⁶⁹ If a shrine worked miracles, its custodian might be tempted to pose as the intermediary of its benefits. Those who did so and dispensed healing draughts from their fountain or expelled demons from lunatics by ringing a handbell at them or, worse still, placated sorrowing families by 'reviving' stillborn children so that they could be baptized, were pursued with prohibitions by curés and bishops.⁷⁰ Other quarrels arose from the disposal of the offerings made by dutiful pilgrims. Great was the scandal when

the Rogation procession of the parish of Aubais went out to the chapel of Saint-Nazaire-de-Marissargues a mile away, recounted with glee by the anticlerical annalist of the village. The hermit had failed to do his duty to provide candles for the chapel, and the curé denounced him to the assembled faithful. ‘My brothers, this is an act of malice on the part of our *frère*, and this is his motive. Every time our vicaire M. David comes to say mass in this chapel, the *frère* wants to pocket the collection—that's why he's vexed and why he will not furnish the candles.’⁷¹

Some communities had hermits as it were manning their outposts in the wild country outside their boundaries—occupying a look-out to give warning of forest fires by ringing their chapel bell, or in fog or darkness ringing at intervals to guide travellers on the mountain paths. A seaport might have the problem of maintaining a lighthouse, perhaps on some rocky pillar inaccessible for months on end. The island of Cordonvan off Bordeaux had a late-sixteenth-century tower manned by Franciscan tertiaries. By 1724, there were two laymen in charge of the lantern, though the friars still sent a hermit, for the custodians often failed in their duty and lost their nerve in the fearful solitude. By 1781, the hermit in place was a cordelier, and by now he was given a substantial wage of 600 livres by the shipowners of the municipality. The chamber of commerce of Marseille had an even more isolated hermitage to sustain, on the island of Lampedusa, far away and under the sovereignty of the corsairs of the regency of Tunis. In 1727, Clément Asade, at the age of 72, asked his patrons in France to send him a corn mill, communion plate, a book of plain-chant, and, if they could find one, companion. Nearly two years later, a galley of the knights of Malta dropped Père Corail de la Nerte on that barren, alien shore.⁷²

Without great success, the bishops tried to circumscribe the hermits within formal rules. There was a way of making regulations more effective, though hardly compatible with the eremetical ideal as Western Europe had come to understand it: to concentrate the solitaries into a community, each living alone, yet subject to corporate discipline. There was an example to follow in the ancient monastic order of the Camaldolese, ‘monks who love each other because they never see each other’ in Loménie de Brienne's cynical and approving phrase.⁷³ The Parisian lawyer Marais in 1721 went out to visit them at Grosbois; there, in lonely cells, he saw Prince Rogotzy, the exiled leader of the Hungarian revolt, and the repentant soldier, the maréchal de Tessé. ‘God is served here’, he said, ‘in great simplicity.’⁷⁴ The bishop of Coutances visited the five

Camaldolese of Saint-Sever in 1758, and felt humbled at the sight of such self-abnegation: what penance could be required of such men except, perhaps, asking them to kneel a few minutes longer at their prayers?⁷⁵ There was little enthusiasm in France to join such a severe order. At the time of the Commission des réguliers the six surviving establishments had a total of only sixteen inmates.

Most hermits would not have wished to exchange their rugged independent life-style for silent loneliness under formal supervision. Yet there were two hermit communities, each about fifty strong, in the open country on the fringes of Paris, one in the forest of Sénard and one on Mont Valérien. The group of Sénard, founded early in the eighteenth century by a Parisian hat maker, had a rule excluding ecclesiastics and persons of quality, and its members all came from artisan backgrounds. The administration was run from a house given by the king, and the brethren in their secluded cells lived by weaving silk stockings; their single servant went round once a week to collect the finished articles and take them to town for sale. It was a famous community, visited by ecclesiastical tourists and by the king himself when his hunt was in that direction, the sort of refuge where an aristocratic sinner might lodge for a few months of rehabilitation—as did the vicomte de Custines, soldier and philanderer, who went to the woods originally to commit suicide, but stayed to repent.⁷⁶ On Mont Valérien Richelieu had built a towering Calvary, which became a place of pilgrimage, especially at the two festivals of the Cross in May and September, when the Parisian curés led out their congregations in long processions. It was also a place for promenades in the clear air high above the stifling city, and cafés had sprung up to provide refreshments for the holiday-makers. On these much-frequented heights a community of hermits with four priests to direct them had been established. They had won a reputation for austerity, being popularly supposed to spend seven hours a day in chapel and eight hours in work, and to eat only vegetables. Like the hermits of Sénard, they were one of the sights to be visited, whether by pilgrims or promenaders.⁷⁷ With Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Jean-Jacques Rousseau went to their chapel and was haunted by their singing of the litanies. ‘Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.’ Now, he said, he understood the promise of Christ in the gospels—‘here is a feeling of peace and happiness that pervades the soul’.

An austere community planted on the outskirts of a city was, no doubt, a lofty example to worldly citizens; but inevitably it became a tourist attraction. The way to escape this fate was, perhaps, to

venture out into desert country, giving an example that might be talked of, but hardly visited. This seems to have been the aim of the founder of 'La Retraite', a community set up in Franche Comté in the early months of the Revolution by a curé who had retired from his benefice to preach evangelistic missions. Within a year, he had sixty 'solitaires', notable in that most were young and most were women; they undertook to spend their days 'in the desert' preparing for death and setting an example of lofty sanctification. In the autumn of 1792 Rome approved their rule, at the very time the *solitaires* were fleeing from France to take refuge in Central Europe.⁷⁸

It is difficult to say how many hermits there may have been, since they did not figure in institutional statistics like monks and canons. Parish registers may record their status along with the notice of death, and sometimes an ordinary family man figures there as 'autrefois hermitte' or 'ci-devant hermite'. On occasion, three or four anchorites from other places came to the funeral, and the curé added the information to his entry. Bishops of the severer sort would check on the parish hermit when they came on visitation; thus the bishop of Dié asked to see Pierre Milon of Félines; he was away on a begging tour with the key of his chapel in his pocket, but the curé gave assurances about his conduct.⁷⁹ Hermits in lonely eyries were in danger from bandits and criminals on the run, and their secret existence would be revealed when journalists gave the grim news of their murder. Those who begged illicitly might get into the police records.⁸⁰ A few slip into historical notice in the Revolution's pension lists of monks, having somehow convinced the authorities that they merited inclusion as friars (in April 1792, too late to be relevant, they were declared eligible for 60 livres a year in their own right).⁸¹ There must have been many who set up as solitaires of a kind and won local acceptance, without getting officially recognized or prohibited. Since the generation of 1590 to 1620 had refounded the hermitages, recruitment was continuous, but declining; hence, occasionally, property which had once constituted a hermitage is found taken over for other uses.⁸² Yet in most sizeable dioceses, a few hermits could be found. Episcopal repression had worked in that of Reims; in 1774, when the archbishop enquired about them, one of his curés gave an ironical reply: 'since Mgr Le Tellier of glorious memory, there are none in this part of the world'. On the other hand, hermits flourished in the diocese of Langres, and there were more than thirty of them when, in 1780, the bishop decided to ban further recruitment.⁸³ In the North and East, the cult of the anchorite continued to flourish up to the Revolution. In one

deanery of Alsace, in forty-three parishes there were twelve hermits; in another, for forty parishes there were eight. The diocese of Toul had seventy.⁸⁴ A compilation of a list of hermits over two and a half centuries has produced 6,000, so perhaps at any one time in the seventeenth century there were about 1,000 of them, and rather fewer in the course of the following century.⁸⁵

Most hermits were from peasant families of the locality. Vocation, no doubt, was often fortified by the thought of the freedom of the life compensating for its renunciations, and, as ever under the *ancien régime*, there might be some minor degree of patronage, some family connection, some ‘apprenticeship’ to an existing solitary to smooth the way to decision. Evading humdrum reality, popular tales liked to picture hermits as coming to the wilderness with romantic adventures behind them, heroes of distant wars, disillusioned knights, returning crusaders.⁸⁶ The concept had psychological validity; the soldier with the driving need to expiate the cruel deeds of battle, to escape from imposed discipline to self-discipline, from promiscuity to loneliness; the desire for singularity—as Boileau said, ‘Aujourd'hui dans un casque et demain dans un froc’.⁸⁷ Thus there was a motivation in real life to produce exemplars that conformed to the popular imagination. The seventeenth-century founders of the institutes of St John the Baptist and St Antony were ex-soldiers (they lived to prodigious ages, 90 and 100). Glimpses of other military men occur in the eighteenth century:⁸⁸ a noble of Brittany who had to leave the anchorite existence to carry on the family name and whose marriage produced only girls; another who left because his creditors needed his presence to sell off his property; an aristocratic officer whose hermitage in the Cévennes was burned down by the Camisards—he raised a company of 200 men to wage guerrilla warfare against them for two years, while his cell and chapel were being rebuilt; a captain who sought peace in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land before vanishing into the wilderness for his remaining fifty years; a soldier from the War of the Austrian Succession living for thirty-three years in the Vosges Mountains, all the while retaining his company commander's certificate: ‘You are a good soldier and will make an even better hermit—go where you will and become a saint!'; a Bavarian colonel who from his cell terrorized the local people and his fellow hermits with thunderous parade-ground orders. The life of one of these military aristocrats-turned-hermit is well documented because his great renunciation and austerities brought him into consideration for beatification.⁸⁹ The abbé de Brion, son of a marquis, brought up as a page of Louis XIV, left the

army in 1673 at the age of 26, and, in flight from his disapproving family, went to Bordeaux and joined the hermits of Lormont on the cliffs north of the estuary. He renounced his rights as eldest son, retaining only a small pension at the insistence of his spiritual adviser, refused the offer of a bishopric his mother had negotiated for him, and lived in a damp cell in the rocks, doing the domestic chores for his five companions. The result was fame: crowds coming on pilgrimage to the wind-swept cliffs, and invitations to Bordeaux to preach and confess. When the senior hermit died, the others asked Brion to depart—he was bringing them too many visitors and setting an example of excessive austerity. For ten years he lived in the municipal hospital of Bordeaux among the orphans and geriatrics, not without regimenting them a good deal. In 1711 he had to go to Paris to intervene in the lawsuits raging among his relatives about the inheritance he had renounced, and there he spent his final seventeen years in a house belonging to the Carmelite nuns of the rue Grenelle, in a fearful self-imposed poverty, a hermit in a narrow busy street of Paris.

IV Pilgrimages

'I had thought the age of *pilgrimages* had been at an end in all European nations, and that devotion contented itself with venerating its saints at home,' said the English traveller Wraxall, but he changed his opinion when his journey brought him to Mont-Saint-Michel.⁹⁰ Though for France this was an important shrine, it did not rank with the two great centres of the Western Church, Rome and Santiago de Compostella, and on the roads through France to Spain and Italy, pilgrims streamed to these two international centres of devotion. They were recognizable by their dress, cockle-shells sewn on to coats and hats, water-bottles hanging from slings, and heavy staves in hand.⁹¹ They did well also to carry papers of identification and authorization, for these journeys outside the kingdom were regarded by the royal government as possible excuses for abandoning wives and children, escaping from criminal prosecution, for begging, and for idleness.⁹² By the edict of 1671, the permission of the diocesan bishop, the certificate of the municipal authorities in the place of residence, and the attestation of the chief magistrate of the nearest court were required; a married woman also needed the agreement of her husband. These rules were renewed in 1686, 1717, and 1738, the latter edict adding the unrealistic requirement of the

signature of an official in the capital. Travellers without proper documentation were to be treated as ‘gens vagabonds et sans aveu’, and being caught twice as an uncertified pilgrim could mean a sentence to the galleys. In 1758 the police at Lyon gaoled a cobbler from Normandy; he really had been to Compostella and twice to Rome (the second journey because he had forgotten some sins in the confession he had made on the first), but he had presumed upon the warrant of his cockle-shells and had been ‘begging with insolence’. No action was taken, however, against a man of noble birth caught begging his way back from Rome—he had gone there to confess a grave sin in the category reserved for papal absolution, had been robbed in the mountains, and was penniless.⁹³

The pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostella was one of picturesque travel through wild scenery, toilsome, though following well-worn tracks, with many a hospice and monastery on the way to offer succour.⁹⁴ The shrine was of vast antiquity, hallowed by the devotions of generations since the early years of the ninth century, when a light in the sky had led shepherds to the sarcophagus of St James the Great. James, who with his brother John and with Peter, had been in the privileged group of disciples allowed to witness the Transfiguration, had been executed by Herod in Jerusalem, but his followers had brought his body to Galicia—a legend still challenged only by Protestants. The route,⁹⁵ avoiding the high passes of the Pyrenees, ran from Bayonne along the Atlantic coast to Irun, though a detour to the defile of Roncevalles, in memory of the paladins who fought the Saracens, was favoured by the sophisticated. Then on to Burgos, a place of subsidiary pilgrimage; in the cathedral there, at certain times of day, a priest would draw aside the three curtains, red, black, and gauze, to reveal the figure of Christ on the cross, an image with supposed living attributes; pilgrims would then buy ‘little Christs of paper and silver’ as souvenirs. Thereafter, the way went through the mountains for 200 miles to Compostella. Manier, a peasant from the Noyon area,⁹⁶ who did the pilgrimage in 1726, described the hardships, more especially the notorious ‘Pont-qui-Tremble’, an early hazard on the march through Spain to frighten the faint-hearted. It was not an actual bridge, but a barge to ferry fifty people across a stormy estuary, where the waves ran high and the rowers could scarce move the craft through the chaos of cascading water. He also noted the quality of the hospitality offered in the monasteries: at Astorga, a miserable piece of bread and a single cup of wine, at Villafranca ample provision of bread and hot broth. To his pride, he was ahead of his fellow pilgrims when he topped the

rise, and was the first to see the towers of Compostella, thus winning the title of 'king' of the expedition; he could not, however, receive the prize they had carried with them for so many leagues—it was an enormous turnip, and a predatory hog had munched it up the night before. As ever in pilgrim centres, the streets leading to the shrine were lined with shops selling pious trinkets. Street traders displayed their devotional merchandise on the paving stones and the steps of terraces, and there were beggars everywhere, chanting hymns between solicitations for alms. The immense cathedral was dark within, but with a thousand points of light glittering from lamps of gold and silver hanging from the vaulted roof, showing dimly in silhouette the lofty baldachin. Pilgrims thronged the building, some crowding in national groups by subsidiary altars, others wandering around, a few lamenting their sins in strident voices above the din. In the chapel behind the choir the famous statue of the saint was venerated, and it was a rule of the pilgrimage to confess and communicate. Each of these three good works was given a certificate of verification—for a fee. Out of the profits, the canons were reconstructing the west façade in ornate baroque. The pilgrims could compensate for their expenses by going round the four chief monasteries of the town for the free midday meal available to all. Those who had not already annexed the right to wear cockle-shells could buy authentic ones from the sea coast to the north, though the archbishop of Compostella had been granted the authority to excommunicate the shell sellers if their trading became obtrusive.

It was a great thing to arrive back home from such a heroic pilgrimage; some dedicated souls stayed away longer, however, and carried on to Rome, as Manier did. Rome was the supreme pilgrimage. Some who went there regarded their journey as the ultimate gesture of piety—the example of the century was Benoît Labre,⁹⁷ the apostle of absolute poverty, who left the Trappists in 1770 at the age of 22 and wandered from shrine to shrine. From Compostella he went to Assisi, but even his devotion to St Francis could not keep him there, and in 1771 he established himself permanently in Rome. Here, in rags and covered with vermin, he died, on Wednesday in Holy Week 1783. But there were all sorts of reasons other than Labre's allegiance to the 'folly of the Cross' for Frenchmen to go off to the Eternal City: there were innumerable sites for prayer and wonderment, relics for purchase, majestic architecture to admire, splendours of music and ceremony, the Curia where major absolutions were given and applications for benefices registered, sight-seeing of every kind, and, for the rich, social life 'at a pitch of

elegance and liberality of sentiment superior to that of any other city in Christendom'.⁹⁸ French visitors tended to be disillusioned by the worldliness, poverty, and incompetence all around—hordes of clerics constituting a fifteenth of the population, beggars, unswept streets, melancholy vistas of vanished grandeur, with goats grazing in the Forum and comic-opera soldiers with parasols to keep off the sun instead of the Praetorian Guard, gossip about the insolence of papal nephews, and rumours of poisoners within the Curia.⁹⁹ Curé Robin of Anjou, on a pilgrimage to Rome in mid-century, thought 'only a French pope with 50,000 men of his own nation . . . could introduce good manners and honest morals'. Pilgrims who had been to the Eternal City were proud of their adventure, and some continued thereafter to wear their cockle-shell hats and special badges. Public opinion admired their enterprise, but did not think they were any better for their journey: as the proverb had it, 'on ne s'amende pas pour aller à Rome'.¹⁰⁰

France had its own pilgrimage sites innumerable. Some had a history of continuous devotion since the Middle Ages—Notre-Dame de Marienthal in Alsace, Notre-Dame de Liesse, Saint-Martin of Tours, the chapel of the Virgin at Puy. It was accepted in Brittany that a man should go to Mont-Saint-Michel once in his lifetime—that was how young Restif de la Bretonne got his first chance to go off alone minding the flocks, dogs at heel, and his picnic strapped to the backs of the two strongest sheep, for the family shepherd had gone on the pilgrimage. Others came to Mont-Saint-Michel from far. The half-dozen young men and women Wraxall saw there had come from Champagne—their hats covered with shells and edged with lace with a gilt coronet on the crown, crossed ribbons adorning their chests, and little images of Saint-Michel all over their clothes to ward off the Devil. Chartres was the pilgrim shrine of royalty. Louis XV's queen went there in 1732 to do homage to the Virgin for the golden rose the Pope had sent her, and in 1756 the dauphine, recently recovered from illness, went there with the dauphin on a journey of thanksgiving.¹⁰¹

Yet many shrines were new inventions, or, at least, newly founded centres of devotion recalling old pieties long forgotten or neglected. The new pilgrimage sites of the seventeenth century were mostly dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the South, official encouragement was given to those in strategic places, from which Protestants could be defied or overawed—thus Bishop Bosquet of Montpellier (1655–76) rebuilt the sanctuary of Notre-Dame du Soc overlooking the heretic town of Ganges.¹⁰² In the diocese of Tarbes,

two or three flourished because they were on the route to Compostella, and pilgrims bound for Spain would turn aside for preliminary or supplementary devotions. The publication of a collection of old miracles in 1607 drew attention to Notre-Dame de Garaison, where in 1515 the Virgin had appeared to shepherds; the shrine had long been abandoned, but new buildings now arose on the site, and in the end a dozen chaplains were resident there.¹⁰³ Plague at Hennebout in 1699 inspired a procession of the entire population to Notre-Dame du Paradis; thereafter, the aldermen went out every first Sunday in October bearing a silver Madonna. A classic case of a new Marian pilgrimage miraculously founded was the discovery of a wooden statue of Our Lady at Gauriagult in 1691. An ox refused to graze anywhere but in a single spot; the farmer dug here, and found the sacred object. Attempts to move it failed, so pilgrims came to the field to worship. Fifty-eight years later, a sea captain, in gratitude for deliverance from a storm, built a little chapel there; the statue was impressively housed, and the zeal of the pilgrims correspondingly reinforced.¹⁰⁴

The building of a chapel to the Virgin, whether inspired by a miracle, in fulfilment of a vow, or simply to encourage popular devotion, provided the standard pattern for the creation of new pilgrimages in the eighteenth century. At Héas on the Spanish frontier, an ancient chapel on a vertiginous rock was rebuilt by the prior of the local monastery, and by the summer of 1715 numerous worshippers were toiling up the mountain paths.¹⁰⁵ In 1720, the bishop of Apt walked barefoot up the hill overlooking his episcopal city to pray for the great plague of Marseille to pass by his people; a chapel erected on the spot became a centre of devotion.¹⁰⁶ As an act of secret thanksgiving, an anonymous donor created the chapel of Notre-Dame des Neiges in the mountains of the diocese of Gap in 1733; a Swiss Calvinist demonstrated his conversion in 1736 by paying for the restoration of Notre-Dame de la Roche (Besançon); in 1752, Notre-Dame de Bon Secours at Champagne de Bélair (Périgueux) was built by the neighbouring parishes in thanksgiving for deliverance from famine. As long as could be remembered, sailors had walked barefoot in gratitude to Notre-Dame de la Garde above Marseille; this devotion was given a new lease of enthusiasm in 1732, when a vast sum was expended on a silver statue of the Virgin, by a unique privilege, holding the reserved Sacrament in her hands. Other pilgrimages were the deliberate creation of bishops to discourage their flocks from wandering away to shrines outside the diocese. The chapel of Our Lady at

Luxembourg, where sick children were blessed, lured anxious mothers over the border from the diocese of Metz; so, in 1737, the bishop encouraged the building of a chapel of Notre-Dame de Consolation at Boudresty in his own territory; it had a statue identical in appearance with the one at Luxembourg, and a festival and procession on the same day as the rival foundation, the fifth Sunday after Easter. The sanctuary of Notre-Dame at Lurs in the diocese of Sisteron was suddenly made famous by the bishop in 1732, for he invented a novel festival for it—of the ‘auguste parenté de la très-sainte Vierge’, celebrating all the ancestors of Mary and Joseph back to David. Eight thousand pilgrims came to the first procession at Lurs, and it became an annual celebration, imitated in other towns of the diocese.

In the new pilgrimages and in the extension of the influence of the old, there was an element of creation by the clergy, anxious to intensify and supervise the devotion of their flocks, and an element of spontaneity from the people themselves. Sophisticates of the Enlightenment had a further suggestion: it was a question of profit—as Voltaire said, pilgrimages were invented by innkeepers.¹⁰⁷ During the Revolution, when de-Christianizers sawed down the sacred oak of St Laurent near Beaupréau in the Vendée, a nearby peasant refused to help, ‘seeing that gatherings here provide a big income to the curé, the doctor (no doubt in certifying the miracles), innkeepers and merchants’—he was not prepared to brave their wrath.¹⁰⁸ At Notre-Dame de Liesse in the diocese of Laon, the crowds of pilgrims who came annually bought medals, rosaries and other souvenirs to touch on the statue of the Black Virgin on the altar, thereby gaining the transference of health-giving powers. All around the chapel were shops and stalls. No fewer than twelve goldsmiths were employed in making the sacred trinkets; when one of them died in 1777, his stock was 200 silver crucifixes, 50 gold ones, 1,000 of base metal, 352 pairs of ear-rings, 150 bracelets, and 10 snuff-boxes—worth in all more than 2,000 livres. Less skilled workers made rosaries, cockades, dolls, ornaments of ribbons, and crowns of paper and flowers. Booklets extolling the wonders of the shrine were on sale, together with popular prints, the work of an engraver commissioned by the canons of Laon. In 1774, new devotional objects came into the shops, ‘bouteilles de la Passion’, bottles in which tiny images of Christ and the Black Virgin floated in suspension, along with a ladder, nails, a hammer, a saw, a sponge, and a vase of vinegar. And on a more mundane level there were the vendors of food and drink and the folk with spare beds available.¹⁰⁹

Where a pilgrimage did not exist, pious entrepreneurs might invent one. A curé (according to his enemies) allied with the nearby Récollet friars to make money by promoting miracles in a chapel within his boundaries; another began to dispense consecrated seed-corn in single handfuls, each in exchange for a whole bushel of grain to be tipped into a barrel at the foot of his statue of St Julien. Pilgrim farmers came, even from other provinces, to avail themselves of this spiritual bargain.¹¹⁰ Or it might be a case of systematizing a devotional practice springing up spontaneously among the people. On the second day after Christmas 1729, two children found the statue of a weeping Madonna on the steps of the ruined chapel of Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs in the parish of Talence, near Bordeaux. Miracles took place, and pilgrims flocked in. The curé proposed to move the statue into his parish church;¹¹¹ the local people rose up in wrath to prevent him, and posted armed guards. The parish was in the fief of the abbess of Fontevault, and she had consistently refused to have the chapel repaired. Now that pilgrim profits were forthcoming, M. Serin, the farmer of her local revenues (also the controller of the government gunpowder monopoly at Bordeaux), arrived at Talence to cover the abbey's interests.¹¹² He reported the miracles to be genuine, and urged the abbess to assert her control. The villagers offered to rebuild the chapel if the revenues could be theirs, and Mathurin Moulinay, whose children had found the statue, paid out of his own pocket for the construction of a niche, painted blue and adorned with gold stars, to house it. The local Jesuits offered to say two masses a day in the chapel. An official of the parlement of Bordeaux started an intrigue to get the now-important benefice of Talence for his 20-year-old son. The curé abandoned his hopeless quest to transfer the devotion to his church, and with the cathedral chapter (the ecclesiastical superior of his parish) on his side, offered to consecrate the chapel and co-operate in organizing the reception of the pilgrims. The archbishop of Bordeaux demonstrated his power over all of them by putting the chapel under interdict. Finally, family contacts between the abbess and the archbishop settled the matter. The abbey of Fontevault was to take control and draw the profits, but had to provide a resident chaplain, a treasurer to account for the pilgrim collections, and a chapel warden. These appointments were duly made, and Moulinay became the first warden at a salary of 150 livres a year. Serin, the abbey's man of business, proposed to use the surplus revenues to commission two huge paintings in gilt frames to adorn the shrine, one of the king, one of the abbess. The inhabitants—except

Moulinay—had been excluded from a direct share of the benefits accruing from the weeping Madonna, though no doubt they hastened to sell refreshments and pious souvenirs.

Why did people go on pilgrimage? The devout went for edification. For ordinary people, the concept of an interiorized, non-demonstrative religion, a lonely relationship with God—the piety evident in the spiritual writers—was, if not unfamiliar, not in the forefront of the mind, except at sermon time, or when thoughts turned anxiously to death. The outward gesture was crucial: it brought other people into supportive complicity, marking a committal, with social pressures enlisted to give it reality. No doubt there could be the allied desire for singularity and to be seen to be pious, since motives for fulfilling outward observances are inevitably mixed. There was also the object of qualifying for indulgences, offered at every shrine of importance. Once a new devotion became established, its promoters would solicit Rome for the usual bulls granting remissions from Purgatory. The sanctuary of Notre-Dame des Ermites at Montaut was given a statue of the infant Christ holding a bird, a copy of the famous one at Einsiedeln, near Zurich. It was carried in procession in 1748, and miracles ensued. Three years later Pope Benedict XIV granted a plenary indulgence to all who made the pilgrimage on certain days.¹¹³ Grants like this were in accordance with popular demand, but were also devices to ensure clerical control, since those who sought the remission would have to comply with conditions, including the making of a general confession.

There were also pilgrimages of thanksgiving and pilgrimages of intercession. The journey of gratitude was often made in fulfilment of a vow made in a moment of terrible danger. Those who could afford to do so would leave a votive plaque¹¹⁴ at the shrine, a gallery of accumulated hurricanes, shipwrecks, and cannonades on the walls of peaceful chapels on bleak headlands and lonely mountain places. There were many shrines offering the hope of miracles of healing.¹¹⁵ In the diocese of Paris, epileptics went to the midnight mass of Saint-Maur-les-Fossés; in Saint-Cloud, at the tomb of the saint the scrofulous drank water in which the relics had been dipped; at the tomb of St Frambourg sufferers from migraine put their heads through the square hole behind the altar and touched the stone which had served the saint as a pillow; in the collegiate church of Laroques where St Cosmas and St Damien were remembered, unfortunates tormented by the stone came to plead for relief, and there was a grim display of gallstones framed in silver given by

rehabilitated sufferers. Every diocese had its sanctuaries of healing, for the most part distrusted by the better-educated clergy. In reply to a questionnaire of the archbishop of Reims in 1774, two of the curés gave unenthusiastic details.¹¹⁶ At Givry there was an altar where women came for relief from tumours of the breast: ‘attendance is neither numerous nor assiduous; there is no document or privilege of authorization; no abuses’. At Perthes-les-Hurlus there was the pilgrimage of St Pantaléon at the chapel of Mesnil: ‘mothers scrape the stone of the statue and put the powder in the food of their infants. The evident miracle is that the powder does not kill them.’ This sardonic comment of the parish priest could equally have been made about many of the medicines on offer from the physicians; apart from a fearsome dexterity in the art of surgery, the medical profession had little better to offer than these traditional observances of a marginally religious nature. For the bite of a mad dog the peasants went to the nearest shrine of St Denis or St Hubert; for this the physicians' remedy was a journey to the coast for sea-bathing—another form of pilgrimage.

Some pilgrimage chapels were shrines for wish-fulfilment. ‘Notre-Dame de Montuzet, faites-moi marier s'il vous plaît.’ A peasant farmer of Normandy noted in his diary for 1795 how in his younger days he had prayed for worldly gain: ‘I wanted property, wealth. I wanted a wife with a great fortune to be rich. I made the pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de la Délivrance and of Sainte-Suzanne to have one’—in fact, he married a poor girl.¹¹⁷ There were particular chapels resorted to by married women desperate to have children. Some were in remote countryside known only to the peasants in the neighbouring hamlets—like Notre-Dame des Œufs in the hills of Haute-Provence, where the memory of rites of fertility going back to pagan antiquity survived behind the Christian prayers and responses. Here, two eggs were blessed, the woman taking one, the other being buried, to be dug up on a second visit. Other shrines were of national celebrity, drawing suppliants from afar, including ladies of high society—like Notre-Dame de Liesse where there were from 100,000 to 140,000 visitors a year. In 1781, Notre-Dame de Masceille, on a high plateau near Carcassonne, was visited by the vicomte de Lévy, captain of the guards of Monsieur, the king's brother, coming as the representative of Queen Marie Antoinette, six months pregnant and anxious to ensure a safe delivery.¹¹⁸

There was an explanation of the motives of pilgrims to correspond to Voltaire's view of their origins: they were holiday excursions,

excuses for looking important and dressing up, for going away in lively company, escaping from the routines of ordinary life, and having adventures. Pleasure and piety may seem to be contrasted motives, yet it is anachronistic to suppose that individual pilgrims can be classified as being in one category or the other: most were in both. The clergy might fulminate, but the pilgrims did not recognize an incongruity in going to pray and following their devotions with a wake. Most did not go alone, but either began with friends (as Mme de Sabran went to Notre-Dame de Liesse to pray for a child accompanied by her husband and her mother), or found them on the way. And as people, however randomly, came together at a shrine, they found themselves in a temporary community in which a common purpose tended to knit up the frayed ends of individual motivation.¹¹⁹ In any case, many pilgrimages were parish affairs from the start, the whole community in procession together. Used to tight community bonds—in the extended family, the village, the urban guild, the religious confraternity—peasants and artisans distrusted the confessor's frightening exhortations about lonely salvation and lonely damnation. They thought of their standing before God as collective; the village drunkard on pilgrimage was being helped along by the others, in spirit, not just physical support to get him back home. The community idea is exemplified in the practice of a parish financing a single individual to go on a pilgrimage on behalf of everyone.¹²⁰ The community *syndic* or the curé would provide a certificate of authorization. 'Charles Décoré, tailor, wishes to travel in Berry to perform pilgrimages of devotion on behalf of several inhabitants of his parish to intercede for the ending of the murrain afflicting their sheep.' The peasants were cautious: on his return, their representative had to produce certificates from the curés of the parishes he had passed through as evidence that he had actually visited the miracle-working shrines.

Many pilgrimages were collective observances of parishes—a procession on a certain day of the year to some sacred spot, the clergy officiating but hardly in charge, and feasting and revelry included. The shrine might be of purely local significance, though at some time the clergy may have negotiated a plenary indulgence for all who processed and confessed their sins. These parish pilgrimages had peculiar traditions and picturesque observances. At Lauzel in Haute-Provence, the atmosphere was one of folklore and sympathetic magic. The population, led by hooded Pénitents, climbed the mountain to three lakes; 'the black lake' was blessed by the curé, then everyone threw stones into it, a rite to avert bad weather.¹²¹ By

contrast, the pilgrimage of Guémer (Alsace) to the chapel of St Maxim on 29 May was formally orthodox. The curé recorded the march of 1760: start at 7 a.m., a panegyric of the saint and high mass in the chapel, then back to the parish church at night, where a force of eight friars heard confessions.¹²² The parish of Feneu in Anjou had a generous endowment providing ample quantities of bread and wine to cheer the Rogationtide pilgrims who went out to the shrine at Montriou; their procession circled the sacred well three times, and after mass in the chapel they sat on the grass, where the seigneur of the place served the picnic in person. They all shouted 'Beauvau' three times in honour of the lady who had endowed the feast, then three virgins led general singing and dancing.¹²³ Forty kilometres from Paris was a shrine of multiple parish pilgrimages—to honour the relic of St Julienne preserved in the village church at Val Saint-Germain. The turn of the parishioners of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas came on the last Sunday of August every year.¹²⁴ With such a long distance to cover, it was a strenuous pilgrimage. The procession set off after a low mass at 5:30 a.m.; on arrival, there was a visit to the sacred fountain, and a candle was ceremoniously placed in a gilded candlestick before the shrine—the property of the parish, paid for and installed in 1640. After dinner, the pilgrims slept on tables or benches, or sat up all night drinking. On the following morning, there was high mass at 4:30 a.m., and on returning to Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas the survivors sang the second vespers in the candlelit chapel of St Julienne. Five other parishes of the capital had similar pilgrimages to Val Saint-Germain, and in 1734 a papal indult set up an *archiconfrérie* of the saint to link them all together. One problem for the pilgrims of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas (and probably for those of the other parishes too) was getting the parish priest to last the distance; in some years he did the journey in a cab, and from 1760 the church hired a priest to act as his deputy; if the churchwardens faltered, they too could appoint substitutes. The curé of Viroflay, one of those with this annual pilgrimage on his calendar, displeased at the dissolute conduct of his parishioners, negotiated a fragment of the relic from Val Saint-Germain for his own church so they could all stay at home to pay their devotions.

Some parish pilgrimages set forth in fulfilment of a vow of thankfulness for deliverance from plague or other menacing disaster.¹²⁵ The plague of 1563 had caused the inhabitants of Offranville (diocese of Rouen) to take a vow to go annually to the chapel of Notre-Dame des Vertus; the memory of the obligation faded, until a new visitation of pestilence in 1718 brought 'the renewal of the vow

made by the respectable clergy and pious parishioners of the said parish on account of the same malady'. Similarly, various parishes of the diocese of Auch went twice a year to Notre-Dame du Biron, once in memory of a plague long ago, a second time in accordance with a new obligation contracted after the hurricane of 1712. In addition to these fixed dates recalling past terrors, there were *ad hoc* pilgrimages in emergencies, more especially in crises of drought, frequent in the South. The local custom might be limited to a procession around the streets, or there might be a march to a shrine at a distance—the inhabitants of Pignans climbing the steep wooded slopes to Notre-Dame des Anges, those of Toulouse going to the black statue of the Virgin at Daurade. In 1753 at Pignans and 1738 at Toulouse, rain drenched the pilgrims, and not all of them explained it by the law of averages. Instant fulfilment of this kind was gratifying for the clergy. The curé of Chenon in the Gâtinais recorded in his register¹²⁶ how his parishioners and those of three other churches took a vow to go to the abbey of Ferrières to pray for rain in the grievous drought of 1719. Three thousand people marched. Those who had not been able to crowd into the abbey church told how, during the reading of the gospel at mass, a little cloud was seen in the sky. As the service finished, a fine drizzle began, 'et si l'on ne crie pas tout haut au miracle, chacun le criait dans son cœur'. It ceased during the return journey, but once they were back in the parish church an hour before midnight, the rain fell in torrents—'certifié sincère et véritable, Julien Lucas, curé de Chenon'.

At certain shrines and on certain days, there were ceremonies to which all the parishes around sent their converging pilgrimages. At the abbey of Cadouin in Périgord, it was when the monks put on display their strip of linen from the Holy Shroud, brought back by one of the brothers in the Middle Ages; at Notre-Dame de Sarrance it was on the anniversary of the day the Virgin had appeared—here, the parishes of the diocese of Oloron were joined by representatives of others further afield, from the dioceses of Dax, Lescar, and Bayonne.¹²⁷ In Brittany, in the Morbihan, La Trinité Porhoët had an annual fair and pilgrimage lasting three days. Processions from three parishes marched into the village in a fixed order (punctual attendance enforced by threat of a fine). The bell-ringers in the steeple rang the peals once they saw the first banners approaching. From the ample collections they made, the churchwardens paid the ringers, brought in priests from all around to hear confessions, and hired music for dancing in the evenings—fifes, drums, oboes, and bagpipes.¹²⁸ A special case of a collective pilgrimage was the excursion by

boat, on the Monday after Pentecost, from Bordeaux up the estuary of the Gironde to the sanctuary of Notre-Dame de Montuzet; it was special in that it was run by the Lazarists as part of their programme for evangelizing the city. From May to October, individual pilgrims came to Montuzet to pray for a marriage-partner, but from the sixteenth century there had been a mass pilgrimage with a more general objective. When, in 1682, the Lazarists took over the chapel, they inherited this devotion, and enhanced its spiritual content. Early in the morning, the decorated vessel left the wharveside, the passengers singing the *Regina Coeli*. There were stops for hymn singing at three chapels on the coast; then, as the boat rounded the big white rock at the point where the chapel of Montuzet hove in sight, the chant of the *Regina Coeli* was raised again. The pilgrims disembarked and stayed overnight, heard high mass on the following morning, and sailed back to Bordeaux, singing hymns as they went, including a *De Profundis* for the soul of a pilgrim who had been drowned on an earlier journey.¹²⁹

In the local pilgrimage, the curé rarely played a leadership role. It was the affair of the village; he had to go along or (if allowed) send a priest as his deputy to perform the sacerdotal functions—say the mass, pronounce a benediction—but the rest of the proceedings went on as folk custom prescribed. Even if he did not have a reforming bishop breathing down his neck demanding the suppression of superstitious or riotous practices, he was likely to be unenthusiastic about a long march and apprehensive of drunkenness, disorder, or excessive familiarity between the sexes. In a pioneering study of the parish pilgrimages (*romérages*) of eastern Provence, M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard¹³⁰ has suggested that they were manifestations of a ‘popular religion’ underlying the formal religion of the clergy and the better-off classes; for a day, the villagers left behind them the cultivated area and pushed out through forest glades and along mountain paths into the domain of the hermit, rather than of the curé; they went to a ‘site de rupture’ where they were free from the constraints of the official order and came into direct touch with the divine. Perhaps this was a return to the old religion as the clergy themselves had known it in the Middle Ages. The interpretation fits the *romérages*, and has relevance to some other pilgrimages, but many are outside it.¹³¹ Far from dating back to distant times, many pilgrimages were recent inventions, including those devised by the clergy themselves. Whether pilgrims are best described as reaching out for a direct contact with God at ‘sites de rupture’ is doubtful: on collective processions they generally insisted on having their parochial clergy with

them. Indeed, the exact content of the religiosity of the people of the countryside is rarely revealed to us—devotion, superstition, frolic, and dissipation co-existed, often within the same minds and often without suspicion of incongruity. There were all sorts of pilgrimages. Some had begun ‘officially’ and become ‘popular’; some had begun popularly and had then been brought under ecclesiastical discipline. Some dated from the Middle Ages; others were inventions of Counter-Reformation piety. There were townsmen making a rural excursion and country folk preoccupied with the weather and the health of their cattle; the devout object might be well remembered or half forgotten; there were expeditions to shrines in the wilderness and others to abbeys, churches, and well-staffed specialist chapels. In them, ordinary folk expressed at once their religious feelings and their communal solidarity. As in so many things which we agree to do together, each individual put in a private meaning over and above the broad ostensible object. There was a variety of pilgrimages and a variety of pilgrims.

A prayerful pilgrimage within the parish and controlled by the clergy—bishops and curés approved of these manifestations, and used them as a means of evangelism. But most pilgrimages did not conform to these specifications. Every now and then, one came under an episcopal interdict or was changed to a religious exercise of a different kind. It might be that the local people had failed to keep the chapel of the pilgrim sanctuary in repair; the disorder would be discovered at a visitation, and a ban imposed.¹³² Circumstances other than the merits of the case might have made the curé hostile. The visits of the parish of Ivry to Notre-Dame des Mèches involved four leagues of walking and four river crossings, two of the Seine and two of the Marne. There was also the allegation of ‘indecent’ feasting at the churchwardens’ expense, but perhaps the parish priest could have put up with this if the march had been less arduous. In 1746, the curé of Ligny objected to the neighbouring parishes coming within his boundaries to the chapel of St Amable, because they brought musical instruments and ‘sometimes transformed their devotions into profane festivals’. Truth was, the chapel was the foundation of a local seigneur and had its independent chaplain, who was busily engaged in trying to lure the parishioners away from the parish church.¹³³ The traditional observances at some of the shrines were classed as superstitious by some of the clergy, and the miracles as fraudulent. A churchman described the midnight matins and mass at Saint-Maur-les-Fossés when the mentally defective and epileptics were brought for healing—the wails and howls of the afflicted, their

porters bellowing for space, clamours for air as fainting people are fanned with hats, denunciations of anyone wearing red as it causes fits, supplications of beggars, crying of wares by sellers of images and candles, while 'All fresh, all fresh' chant the vendors of herbal drinks. Above the tumult one of the sick manages to say the sacred formula for the third time, 'Saint-Maur, grand ami de Dieu, envoye moi santé et guérison', and there is a universal cry of 'Miracle!' When all is over, some pilgrims sleep in the church and relieve themselves there, others go off drinking and dancing.¹³⁴ Small wonder the archbishop of Paris banned the pilgrimage in 1735. Notre-Dame de Sarrance continued to receive visitors praying for healing, but the clergy in charge stopped keeping a register of the miracles; as one of them writing an account of the pilgrimage in 1747 observed, it was 'because the people publish them everywhere and . . . these delicate matters might involve circumstances rendering them suspect'.

To the men of the Enlightenment, the chief indictment against pilgrimages was that they encouraged idleness—Voltaire wanted the common people kept hard at work for their own good. This was the view of Loménie de Brienne, the 'philosophical' archbishop of Toulouse: 'they turn people from looking after their households and doing their daily work, thus increasing their poverty'.¹³⁵ But the curés do not seem to have bothered about idleness so much as the accompanying rioting and drunkenness. The bishop of Châlons closed down the pilgrimage of Notre-Dame de Marloux in 1774 on the request of the curé—'stallholders sell their wares without regard for the celebration of the offices of the feast; young people of both sexes turn up in crowds from several leagues around and pass the ensuing days in licence, at the wine bar or in dancing. Almost always there are altercations and fights between the youths of the various parishes.' A curé of Metz said much the same about pilgrimages in general in 1789, inserting his condemnation in the *cabier* of his flock:

It is no longer fervour, zeal and piety which are the motives for pilgrimages. They are excursions of pleasure where libertinage flourishes. There, children escape, thanks to the crowd, from the eyes of their parents, and servants from those of their masters, abandoning themselves to all sorts of disorder. Dangerous acquaintances, the seduction of youth, drunkenness, quarrels, fights—these are the usual fruit of pilgrimages today.¹³⁶

When a pilgrimage was interdicted, the bishop's reasons usually ran along these lines—dancing, drinking, *bombances excessives*, all-night sessions, excessive familiarity between the sexes. But if the bishop refused to act, the curé would hardly be able to refuse to take part.

Public opinion would censure him, and his parishioners might even serve a legal writ to compel him 'to do the procession according to custom'.¹³⁷

28 Confraternities

I

One of the brilliant half-truths Tocqueville riveted on to the historiography of the *ancien régime* was the idea that absolute government had isolated Frenchmen from each other, their sole apprenticeship to liberty being their divisive insistence on their abusive privileges, and their sole education for the business of government the taste for litigation and procedural forms. So it appeared from limited research based on the administrative files of a centralizing monarchy. In fact, one of the surprising things about the men of 1789 is not their naïveté in face of the problem of taking control of their affairs, but the effective way in which they formed voting caucuses, corresponding societies, political clubs, parliamentary alliances, local militias, and detachments of National Guards. They could do so because of their inheritance from the *ancien régime*: the discussion groups and *sociétés de pensée* and masonic organizations bringing together the educated classes, and the pattern of neighbourhood groups with customary ties binding together ordinary people in urban *quartiers* and rural villages—not the least important being the multitude of confraternities in the parishes in which so many found satisfaction for their religious yearnings and for their inclinations to co-operation and sociability. These associations were particularly numerous in the South. In the diocese of Rennes most parishes had only one (at least so far as the surviving records show),¹ while there were little market towns in Provence with a dozen to sixteen. At Vence there were seven confraternities in chapels in the cathedral, and seven with their chapels elsewhere. Everywhere in France, important town parishes would be well furnished with religious associations of various kinds, some managing considerable funds. A typical structure within a Parisian parish is seen at Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles. The senior foundation, under the invocation of St Leu, had a continuous history since 1388. The Confrérie du Saint-Sacrement, dating from 1629, looked after the furnishings of worship; the Confrérie des Saints-Anges (1620) was concerned with

devotional preparation for death; the merchants had their trade guild of St Eloi, and the coopers and lantern makers were in a joint group under the invocation of St Claire; there was also a Confrérie de la Charité looking after the deserving poor. In 1780 came an exotic addition, for the ancient order of the Chevaliers du Saint-Sépulcre de Jérusalem transferred from the neighbouring church of Saint- Sépulcre to Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles and furnished the crypt for their services.²

There was a picturesque diversity about these confraternities of the *ancien régime*, baffling generalization. Some were old-established, like the thirteenth-century association at Guincamp in Brittany 'to maintain union and good understanding among the three estates of clergy, nobility and bourgeoisie'. Every year they met for a high mass and to discuss 'the little differences and misunderstandings arisen since the last meeting'.³ From the fourteenth century dated the Confrérie des Clercs de l'Assomption in the town of Douai, with considerable revenues laid out annually in buying ornaments for local churches, holding a banquet, and offering prizes for the best poems in honour of the Virgin Mary—with prescribed verse-forms and fixed formulas and refrains, like 'Marie est dans l'orage un astre salutaire'.⁴ Of great antiquity too were the Arbalétriers (or Chevaliers) de Saint-Georges of Saint-Omer, attending high mass in their uniforms of red coats, white trousers, and plumed hats on the day of their patron saint, then shooting at targets in their garden afterwards for the title of 'king' of the festival.⁵ These were picturesque survivals, affairs of the leaders of local society amusing themselves with archaic rituals. A long ancestry could also be claimed for many of the numerous associations of hooded Pénitents in the South, going back to the flagellants of the later Middle Ages. They had now become combined social and religious institutions in mesh with local life and with the class structure of society.

Later confraternities had often been founded for the adoration of the Holy Sacrament, perhaps in reparation for Protestant outrages during the Wars of Religion.⁶ Others drew together in pride those who had made a certain arduous pilgrimage, more especially those who had crossed the mountains to Compostella. Confraternities of a devotional nature were mostly foundations of Counter-Reformation piety in the seventeenth century, created in the shelter of Jesuit, Dominican, or Capuchin houses, or inspired by zealous curés, or springing up more spontaneously among groups of pious laity. In the eighteenth century, though there is evidence of the decline of existing groups in some dioceses,⁷ new foundations were still being made.

In the diocese of Bordeaux⁸ sixty-one new ones appeared between 1680 and 1728, forty-one between 1729 and 1769, and twenty-six from 1770 to 1789, a decline in the rate of expansion, it is true, and probably matched by the number of suppressions and collapses, but evidence all the same of the continuing vitality of the associative idea. A confraternity which at first sight might appear to be dedicated to following ancient 'folkloric' practices could be a recent, eighteenth-century creation. Thus a visitation of the archbishop of Bourges at Vaudovan in 1734⁹ revealed a confraternity processing annually to a wood with a statue of Our Lady, with some of the numerous associates staying on to dance, then sleep overnight, in the chapel; it had been founded only twenty-eight years earlier.

Over the years, the old-established groups had accumulated resources to yield an annual income—gifts, legacies, a house to install a permanent chaplain; newer ones had to subsist on the subscriptions of their members. These might be very small: in the diocese of Mâcon¹⁰ in mid-century, 5 sous entry fee and 2 sous a year was the norm. The subscription and, more particularly, the entrance fee could obviously be used as regulatory devices to adjust the numbers or dictate the social composition of a particular confraternity. If a bishop on visitation decided there were too many members for good order, he could prescribe a change, and even an extra 2 or 3 sous seems to have been enough to make a significant cut in membership. When the Jesuits at Moulins set up a devotional group after a successful evangelistic mission, they fixed the entry fee at 3 livres, knowing this would exclude the less well off; a candidate coming forward, they said, must be sure he could afford it 'sans nuire au bien de sa famille'.¹¹

Though the authorities of Church and State could always invoke formal processes to regulate confraternities, those founded before the mid-seventeenth century were usually left free to proceed on their idiosyncratic way. There were strict rules, however, concerning the foundation of new groups.¹² 'An association of laymen for exercises of charity or devotion', as the legal definition went, could only be established with the agreement of the diocesan bishop. An application would come from a group of parishioners,¹³ perhaps with a local nobleman or notable in the lead, or supported by some monastery whose chapel was to be the meeting-place; the curé might not play a prominent role in making the proposal, but his approval would be needed. The bishop, if satisfied, would send formal permission for the group to be constituted, and would name its first officers; they would be allowed a year to draw up their statutes and send them to

diocesan headquarters for verification. Being ‘un corps dans l'état’, the confraternity had also to be authorized by the secular authorities through letters patent duly registered in the law courts. This rule was reaffirmed in the edict of August 1749, with the setting out of two exceptions. First, there could be legitimization by prescription: a group with documentation to show it had begun before 1666 needed no further warrant for existence. Secondly, if the new group had the sole object of conducting public prayers without holding assemblies for the transaction of other business, and did not draw up formal statutes, secular permission was not needed. This covered the case of the organizations existing in many parishes, usually under the invocation of the ‘Saint-Sacrement’ or the ‘Sainte-Vierge’, through which the most assiduous church attenders looked after the candles, the laundry of the linen, and the other tasks required to support the liturgical services.¹⁴

The policing of these regulations was in the hands of the parlements, and the magistrates occasionally intervened to suppress some pious association lacking formal authorization. Thus in 1738 the parlement of Brittany wound up the confraternity of Notre-Dame de Consolation in the parish of Sainte-Croix at Nantes, and two other suppressions followed in the same town in 1750. In the following two years, there were two more at Saint-Malo.¹⁵ This power was useful to the magistrates in their warfare against the Jesuits. In May 1760, the parlement of Paris ordered a review of all the documents of authorization held by confraternities within its jurisdiction, the object being to attack the network of lay devotional groups under Jesuit patronage, supposedly a source of occult influence in society. The investigation was ruthlessly pursued: the Confrérie du Saint-Sacrement at Versailles was harassed, in spite of the fact that the king himself was a member.¹⁶

II

The trade guilds of France were religious as well as secular organizations. In some instances, it is possible to trace the process by which these functions came to be allied. On the one hand were artisans combining in matters concerning their trade while making provisional religious arrangements ‘en attendant qu'ils auront frairie’. On the other hand, and more usually, the religious confraternity came first. The shoe-makers of Castres in 1636 drew up statutes for a religious association and presented them to the bishop for approval;

then in 1707, they added new articles transforming their 'confrérie' into a 'jurande'.¹⁷ This development had still not taken place at Brignolles by 1730; the archbishop of Aix came on a pastoral visitation and found the various vocational groups—*avocats*, bourgeois, merchants, tanners, artisans, and peasants—had no guild organizations, but each held meetings in hired rooms for fraternization, nominally religious, though good cheer seemed to prevail over pious exercises.¹⁸ No doubt these sessions could easily move informally into discussions of common material interests. In small places in Provence where the numbers employed in each trade were too few to constitute a quorum, there might be a single trade guild including all of them (invoking the patronage of St Joseph¹⁹); these inter-occupational groups had begun in the seventeenth century as religious organizations to pray for the dying. When in 1749 and 1760 the government took measures²⁰ to regulate the guilds, subjecting them to expense and supervision, some of the artisans of Paris tried to gain exemption by arguing that their traditional associations were for purely religious ends; the glass workers of the faubourg Saint-Antoine, the hat makers (meeting in the church of La Madeleine), the old-clothes dealers (in the church of the Grands Augustins), and the gilders and decorators (in the church of the precinct of the Temple) applied.²¹ The gilders and decorators were betrayed by the masters of their trade: far from being religious, said the *maîtres*, these workers and apprentices were engaged in a conspiratorial combination to push up wages.²²

Whatever the stage of its development, every trade guild had its patron saint. Some were traditional: carpenters had St Joseph, fishermen St Peter, porters of sedan-chairs St Christopher, tailors and needle-workers St Luce, apothecaries St Cosmas and St Damien, midwives St Marguerite, shoe-makers St Crespian and, probably, St Crespinian as well, hat makers St Jacques. Other saints came in as the free choice of the masters; sometimes, instead of naming a saint and having his day for the guild festival, their choice had fallen on a great day of the Church like Ascension Day or Trinity Sunday—a decision suggesting the influence of 'progressive' clergy. St Eloi was a particularly viable saint, for while he was always the patron of muleteers, he could also be adopted by blacksmiths and leather and metal workers, the common factor being shoeing and harness making.²³ In Provence, peasant farmers usually confederated under the invocation of St John, but in the eighteenth century the richer ones (those who owned the animals) were tending to break away to St Eloi, though mainly for feasting rather than for piety.

A guild would have its chapel in the parish church, cathedral, or monastic house (though not for its exclusive use), and might commission special furnishings for it, as the chair porters of Versailles did by buying a huge picture of St Christopher carrying Christ on his shoulders.²⁴ There would also be a chest containing ecclesiastical silver and vestments—a funeral pall with sombre, rich embroidery, candlesticks, chalice, paten, communion linen, frontals in the various liturgical colours, always including a black one for requiems. These valuables were for the exclusive use of the brethren, and were jealously guarded. When the gardeners of Strasbourg founded their confraternity of Saint-Fiacre in 1752,²⁵ they had a tight contract with the Récollet friars in whose chapel their services would be held; the guildsmen kept the key of the wall cupboard in the sacristy where their valuables were stored, and the statue of their saint would be held by their members in rotation. If rich enough, the guild would pay a retaining fee to a verger to officiate at their corporate services. These would always include a high mass and vespers on the day of the patron saint. The *pain bénit* distributed at the end of the mass would be paid for by one of the richer members, a gift conferring distinction on the donor, though if there was no one able or willing, the charge would be borne by the community. At the death of a member, there would be a requiem mass and procession to the graveside, all masters (or their proxies) present on pain of fine for absence. There would also be regular masses for the dead, perhaps as often as once a week. And the great day for all guildsmen was the feast of Corpus Christi; they might have some special duty to perform, like decorating an altar at one of the ‘stations’ or dressing up in some pageant—certainly they would all march with banners unfurled, for once in the year the cynosure of every eye.²⁶

The statutes of guilds contained provisions of varying degrees of insistence designed to make the members take their religious obligations seriously. The carters and gardeners of Toulouse were supposed to make their confessions on the day of St Quilterie ‘after a good and sufficient examination of their sins and the preparation required for a true amendment of life’.²⁷ No doubt some achieved this fervour, but more accepted those rules as part of the routine religious background of life, just as the carpenters usually made a prayer desk as their prize exhibit in the examination for the rank of *maître*. However that may have been, guildsmen were certainly prone to hearty socializing and drinking in the celebration of the day of their patron. In the mid-seventeenth century, Henri Buche, ‘le bon Henri’, a cobbler of Paris, made an attempt to end frivolity and

transform his guild into a genuinely religious institution;²⁸ the shoemakers would sing canticles and say prayers as they toiled, wear a sober costume of brown serge with a broad-brimmed hat, and share their profits with the poor. In pursuit of his reform, he got the archbishop and the Sorbonne to issue solemn condemnations of ‘the impious, sacrilegious and superstitious practices’ of the cobblers, tailors, saddlers, and hatters of the capital. His movement won followers, though few; late in the eighteenth century there were two establishments of devout shoe-makers in Paris, and others at Soissons, Metz, Toul, Nancy, Lyon, and Grenoble. Mercier describes one of these groups in the capital: ‘they live like the apostles of old by the work of their hands, they sing psalms as they beat the leather—the two activities being compatible—and they have the reputation of selling good merchandise’.

The ideal of ‘le bon Henri’ was opposed to the tendency of the eighteenth century. Guildsmen were taking their secular interests more seriously than their religious ones, and this displeased the authorities in both Church and State. Reforming bishops distrusted quasi-religious confraternities in which the social divide between *maîtres* and *compagnons* led to ill feeling²⁹ and worked against true Christian fraternity, and they were dismayed to see liturgical observances so often finishing up as excuses for getting drunk. If, on a visitation, they heard reports of riotous conduct on the guildsmen's days of festival, disciplinary measures would be taken. If there had been dancing, the hiring of musical instruments would be banned, ‘à cause de la dissipation qui en résulte’. A visitation of 1781 caught out the weavers of Angers who met in the convent of the Dominicans.³⁰ Their fête in the previous August had ended with fighting in the taverns of the town. Draconian regulation followed: the name of the confraternity was changed to Saint-Sauveur, the superior of the Dominicans was to be the director, membership was thrown open to all religiously inclined people, women included, and the hiring of music was ended. Clearly, the aim was to transform a trade guild into a pious association run by a house of friars. In spite of the reform, three years later there were ‘troubles once again and drunken brawls’. The civic authorities wound up the confraternity altogether, but since the weavers had generously contributed to the repair and adornment of their chapel, the Dominicans continued to celebrate the high masses of the two annual festivals.

The secularizing tendencies in the guilds also brought their doings under the suspicious eye of the absolutist government, for here were combinations of workers in restraint of trade, encouraging excessive

holidays, idleness, and waste of money, and prone to form gatherings threatening the peace of towns. In 1775, Turgot took decisive action and suppressed most of them; in some cases, their religious functions were allowed to continue, though as the instance of the weavers of Angers showed, only on sufferance. Yet these trade guilds were resilient, and in one way or another, they survived as social groups with common interests. Examples are found in the guilds of gardeners in the towns of Nancy, Dijon, Strasbourg, and Provins, celebrated for their loyalty to their patron, the hermit St Fiacre (at Nancy, they fought a lawsuit lasting from 1767 to 1779 in his honour). They survived the legislation and carried on to 1789, then kept going through the Revolution, even if they had to call themselves 'citoyens jardiniers' for the duration.³¹

In the south of France there were peculiar confraternities resembling the trade guilds in being essentially secular, though with customary religious observances and in mesh with the life of the parish and its church. Strictly speaking, they belonged to the commune.³² The town or village had its own patron saint, distinct from the saint of the parish church, and under the invocation of this divine protector of the community, there was a confraternity with its own chapel, probably on a hill outside the main inhabited area. The processions and excursions to this sacred site were the famous *romérages*. The citizens usually preferred their own organization to one under the eye of the curé. Thus the hamlet of Esperron de Salliers had three confraternities: one dedicated to St Antony, the patron of the parish, one to the Saint-Sacrement concerned with the administration of the liturgical offices, and the third to Notre-Dame de Revest, the name of the chapel where the inhabitants went for their communal festivities. In Draguignan, the senior *prieur* of the confraternity of Saint-Hermentaire was superior in dignity to the churchwardens, and his organization commanded substantial funds. After their annual procession of 'the Dragon', the six *prieurs* and the six *prieures* entertained all the members, the clergy, and the municipal officers to an ostentatious banquet.

The festivities of these communal confraternities were enlivened by the participation of the local youth, organized into companies under leaders nominated by the municipality. The *capitaine de guet* would be a distinguished older citizen, a noble or an ex-consul, but his subordinates (in descending order of rank), the *abbé de la jeunesse*, the *enseigne*, and the *sous-enseigne* were young men, their social class corresponding to their place in the hierarchy. From these groupings was drawn the *bravade*, a military escort for the religious procession,

a reminder of the days when a militia was required to repel raids by the Barbary corsairs. In these peaceful days the *bravade's* function was to provide a roll of drums and fire muskets in the air. The curés, already jealous of the doings of a confraternity outside their control, deplored the aggressive swagger and the pagan din—or, if they were complacent about it, the bishop might insist that they take action. At Collobrières, the curé continually complained of the ‘coups de mousquet’, and in 1742 he announced at vespers he would tolerate them no more; most of his congregation walked out of the service. If the clergy refused to accompany the procession, they might be cited before the law courts by the mayor.³³ In 1759 at Bargemon, the parish priest pulled out of the march because of the ‘tambours et autres choses profanes’, and as he departed, he seized the banner carried by the *abbé de la jeunesse* and ripped it asunder. In the ensuing wrangles, the municipal officers casuistically denied that they had the drummers walking in the sacred procession—they were simply lined up by the roadside to roll out a salutation as the relics of St Stephen went by. These affairs came out when episcopal visitations took place. A judicious prelate would turn a blind eye: ‘we wished to abolish these ceremonies, but it has been represented to us that there is a danger that the youth of this place, who are quick-tempered and are greatly attached to their customs, would not obey our ordinance and would cause disorders’.³⁴ It was more usual, however, to insist on decency and reverence. Though the clergy hardly realized it, they were making a choice. It was unrealistic to try to exclude frivolity from communal observances: the only result was to hasten on their laicization.

III

In parishes of fair size and with numbers of reasonably well-off inhabitants, three standard types of confraternity were usually found: one a sort of vestry guild looking after the liturgical requirements of the church, one collecting funds and making charitable distributions, and one devotional, concerned with preparation for death—for these were days when life was precarious and there was a general belief in divine judgement.

There were many pious duties to perform in and around a parish church: the care of books, repair and laundry of linen and vestments, maintaining the light burning before the tabernacle, changing the decorations of the altar according to the season, polishing silver,

renewing the candles in their holders, furnishing Hosts for communion.³⁵ A curé would hope that a few of his parishioners would interest themselves in these things, with the churchwardens seeing to the financial arrangements. These helpers were often organized into a formal confraternity—called *royautés* in the diocese of Autun, *confréries du Saint-Esprit* in that of Clermont, and elsewhere *confréries du Saint-Sacrement* or *luminaires*, or simply *fabriques*, since their functions were tied up with those of the churchwardens. In Brittany,³⁶ the *prévôts* or *bâtonniers* who ruled these groups were elected by the village assembly. So too in Provence, where the assemblies of the commune often chose the *recteurs* or *prieurs*. Or there might be a system of oligarchical succession, the retiring mayor (*consul*) automatically taking over, or the existing *recteur* naming his successor. In any case, it was always the notables of the village who were called to serve, ‘ceux qui jouissent d'une certaine aisance’.³⁷ The splendid confrérie du Saint-Sacrement at Grasse was a club of leading citizens as well as a religious organization. The twelve *recteurs* were appointed by co-option (their choice invariably including the retiring *consul*); in 1679, there were two canons, three other clergy, one noble, two *avocats*, two men of independent means, and one merchant, with most of the rank and file drawn from the mercantile class. This social exclusivity intensified in the eighteenth century, the artisans and less important merchants being excluded.³⁸ The parish confraternity was likely to own some accumulated assets, a plot of land, perhaps with olive trees providing oil for the lamps and beehives the wax for the candles, with a few money rents arising from legacies. The members had the right to go round taking collections, and in Provence they were also entitled to ‘folkloric’ dues on widows remarrying and on outsiders who married a girl in the parish. They sometimes indulged in folkloric expenditure too; when Fleury was bishop of Fréjus, he stopped the brethren at Draguignan from holding a feast on the eve of Corpus Christi, resplendent with flowers in their hats. By contrast, the *prieurs* or *recteurs* often dipped into their own pockets to keep the liturgical amenities going, paying for their precedence in processions and pews with personal subscriptions.

In the confraternities established with the primary purpose of performing works of charity, arrangements went best when specifically directed—a special need caught the imagination, then the members became expert at catering for it; besides, so overwhelming was the mass of misery that only by selectivity could the satisfaction of visible results be obtained. Of the six confraternities of Nice, five raised

funds and provided administrative help to institutions—the main hospital, two Monts-de-Piété, and two orphanages. In Lyon,³⁹ a confraternity of Sainte-Françoise founded in the mid-seventeenth century had built up an income of 10,000 livres from this, the poor girls of three parishes were provided with education, and provisions were bought and taken to the sick by volunteer ladies. There was also a group of Sainte-Croix for prison visiting, though its activities declined throughout the century. Of Parisian parishes, Saint-Leu⁴⁰ had a seemingly comprehensive organization, for under the general title of *la charité* there were four branches, each with independent revenues, one for poor households ('pauvres ménages'), one for respectable folk fallen on hard times ('pauvres honteux'), one for the indigent sick ('pauvres malades'), and one for the poor without differentiation. At Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois⁴¹ there were two organizations, both founded in 1655 with the same objects, codified in statutes revised in 1737. Their aim was to give every penniless sick person in the parish a *livre* of meat and a sufficiency of bread daily, while paupers generally were to be helped so far as funds allowed. But vagabonds, beggars, cripples, children, and servants were excluded; the rationale must have been vagabonds and beggars were undeserving, cripples could beg legitimately, children ought to be in institutions, and servants were the responsibility of their masters. At Saint-Étienne-des-Grès,⁴² the notable confraternity of Notre-Dame de Bonne-Délivrance, with its richly decorated chapel and royal patronage, sent its governors annually to the prisons to interview debtors and choose a number whose release would be paid for. In the first half of the eighteenth century the curé of Saint-Sulpice⁴³ founded a group for feeding prisoners and, every year, buying the freedom of a single debtor. It began as a gesture of penitence for the refusal of so many prisoners to attend mass, hence the name—the Confrérie de l'amende honorable au Saint-Sacrement de l'autel—but the practical prison visiting soon took over from the sessions of prayer.

Sick visiting was an activity specially suited to women, and charitable confraternities often had women members, some becoming office holders. From 1693, the parish of Fitou⁴⁴ (archdiocese of Narbonne) had a confrérie de la Charité composed exclusively of ladies; they elected their own superior, treasurer, and keeper of the linen chest, and though a man kept their accounts, they appointed him, and he was not allowed a key to their coffer. Between vespers and compline every Sunday the *sœurs* processed; they held a corporate communion once a month, attended the funerals of their

members and commissioned a requiem mass, and escorted the bodies of paupers to the cemetery and paid for a low mass. In so far as their funds allowed, they provided every poor inhabitant of Fitou with soup, bread, and wine and five ounces of meat daily (two eggs instead of meat on fast days). Half the population did not fare as well as this.

A town of any size would usually have its confrérie de la Rédemption collecting money to ransom prisoners from the Barbary corsairs.⁴⁵ These groups were unique in belonging to a nationwide network under the patronage of the Trinitaires, the order of 'Mathurin' fathers of the rule of St Augustine. They had divided the whole country into provinces, each with a lay *commissaire général des quêtes*, who named *marguilliers* in each town to found a group and organize its collections and the sale of pamphlets, scapularies, and tokens. The *commissaires* were paid fees; the *marguilliers* were allowed exemption from billeting, guard duties, and municipal office; while the ordinary members enjoyed the benefit of indulgences and the prestige of appearing in processions wearing an embroidered scapular and a white hat with red and blue crosses. More and more, the whole process tended to become a business, the *commissaires* in particular being grasping and self-interested. In 1782, the king suppressed their fees and the exemptions of the *marguilliers*; from then onwards it was hard to find volunteers. Other specialist charitable confraternities were found in Lorraine, composed entirely of lawyers, though respectable citizens could apply to be affiliated. The young barristers (*avocats*) who were members of these *Miséricordes*,⁴⁶ imposing in their gowns and bands, toured the churches on Sundays taking collections to buy blankets, bread, and wine for prisoners, and every Saturday the full group met to review the calendar of cases due to come before the magistrates and organize legal aid for the poorest defendants. The registrars of the courts co-operated by providing information about the indictments, and the gaolers allowed the *avocats* to visit the accused in their cells. This was 'one of the most touching and useful establishments that religion ever inspired', said the standard law dictionary, adding the hope that the example would be followed outside Lorraine. In fact, something of the sort had gone on informally in Paris since the beginning of the reign of Louis XV, pious *avocats* meeting weekly in the presbyteries of various curés to provide free legal advice to the poor. At the end of 1787, Boucher d'Argis set up a secular association to formalize these consultations and discuss ways and means of finding compensation for victims of miscarriages of justice.⁴⁷ This tendency for charity to begin in

religious circles, then become secularized, had been operating since the mid-seventeenth century. Parish confraternities had been absorbed by municipalities, the *consuls* taking over as *recteurs* and town officials organizing the collections.⁴⁸ The old name might be retained—‘la charité’, the ‘confrérie du Saint-Esprit’, and so on—or it too might be municipalized—‘bureau ou œuvre de charité pour la ville de Fréjus’. Meanwhile, in the parishes new confraternities arose with the original religious inspiration, but probably moving into more specialized areas of charitable concern.

The other most common form of confraternity was concerned with preparation for death. The spiritual writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spoke of the disciplining of the soul in anticipation of the end as highly individual, a lonely preparation for the loneliest journey. But most people's minds were moulded by the observances of religion, rather than by reading, and in the ceremonies of the Church the idea of a corporate salvation was affirmed.⁴⁹ It went back to the time before mass conformity had made it necessary to imagine that the line of judgement would be drawn somewhere within the formal institution, rather than set round its boundaries. The procession to the cemetery on All Souls' Day, the masses for the dead, the prayer of commendation at the deathbed all conveyed the consoling idea of the solidarity of believers; in this context, it might be supposed that the best preparation for dying was membership of a confraternity in which the prayers of all defended the lonely individual.

To a degree, all confraternities accepted this duty and cherished this hope: there was a duty to visit the sick, perhaps to accompany the Last Sacrament to the bedside, and certainly to walk in the funeral procession. As the cortège wound through the streets, the attendance would show the milieu of sociability in which the dead man had lived—his trade guild, his allegiance to one or two devotional groups in the parish, and, perhaps, his membership of an exclusive club like the pilgrims of Compostella.⁵⁰ The Confrérie du Saint-Sacrement in the Church of Ferrières (near Plantis)⁵¹ named forty of its members to attend the obsequies of a brother—the presiding ‘Eschevin’, the three ‘frères de mémoire’ (who reported the faults of themselves and others every Sunday), and about thirty- five of the ‘frères servants’, the rank and file. They would go dressed in white robes with red cloaks embroidered with the symbols of the Eucharist, stiff black hats and white stockings (to be laundered every four months), and had their cross, banner, and fourteen large candles with them. Another group, the Confrérie de la Charité, extended

over four neighbouring parishes, and sent its representatives to funerals in all of them—in one year, 1788–9, no fewer than seventy- three. At Vimontiers,⁵² a similarly named devotional group called all its members to prayer during the night after one of them died: a bellman went round to their doors chanting:

Réveillez-vous, réveillez, frères et sœurs qui dorment;
 Songez, un jour que vous mourrez,
 Rien du monde vous n'emporterez
 Qu'un seul linge quand vous partirez;
 Priez Dieu pour les trépassés.

Some confraternities were exclusively devoted to preparation for death. They were under the invocation of saints who might be expected to be able to proffer special aid: the Virgin, 'la patronne de la bonne mort' because of her direct influence on her Son, who holds the keys of Heaven and Hell, St Joseph because he died in her arms with her all-powerful Son beside her, St Mathurin who succeeded in getting his parents released from Purgatory, or some saint of local celebrity because he would look after his own. If fear of plague led to the foundation of the pious group, the patron chosen would be St Roch or St Sébastien, the first because he worked miracles of healing on victims of the plague before himself dying of the malady, Sébastien, shot to death by arrows, for less obvious reasons (perhaps because 'thou shalt not be afraid for . . . the arrow that flieth by day, for the pestilence that walketh in darkness', Ps. 91: 5–6). More recent foundations were the work of Jesuits or friars preaching parochial missions. The main aim might be to prevent feuds and lawsuits or to institute the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament, but Hell was so often the subject of mission preaching that the shadow of judgement would come as a sombre refrain in the prayers of the brothers and sisters of the mission confraternity. Or the aim might be laid down as simply the lifelong preparation for the final hour and the judgement. In Franche Comté in 1740, a mission inspired a pious lady to found an 'Association en faveur des Agonisants'—as it happened, she herself was the first beneficiary of the communal procession and requiem.⁵³ In another area in 1784, the grimly austere curé ran a retreat for ten days with the church all hung in black and, above the sanctuary, a banner with huge letters proclaiming 'Éternité'. There was a rush of conversions: in the final procession 3,000 marched carrying the wooden crosses destined for their own graves, and an 'Association de l'Éternité' was founded with 4,000 members.⁵⁴

At the meetings of the confraternities devoted to holy dying, the adherents sang canticles like the famous 'il faut mourir' and said appropriate prayers, sometimes from their own special book, like the thirty-two-page brochure of the Association de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ mourant, published at Rennes in 1736. Every Sunday night in Limoges,⁵⁵ representatives of the confraternity of Saint- Martial went round the houses of the members, waking them with exhortations to pray for the dying: 'Sancte Martiale, ora pro nobis'. Two groups set up in the mid-eighteenth century added an extra liturgical obligation: attending the service of benediction with the Holy Sacrament once a month and paying for candles and incense to enhance its splendour—one of them also hired musicians as well. And all the confraternities concerned with the art of dying expected full attendance at the funerals of members, and requiem masses were commissioned, as well as masses for memorials.

All these activities required subscriptions, and human nature being what it is, there were disputes. In particular, there were troubles and murmurings about applications to join late in life, the suspicion being that the aim was to pay as little as possible for other people, while enjoying all the benefits as the end approached. One way to counter this was practical, but lacking in Christian charity: to provide more masses and more splendid ceremonies to those who had paid subscriptions for a longer period. The register of the Confrérie des morts at Gannet⁵⁶ (a little town of tanners and weavers in the diocese of Clermont) shows a restricted membership (sixty-six in 1756 and seventeen in 1786), the average age on joining being 45, with 58 per cent of the members staying affiliated for one year only. The hardships of a subscription of 3 sols, 3 deniers, and the obligation to communicate ten times a year would explain a one-year membership qualifying for a minimum of farewell honours and attendance at the funeral.

If confraternities are divided into categories on the basis of their titles and the provisions of their statutes, comparatively few were specialist organizations devoted to preparation for dying. In the diocese of Rennes,⁵⁷ of the 287 confraternities identified in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, thirty-two were concerned with death. But sharp divisions into categories is misleading; there were many others with observances directed to this end, though not as the principal ostensible aim. Conversely, confraternities specializing in dying had other duties and interests, and, indeed, sound theology demanded this, for good works, service to the Church, and prayerful meditation on God were as necessary preparations

as any. And of course, the various religious interests never excluded good cheer, like a banquet on the feast-day of the patron saint. In the case of pious associations specifically devoted to preparation for death, the size of the membership is a pointer to the nature of their devotions. In the diocese of La Rochelle⁵⁸ in the early eighteenth century there were two 'confréries des agonisants' with 200 and more members each. In the diocese of Tournai⁵⁹ in 1720, a curé set up an association under the protection of the Holy Angels ('les saints-anges') whose members were to 'strive for grace to die well'; by 1735 it had 700 members. By contrast, in the church of Saint-Nicolas at Maule,⁶⁰ the Confrérie de Saint-Sébastien, dedicated to striving for the same object, in 1748 consisted of the curé, two notaries, one *procureur*, six other men, and five widowed ladies, with the vicaire as an aspirant, a candidate awaiting election. Only within such a small group of the pious élite could intense devotional preparation for death take place, in frequent meetings for quiet meditation. The huge confraternities were open organizations, a sort of meeting-place for all the respectable inhabitants; they were not making an individual preparation of interior dispositions in preparation for the last lonely journey so much as joining in a collective gesture recognizing their common fear of death and affirming their Christian solidarity in face of the Last Judgement.

IV

A special case of confraternities ostensibly devoted to the sombre disciplining of life in preparation for dying, yet in practice organizations of sociability and fellowship, are the Pénitents of southern France. As religious groups, they looked back to two strands of a medieval heritage: one of deep and simple lay piety, the other of harsh fanaticism. In thirteenth-century Italy, confraternities of penitents had formed, forswearing dancing and feasting, limiting themselves to two meals a day, saying the seven daily offices, refusing to bear arms or take the oath in the law courts, and assuming heavy duties of charity. Taken up by the Franciscans and Dominicans, these lay groups multiplied, and in 1248 they reached Provence in the form of the 'Pénitents de Jésus-Christ', popularly known as 'Les Frères du Sac'. By contrast, the flagellant movement had arisen, manifesting itself in periods of war, misery, and millennial exaltation, in Italy in the late thirteenth century, in southern Germany and central Europe after the Black Death of 1347, then again in the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries on the Mediterranean coast. By now, the notorious uniform of the coarse robe and hood had been adopted. Condemned by Pope Clement VI in 1349, the flagellants remained suspect to the ecclesiastical authorities until, in the sixteenth century, Charles Borromeo reformed them, incorporating their flogging sessions into solemn liturgical services with the discipline administered only during the recitation of the *Miserere*. The Jesuit Jacques Grétser's theological defence of flagellation as a spiritual exercise (1606) was along these lines: an activity circumscribed by strict rules and under ecclesiastical supervision. But by the eighteenth century, whatever their statutes laid down, whether the good works of the Italian *Memoriale propositi fratrum et sororum di Penitentia* (1221) or the Borromeian regulations concerning corporal punishment, the Pénitents of France had become something different, doing some good works and accepting minimal rituals of discipline, but essentially social clubs for fraternization and the performance of communal observances—though always with a religious flavour.

In northern France, the Pénitents were no more; they were now found in Provence, Languedoc, Dauphiné, and the Limousin, and in these areas, almost exclusively in the towns. A little place like Treignac had a single group; Tulle, Grasse, and Manosque two each; Nice, three; Toulon and Toulouse, four each; Lyon, five; Limoges, six (the whole diocese having about eighty); Marseille no fewer than fourteen. Of 200 communities of inhabitants in Provence,⁶¹ seventy-two are known to have had Pénitents (some more than one group, for the total in the whole province was 108); many more must have existed without leaving a trace in the records. Popularly, the confraternities were called by the colour of the habit they had chosen—white (the most common), black, blue, purple, red, and grey. Common to all was the distinctive feature of their attire, the hood with eye-slits, a badge to proclaim the intention of anonymity, if not always ensuring it. A variant adopted by some was the flap on the back of the robe to be hoisted up for whipping sessions. This had begun with the Pénitents disciplinés du Très-Saint-et-Très-Auguste-Nom-de-Jésus, founded at Marseille in 1591, the 'Bourras', so called because of their unusual, close-fitting form of *cagoule*. Often, a particular colour was associated with a devotional theme (black with Calvary, red with the Precious Blood, blue with St Jerome, brown with Mary Magdalen, grey with St Francis of Assisi, purple with the Assumption). It was possible for a confraternity to change its colour, provided the bishop agreed: in the late eighteenth century the Blues

of Toulouse changed to white with a blue sash, presumably for aesthetic reasons, while the Blacks of Brive moved to white because they found the dyes in the fabric constituted a health hazard.

In certain towns, the total membership of the various groups of Pénitents can hardly have fallen short of all the adult men of any social standing. In Limoges⁶² altogether there were 2,500: in the Noirs de la Sainte-Croix, the Bleus de Saint-Jérôme, the Blancs de Saint-Jean-Baptiste, in the Gris, the Feuilles-Mortes, and the Pourpres; sons succeeded fathers as a matter of course. In Marseille, the 'Bourras' had 72 members (the number of disciples in Luke 10), the Rouges 96 (the total of the years of Christ and his Mother), the Carmelites 120 (the size of the electoral assembly appointing St Matthew to the apostolate), Notre-Dame-de-Pitié 766, the Blancs about 1,000—that is, a total of over 2,000, and there were nine other groups accommodating many more. In mid-century, 30 per cent of the men of Grasse were in one or another of the four confraternities; at Toulouse only 11 per cent (though the total, 1,486, was imposing), at Manosque only 8 per cent.

Though one of the ostensible goals of the Pénitents was the cultivation of humility, the different classes of society had tended to remain aloof from each other, gravitating to different groups. The élite of Toulouse⁶³ gathered in the Blues (40 per cent nobles, 20 per cent clergy, including those highest in the ecclesiastical hierarchy); the Blacks had a few nobles, while the Whites and the Greys were associations for the *menu peuple*; all four confraternities, however, had a nobleman as their *prieur* (presiding officer). The two upper-class groups of Toulouse demonstrated their superiority by getting distinguished figures from outside the city to accept the rank of honorary *prieur*; in 1773 the Blacks nominated the archbishop of Narbonne, and in 1777 the Blues turned to the king's brother, the comte de Provence.⁶⁴ Elections of this kind were also used to express thanks to a benefactor, the Blues of Sarlat in Périgord making Christophe de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris, their *prieur perpétuel* in gratitude for gifts of chapel silver and communion plate.⁶⁵ In Limoges, the rich and the clergy were in the Blacks; so, too, in Nice. By contrast, in Grasse, most members of the Blacks and Whites were of the urban middle class, with the proportion of richer and poorer about the same in both. At Manosque, where the total membership was small as a proportion of the population, the two groups, the Whites and Blues, were almost exclusively middle class, with not a single nobleman, and from the lower reaches of the social scale only two carters and seventeen agricultural labourers.⁶⁶ As the eighteenth

century went on, the nobles and the rich were moving out of the Pénitents, and even the prospect of office holding no longer encouraged them to stay. This exodus was reducing the social composition of the more splendid groups of Pénitents to the norm of the vast majority, who came from 'the world of urban tradesmen, commerce and small industrial enterprises',⁶⁷ there were few peasants, no members of the proletariat, and so far as the professional middle classes were represented, it was from their lower strata, surgeons (*chirurgiens*), not doctors (*médecins*), bailiffs (*buisriers*), not barristers (*avocats*). Decline in the social status of membership was a process with its variants and complexities. The very full 1785 register of the Pénitents of Notre-Dame-de-Pitié of the parish of Saint-Martin of Marseille provides illustrations. Very few merchants or bourgeois joined after 1753—this was the standard pattern. There was also a change in the composition of the less prestigious mass of the membership, masons, hat makers, and seamen being replaced by warehousemen, weighers, and porters—*magasiniers*, *peseurs*, and *portefaix*. These allied trades were presumably of lower social standing, but the change-over was unusual in that it took place by mass entry, as it were by guild migration—a very different story from the usual phenomenon of family recruitment, with sons brought in by fathers. This confraternity was also an extreme case of membership being taken up as the done thing, but with enthusiasm abated—only 192 of the 763 members of 1785 were up to date with their dues, and most of the defaulters had given up subscribing after paying for only two years.

A confraternity of Pénitents would have its own chapel, even if in its early years it had leased accommodation while funds were accumulated. Some of these buildings were spacious, big enough for the secular authorities to hire them for meetings of the electors to the Estates General of 1789. In due course, a bell tower, pews in hierarchical order, subordinate seating for spectators, tribunes with observation windows for novices, pictures, and adornments would be added, and silverware accumulated. In accordance with its statutes, each confraternity gathered at fixed times for liturgical observances: at Dié, the Whites came every Sunday at 6 a.m. (7 in winter) for matins and lauds, and in the afternoon for vespers and compline. There was a problem about hearing masses, for bishops and curés tried (often unsuccessfully in the case of old-established associations) to confine them to the parish church; there was stronger pressure still to compel the brethren to make their statutory communions, perhaps monthly, with the curé, while the Easter

duty had, of course, to be performed at the parish altar. When the recently founded Whites of Treignac⁶⁸ wanted to build a chapel in 1640, the bishop laid down strict conditions: masses were not to be celebrated there except on the day of the patron saint, John the Baptist, and the brethren must march in the curé's Corpus Christi procession and make their Easter communion at his altar.

On fixed days, each group of Pénitents made its solemn procession through the streets. If there was flagellation, it was likely to be simulated. True, at Nice in April 1714, 300 hooded Pénitents, with fetters on their ankles, marched to pray for the ending of the drought, flogging each other with iron-tipped lashes: 'Mon Dieu, de la pluie!'⁶⁹ But this was early in the century and across the frontier; the curious traveller wishing to see the real thing would need to go to Budapest, Naples, or Lisbon. In France, the discipline was applied behind locked doors in the chapel, probably when the public procession was over. The route taken by the marching Pénitents was fixed by established custom. At Treignac on 1 May, they went to a chapel on a hill outside the town, the whole city accompanying them in silence until the open country was reached, while 800 or so would go all the way, returning as the twilight fell. At Limoges, the Blues processed on the two feasts of John the Baptist, the Greys on St Francis of Assisi's Day (in 1788 there were 200 in hoods and 500 without costume). The Blacks, the association of the rich and privileged, had the most prestigious and sombre time on the calendar, the night of Maundy Thursday. In the darkness, they emerged in their sinister costume (instead of hoods, they wore conical hats with veils hanging down to conceal their faces), barefooted, carrying lanterns on poles, and preceded by their cross draped in black crepe—a procession to mark the night of Gethsemane, the eve of the Passion.

At the heart of the religious concern of the Pénitents was death: the death of Jesus and the guilt of our responsibility for it, our own death and the Judgement. 'I accept the solitude and horror of the tomb to make reparation for my frivolity and amusements,' ran the prayer of the Blancs du Saint-Sacrement of Dié; 'I accept the dissolution of my body to dust and ashes, to be food for worms. O dust, O ashes, O worms, I welcome you as the instruments of the justice of God.' The Noirs de la Sainte-Croix of Limoges had an emblem to adorn their liturgical books: the open tomb, the spear, the sponge on a reed, a cross, and a crown of thorns. For all these confraternities the central duty was to visit sick brothers, send representatives to accompany the Last Sacrament to their door, and to walk in their funeral cortège, with their nominated officers carrying the corpse. They

also accepted the duty of burying paupers, a lonely task in those unhygienic days when the disease-ravaged bodies were carried to the common burial pit without coffins, face exposed. Families without connections with the Pénitents who could afford it would pay a fee to have a number of brethren to march in the funeral procession. In Provence, one could assume that there would always be a group of hooded figures leading the way from church to cemetery; if it was the funeral of one of the brethren, as of right, of one of the poor, out of charity, and of one of the rich, because of payment.

The poor included executed criminals, and one of the confraternities in the town would have the duty of attending at the scaffold and burying the body afterwards. In Marseille, there was a unique division of labour, for the Pénitents Noirs de la Décollation de Saint- Jean-Baptiste had the right to bury condemned nobles, while the commoners were left to those of the Très-Saint-et-Très-Auguste- Nom-de-Jésus—the ‘Bourras’. In Limoges, the undifferentiated task fell to the Pourpres. On the night before the execution, they held a lottery for the privilege of cutting down the corpse from the gibbet or lifting it off the wheel and wrapping it in a shroud. On the following day, in their blood-red robes and hoods with black girdles and rosaries, and carrying candles, they marched to the prison, and escorted the condemned man to the scaffold, reciting litanies and prayers—‘O God, who justifieth the unrighteous and hateth none of thy creatures, accepting their penitence and blotting out their crimes, accord to this thy servant the grace to confess and bewail his sins and to bear with patience every torment in humble expiation.’ After the execution, they knelt to recite the *De Profundis*. The corpse was borne to the church of Saint-Cessateur, where the bearers kept vigil over it all night. At dawn they buried it in the adjoining cemetery, the site of the great plague pits of the early seventeenth century. Every year on All Souls' Day, the Pourpres processed to this grim spot to pray for the dead who lay there; sometimes, as a final gesture of humility, one of the members would leave instructions to his heirs to bury him there also, amid those whom the haste of fear or the censure of society had deprived of all memorial.

Everywhere in France where there were Pénitents, these macabre and haunting rituals accompanied the savage theatricalities of the scaffold. In Limoges, however, they ceased in 1743; thereafter the corpse was taken over for burial without preceding ceremonies. This was a result of a sensational event the year before: a deserter from the militia was being hanged; the doctored rope broke, and the Pénitents smuggled him away through the crowd disguised in one of

their habits. The parlement of Bordeaux issued an angry ordinance forbidding 'all Pénitents red or white or whatever other colour they may be or can be, to be present in the robes of Pénitents or to attend as a corporate body or confraternity at the execution of the death sentence on criminals'. News of the heroic exploit of the Pourpres of Limoges spread, and an unsuccessful attempt to imitate their rescue was made nineteen years later at Montpellier.

Among themselves, the members of a group of Pénitents had obligations of mutual assistance, perhaps extending as far as supporting the families of those who were incapacitated from earning their living. They might be forbidden to go to law against each other, all disputes being subject to arbitration, an official being appointed to look into accusations and arrange reconciliations. It was a universal duty to visit the sick, with *visiteurs des malades* elected to ensure that no one was overlooked. This activity was regarded as particularly suited to women associates, who were allowed to wear the girdle and rosary, but not the robe and hood; they could not take part in the general business of the association, but governed themselves under their own elected *prieureses*. Bishops had reservations about feminine membership; in 1752, the bishop of Grasse forbade the Pénitents Blancs of his episcopal city to admit women under the age of 45; as to those who had got in, they must leave, and the registers in which the names of these 'prétendues sœurs' were inscribed, must be burned.⁷⁰ There would be formal rules, in greater or lesser detail, banning immoral conduct, perhaps specifying punishments for breaches—a fine, or having to walk in the procession without wearing the robes—though there is little evidence of the enforcement of these penalties in the eighteenth century. A curiosity of the statutes of the Blacks of Nice, dating from the late fifteenth century, was the penalty of exclusion for a married man who took a mistress and for a bachelor whose mistress was a married woman, 'à moins qu'elle ne fût fille publique'—that is, fornication was no bar to membership, only breaking up a marriage.⁷¹ As in all confraternities, there was a duty of charitable conduct towards the poor of the locality. Everywhere, feeding prisoners in gaol was an obligation. This meant soliciting extensive collections, and hostile critics alleged that some of the money was diverted to pay for the community banquets; at Aix,⁷² the Whites appointed separate recteurs for collections in 1686, and in 1746 separated prison welfare entirely from the business of the confraternity: members who did the good work did so as private individuals. Where there was more than one group of Pénitents, they would agree on a division of charitable duties. In Toulon, the

white-robed group looked after the slaves ransomed from the Barbary pirates and the widows of sailors, and those in grey fed the prisoners in the gaol; at Nice the Blacks buried the poor and criminals and ran the Mont-de-Piété (pawnshop), the Whites visited the poor, and the Blues the municipal orphanage.

Given their comprehensive membership, the confraternities of Pénitents were inevitably social and welfare clubs, not introverted pious groups. They conducted their affairs free from clerical domination and by democratic processes. They elected their officers, though with deference to rank when choosing their presiding recteur and taking wealth into account when appointing to posts best performed with subsidies from a private pocket. Even so, there were plenty of opportunities left for ordinary members to satisfy their vanity by doing something important under the eyes of spectators—there were vice-rectors, treasurers, masters of ceremonies, masters of novices, arbitrators of disputes, sacristans, bell-ringers, cross-bearers, banner-carriers, sweepers (removing broken glass in front of the procession, since the marchers were barefooted), pall-bearers, chapel guards, choristers, knockers-up (*veille-matins*) and a multitude of visitors of the sick, and alms collectors. The Blues of Toulouse had a council of thirty, and no fewer than fifty-four officers. A confraternity might accumulate a substantial income from yearly subscriptions, gifts and legacies, fees for funerals and burials (walking in the procession and attendance at the graveside were separate charges), while the older organizations had rents from houses and property. From time to time, the surplus would be spent on a banquet, perhaps going out to meet Pénitents from other towns, as the Blacks of Grasse did twice-yearly, having a joint picnic under the trees to the sound of music. The Whites of Cannes even held a feast in their chapel on Maundy Thursday. Sometimes more than the surplus was spent, and debt accumulated. In 1761 the parlement of Aix ordered all confraternities in its jurisdiction to send their accounts for inspection, so widespread were the rumours of waste and insolvency. Paradoxically, religious associations supposedly concerned chiefly with death and self-mortification had come to be synonymous with junketing.⁷³

This cheerful laicization of the Pénitents was anathema to reforming bishops. In any case, they were suspicious of chapels operating independently of the parish church, separating so many men from the other parishioners, leaving the women and children to the curé—a foreshadowing of the nineteenth-century pattern of religious practice, with wives looking after the salvation of the

family while their husbands stayed anticlerically aloof. In Limoges, the Blacks had a running feud with their curé over their chapel in the parish church—about the times of services and their share of repairs to the fabric; in 1767 the bishop ordered them to pay half the repair bills, and have all their services taken by the parish clergy. The Blues had their quarrels too, with the curé of Saint-Paul, coming to a scandalous crisis at the Fête-Dieu of 1779, when they refused to allow the parish its customary use of their monstrance, in defiance of the orders of a *grand vicaire*, and refused to take any part in the procession. The bishop put the confraternity under interdict, and the brethren were only allowed to meet again after two representatives had made humble atonement with lighted candles at the parish mass.⁷⁴ The solemnities of funerals were sometimes disrupted by the clochmerlesque disorder of the hooded penitential figures, resorting to fisticuffs at the time and lawsuits afterwards. In these battles, the social decencies, as well as the religious ones, might be overthrown, as when the *premier président* of the parlement of Toulouse was belaboured by his own coachman, both anonymous under their hoods of rival confraternities.⁷⁵ In this age of competition for precedence, it was difficult to prevent these confrontations, though diocesan regulations prohibiting a member of one group changing over to another had some effect, for this was a sure formula for an eventual fracas in the churchyard. Martin du Bellay, bishop of Fréjus from 1739 to 1766, came to his diocese ignorant of the customs of the South, and the typical shortcomings of the Pénitents in episcopal eyes are summarized in his prohibitions and pastoral letters.⁷⁶ They fail to perform their Easter duty for years on end, he says, and ‘their assemblies verge on the profane, and often in them vanity, independence, jealousy and dissension reign’. He ordered the closure of their chapels during the Easter fortnight, and required candidates for admission to provide a certificate of having received Easter communion from their curés. They were not to indulge in non-religious conversations in chapels, vestries, or processions, and they were not even allowed to play skittles in their gardens: ‘this game from time to time is the occasion for several people to swear by the holy name of God. What a contradiction! A congregation established with the aim of praising and worshipping God, and yet we allow him to be cursed when a game of skittles is in progress.’ There were a few new foundations of Pénitents in the eighteenth century, and the rules imposed on them by the ecclesiastical authorities are indications of the sort of reform they would have wished to apply to all. Bishop Belsunce of Marseille founded a new group, with flagellation

forbidden and the presiding recteur to be a priest appointed by the bishop (the brethren later managed to have this clause removed from their statutes). In 1772, a later prelate of the diocese set up Pénitents at Bandol, for there were no arrangements there to bury paupers, and when the corpses were putrid or infected, no one was willing to carry them, even for extra fees. At Autun,⁷⁷ the Pénitents de la Croix began in 1725, and by 1740 had their own chapel. The entry fee was 8 livres, high enough to ensure the social respectability of the membership; women were allowed to join, though they could not wear the robe and hood. The chief duties were to care for the sick and prisoners, and to accompany condemned criminals to the scaffold; the chief reward was the right to process three times a year wearing the black habit, with the unusual ornaments of a red cross sewn on the material over the heart and a miniature death's head attached to the rosary. Three priests were members, and they said a daily mass in the chapel, but the brethren had to make their two annual communions in the parish church.

Like the bishops, the men of the Enlightenment disapproved of the Pénitents, though for different reasons. They were organizations in the van of the forces of obscurantism and intolerance—Voltaire blamed the Whites of Toulouse for the execution of Calas; they were Italian rather than French, representing the backward South as against the prosperous North; they were potentially subversive groups, endangering the good order of society. Their fanatical processions were ridiculous: ‘These hooded gangs who frighten little children and provoke miscarriages in pregnant women’, he said, ‘these clowns in costume who, in our southern provinces, roam the streets for the glory of God . . . mummeries rendering us ridiculous in the eyes of the peoples of the North.’

As social organization became more sophisticated and an aura of ridicule built up around the hooded processions, rich and distinguished citizens began to move out of the Pénitents, some finding a home in the new Freemasonry.⁷⁸ The lower-middle classes, always the backbone of these confraternities, continued to find in them their social fulfilment and satisfaction in minor office holding, though some groups collapsed because of debts and lawsuits, and others, oppressed by reforming bishops, could not attract the usual quota of new members to their curtailed activities. Now that influential citizens were rarely involved, the municipal authorities ceased to regard their local Pénitents as associations integrated into the life of the town; an extreme case was Toulon, where, in January 1789, by the authority of royal letters patent, the municipality

wound up three of the four groups, leaving only the one collecting for the hospitals. The next few years were to see the rise of the new sociability of the revolutionary clubs and committees.

V

To the reforming clergy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the confraternity type of organization, adapted and under clerical control, was the ideal instrument of evangelism and moral improvement. A few, a self-conscious élite in the clerical establishment, used it in an original fashion, setting up a confraternity with the mysterious name of the 'Aa', a closed, secret society spread nation-wide and, indeed, branching out into Savoy, Italy, and Germany. It began in the 1630s, at the same time as another secret society, the *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement de l'Autel*, though if there was imitation, there was no direct connection. The *Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement* was essentially lay, composed of the rich and powerful, centred in Paris with access to the levers of power; its aim was to reform society by authoritarian means. By contrast, the Aa was composed exclusively of ecclesiastics, and aimed to deepen commitment and devotion among the clergy; it had no central organization, but consisted of little groups corresponding with each other informally, but taking no instructions from outside. In 1787 a priest of Chambéry wrote to another in Turin: 'the Aa is a holy union of hearts and minds among people who wish to strive seriously for perfection, and to contribute all in their power to the sanctification of those who wish to enter the ecclesiastical vocation'.⁷⁹ It began as an élite within an élite when Père Bagot, who was in charge of the *Congrégation de la Vierge* at the Jesuit *college* of La Flèche, in 1633 decided to set up a secret inner ring of zealots. Nine years later, one of its members, Vincent de Meur, went to the *Collège de Clermont* in Paris for some years, then on to Toulouse, then Rome, setting up groups as he travelled, Toulouse being the most important, becoming the major centre for the South.⁸⁰ In 1664, he ended up founding the seminary of the *Société des Missions Étrangères* in Paris, recruiting chiefly through his 'friends' in scattered groups of the devotional society. In the eighteenth century the Aa spread by such personal contacts. In Lyon,⁸¹ thirty years after Vincent de Meur had stayed there, there was a continuing group of three Jesuits and two secular priests; in 1689, unaware of their existence, two priests from Toulouse arrived

and began recruiting. By 1692 there were twenty theological students in the organization, the only sign of their difference from others being their zeal for catechizing the children of the poor. Five years later, numbers had expanded further, with disastrous consequences, for the secret got out, and the group disbanded. In 1728, the Aa began again in Lyon, refounded by two priests from Bordeaux. Though one of them soon died, and the other was called away to teach in the seminary at Aire, a stronghold of the movement, their handful of recruits made converts in the Jesuit *collège*, the Suplician seminary, and the seminary of Saint-Charles. The Jesuit and Suplician directors heard whispers about the movement, but their efforts to find out about its activities, with the aim of annexing them, failed. In the same decade, new groups were set up in Poitiers and Béziers (1721), Orléans (1724), and Limoges (1725), while more than thirty branches were created by influences radiating from Toulouse.⁸²

The Aa was unique among confraternities in France in existing without a legal basis, without letters patent, without royal approval, and (though one or two bishops joined), without episcopal control. Secrecy was essential. At Toulouse,⁸³ the rules forbade signs of recognition to fellow members outside the meetings; the existence of the society could not be mentioned except in the confessional, and then only if it was inescapable. Since the city had various groups, with priests moving up to a different one as they got older, there was a password consisting of a verse from Scripture or the Fathers, and an invitation to join could be given only after devious conversational manœuvres. If the secret got out, the group was automatically dissolved, a proviso of high-minded casuistry. The Aa could properly have resorted to the standard ruling that the possessor of a secret can lie about it if the refusal to answer a question would constitute an admission; but instead of this, they turned to a more morally certain but artificial rule—the question itself dissolved the organization, which thereafter had to be reconstituted; if the secret became public knowledge, of course, reconstitution would not be possible at all. As a result of its clandestine nature, posterity has been left uncertain even of the meaning of the name of the society. Was it ‘*Associatio amicorum*’, for they habitually called each other ‘friends’? Or did the double letters signify the plural of either ‘*Ami*’ or ‘*Assemblée*’? Or were they the first and last letters of ‘*Anima*’, some groups having the motto ‘*Cor unum et anima una*’?

The Aa was not identified with any religious institution or Order, though it often found its recruits in the Jesuit *Congrégations de la*

Vierge. It also carried on another connection from its early days, providing staff for the seminary of the Missions Étrangères. In 1743, a priest of the Toulouse branch was studying there, and reported that three directors were of the confraternity, while the abbé Dufau, formerly a *vicaire général* of the diocese of Limoges, whose membership dated from many years ago, had just retired there. Two years later, Christophe de Lalane, of the seminary of Langres, followed Dufau to Paris, went to Canada to run the seminary at Quebec, and finally returned as superior-general. Another associate of the Aa from the seminary of Langres, André Bramany, came to the house of the Missions Étrangères in 1752, and was given an administrative post there. Most members of the Aa, however, stayed quietly in their provincial vocations, striving to form an élite in the seminaries and to contact the students of theology in the universities. The movement quietly expanded, the seminaries of Auch, Aire, Langres, Lyon, and, especially, Toulouse being the recruiting centres sending out apostles to evangelize the clergy in other towns.

The rules of the large Toulouse group are probably typical of the others. A student member was to find time from his lectures to make a daily visit of at least fifteen minutes to adore the Holy Sacrament in the basilica of Saint-Sernin or the Cordeliers' chapel, if possible persuading others to accompany him. Each week, there would be a devotional talk to attend, and once a month there would be a meditation on the theme of the Sacré-Cœur. The wearing of hair shirts and iron belts was a standard routine of penitence. Every Friday there was flagellation ('l'exercice du vendredi') in the crypt of Saint-Sernin, creeping in after dark, putting palliases against the windows to muffle the sound—'there was never any lack of fervour, on the contrary, often we had to moderate it'.⁸⁴ Each week the friends chose their password ('mot de guet') and drew up their roster of duties—visiting prisons and hospitals and going to venerate the relics at Saint-Sernin. Once a fortnight, there was an afternoon promenade beyond the city ramparts, and here, away from the noise of the streets, a session of devotion and business was held. At one of these in 1788 the minutes record singing anthems to the Virgin, the reading out of the rules concerning the admission of new members, a discussion of points in the catechism, and 'the censure of certain brothers because they neglected to make their tonsures evident'. At another meeting, they are recorded as choosing 'the virtues of the month', in this case 'inner peace' and 'fervour'; the date of the next retreat, with the 'rénovation' (the renewal of priestly vows), was fixed; and resolutions were made to intensify their exercises of

mortification. The meeting ended with an anthem to the Virgin, 'and the brethren departed conversing the while on edifying subjects, being unable to give themselves over to holy enjoyment during the picnic, because the brother who was supposed to bring it had not turned up'.⁸⁵ No doubt such a pious assembly hastened to forgive him.

The laws of both Church and State made it impossible to set up a secret network of associations for laymen, but the Jesuits tried, through their lay 'congrégations', to create something of the atmosphere of privileged association and intense piety of the Aa. Their groups were systematic, selective, and disciplined, unlike the *ad hoc*, loose confraternities under the invocation of the rosary favoured by the Capuchins and Dominicans. Combining dedication with disillusioned social realism, the Jesuits established their congregations on a class basis, keeping distinguished citizens separate from the others. At the *collège* of La Flèche there were two inner groups among the pupils, one for boarders and one for day-boys; and for townsmen, there were two confraternities, one for 'bourgeois', the other for 'artisans'.⁸⁶ From 1631, the Maison Professe of the Jesuits in Paris had a congregation of 'Messieurs' meeting at the church of Saint-Louis; the members were ecclesiastics and laymen of high social standing. In 1688, the Jesuit directors decided to set up a 'Sodalité des laquais', since these characters, proverbially turbulent, disturbed the meetings of their masters with noise outside the church windows as they waited to escort them home. In 1716, this group was thrown open to all servants and, possibly, to others, since it was given the new title of 'Artisans'.⁸⁷ The two Jesuit organizations at Grenoble had a higher social gearing than elsewhere, the Messieurs being for magistrates of the parlement and the *cour des comptes* and the military nobles, while the Grand Artisans, with 500 members, included canons and other churchmen, notaries and bourgeois citizens, as well as less considerable people. 'Low professions' were specifically excluded—policemen and minor legal officials, butchers, tripe sellers, porters, and servants. To join, a man had to be 'established', a householder, and a payer of the capitation tax, or the son of one. In 1751, at the request of the bishop, a cook was admitted; perhaps the bishop paid his entry fee of 15 livres, quite enough in itself to exclude half the population.⁸⁸ Social selectivity at the *grand collège* at Lyon⁸⁹ was complicated by the additional differentiation of age; for the pupils, there was a congregation for those studying philosophy and theology, and another for those studying rhetoric; and for townsmen there were the Messieurs, the Jeunes Messieurs,

the Grands Artisans, the Artisans, the Jeunes Artisans, and the Plus Jeunes Artisans. This was not the sum total of Jesuit organizations in town, for the other *collège* had groups for Messieurs and for Artisans, while the Maison de Saint-Joseph had a single association of Messieurs. Since it was the custom of the Order to give the congregations a title expressing veneration of Our Lady (confirmed as mandatory by Benedict XIV in 1748), the situation in Lyon strained the resources of Marian lore: there was the Assumption (twice), the Purification (twice), the Visitation, the Nativity of the Virgin, the Presentation, the Sacred Name of Mary, and the Sacred Marriage of the Virgin.⁹⁰

The members of the Jesuit congregations were meant to be a spiritual élite. A candidate for admission to the Artisans of La Flèche had to be recommended by his parish priest and by his employer; he had to attend all the offices at the parish church on Sundays, and communicate there at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints, and communicate once a month in the Jesuit chapel. More still was required of the Messieurs, who presumably would have greater leisure. At Saint-Louis in Paris, in addition to communion monthly and at the great feasts, every member was to have a session of prayer, examination of conscience, and spiritual reading every morning, and conduct family prayers every night. If possible, there should be daily attendance at mass, and every Sunday (except in September, October, and November) there was a general meeting at 6.30 a.m. (7.30 in winter) in chapel lasting for two and a half hours; there would be mass and intercessions, with every third Sunday the addition of the reading of the office of the dead and prayers of preparation for dying. Every year, there was a retreat, the Messieurs living apart from the world in cells in the Jesuit house, the Artisans coming together for services after the day's work was done. In some places, the observances of the congregation included an annual pilgrimage, not ostentatious, but a quiet demonstration to the world of piety and loyalty to the Jesuits, like the Messieurs of the Maison de Saint-Joseph at Lyon going to Isle Barbe on the second Monday after Low Sunday and on 3 May to Saint-Irénée.

Like everything else the Jesuits devised, their confraternities aroused passionate loyalties in some and deep suspicion in others. The parlement of Paris distrusted the half-hidden web of influence the Order had spun, and when in 1760, the magistrates' political attack began, they extended their condemnations to the lay congregations. Curés disliked seeing prestigious parishioners lured away from their confessionals and works of parochial charity. Even so,

there were parish priests who found the Jesuit contribution to lay piety invaluable. 'I know of no better persons', said the curé of Saint-Michel at Dijon in 1761, 'than those who are attached to the congregations established by the reverend Jesuit Fathers—those who profit from the retreats they hold annually, more especially those designed for artisans.'⁹¹ The Jesuits could not win. If they preached devotion to the Messieurs, they were intriguing for social influence; if they ministered to lackeys and servants, they were spying on decent citizens; if they worked among the artisans, they were rabble-rousers. Unlike the Capuchins and Dominicans, with their undemanding confraternities of Notre-Dame du Rosaire, the Jesuit endeavour among the laity was single-minded and highly organized, a uniformity alien to the patchwork confusions of the rest of eighteenth-century religious and social life.

A zealous curé seeking to evangelize his parish would naturally think of founding a confraternity, or adapting one to the purpose, an instrument of evangelization under clerical control. A success which few could emulate was achieved by curé Platel of Linselles⁹² in the diocese of Tournai. Arriving in his parish in 1714, he found documents relating to a long-defunct association of Notre-Dame du Rosaire: he refounded it, and soon there were 1,000 members. Devotion alone would not bring in such numbers, but panic might do so. In 1749 the curé of Longecombe in the diocese of Belley set up a confraternity of St Antony because of the approach of a cattle plague; 300 heads of households joined and clubbed together to build a chapel.⁹³ Another way of proceeding was to strive to enlarge a group providing for the liturgical necessities, usually the Confrérie du Saint-Sacrement, to include all the more dutiful parishioners. Bishops liked this idea: it increased clerical control over parish devotions, and encouraged Christo-centric and Eucharistic observances as against the cult of therapeutic and 'popular' saints⁹⁴—confraternities in the name of the Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of the Rosary, and St Joseph corresponded to the new centre of gravity of Counter-Reformation piety. Thanks to episcopal initiatives, in the area around Boulogne there were a number of confraternities under the invocation of the Holy Sacrament with from 200 to 400 members—on average, one in eight of the communicants of the particular parish.⁹⁵ From 1717 in the diocese of Lyon, encouragement from the bishop created a dozen new confraternities under clerical control, dedicated to the new cult of the Sacré-Cœur.⁹⁶ Their purpose was devotional, the entrance fees low, and, unlike the old confraternities, most of the members were

women. Other new foundations created by the clergy were set up at the end of an evangelistic mission, drawing together parishioners who had made resolutions of amendment of life. Prayer was their main preoccupation, but there was always provision for winding up quarrels by arbitration. The 'confrères praticiens',⁹⁷ who were sometimes specified as available for the purpose, were that rare phenomenon, lawyers working without fees.

Generally, however, a parish priest had to make do with the existing confraternities in his parish. Some would be useful, others a hindrance, if he was determined on an austere reforming programme. The chief complaint of the curés was that observances which, in their eyes, ought to have been solemn pious exercises were an excuse for drunkenness and frivolity. In a published homily, one of them described how the brethren observed the day of their patron saint: 'except for a few minutes spent in attending the Holy Mysteries as a sort of sop to respectability, the day is given over to dissipation, sometimes even to libertinage. And pray God the funds of the confraternity are not expended in feasting and entirely profane usages.'⁹⁸ When the associates come to church, said a curé of Normandy, there is no reverence, for they are drunk already.⁹⁹ The other main complaint, less easy to formulate, but always a nagging irritation, was the way in which a confraternity, even—or perhaps especially—a pious one, could draw the faithful from attendance at the parish church and the support of parochial charities. In a visitation of 1743 the bishop of Fréjus completely overhauled the structure of the confraternities in one of his parishes. He reduced them to three: one under the invocation of the Très-Saint-Sacrement running the liturgical services, one of Notre-Dame du Rosaire for devotion, and the Confrérie du Purgatoire for preparation for death; all three were to be under the churchwardens and sacristan.¹⁰⁰ This was clerical control with a vengeance, with no concern for the virtues of sociability. In 1749, the bishop of Orléans complained of the confraternities of his diocese: 'what had begun as works of the spirit had degenerated to become works of the flesh,' and he laid down that members must be of exemplary life, must confess and communicate on the seven great feasts of the year, must assist sick brethren and attend their funerals, but never indulge in communal celebrations.¹⁰¹ A surgeon of Blaye in 1773 entered into his commonplace book the list of obligations he had incurred in joining the parish association for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament: the renewal of his baptismal vows at the beginning of the year, confession and communion nine times in the course of it, and

if ever he committed a mortal sin, to go at once to confession.¹⁰² Here is the ideal confraternity member in the eyes of the clergy.

The policy of reforming confraternities into groups of a pious élite was being pursued at the same time as the upper classes of society were withdrawing from them anyway. Pious, well-educated people were becoming more interested in spiritual reading, sessions of guidance with sophisticated confessors, long periods of meditation, and conducting family prayers. For sociability, the upper classes were turning to salons, discussion groups, reading societies, provincial academies, and masonic lodges. The restricted religious groups favoured by the bishops were less attractive to some because they would no longer be a stage where a man could cut a figure as an official or wear a ceremonial habit. So the old confraternities of France declined. A century later, the clergy were running social clubs in an attempt to keep men in touch with religion, however marginally. In the days of the *ancien régime*, still believing in the myth that society was and would remain Christian in inspiration, they had been attempting to turn the existing nominally religious clubs into devotional confraternities. Had they realized it, the choice before them was between the existing large membership with sociability or piety and few adherents. The period of the Enlightenment was the beginning of the process whereby the Church became a minority association. It was not so much a question of the people drifting away as of the clergy making new demands and excluding them. The Revolution completed the process by the decree of 18 August 1792 abolishing the confraternities and putting their property and chapels up for sale. The groups carrying on a clandestine existence, and the new ones subsequently founded, were mostly exclusively pious organizations under clerical control.

29 Popular Religion and Clerical Reformers

I 'La Religion Populaire': Questions of Method

Joseph de Maistre described Christianity as unique in that it was 'preached by ignorant men and believed by learned ones'.¹ If this was so, it did not last; from St Paul onwards, it was learned men who shaped its credal forms and dictated what should be preached. Hence, there came to be a dichotomy within the Church between those who claimed to understand and those who practised without regard to intellectual niceties. 'The simple people', said a sixteenth-century bishop of Senlis, 'are not expected to believe [the articles of the faith] explicitly, but only their superiors, who, by virtue of their office, have the duty of providing answers to questions regarding the faith to those who ask.' This divide had become more evident as seminaries and universities and the spread of enlightenment created an élite of educated clergy. The nature of the religion of the clerical establishment is well documented, while that of the peasants and artisans is recorded chiefly in the attempts of their betters to reform it. The peculiar bias of the evidence presents a challenge to the historian, and during the last two decades one of the themes of innovative historiography has been the elucidation and interpretation of 'la religion populaire'.

A long-range problem presents itself: in Vauchez's words, was popular religion 'a coherent system of magical beliefs or a coarsened Christianity adapted to rural civilization'?² These alternatives (not entirely excluding one another) may be diversified. There might be a long-continuing survival of pagan elements from remote antiquity, though in view of the collapse of attempts to trace such an ancestry for witchcraft, it seems unlikely that the quest will yield coherent findings. Or, without necessarily conveying distant echoes of paganism, there may have been a folk mentality operating over a long duration, rather like Bakhtin's 'millennium of folk humour'³ bursting into literature with Rabelais, a mentality instinctively adapting the solemnities of Christianity to its own yearning for festive

sociability. 'Fantasy thrives among the disadvantaged,' says Harvey Cox, taking their imaginings to be nearer to the gospel than the wisdom of the sophisticated; 'the poor inherit the kingdom of God'.⁴ Yet there must have been a leadership element, and surely this would include the clergy. A study of the folk religion in one area of France in the sixteenth century describes it as 'sustained and embellished by an élite'.⁵ If this proposition applies generally, we are swung nearer to the other broad alternative of Vauchez; the conversion of Europe had been superficial, and medieval religion had been Christian in a 'coarsened version adapted to a traditional rural civilization'. To Muchembled,⁶ this was a 'totally coherent popular culture', a version of the world 'superficially Christianized but fundamentally magic'. Strange forces operated; witchcraft was as real as salvation; the village community, by its beliefs and practices, defines itself as a unit, placating unseen powers to serve its agrarian needs, absorbing its potentially rebellious youth into the structure of routine, and binding itself in spirit to the dead who have gone before. Without accepting Muchembled's insistence on 'coherence' or his excessive subordination of religious inspirations to social needs, Jean Delumeau⁷ accepts the folk religion of the Middle Ages as an undemanding synthesis of magical and Christian elements, and traces the outlines of the process by which it became the religion of individual choice. The change began in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the mendicant Orders attempting to bring the people to a simple heartfelt Christianity. With the Renaissance, a written urban culture arose, a blend of Christianity and humanism, in sharp contrast to the dark ocean of rural, oral culture. From the Christian intellectualism of the Renaissance arose the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, striving to bring about individual conversions as against the old mass conformity tranquillized by belief in a collective salvation. The argument used was the only one available for the general understanding: fear of individual judgement at the Last Great Assize. On this view, 'la religion populaire' of the historian's quest was the religion of both clergy and people in the Middle Ages, and in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries an élite of clergy and laity were attempting to carry the work of conversion to a new and higher plane.

In this historiographical debate there is an element of artificiality arising from the procedure of isolating 'la religion populaire' for dissection and analysis. For one thing, folk religion was evolving, and more rapidly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than before. It was not a geological stratum laid down in the Middle Ages

and unchanged ever since except by the erosion of reform: it was an organic growth continually renewing itself with more sophisticated means of expression. 'For the most part', writes Bercé, 'the rites (of the peasant culture) were not inherited from a distant past, but invented and introduced recently.'⁸ There are examples of conscious archaism imaginatively imposed on the rural milieu, like the activities of an entrepreneur in the 1780s introducing 'bals champêtres' in the parishes around Angoulême. There are examples of the oral culture identifying a saint for itself, like St Lénard becoming established in Brittany in the second half of the eighteenth century; he was a converted highwayman who offered to push a cart out of a rut and was killed by the waggoner, who thought it was just another of his hold-ups.⁹ But more significant were the many new confraternities and pilgrimages invented, new relics obtained and revered, new shrines and chapels founded. These preserved the essence of the old observances credited with the power to heal the body and avert natural calamities, though now they were often devised and directed by the clergy. By a converse process, popular religion was self-generating,¹⁰ annexing the very efforts of the reforming clergy for its own instinctive purposes and satisfying popular psychological needs. The theologians and, in their wake, the bishops of the eighteenth century were making devotion Christo-centric and sacramental, but the Host displayed for adoration or carried in procession could be regarded as a magical object, a superior kind of relic. That was why, in 1729, the bishop of Grasse declared: 'a single mass listened to devoutly is more capable of drawing the blessings of God upon this town than many benedictions'.¹¹ Perhaps the next step in the historiography of 'la religion populaire' is to elucidate how, from the refined and intellectualized Christianity fostered by the reforming clergy, the folk imagination of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has drawn a new popular version suited to the mass industrial society—with the functions of promoting decent conduct, blessing births and weddings, and giving assurance of a life after death irrespective of any religious practice and with only rudimentary beliefs.

Concentration on popular religion as an entity in itself has another drawback. In the eighteenth century, the clergy were still closely integrated with the people, and the consideration of the actions of either in isolation ends up in unreality. There were multitudes of nuns, friars, and unbeneficed priests who were as superstitious as the peasants and in continual touch with them. The extensive documentation of the tension between the clerical reform

movement and popular inertia gives a one-sided picture, for so often, in quiet undramatic and permanent everyday contacts, the story is one of friendship and clerical leadership. Many a curé was the oracle of the village and the adviser of his people in their battles with external authority. When bishops descended on reforming forays, there were parish priests who covered up the misdemeanours of their flocks—the prelate would soon be gone, and they had to live there. The curés who denounced traditional frolics got into the record, while those who joined in the fun passed unnoticed unless they drank too much and were caught. The doings of confraternities, dominated by lay interests and pilgrimages outside the village, escaping from the curé's domain, are the archetypal examples of 'la religion populaire', but what is the importance of picturesque and 'folkloric' incidents as against the round of everyday happenings—the gatherings in church and churchyard on Sundays, the catechisms, exhortations, the daily sound of the bells, the liturgical observances, the confraternities run by the clergy? For all their ingrained anti-clericalism, the peasants regarded the local priests as peculiarly theirs and as integrated in the community. In 1817, some Breton parishioners recorded a protest against the snobbery of the educated. 'Considering they know nothing of great matters and still less of Latin words they declare that they know only their plough and the usages of the locality; nevertheless, educated people do not have the right to regard them as savages, for we love God above all things, and our good king as ourselves, and we also love our rector.'¹² The anticlimax of the final clause is attractive: here at least are some exponents of 'la religion populaire' who do not propose to separate it from the religion of the clergy.

So far, the historiography of the religion of the masses has tended to equate it with superstition and the search for magical help in obtaining material blessings. Isolating it from the religion of the establishment tends to make it so, and obscures the contribution made by simple people to the spiritual content and continuity of the formalized religious cult. Within the confraternities, pilgrimages, and carnivals, a sense of collective salvation was enshrined, an aspect of Christian truth which the stern doctrine of individual responsibility tended to forget. So too the simple loyalty to the person of Jesus, without the grandeur of the sacraments or the insight of the mystics to inspire it. At the Jesuit *collège* of Pont-à-Mousson early in the eighteenth century, the prize-day Passion play seemed doomed, as the parents of Judas forbade him to take part, and the other parents followed suit, deeming the role an insult to the family honour. So a

peasant boy was given money to dress up and appear in the theatre, with nothing to say but 'Ave Rabbi'. But when Jesus began upbraiding him for his treason, in elegant French verse, Judas threw down his fee and rushed off the stage. 'I never ever thought of betraying you,' he cried; 'it's *ces bougres de Jésuites* who gave me an écu to come here.'¹³ With all its limitations, popular religion provided a counterweight to the harsh and intelligent theology of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, and an encouragement to the pietistic thinkers who were to rediscover the simplicity of the gospel of love.

Theologians have tried to define religion as concerning 'only those things whose purpose and goal is God'.¹⁴ With puritanical severity, Kierkegaard went further, and rejected from it 'the complete inventory of churches, bells, organs, footwarmers, alms boxes, hearses etc.', a supercilious catalogue of things which have mattered to ordinary people, the furniture of an environment where they found fellowship and spiritual experience. From their side, the historians, for convenience of technical analysis, not principle, have divided religion into two echelons, establishment and popular, the latter being mostly concerned with factors the theologians would reject as lacking the austere godward orientation. Among these factors, the search goes on for origins—pagan, magical, folkloric, communal—all drifted together under a veneer of Christianization. In the following studies of the belief and practice of the people, there is no intention of searching for diverse origins or, indeed, of observing the concept of the two echelons. Religion is taken as including whatever contemporaries included in it. 'Nothing in a cult is a survival,' says a modern anthropologist; 'all is either lived or does not exist at all. A belief or a rite is not the combination of residues and heterogeneous innovations, but an experience with no significance outside its present coherence.'¹⁵

II Oral Culture and the Printed Word

At the end of the seventeenth century, 44 per cent of the men of the North and North-east of France could read, and 17 per cent in the South; the figures for women were about half. In the course of the eighteenth century, literacy raced ahead: on the eve of the Revolution the level stood at 77 per cent of the men in the North and 27 per cent in the South. The culture of the masses was changing from one shaped by oral tradition to one increasingly influenced by the printed word, at least at second hand. The literature of the

Enlightenment was available to few at any remove, but simpler reading could have an effect, perhaps out of proportion to its apparent naïveté. A pamphlet literature peddled by hawkers—*livres de colportage*—arose to cater for the widening market;¹⁶ the venture began early in the seventeenth century with the Oudot family at Troyes, and as demand rose, other printers at Caen, Rouen, Paris, and Lyon joined the trade, until by the end of the eighteenth century, 150 firms were involved. Their little books, designed to be read aloud by the fireside, consulted as vade-mecums and cherished as status symbols, were widely disseminated.

Enough of this literature survives, especially in the ‘Bibliothèque bleue’ of Troyes, to be conflated and analysed to form a picture of a mental universe. But to what particular reality did it correspond? It would be simplistic to say that it represented or recorded popular culture. For one thing, there was a culture of city dwellers and another of peasants, identical in some respects but not in all. It has been suggested that the literature of *colportage* was read first of all in the towns and only penetrated the countryside later;¹⁷ if so, was it essentially written for townsmen, and was its final effect to bind the two cultures together with the urban dominant? So far, the possibility is only speculative. But there is no doubt that these pamphlets destined for simple folk were written by the educated; as such, to some extent they must be a vulgarization of the ideas of an élite for mass consumption. Indeed, they have been taken to be part of ‘a system of repression’¹⁸ designed to destroy an older popular culture with its vision of the world only superficially Christianized, a vision essentially magical, oriented towards agrarian and sexual needs. In this extreme form, the hypothesis is implausible: it postulates coherence where there could only have been diversity—coherence in the ancient culture and also in the mass of pamphlets supposedly devoted to its repression. The printers published what would sell, and if they were mistaken initially, they would soon have found out. Besides, the hawkers knew their clientele, and they sold a great many other things beside reading material. The police found one, a Swiss, in the north of Burgundy in 1758 with two baskets on his back containing pipes, knives, scissors, pens, trinkets, five pairs of spectacles, twelve almanacs, ten copies of the *Petit Chrestien*, six of the *Chemin du ciel*, and six books of Hours.¹⁹ They were not likely to toil along the country lanes with merchandise which did not find a ready sale. There were limits to what could be printed, of course; for the State would not tolerate subversion, nor the Church blasphemy. Even so, it was not a literature subject to dictation of content. Tracts

indicating the influence of reforming clergy—explanations of indulgences to discomfort Protestants, handbooks of preparation for First Communion, guides to Christian living directed to the achievement of individual as against corporate salvation—are few. There is little evidence of clerical influence—indeed, the clergy tended to be suspicious of recommendations on religion and morals hawked around by irresponsible itinerants.²⁰ A group of theologians in 1713 condemned the ‘superstitious prayers in the tracts sold to peasants by the *colporteurs* and haberdashers who wander the countryside’. In 1789, curé Grégoire protested against the vogue of almanacs, especially the one printed at Bâle in 40,000 copies a year: ‘these absurd compilations perpetuate into the late eighteenth century the prejudices of the twelfth. For eight sols every peasant can furnish himself with this collection of palmistry and astrology, the product of bad taste and lunacy.’²¹

The *Bibliothèque bleue* was not an establishment invention; nor did it directly reflect the mind of humble people. It began with intelligent efforts to appeal to them, spurred on by the most decisive of motives, the desire for profit. It must have been in tune with popular concerns and aspirations. In the eighteenth century, the literature became a key ingredient in the folk mentality, partly because the writers had perfected their appeal, and partly because what they had said so far had been absorbed. By the mid-century the literature of *colportage* may be taken as bringing us near to the mentality of peasant and artisan France, though with two provisos. First, it was a commercial venture, which could not replace the influence of the clergy and the pressure on mind and imagination of the daily round of religious observances: it revealed what entertained simple people, but not the secret of their innermost feelings. Secondly, the struggle for existence dominated the lives of the humble, and the hawkers were selling a literature that was of the earth, earthy, yet essentially escapist.

There were a few tracts²² giving practical information and guidance—about cooking, gardening, calculating, playing cards, medical matters, how to converse politely, write a letter, make an offer of marriage. Much more numerous (about a quarter of the total) were books of entertainment, perhaps with a dash of moralizing; there were simplified versions of stories from classical antiquity and from the legendary side of French history; the doings of famous brigands were rehearsed, appreciated for robbing the rich but duly meeting with the severities of justice in the end; and there were accounts of the exploits of knights and crusaders, heroic figures

contrasting with so many of the nobles of the eighteenth century, living on privileges rather than adventuring in feats of arms. Some tales were enlivened with burlesque incidents and comic asides, and many had a dash of the mysterious and supernatural.

The largest single category of all, more than a quarter of the total, concerned religion. There was little specific Christian instruction—a few catechisms and, in the eighteenth century, a few handbooks of guidance for First Communion and Bible reading. Stories predominated—about the saints and about the life of Christ. The emphasis in the gospel story is on the Nativity and the Passion—in the Nativity, the reader is encouraged to identify his own poverty with that of the Holy Family and the shepherds; the three kings are admired from afar, and Christmas carols (to be sung to well-known tunes) enhance the festive atmosphere. The saints are attractive, not least because of the dissolute and pagan lives so many of them led before conversion; the only Father of the Church included is Augustine, no doubt for this reason. Their fights with devils make good reading, as do the supernatural interventions which save them—angels, voices, the vision of the stag with the crucifix on its horns for Saint-Hubert. It is not a dogmatic religion which is portrayed, nor yet a puritanical one, but a religion of picturesque splendour, offering supernatural aid in material things, heroic for a noble few, but reaching out to the poor and disinherited. In one of the most popular improving tracts, *L'Enfant sage à trois ans*, an omniscient child gifted with a total recall of Scripture, makes an egalitarian point on behalf of ordinary folk: 'the greater part of the peasants will be saved, for they live simply by the work of their hands, and the people of God are fed by their labours'.²³

There is also a significant, though marginally religious, content in the fiction, manuals of instruction, and other secular works. A few pamphlets deal with the occult. Direct descriptions of witchcraft would have been dangerous, and while most of the writings on the darker side of the supernatural were composed in the seventeenth century, the affairs of demon possession at Loudon and elsewhere raise no echo; nor are there references to the *Malleus maleficarum* or other classics of demonology. The curious information about how to converse with the dead in the cemetery after the midnight mass of Christmas is taken from a respectable medieval author. Astrology was popular, but mainly confined to calendars. The works on politeness make it a necessary observance of worldly *savoir-faire* to stand at the gospel of mass and to genuflect at the 'et homo factus est'—quite as important as remembering to attach one's hose to one's breeches.

The works of fiction have hermits abjuring the world as great favourites; so too are knights fighting for an ideal; by contrast, the wealthy clergy are censured. The general attitude to life is one of resignation, half Christian, half arising from the fact of universal hardship. Death's shadow is over us; the *danse macabre* epitomizes sadness at the inevitability of our approaching end, and grim satisfaction at the bringing down of the rich to dusty equality. Misery is our lot; great happiness is unattainable; marriage is a necessity and a comfort, but it is the tomb of great passions. If there is a final inference, it is not Christian: *carpe diem*, seize what happiness you can before the darkness closes in.

This picture of a sub-Christian mentality revelling in magic and haunted by pessimism is derived from a systematization of the ways of the imagination as they had been identified by commercial publishers. The mentality was real enough, but the peasants and artisans did not put all they read (or had read to them) into a single undifferentiated world outlook—none of us do. There is a time to dream or to laugh, a time to philosophize—or seem to do so—and a time to do the business of living. The tracts which were the least fun to read, those containing practical guidance, moral lessons, or prayers, would be those retained for consultation when the literature of dreams or buffoonery had become familiar or forgotten. Among the items kept available would be, more especially, the almanacs²⁴ throughout their current year—on the wall or in the drawer for reference. They were also the most significant productions of the trade of *colportage* by another test: many more of them were sold than anything else. Printed mainly in the literate North at Amiens, Arras, Lille, Troyes, and Reims (with a southern centre at Lyon), they went out in prodigious quantities—2,500,000 copies in the ten years between 1778 and 1788. Grégoire's censure of their superstitious vagaries was supercilious and Jansenist, for they always contained solemn Christian exhortations—'Let us render ourselves worthy of the bounty of the Almighty by offering him acceptable worship and by assiduous toil'.²⁵ The influence of straightforward, though simple and moralizing, Christianity in the tracts of the *Bibliothèque bleue* was greater than a synthetic view of content might seem to indicate.

Nor were the commercially produced publications the only ones available in the countryside. Missioners conducting evangelistic campaigns distributed leaflets, bought at 30 sous the hundred, on the meaning and efficacy of the various sacraments, on the sign of the cross, holy water, processions and prayers for various occasions, as well as warnings against swearing, indulgence in strong drink,

and other vices.²⁶ Curés knew they had a duty to encourage their parishioners to take up pious reading, however rudimentary. Charles Borromeo's instructions for priests, often cited and circulated in the eighteenth century, included directions to go round from house to house checking if religious handbooks were available.²⁷ In his synodal instructions of 1693, Noailles, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne, ordered his curés to 'ensure that in each family there is a work of piety in the vulgar tongue'. Parish priests provided abbreviated catechisms and, to help the laymen who joined in the instruction, sheets of catechism extracts; they would also lend out larger works of spirituality or liturgical instruction. In areas of France where patois was spoken, the reading coming the way of those whose understanding of official French was limited, came chiefly from the clergy. In the second half of the eighteenth century in the diocese of Vannes²⁸ they translated into Breton the catechism, the *Imitation*, the life of St Isidore (the patron of ploughmen), the *Pensez-y bien*, books of canticles, and tracts on the adoration of the Holy Sacrament. Peasants and artisans acquired for themselves the verses, handbooks of devotion, and accounts of miracles on sale at the pilgrim shrines—reading to refresh the memory and renew the resolutions taken, and also status symbols, along with the sacred trinkets and scapulars to assure the neighbours that the journey had been accomplished and the right to wear the cockle-shells established. Books on loan, tattered broadsheets, song-books, and pilgrim memorabilia usually did not figure on inventories, and thus a great deal of popular religious reading escapes the historical record. A curé who investigated the extent of popular reading at the beginning of the Revolution said that almost everything on the bookshelf of the peasant was concerned with religion, and well over half the titles were concerned with the liturgy—the Hours and collections of prayers and hymns for use in church.²⁹

Because the statistics for literacy were improving, it does not follow that those who could read did so habitually. Spelling out the words took away the immediacy and some of the pleasure; life was exhausting, privacy hard to come by, candles expensive; there were many diseases of the eyes, and spectacles were not available to everybody. Those who could read with facility were in demand to help those who disliked the laborious deciphering of texts. The transition from an oral to a literary culture was slower than the progress in the provision of reading matter. The better-educated were still the agents of the transmission of ideas and chose the material they wished to pass on. The clergy, the schoolmasters who depended on

them, the Sisters of Charity, the friars on their tours, pious heads of households who accepted the duty to instruct their servants, and the more prosperous peasants who read aloud to their children by the fireside were likely to favour more improving reading than the fables of the *Bibliothèque bleue*. Bishop Noailles's instructions of 1693³⁰ listed a few books for the laity to possess: François de Sales on confession and communion, Luis of Granada's guide to prayer, and three books covering social duties, Christian belief and preparation for death—*Le Bon Laboureur*, *Le Pédagogue chrétien*, and *Pensez-y bien*—which they were to read to their families on Sundays and saints' days. The bishop also ordered his curés to buy (on pain of fine for non-compliance) fifteen well-known titles, five being on meditation, five on problems of casuistry, three on the priestly life, one on the lives of the saints, and a catechism. Fortified with this library, they were to read to their people under the church porch on holidays, and get their schoolmasters to give readings after vespers. It is true that in the first half of the eighteenth century the number of books available in the villages was limited. Schoolmasters might well have only the necessary manuals for teaching arithmetic and writing and a few works of piety—some had none at all.³¹ A local notable would have more (a surgeon had forty books on his trade and forty more on religious subjects—perhaps forty was the average for a curé). But after mid-century most of the curés of any standing would have about a hundred volumes. There was more than enough here to pass on to the peasants and artisans in whatever time they had available, and those who were well disposed would gain some acquaintance with the *Imitation*, the *Chemin du ciel*, the *Sept Trompettes spirituelles*, the *Pensez-y bien*, the collections of canticles and carols, François de Sales on preparation for communion, and Letourneau's *De la meilleure manière d'entendre la Sainte Messe*.

Most significantly of all, the multitude of stories in the Bible were passed on, for in France, unlike Spain, Italy, and Portugal, many translations were available.³² From the end of the sixteenth century, there was the version 'of Louvain', so called because the theologians of that university had approved it, while the Sorbonne had condemned it. Then, from 1660 to 1670 came Denys Amelote's *Nouveau Testament*. In his preface, he cited a ruling of the Index to authorize his translation: 'laymen of capacity' were entitled to read the Scriptures, provided their clerical advisers granted permission. The Jesuits and a strong body of conservative opinion, however, still inclined to the 'Spanish' ruling of the Index, confining direct access to the text of the Bible and of the liturgy to the clergy, who would

expound their content to the people with judicious explanations. In the second half of the seventeenth century, however, the Jansenists of Port-Royal broke through all the Roman rules; they translated the Scriptures for all to read, declaring, on the authority of St Augustine, that study of the Bible was an indispensable preparation for receiving communion. They also worked from the Greek and Hebrew as well as the Vulgate, in spite of the ruling of the Council of Trent making the Vulgate the authentic text for doctrinal purposes—two translations of the Psalms came in 1665, one from the Latin, one from the Hebrew. In 1667 the New Testament ‘of Mons’ was published, based on the Vulgate ‘avec les différences du Grec’. Two years later came an immensely popular collection of stories about biblical personages, the *Histoire du Vieux et du Nouveau Testament*, popularly called *La Bible de Royaumont* or *Des Figures de la Bible*. Then, from 1672 to 1693, the translation of the entire Bible was completed by the thirty-two volumes of the Old Testament, rich with commentary. The drive to convert Protestants at the end of the century led to the abandonment of clerical reservations about the availability of the Scriptures, and thousands of copies of Amelote's New Testament were distributed (minus his preface, with its anti-Jansenist rigours and his reference to the Index). The massive translation programme of Port-Royal now opened the way for many other versions, including a Jesuit New Testament in 1696. Six years later, two more appeared, one by the most original biblical scholar of the age, Richard Simon, the other by Charles Huré, a friend of Port-Royal. Diverse translations followed in 1712, 1719, 1729 (this by Mésenguy, the Jansenist liturgiologist), 1752, and 1783. The printers of France and the Low Countries published the whole Bible in diverse formats, usually following the Port-Royal versions but with notes from other sources. Among these was the most sumptuous edition of the century, prepared by the Jansenist E. L. Rondet, *La Bible de Vence*, in fourteen volumes, appearing from 1748 to 1750 (and a new edition in seventeen volumes from 1767 to 1773);³³ there were extensive notes, mostly borrowed from Dom Calmet's laborious and detailed commentaries. Long before Pope Benedict XIV in 1757 authorized vernacular translations (provided they were approved at Rome and contained explanations by orthodox scholars), Frenchmen had the open Bible, though no doubt only a minority of them could afford to buy it.

Restif de la Bretonne describes the family Bible as ‘une Bible complète, un peu Gauloise’, but all the better for its bluff language, ‘as showing forth the truths contained in that most ancient of books

in a naïve and touching fashion'. As a boy, his father had found in it the 'laws of reason' by perusing Numbers and Deuteronomy, and the art of living in the Wisdom books. Of the gospels he preferred Matthew, possibly because it had the more interesting miracles. Abraham was his hero, and the family loved to hear him reading tales from Genesis, especially how Jacob won over Esau, the culture of the shepherd and herdsman reconciled to that of the hunter. As a boy, Edmond had met the extraordinary apparition of a man aged 105.

'Have you read the Bible, my child?'

'O yes, Father Brasdargent, and I know it almost by heart.'³⁴

Perhaps the stock of improving tales circulating among the peasants was as much derived from the more picturesque pages of Scripture as from the romances of the *Bibliothèque bleue*. In 1776 a soldier in Corsica was charged with looking through a pack of playing-cards during divine service; he was able to prove that each card represented a particular biblical personage, except one of the knaves, who was the sergeant.³⁵

The concept of a milieu of ideas and discourse which the historian can re-create by an analysis of the surviving reading matter, whether recreative or religious, goes only a limited way towards an understanding of the popular mind in the eighteenth century. Life was dominated by structures of conduct and rules of ritual concerning birth, youth, courtship, marriage, growing old, and dying; there were bonds of understanding concerning mutual help in times of plague or famine, and demarcation lines of feud between family groups and neighbourhoods; there were institutions of sociability—confraternities, pilgrimages, processions, carnivals, meetings in taverns and churches. These patterns of existence moulded men's minds. Life was communal and dominated by the immediacy of the struggle for survival and, beyond survival, a modest comfort. The clergy were preaching a religion of other-worldly spirituality to people who wanted their prayers answered and their hopes realized in the material here and now, a religion of individual responsibility before God's judgement in a social order inclining the mind to collective observances on the way to collective salvation. No doubt the people lived in the imagination in one world and hoped to be saved in the other, with the collective hope derived from their sociability moderating their curé's severities.

III Suppressing Frivolity and Holidays

In 1444 the Faculty of Theology of Paris approved of the spirit of carnival in religion, referring especially to the New Year 'Feast of Fools'. 'Foolishness is inherent in man,' said the doctors, 'and from the earliest times the Church has recognized this. Wine barrels burst if they are not opened from time to time to release the pressure. . . . We permit folly on certain days so that we may return with greater zeal to the service of God afterwards.'³⁶ There had always been a puritanical drive in Christianity going counter to this humane judgement, and the Reformation and Counter-Reformation ensured that it prevailed.

The clergy of the eighteenth century regarded themselves as the guardians of morals: this was their right and duty, because they represented the conscience of the State and because the holidays and leisure activities of the people were bound up with the observances of religion. A great deal of frivolity was censured as morally dubious, or as an insult to the solemnities of Christianity. Jacques-Nicolas Colbert, coadjutor archbishop of Rouen, who had risen by court favour yet enforcing indiscriminate austerity, issued a questionnaire to his curés in 1687.³⁷ 'Does anything indiscreet take place on Christmas night, Halloween, or at other seasons? Are games played in the cemetery? Are dances held? Do confraternities hold feasts on the day of their patron saint? In the celebration of marriages does anything contrary to due respect for the sacrament occur? Are second marriages dishonoured by mobs gathering to raise tumult and shout ridicule?' This period at the turn of the century saw the most zealous episcopal efforts to reform the cheerful licence and buffoonery of the countryside. Le Camus at Grenoble issued ordinances to keep the sexes apart during nocturnal celebrations, to end the *charivari* at weddings (the beating of pots and pans to express disapproval of ill-assorted marriages) and various games, including sledging (because the girls so often did not wear underclothes).³⁸ The bishop of Senes banned almost every traditional frivolity, including the racing of animals and dancing—a sin reserved for episcopal absolution.³⁹ With more justification, the bishop of Grasse prohibited the *jouvines de Carême*, a Lenten festival with beribboned boys and girls dancing as a preliminary to a competition for who could piss the furthest, to the encouragement of rolling drums.⁴⁰ In the company of many of his colleagues, Vialart de Hersé of Châlons-sur-Marne prohibited bell-ringing in honour of the departed on All Souls' night and, with a strange lack of understanding, forbade confraternities to

hold the annual auction of their processional mace.⁴¹ This was a painless way of raising funds, and the winner derived enjoyment from leading in processions, carrying the emblem (adorned with the effigy of the patron saint), and the privilege and obligation of attending all parish weddings, firing three musket shots in the air at the door of the house, then going in to the feast.

Throughout the eighteenth century, zealous bishops would discover some dubious festivity at visitation time and ban it. A curé, equally zealous, might take the lead in proposing action—in 1733, one complained of the ‘damnable custom’ of making the bride dance on the village square on coming out of the nuptial mass. Perhaps he had better reason to complain of the gangs of boys who went round at night looking through windows at the girls, though it was harder to do anything about it.⁴² In 1738 a curé of Poitou reported to diocesan headquarters: ‘the orders of Monseigneur the bishop have been religiously observed [this was concerning the celebration of the Annunciation], all the boys and girls have made confessions and received communion. There have been no dances, no violins, no gatherings in taverns, no election of a “king” or “queen”, and none of the disorders usual in similar cases.’⁴³ It must have been a dull affair—unless the curé was disingenuously diverting episcopal thunders from his parishioners. Another curé in 1774 prevented his young people from celebrating the first Sunday in Lent by rolling a cartwheel (provided by the most recently married man) down a hillside: he said it was ridiculous to do this in honour of St Pantaléon, who was martyred on a wheel, and that sometimes fences were broken.⁴⁴ No doubt, in future, less innocent pastimes were devised.

The most unreasonable of the attempts to bring religious decorum into popular customs⁴⁵ must surely have been the proposals to reform the *veillée*. On winter nights, the women and girls of the parish would gather round a hospitable fireside to spin, sew, or knit—and gossip—until two or three hours after midnight. At the end of the seventeenth century, a few curés were complaining of these ‘gatherings of the Devil’—ghost stories were told, instrumentalists dropped in to offer a tune, and, worst of all, young men sometimes insinuated themselves, with their trick of putting out the lights, ‘shewing thereby that their only aim is to accomplish works of darkness’. In 1701, the bishop of Toul issued rules for the conduct of *veillées* in his diocese.⁴⁶ They would begin at 6.30 p.m., and the door would be locked at 7 p.m.; thereafter, no one could come in but the clergy. Proceedings would commence with prayer and singing a canticle. At 8 p.m. there would be a quarter of an hour's pious reading. From 9

to 9.30 instruction in the catechism would be given by a lady named by the curé—the older women doing her sewing for her. At 10 p.m. there would be reading from a little book, *L'Instruction des filles* (which happened to have been written by the bishop himself). At 11.30 p.m. the session would end with a meditation on the mysteries of the rosary, and the girls would be taken home by their mothers. No doubt they went out into the night with a sigh of relief.

Bishops issuing thunderous ordinances leave an impression on the historical record; many, whether from tolerance, idleness, or lack of zeal, did little or nothing. A few were even glad to see people enjoying themselves—Jean-Felix Fumel, who reigned for long at Lodève, encouraged his flock to dance to the music of violins.⁴⁷ Some restrained fanatical curés; there is a nice case in 1667 of one of them replying to a parish priest who was asking for the suppression of a riotous festival—‘lock up your church, so they can't ring the bells; go away for the day and say your mass in a neighbouring parish church; and let them celebrate their bacchanalia as they please’.⁴⁸ On the other side were curés who did their best to conceal from censorious prelates the holiday pranks of their people—collusion between parish priests and parishioners was as common as co-operation with bishops in imposing discipline. Episcopal prohibitions were effective at first, but were soon forgotten; country folk went back to their old amusements and could be fertile in inventing new occasions for celebration. A festival of Sainte-Tulle in Haute-Provence, an affair of hilarity up to 1720, was abruptly changed under the menace of the great plague of that year—a procession of the inhabitants wearing rope halters round their necks was substituted. In 1724, the bishop changed it to a more orthodox procession with recitation of prayers; within a few years everything had relapsed into the old tradition, with dancing and volleys of musket shots.⁴⁹

Most of the disorders condemned by the reformers among the clergy took place on holy days and saints' days which were public holidays, the *fêtes chômées*, when work was forbidden. The secular authorities normally did not exert themselves to second the crusades of clerics against drink and revelry, but the royal government wholeheartedly supported bishops who proposed to demote some of these festivals and make them ordinary working days.⁵⁰ It was an axiom of the mercantilist government of Louis XIV that France should be made rich not so much by reducing expenditure on Court splendour and warfare, the king's great affairs, but by encouraging trade and constraining the common people to work harder. In 1669, Colbert sent a circular to the bishops asking them to reduce the number of

religious holidays in their dioceses.⁵¹ There was agreement in high society that this was a necessary reform. The curés, complained La Fontaine, are always diversifying their homilies with stories of some new saint—

Le mal est que dans l'an s'entremêlent des jours
Qu'il faut chômer: on nous ruine en fêtes.

By now, the bishops and educated clergy were identifying themselves with the official view, though for humanitarian and moral reasons rather than mercantilist ones. The peasants were miserably poor, and ought to be bettering themselves by toil rather than wasting their substance in riot. At the beginning of the century it was estimated that, according to diocese, the year only had from 250 to 270 working days.⁵² In the diocese of Rouen in 1700,⁵³ just after the archbishop had suppressed a number of the *fêtes chômées*, there were still thirty-four left—in addition, of course, to Sundays; this was a modest total, Bordeaux and Autun still having over seventy. Some of these holidays had more than twenty-four hours in them, since convention decreed the observance to begin with the first vespers. Working time lost was one thing, but the clergy were still more concerned because of the drunkenness and disorder going with excessive leisure. In 1710, in a pastoral letter cancelling a number of holidays, the bishop of Rennes⁵⁴ declared that saints' days had 'become, by the malice of the Devil and the corruption of the people, occasions for a multitude of transgressions', and he urged his flock to show devotion to the saints by prayer, processions, spiritual reading, and visiting the sick, rather than by the hollow gesture of idleness. Later in the century, eight curés wrote to the archbishop of Lyon urging him to fix the patronal festivals of all churches on the same day of the year; as it was, they said, crowds from all around converge on the celebrating parish, with pitched battles being fought between the youths of the various villages: 'these days are the most dangerous rock of shipwreck for the morals of young people'.⁵⁵ The multiplicity and diversity of saints' days also gave rise to strange contrasts on either side of complex diocesan boundaries. Expeditions of revellers could go across, seeking excuses for their excesses, and travellers were confused; as late as 1801, it was said that the inhabitants of Pont-à-Mousson could avoid most fast days by crossing and re-crossing the bridge between the jurisdictions of the bishops of Toul and Metz.⁵⁶ The *fêtes chômées*, indeed, presented the curés with two contrasting and impossible tasks. They were supposed to prevent their people from working. This was out of the question if the

harvest or the hay were in danger, and it was unrealistic to object to traders hawking their wares at the chief times when their customers were free to gather to buy. The secular courts did not take kindly to applications to prevent the lower orders from being usefully occupied—they would complain, as the parlement of Paris once minuted, of the ‘*prétentions déplacées des curés*’.⁵⁷ On the other hand, when the parishioners left their fields and flocks in honour of the saint, they celebrated with strong drink and brawling. Either way, parochial discipline could not be upheld, and the authority of the *curé* was undermined.

There were also intellectual and devotional considerations involved. The Maurists and the Bollandists had raised questions of historicity: how certain were the stories of the doings of the saints—indeed, what guarantee was there that some of them had ever existed? One of the well-worn jokes of the century concerned St Denis; after his execution, he had carried his severed head for a league to the spot where he wished to be buried—a whole league! In these sorts of stories ‘*c’est toujours le premier pas qui coûte*’.⁵⁸ During the seventeenth century, bishops on their visitations had weeded out the most dubious examples. In 1647, the bishop of Rennes had found a chapel of ‘*Saint-Vénier*’, presumably Venus, for a woman with naked breasts was carved above the door. Ingeniously, the dedication was changed to St Agathe, the Sicilian martyr whose breasts had been cut off, and the chapel became a place of pilgrimage for nursing mothers.⁵⁹ But there were still doubtful dedications left for eighteenth-century visitations to detect. In mid-century, the bishop of Grasse found one of his churches dedicated to St Pandoise. Having enquired in Paris of ‘highly qualified persons’ and discovered that Pandoise had been a pagan divinity, he ordered the parishioners to change to the Assumption of Our Lady.⁶⁰ There was also a high theological consideration working against the plethora of saints’ days, for they exercised a centrifugal pull on the piety of ordinary folk, while the preaching of the clergy was directed to encouraging Christo-centric devotion. This was evident in the parish churches of Provence. Here, the clergy had followed the policy of excluding the old therapeutic and local saints and dedicating the most splendid altars and those nearest the east end to the Virgin, St Joseph, and, above all, Christ—to his five wounds, the descent from the cross, his baptism with the Holy Spirit. The Virgin was now portrayed not alone, but with the child Jesus in her arms. St François de Sales had spoken of the earthly Trinity of Mary, Joseph, and their all-powerful Son, and Joseph was the patron of the dying

and of souls in Purgatory, for he had died in Mary's arms with Jesus beside her, the gates of light thrown open before him. The believer was to share in the risen life of Christ through the Eucharist—thus the favourite title for a confraternity as prescribed by reforming bishops was the ‘Saint-Sacrement’, and the high altars were to focus on the recollection of the divine gift at the Last Supper. This Christo-centric and Eucharistic theology explains why the bishops, in the second half of the century, encouraged devotion to the Sacré-Cœur, in spite of the ridicule of the philosophes and Jansenist hostility to *cordolâtrie*. It was a cult arising as an expression of penitence for the neglect of the Sacrament of the altar by so many Christians, its theology from John Eudes, and its devotional fervour from the visions of Marie Alacoque; it was taken as a more direct and dramatic way to the central Christian allegiance than prayer directed through the multitude of saints and martyrs.⁶¹ With this contrast in mind, the bishop of Saint-Pons referred to the cult of the Sacré-Cœur as a means of salvation appropriate to draw the people away from the ‘funestes routes où ils s'étaient égarés’.⁶²

Throughout the eighteenth century, episcopal ordinances, motivated by scholarship or devotion, hatred of immorality or regret at the consequences of idleness, reduced the number of the *fêtes chômées* observed in the particular diocese. One ingenious way was to switch certain feasts to the nearest convenient Sunday, thus suppressing a holiday without invidious repudiation of some locally revered character.⁶³ Another was to separate the holy day from its accretion of traditional profane observances. Thus, in 1762, the archbishop of Rouen put St Romain on the third Sunday of October, leaving the great fair named after him in occupation of the traditional twenty-third of the month.⁶⁴ In 1777 and 1778, the parlement of Paris helped by renewing royal ordinances of the past prohibiting fairs and markets on Sundays and saints' days, and ordering them to be held on the day after the festival.⁶⁵ Another reform was to discourage the custom of starting the feast at the first vespers, taking it as running from midnight to midnight. But the chief resort of bishops was simple abolition. After the bout of zealous activity at the beginning of the century, there were episodic selective suppressions: in Bordeaux in 1740, Autun in 1753, Orléans in 1763, Rouen in 1767. In 1778 a pastoral letter of the archbishop of Paris ending thirteen holiday festivals (including Holy Innocents' Day) sparked off a rush of suppressions elsewhere.⁶⁶ Mgr Partz de Pressy of Boulogne, reducing his *fêtes chômées* to twenty-two, said he regretted the necessity, but these days of idleness were driving the poor deeper into

misery and were besmirched ‘by the profane joys of Babylon, lewd songs and prohibited entertainments’.⁶⁷ In 1781, the bishop of Toul cancelled four full and one half-day holidays because of their ‘monstrous intermingling of sacred and profane’, and for good measure abolished the customary *fassenottes* on the Sundays of Lent—meetings when boys and girls played the game of ‘who will marry whom?’—‘marriage being a sacrament and not to be a subject of jesting’.⁶⁸ Five years later, the bishop of Besançon reduced the saints to a minuscule place in the calendar: only six remained (four biblical, two local), the other fifteen religious holidays all being concerned with the central core of the faith (Christmas, Easter and its Monday, the Ascension, Pentecost and its Monday, Trinity, the Circumcision, the Epiphany, Corpus Christi, and the five feasts of Our Lady). Meanwhile, the general pattern of individual bishops acting independently had been broken by the meeting in synod of the twelve bishops of the province of Tours in 1780. Here, they agreed on a common list of feasts of obligation, involving some dioceses making a greater number of erasures than others. The policy of the episcopate, they declared, should be ‘to fix the number of feast-days in proportion to the needs of the people: if fervour progresses, to multiply them, but if piety grows cold and hard times bring poverty, to hand back some of these days of solemn observance to toil for the benefit of society, in so far as the concession seems necessary’.⁶⁹ It was an austere code for leisure. When the economy was on the upturn, the people should be allowed holidays, not otherwise; provided they proposed to behave with piety and propriety on these occasions, they should have more of them, but if they just wanted to enjoy themselves, they should be allowed as few as possible.

IV Miracle Restricted and Providence Refined

It was axiomatic to the men of the Enlightenment that the common people were superstitious, and the literate classes rejoiced in stories of their stupidity. In 1718, the Petit Pont in Paris, a wooden bridge crowded with houses, was burned down, and a number of soldiers and friars engaged in fire-fighting lost their lives. It all happened, the story went, because a woman whose son had been drowned resorted to a traditional formula to find his body, setting afloat a bowl containing a lighted candle and a wafer stamped with the image of St Nicolas of Tolentin; this divinatory device fired a hay barge which

drifted downstream and set the bridge ablaze.⁷⁰ Gossip from mid-century recounts how 4,000 Parisians gathered before the statue of the Virgin and Child in the parish of Sainte-Marguerite; a procession had failed to do her due honour, and she had therefore changed the child Jesus to the other arm; sellers of eau-de-vie and other refreshments hastened to be of service to the cause of pious zeal.⁷¹ A provincial account in 1785 tells how a Montgolfier balloon released from Albi came down near the village of Lacune; the women said it ‘contained a tutelary deity of the mountains’, while their husbands said it was ‘an infernal divinity who would ruin the crops’—until a tailor who had seen one before took an axe to it.⁷² Mercier, watching the files of Parisians doing the Holy Week tour of the Stations of the Cross on Mont Valérien, tells how one of them believed this was, indeed, the original hill of Calvary.⁷³ These four stories are related by a rich anticlerical lawyer, a pious but sceptical duke, the bourgeois mayor of a commune rejoicing in his hour of literary fame, and a journalist avid for copy. No doubt their narratives lost nothing in the telling. But questions arise. Was the poor woman really expecting to find her son's body, or was she just doing the traditional thing expected of her, in a last gesture of affection and despair? How many people believed that the statue of the Virgin had changed, and for how long were they convinced? How many came just for the fun? The Montgolfier balloon was strange and menacing, but did the peasants really express themselves in terms worthy of a pastoral eclogue? Mercier had found a single simpleton in a crowd, and had made the most of him. One can only guess at what went on in the minds of the people, what they believed, and with what degree of conviction. The comic anecdotes recounted by the educated relied for their effect on the stereotype of the dim-witted multitude; there was no room for nuances. The revolutionaries inherited this contempt for the intelligence of ordinary folk, and organized iconoclastic forays of demystification to enlighten them. They took the statue of St Vincent Ferrier from the main gate of Vannes to show that it did not prevent the river flooding, replacing it with an effigy of a sans-culotte with *bonnet rouge* and pipe; the one image had been an encouragement to prayer and reliance on Providence, the other to militancy and reliance on the politicians of the Convention.⁷⁴

Folklore is full of picturesque quirks of the popular imagination, but what depth of meaning was there in superstitious ideas so evidently relished? Did young men in Brittany think drowning or hanging awaited them because the old women of the village had

seen a cloud cross the moon when they were born?⁷⁵ Did the peasant who forgot to sleep on his left side at the new moon anticipate disaster? When the wives of sailors swept the dust of the chapel of Roscoff in the direction from which their husbands ought to return, did they feel confident in their safety?⁷⁶ Did the vision of a watery grave flit across the minds of sailors because they saw a priest approaching as they raised the anchor? This was a social order in which anarchy was kept at bay because certain things were always done in certain ways and certain patterns of deference were always observed. The way to live was to conform to established wisdom. The question of belief as outright conviction is hardly relevant in the context. To sweep the dust of the chapel the opposite way would be a gratuitous defiance of normality, the throwing away of some possible protection; this did not mean, however, that the correct action established a glow of certainty. The question of belief as conviction becomes more relevant when matters of desperate immediate import were involved—serious illness, the ruin of the crops, a plague menacing the cattle. Then, a committed insistence came into traditional observances, though in degrees differing according to the person—real hope and yearning, trying everything just in case something worked, performing ritual actions to occupy the mind, making an outward gesture in communion with other people. The historian can rarely be sure; for the evidence generally comes from clerics and intellectuals observing from outside.

The clergy wished to encourage belief in answers to prayer and in miracle, but everything had to be done in the cadre of the Church. According to Bergier, the master theologian of the latter years of the *ancien régime*, two of the dominant passions of the mind, fear and cupidity, drive men to superstition.⁷⁷ Fearful of the loss of their crops and the other good things of life, and anxious to increase them, they invent gods, ceremonies, and incantations, or listen to charlatans who do it for them. So powerful is this drive to superstition, ‘that it is absolutely necessary for God himself to prescribe, from the very beginning of the world, all the practices of worship due to him, and to forbid those that can be a source of crime and error’. Thus he gave instructions on sacrifices to the Patriarchs and the detailed ceremonial law to Moses, then finally established the definitive version with the teaching of Christ and his apostles, ‘the worship in spirit and in truth, suitable for all peoples to the end of time’. But the Protestant argument that every detail of this worship must be found in Scripture is erroneous, for the Church has inherited authority to adjust to changing conditions, like adding pomp and picturesque

ceremonies to win the barbarians of the fifth century and the South American Indians of the sixteenth. Outside this established system given in the teaching of Christ and his apostles, as modified by the continuing regulatory power of the Church, would-be religious practices are illegitimate. The pastors of Christianity have the task of arguing against and suppressing the superstitious observances which the populace, in its cupidity, fear, and credulity seek to add to the authentic deposit. Many pastors, says Bergier, face persecution when they attempt to do so.

Clerical witnesses in the parishes complain of this hostility. ‘The folk of Chartres’, said a canon of the place in 1730, ‘are idle, worldly, avaricious, jealous, very credulous about miracles and legends, attaching themselves to the externals of religion and regarding all those who try to instruct them as innovators.’⁷⁸ In 1781 a curé of the diocese of Reims refers to ‘the coarse religion of the countryside’. ‘It is dangerous’, he said, ‘for a curé to try to detach himself from it, for the peasant, who can put up with a condemnation of his morals, never forgives a priest for having ridiculed his gothic customs—he considers they are integral to his beliefs.’⁷⁹ It was difficult, but the bishops expected their parish clergy to be vigilant; the synodal statutes of the diocese of Dol (1741) order them to ‘watch that nothing happens in their parishes which smacks of popular superstition or tends to bring our mysteries into contempt’—instances given are the demands of peasants for masses on behalf of the health of their cows or their use of images for the purpose.⁸⁰

The Church's control over the credulity of the people when claims to miracles were made was officially organized in a precise routine. The stories generally came from the milieu of monasticism or from the people; a curé might go along out of conviction or zeal to see his church become important; even so, there would always be difficulties with the diocesan authorities. By a ruling of the Council of Trent, a miracle could not be proclaimed unless the bishop recognized it. The process of verification was detailed and formal. In the diocese of Tournai⁸¹ there were a number of miraculous cures in the first half of the seventeenth century, all associated with some newly founded monastic house and the installation of a new statue or the acquisition of relics. In every case, a petition was made to the archbishop, with sworn depositions before notaries and attestations from doctors attached. The legal fees could be high, and the petitioners were responsible for them. Thus the chronicle of one monastery records enviously that its miracles had never been

officially guaranteed 'because of the expenses and costs which arise from these approbations of authenticity'. Once a prima-facie case had been made, the archbishop set up a commission of enquiry, choosing canons and curés as members, never monks. After some months, the commission would report, and the prelate then either declared the cure 'true and miraculous' or rejected it, though there could be an intermediate decision to allow the publication of the story without vouching for it. These remained the standard procedures during the following century.

Normally, a bishop would be inclined to sceptical restraint, vigilant to guard against random prodigies occurring outside the control of the clerical establishment. In 1740, the ecclesiastical court of Cambrai confiscated advertisements of a miracle being hawked about the diocese: 'without denying that remarkable things took place at the abbey of Saint-Hubert by the intercession of that saint . . . and without doubting the omnipotence of God,' said the ecclesiastical lawyers, 'we are entitled to doubt miracles put about by an unknown person . . . acting without authority'.⁸² Given that the claim of miracle arose from reputable people within the clerical establishment, the episcopal investigators would have to be sure they allowed no flaws in procedure, no awkward details left floating which might give sceptics cause to scoff; there was a great deal to be said for delay, waiting to see how enlightened opinion was moving, and whether the initial enthusiasm of the pious would wane. This seems to have been the attitude of the archbishop of Paris in dealing with a case in 1785–6. A curé of his diocese called on him to recognize the miraculous healing of one of his parishioners. This was in June 1785, and the medical reports sent in were convincing. Even so, by 1 September the archbishop had still not set up an enquiry: 'there are formalities to be observed, and I have to gather precise information before ordering a juridical investigation'—besides, he said, the girl in question, though apparently cured of paralysis in the right leg, remains lame in the left. M. de Vauvilliers of the Academy of Inscriptions, a converted libertine who had taken up the case, poured scorn on the episcopal hesitation: 'she hasn't obtained what she didn't ask for'.⁸³

Besides looking at the evidence, a bishop would also reflect on the doctrinal implications of guaranteeing a particular event to be miraculous—in 1734, the bishop of Arras, investigating a wondrous healing in a Jesuit church, called in four doctors of theology, and obtained an opinion from the Sorbonne.⁸⁴ The sort of theological point most often at issue is reflected in a statement of the bishop of

Amiens in 1661 refusing to declare that a conflagration in the city had been extinguished by the presence of a Carmelite scapular. 'Apart from the fact that this favourable occurrence ought rather to be attributed to the presence of the very august Holy Sacrament, it appears that the extinction of the fire must be related to natural causes alone—the fire was stifled by lack of air.'⁸⁵ If the application had proposed to magnify the splendour of the Eucharist, it would have been taken more seriously. This fitted with the theological view of objects which had been solemnly blessed and dedicated—bells, ornaments, scapulars, banners, pilgrim staves: 'creatures can convey no virtue by themselves . . . it must come from God . . . This is assumed with relation to objects the Church uses for the administration of the sacraments. But for the others, the Church does not attribute virtue to them except in so far as it pleases God to confer it, to recompense the faith of those who use them with the respect one ought to have for objects blessed and consecrated by the prayers of the Church.'⁸⁶ It was the duty of the clergy to lead the faithful on beyond relics and sacred objects to the central truths; that is why attending mass, preferably with confession and communion, was insisted on as the necessary culmination of resort to intermediary aids to intercession.

There was also a crucial apologetical consideration inclining churchmen to hesitate before crying miracle. The bishop of Auxerre invoked it in 1770, when rejecting a request from one of his curés (suspect in any case because he was a Jansenist): 'out of respect for the basic miracles on which the certitude of our Holy Religion rests, we must not lightly be prodigal with this sacred title in regard to facts of a different nature'.⁸⁷ A multitude of inessential marvels would devalue the necessary ones, and insistence on implausible happenings would burden the conscience of believers to the point that they begin to wonder about the veracity of the foundation truths. 'Piety does not oblige a man of good sense to believe all the miracles reported in the *Légende dorée* and the *Métaphraste*,' said the *Logique* of Port-Royal; 'but I maintain that all men of good sense must recognize as true the miracles Saint Augustine recounts in his *Confessions* and the *City of God*'.⁸⁸ An intellectual parish priest made a similar distinction, setting the New Testament apart from legends about the minor saints; the gospels, he added, 'form only a small book and there are only a few scattered miracles in them, coming on appropriate occasions'.⁸⁹ He was minimizing the number of New Testament miracles rather than boasting of them. Even in the case of events described in Scripture, churchmen avoided head-on collision

with the spirit of the age, and did not demand uncritical acceptance. Dom Calmet, a notoriously credulous apologist, declared his belief in all the 'appearances of spirits' in the Old and New Testaments, 'without however claiming that we are not allowed to explain them and reduce them to natural and credible occurrences, taking away from them the excessively marvellous elements which might shock enlightened people'.⁹⁰ The multiplication of prodigies enlarged the target for the shafts of sceptics and anticlericals. Voltaire took the 'prophets' of the Cévennes and the convulsionists of Paris as indications of how Christianity could have begun: 'l'enthousiasme commence, la fourberie achève'.⁹¹ Barbier, commenting on the visions of a lunatic sect in 1734, drew a general sceptical moral: 'if this happens in our day, in a sophisticated, irreligious, debauched century, there is no need to be surprised at the effects of wishful thinking (*prévention*) on ordinary intelligences and how, in every age, the various religions won their way'.⁹²

Orthodox apologists faced almost inextricable confusions when they tried to explain the Jansenist miracles of the first half of the century. The Enlightenment method would have been to rationalize them to vanishing-point along the lines proposed by the abbé de Saint-Pierre when he urged the Academy to offer a prize 'for the best explanation of the prodigies recounted in the books of the Greeks and Romans and of the so-called miracles of Protestants, schismatics and Mohammedans, by the laws of nature and the extraordinary effects of the imagination'.⁹³ He was omitting Catholicism from the investigation, but the findings of the prize essay would have been dangerously relevant. It was useless hammering the Jansenists with arguments equally damaging to orthodoxy. Besides, the Jansenist healings were not rural wonders witnessed by naïve peasants, but urban phenomena vouched for by educated laymen and theologians, and published by lawyers and skilled propagandists. Some seemed to be based on irrefutable evidence—like the cure of the wife of the cabinet-maker La Fosse from a flux of blood at the Corpus Christi procession of the parish of Sainte-Marguerite in 1725. Two sceptical lawyers, Marais and Barbier, believed in it. 'For long God has not performed miracles', said Barbier; 'but we had one in Paris last May at the Fête-Dieu procession, and it is so well authenticated that even I am obliged to believe it, and that is saying something'.⁹⁴ Since the Jansenist thaumaturgy could not be dismissed as fraudulent, the orthodox line (following St Augustine) was to accept the proposition that heretics and pagans could indeed work miracles, then to speculate about the reasons why God allowed

them. There was scriptural warrant—the sorcerers of Egypt showing off before Pharaoh, the witch of Endor conjuring up the shade of Samuel for Saul, and the assurance that at the Last Judgement there would be damned souls crying to the Lord, ‘we cast out devils in your name’.⁹⁵ Going beyond Scripture, Bishop Belsunce of Marseille, enraged at the story of a boy cured of his blindness by the intercessions of a Jansenist, declared that ‘Judas himself worked miracles’.⁹⁶

These embarrassing phenomena seemingly vindicating the unjust were variously explained. Possibly it was the faith of the sufferer which earned his cure, not the prayers of the impostor. Or the schismatic may have earned the right to perform wonders by the austerity of his life, though he would be lost at the Last Judgement when he would be told that he ‘had received his reward’. Help from the underworld might be involved; the fallen angels may be assumed to have retained some of their supernatural powers, and may be intervening in the world to mislead the credulous. An utterly sinister possibility was that God was giving the heretic healing powers to harden his heart and drive him down to final condemnation. Or, more consonant with the divine love, we may regard God as acting with uncalculating generosity, even as he makes his sun to shine and his rain to fall on both the just and the unjust.

Granting one or more of these possibilities was operating, how do we distinguish the true Christian miracles from those of impostors?⁹⁷ As Gerson had observed, if a great prince allows his seal to be used by people outside his control, how shall we recognize an authentic document? The miracles of the true Church do not come randomly; they come when they are needed, to found the faith in the first place—showing forth the mission of Christ, with a special and limited continuing dispensation to his apostles. Afterwards, they will come to affirm the major doctrines. God will work miracles when he wishes to make his will clearly known and to set up a new order of things; there is a driving purpose to ‘confirm and establish the rules of faith and morals’.⁹⁸ This was an austere and limiting principle; there was, however, a potentially dangerous possibility allowed—miracles might be used in a subsidiary way ‘to justify God's servants or to try them’.⁹⁹ But whatever the purpose behind these divine interventions, there were simple tests to verify them: they must never defy reason or lead to bizarre practices; they are always associated with people of holy life; they have ‘a singular dignity about them’, appealing to ‘men of discernment’; and they fit into an admirable harmony and economy of concepts.

Since there were so many possibilities of subjective convictions and disagreements,¹⁰⁰ the theologians were tending to avoid using the argument from miracles to convince unbelievers. St Augustine had declared that ‘charity is superior to prodigies’; and a modern writer had added: ‘a good life is the first of all miracles’, and, indeed, the only one necessary to proceed to a canonization, another even held the conversion of a sinner to be a greater wonder than the creation of the universe. Miracles were limited in number, tied into the whole economy of salvation rather than episodic and random, valuable as demonstrations, but not certain proof.

At some time or another in our lives, however comfortable or predictable they have been, we all yearn for a ‘miracle’, a recovery against the odds, an extra meed of time. Existence for the mass of people in eighteenth-century France was not comfortable, and certainly not predictable. One subject of prayer was universal and obsessive: everyone yearned for preservation from illness or for cure when disaster came, and women more especially wanted safe delivery in childbirth, a time of fearful hazard. General resort was made to the invocation of healing saints and pilgrimages to strategic shrines. As for pilgrimages, the clergy tried to keep them under their control, and mostly succeeded so far as mass excursions were concerned, but they were not happy with the multitude of minor unsupervised shrines and about the allocation of therapeutic saints to specific illnesses: Laurent and Lazare to burns because they were tortured by fire, Eutrope and other decapitated martyrs to migraine, Agathe to breast tumours because the pagans had cut off her breasts, Sulpice to alleviation of pain (for pain is a *supplice*), Marguerite to difficulties in childbirth, Hubert and Denis to hydrophobia, Jean to epilepsy, Loup to convulsions, Claire to maladies of vision, Roch to plague, Apollinaire to toothache, Méen to scabies. It was hard to fit this code of popular intercession into any scheme of theological logic or historical *vraisemblance*; even so, at least the memory of saints and martyrs and of their heroism was preserved. The same could not be said of the people's unsupervised remedial practices on the margins of official religion. These for the most part came under the educated clergy's rubric of ‘superstition’; faced with unhappiness, says Canon Bergier, the common people will believe in anything promising an escape, an alleviation, ‘acting more from the fear of the ills of the present life than for those of the life to come, a matter of medicine, not of religion’.¹⁰¹ According to peasant lore, a pregnant woman did well to remain seated during the gospel at mass, and at home by the fireside she should call on the three Magi of the Nativity, Gaspar,

Melchior, and Balthasar, to intercede for her.¹⁰² After the birth, she should not bake bread until she has undergone the rite of purification, and if her milk dries up, she should offer a cheese to St Pantaléon. Every house had its frond of greenery blessed on Palm Sunday: dipped in water, it produced a drink to cure colic. To relieve itching, read the gospel for the day of St Fiacre, holding an unlighted candle. Other afflictions could be cured by performing arcane ritual actions while hearing mass; during the Sanctus, shutting the eyes relieved aching fingers, and lying down improved the appetite; for headaches say the Pater backwards during the Elevation. There were also incantations linked with the Passion story; at the onset of fever, say 'I do not shake or tremble', the legendary reply of Jesus to a Jew who accused him of showing fear on the way to Golgotha, and for burns say five Aves and five Paters, adding 'Let fire lose its heat as Judas became pale when betraying Jesus'. For preservatives against illness there were charms and amulets, preferably blessed at some pilgrim sanctuary. A variant was the spiritual letter, no doubt commercially printed, carried on the person. In 1751, there was a letter from Christ himself, 'recently found by a saintly monk at a roadside calvary two leagues from Paris', effective for warding off evil spirits, pestilence and the hazards of childbirth; ostensibly it was guaranteed by two doctors of the Sorbonne.¹⁰³ In the Vendean civil war, the peasant guerrillas carried a 'letter of the Holy Virgin copied from the original conserved in the reliquary in the great city of Messina', promising immunity from fire and water and from sudden death without the sacraments. There was comfort in myths of invulnerability.¹⁰⁴ Suffren, the admiral, despised them. His brother, the bishop of Sisteron, had given him a felt hat which the sailors said gave him immunity from musket shots. Sailing into battle in 1782, one of the cannoneers repeated the tale in his hearing, so he threw the hat overboard.¹⁰⁵ One of the most potent talismans for immunity was the key of the parish church, especially for warding off the bites of mad dogs and the ensuing torments—the most unpredictable of the pestilences that could strike by noonday. The formula was to grip the key and keep the mouth open during the singing of the Sanctus at a requiem. If the worst happened, and the dreaded symptoms appeared, placing the key on the head with readings from the New Testament was recommended, though it was probably best to be escorted on a pilgrimage to a shrine of St Hubert.¹⁰⁶ The clergy, guardians of the key, had a say in the administration of these practices, perhaps attempting to spiritualize them, though occasionally with an eye to profit. In the church of Saint-Léger-sur-Bevray,

the confraternity of Saint-Hubert sold a concoction of aniseed, and from Saint-Méen came the 'eau de Gaël' prepared by the parish priest from a secret formula passed on from rector to rector; bottles of these remedies for hydrophobia circulated well outside the dioceses of their origin.¹⁰⁷

If by such means human beings are healed and preserved, why not animals? Country curés were often asked to bless the livestock. There were set prayers in the diocesan *Rituels*; in 1745, a curé near Autun, alarmed by news of a bovine epidemic, improved on the book by reading the *Miserere* over the cattle.¹⁰⁸ In a famous pastoral letter, Loménie de Brienne, archbishop of Toulouse, warned his people of the dangers of spreading infection by bringing the oxen together, even to give them a religious blessing—his text circulated in France and beyond, as a sort of manifesto of the Enlightenment. There was, however, a hygienic alternative: the clergy could consecrate little bags of salt to be hung around the necks of the beasts.¹⁰⁹ In a town under scrutiny by wits and sceptics, a parish priest might consider he needed episcopal warrant for extending liturgical benefits to brute creation; on 15 July 1789, the archbishop of Paris gave written permission to the curé of the Madeleine to go to the pens of a dealer supplying the butchery trade to bless the beef cattle as a prophylactic against disease. During the Terror, the document fell into the hands of Chaumette, who annotated it: 'monument of the superstition and of the stupidity of the priests of the eighteenth century'.¹¹⁰ For exorcisms, episcopal permission was supposed to be necessary,¹¹¹ though parish priests probably did what their farmers demanded without making a fuss. When in 1738 the town of Auxerre asked the cathedral chapter for a procession with exorcisms to get rid of the insects destroying the vines, the canons processed, but refused to exorcise.¹¹² By contrast, the bishop of Riez in 1767, in response to an appeal from the magistrates, fulminated an excommunication against the caterpillars swarming over the crops.¹¹³ A third possible ecclesiastical reaction to a plague of insects was exhibited by the eccentric archbishop of Arles in 1720, to the delight of the wits of Paris. The grasshoppers afflicting this diocese, he said, are a scourge sent as punishment for opposition to the bull *Unigenitus*, being creatures whose irresponsible jumping reflects the state of mind of erring Christians 'carried about by every wind of doctrine'.¹¹⁴

When natural disasters loomed, the clergy had to encourage divine intervention. A curé in his parish and a bishop in his episcopal city would rush to the scene of a fire to lead the saying of intercessions;

what was not allowed by the Church, though by popular demand it could happen, was bringing the Holy Sacrament to the edge of the conflagration to mark a boundary against the flames, or when there was a gale, to the sea-shore to allay the storm.¹¹⁵

When the sky was dark and cloudburst or hail might threaten the harvest, the curé was expected to take all spiritual precautions; it was more than his life was worth, said one of them, to be away from the parish on these occasions. To preserve the village and, more especially, its church, so expensive to repair, from being struck by lightning, the ringing of the church bells was supposed to be effective. The inhabitants therefore had to make arrangements for ringers to be available. They might pay one of their number to be on stand-by—say, from 15 May to 1 October—with a reward of a sheaf of grain from every farmer. Or when the local court of seigneurial justice met, a rota of ringers would be established, with a stiff fine on absentees.¹¹⁶ In September 1772 in the village of Boulogne near Paris, when four ringers were hard at work in the bell tower, at one in the morning, with thunder growling around, a bolt of lightning struck. One ringer was killed and the others injured, and a fire-ball raced through the church scorching the gilding and pictures before drilling an exit hole in the far wall.¹¹⁷ It was an example to cite to undermine superstition and encourage resort to the newly invented lightning-conductor. On 2 May 1784 the Parlement of Paris issued an administrative regulation forbidding the ringing of bells in thunderstorms, citing scientific evidence that it attracted lightning strikes rather than warding them off. The lightning-conductor was a symbol of the Enlightenment and its doctrine of progress. The sphere of unknown terrors was contracting, and human ingenuity was finding ways to protect mankind more certain than superstitious practices and, for that matter, than the intercessions of the Church.

The Church had always enjoined its faithful to pray for help in crises of life and in face of death. In the parishes, the clergy sometimes repudiated folk practices as superstitions and discouraged them; sometimes they joined with their people in folk observances, attempting to elevate them above crude incantations and self-regarding implorations to prayers offered in submission to the will of God and with the sincere intention of amendment of life. There were various ways to do this—suppressing some frivolities in the rituals, producing a sheet of liturgically correct litanies, or adding a homily. The ideal was to bring the supplicant, if possible, to confession and communion—that is, at once under the supervision of the clergy and within the orbit of their Christo-centric, Eucharistic

theology. The case of Marie Valéry in 1789 is in the best tradition of this refined edification. She had a cancer of the upper lip; her curé certified this to be so, and sent her to the tomb of the venerable Alain Solminihac at Cahors. There she heard mass and took the sacrament; the cancer fell off onto the 'nappe de communion' leaving no scar, and six months later she joined the Filles de la Charité.¹¹⁸ By the eighteenth century, a vast number of folk practices had been absorbed into the fabric of routine institutional religion. Processions, claims to miracles, pilgrimages, the cult of relics, the establishment of hermits, and multitudinous confraternities constituted a broad sphere of influence on the border of the central liturgical observances of Catholicism, an area where the historian can hardly hope to differentiate 'la religion populaire' from the religion of the establishment. They were fused, though the clergy were continually attempting to fulfil their duty and complete the refinement and elevation of practice into decorum and theological correctness.

30 The Dark Side of the Supernatural

I

The seventeenth century saw ‘the crisis of Satanism’ in France: there were sensational cases arousing intense speculation and debate, and the opinion of the more enlightened magistrates and clergy moved towards scepticism. In the first half of the century, there were menacing outbursts of hysteria, women possessed by demons dribbling out fearful denunciations during sessions of exorcism.¹ In 1611 there was Madeleine Demandols at Aix-en-Provence accusing her curé of making a Satanic pact; then there was the lunatic exaltation of the nuns of the Ursuline convent of Loudon leading to the burning of curé Grandier in 1634 (and still their outbreaks went on). In Louviers, Madeleine Bavent brought about a decade of madness in her convent which finally, in 1647, led the parlement of Rouen to torture and burn a vicair. In Nancy, Elisabeth de Ranfaing, a young widow of a minor noble family, broke out into denunciations causing the burning of three worthy citizens—thereafter, she organized an institution for helping fallen girls and, as Mère Elisabeth de la Croix de Jésus, founded an *Ordre du Salut assuré*. Meanwhile, the example of the Ursulines of Loudon had its effect at nearby Chinon, where a group of laywomen fell under the power of the demon, their local curé encouraging their hysteria by his efforts to cast out the Evil One. These affairs all concerned women of quality, noble or bourgeois, and the convents of affected nuns did not shrink from publicity, as if it were a sign of the importance of their house that God had chosen it to be a battleground for the forces of righteousness against the hosts of iniquity—‘ce grand jeu sinistre de la possession collective’.² The parochial clergy who were dragged into danger were priests well known in their local towns. So educated society could not help reflecting on these scandals. The instinct of the bishops was to avoid pronouncing on the reality of demon possession and to hush up these affairs lest the hysteria spread. The bishop of Evreux believed Madeleine Bavent to be genuinely

possessed, but he wanted to lock her up and conceal her doings from the secular courts and everyone else. The archbishop of Lyon, investigating the 'possédées de Chinon', was highly sceptical and gave them no credence. As churchmen pointed out, these affairs could never have happened if the rules of the theologians had been observed, for the Sorbonne in 1615, 1620, and 1625 had condemned the practice of denunciatory exorcism. 'The demons must never be allowed to accuse anyone, still less should exorcisms be used to discover the crimes of other people and to find out if they are guilty of witchcraft.' The devils, by definition, said the doctors of theology, are liars, so what they say is inadmissible as evidence. Grandier then had been condemned unjustly; indeed, it was known that Richelieu, for his own political ends, had arranged for him to be tried by a special commission instead of the ordinary courts. The devils of Loudon had also disqualified themselves by their ignorance. Interrogated by the abbé d'Aubigné, they could not understand languages other than French, and did not know if there were Pelagian or Donatist heretics in Hell.

Meanwhile, the ordinary trials for witchcraft went on. In 1609, there was a frantic outburst of cruelty and panic in the Pays de Labord,³ and the Royal Council made a magistrate of the parlement of Bordeaux, Pierre de Lancre, its commissioner with power to act. He proceeded ruthlessly. Mgr d'Eschaux, the bishop of Bayonne, taking his ease at Court, heard the news and rushed back to his diocese, where he stopped the trials, released the prisoners, and evicted Pierre de Lancre—too late, however, to save the people he had burned already. Another Court prelate, the archbishop of Reims, wrote to the chancellor in 1644 concerning the condemnation of thirty witches in a single parish: 'these petty subaltern judges pass the death sentence upon a simple conjecture'.⁴ The last waves of witch-hunting came in the middle and second half of the century. In 1644–5 in Burgundy, the North, and Languedoc, gangs of peasants murdered neighbours they suspected of sorcery. At Dôle in 1661, ten witches were tried, five being banished, and five burned. In 1670 in Normandy and Béarn, young men, 'cognaisseurs de sorciers', wandered round gaining notoriety and free meals by making denunciations. Thirteen years later, six girls were executed in Lille. Pierre-Ignace Chavatte, a pious textile worker, believed they were guilty—except for the expensive wars of Louis XIV, he always approved of the actions of the legitimate authorities.⁵

The magistrates of the parlement of Paris led the way in trying to curb these excesses.⁶ In 1601, they forbade the 'ducking' of witches,

and from 1624 onwards, they treated the confessions of those accused of witchcraft as hallucinations, and when death sentences came to them on appeal, they commuted the penalty to banishment—probably necessary anyway if a lynching was to be avoided. Some parlements, notably Rouen, Grenoble, and Aix, refused to follow its example. The sovereign court of Dôle, however, in 1662 set up a commission to investigate the execution of a girl for witchcraft, and by a majority vote it declared that the only evidence against her had been her confession extracted by torture.⁷ Ten years later, in a notable intervention, the Royal Council struck out a dozen death sentences ratified by the parlement of Rouen, a decision marking the turning-point—decisive government intervention for the first time.⁸

Churchmen joined in the growing revulsion against witch trials. A Roman instruction of 1657 ordered the Inquisition to look for straightforward evidence outside the old code of demonological procedure, and to take into account the possibility of mental illness. In 1660, a French translation of the Latin treatise of the German Jesuit Spee was published at Lyon, *Advis aux criminalistes sur les abus qui se glissent dans les procès de sorcellerie*: a work pointing out the illogicality of the established system of proofs, based on the assumption of guilt rather than innocence. Eleven years later, the Capuchin Jacques Chevanes published his *L'Incrédulité savante et la crédulité ignorante au sujet des magiciens et des sorciers*: he took the line which was to be common in future among ecclesiastical analysts—there are real witches, but few of them, and most of the stories about them are nonsense. The *premier président* of the parlement of Rouen consulted the University of Paris in 1670, and received a reply censuring his bigoted colleagues. Children and mentally feeble characters should not be indicted, whatever they say. Nor should anyone be charged if the alleged crime is only in the mind—willing evil against others, though if an actual attempt to do harm, such as administering poison, has followed, the death penalty can be pronounced. If it was established that someone had renounced his baptism and made a pact with the Devil, the Church should take over and offer instruction; if, however, there was persistence in such bizarre conduct, it would constitute the crime of sacrilege, a capital offence, to be dealt with as such. ‘In the provinces of France where no one talks of witches and the idea is ridiculed,’ said the doctors of Paris, ‘there are hardly any to be found. Which goes to show that, just as there are illnesses of the body, so there are those of the mind, and infectious ones too.’⁹ At this time, Malebranche was saying much the same: there are

dubious characters who cast spells and try to invoke the Devil, but they are few in number, and they are not to be punished, for punishment ministers to their twisted obsession to be noticed, and swells a flood of collective hysteria.¹⁰

The inadvisability of using the law courts against those who invoked the spiritual hosts of wickedness, and scepticism about most of the phenomena cited as evidence, led to the decisive edict of July 1682. By what it left unsaid, rather than by what it explicitly stated, it threw out witchcraft and sorcery from the ranks of criminal offences. Practitioners of the black arts could still be tried and executed, but the charge would be sacrilege, seduction, poisoning, fraud, or whatever other criminal activity was involved. It has been said that the edict was 'ambiguous' and left the door open for witch trials under another name.¹¹ But this is to minimize the enormous importance of the grim legal procedures devised over the generations by demonologists and lawyers, which the edict by implication repudiated. Once under way, these procedures had facilitated the detection of witches and made their condemnation logically respectable, as well as ensuring that every conviction led to new accusations. To treat black magic as a fraud and obscenity, and to punish its odious adventures through the down-to-earth charge of sacrilege (savage though the penalties were), was a great advance in legal procedure, an advance reflecting the mental revolution that had taken place and assisting its final victory.

II

The edict of 1682 was a typical example of the working of the legal mind, fortunately on the side of enlightenment; it made clear what constituted offences and laid down punishments; there was no pronouncement about the reality of witchcraft—that was for intellectual debate. It was a debate in which it was difficult to break through to rationality, for deep-seated convictions and fears and a long tradition of official acceptance were involved. Though most cases were crude rural affairs, there were sinister sociological and psychological roots to the belief; historians will probably never succeed in giving a convincing explanation. Whether it was a power struggle in the villages, with the notables and royal officials imposing their domination on the mass of the poor,¹² or a struggle in which the margins were being brought into subjection to the authority of the centre;¹³ whether it was instinctive reactions against deviants by

the half-educated, a panic provoked by professional witch-finders, or a lunatic frenzy breaking out in periods of starvation and despair¹⁴ (or, what is more likely, a combination of these and other factors as yet unstudied, operating differently in different times and places), one thing is certain. The accounts of demonological rituals—the renunciation of baptism, pacts with the Devil, the sabbat and its grotesque obscenities, potent narcotic unguents, and flights through the air—were constructs of educated men, lawyers, theologians, and officials, codifying into a vulgate the incursions of Hell from materials furnished by the magical thought of the peasants and the tales of demonic intervention accumulated through the centuries.¹⁵ A legal system admitting ‘half proofs’, encouraging delation, using torture, and lacking a concept of mental illness bolstered the official systematization of Satanic practice with accumulations of apparent evidence.¹⁶ Terrible things had been done, so it was doubly hard to admit that they had been perpetrated in the name of an illusion.

Given the interlocking structure of long-established error, few in the seventeenth century, even among the free-thinkers, were able to force their way through to the limpid rationality of Cyrano de Bergerac: ‘A man can say all sorts of things, but the only capabilities to be ascribed to him must be human ones.’ Naudé’s *Apologie pour tous les grands personages qui ont esté faussement soupçonnez de magie* (1653) was hardly a monument of scepticism; he was defending worthies like Virgil and Roger Bacon, not old women in villages, and his point was that the Devil puts suspicion of the innocent into men’s minds so the guilty will go undetected. What was eroded, however, was belief in the sensational phenomena established by the judicial demonology; while still accepting the possibility of sorcery, intelligent men were not willing to give credence to the lurid liturgy of the sabbat.¹⁷ Churchmen in particular, regarding Satan as an immaterial spirit, would not accept his appearances as a horned monster presenting his buttocks to be kissed. The *Malleus maleficarum* came to be seen for what it was, the product of frenzied admissions and psychopathic rationalization.

A preliminary victory against less horrendous supernatural manifestations was won with the overthrow of the traditional view of the heavens as a showcase of prognostications about human life. The government had sponsored sceptical pamphlets when the comet of 1654 was due, and when the comet of 1680 appeared, educated people no longer expected it could presage anything except, perhaps, the death of the elephant in the menagerie at Versailles. Witches and all their doings were then comprehensively demolished

in publications by Balthasar Bekker (1691), Bishop Hutchinson (1718), and in France by the Oratorian Le Brun (1702). More effective than argument, however, was ridicule. The abbé Laurent Bordelou's *Histoire des imaginations extravagantes de M. Oufle* (2 vols., 1710) made fun of the hierarchy of Satanism and its paraphernalia; as the subtitle says, the hero's hallucinations were caused 'by the reading of books on magic, spells (the *grimoire*), demon possession, witches, incubi, succubae, horoscopes, talismans'.¹⁸ The tradition of ridicule continued throughout the century. French literature never made Satan into an epic figure as in Calderón, Vondel, and Milton, and French attempts to Catholicize *Paradise Lost* were pedestrian. The Devil went straight from a sinister medieval grotesque to a comic figure, *Le Diable boiteux*, *Le Diable bossu*, *Le Diable amoureux* of the novelists.¹⁹

Spurious or real, Satanic practices remained under the ban of the Church. The new bishop of Dax, in his visitation instructions of 1734, told his curés to refuse absolution to all who 'embark on vain rituals, perform exorcisms and claim to be witches or soothsayers'.²⁰ Even so, churchmen agreed that witchcraft as such was not punishable in the secular courts. According to the Jesuit *Mémoires de Trévoux* in 1732, going to the sabbat was a matter only for the ecclesiastical courts, providing no harm was done to other people. Oddly, the editors added that the secular courts would no doubt sentence to death those who were shown 'by evident proofs' to have afflicted their neighbours by 'maléfices et sortilèges', evil spells and witchcraft. It was hard to imagine what 'evident proofs' could be found, but the good fathers were keeping the way open for the possibility that the black arts could be instruments of malice in the world.

This was a concession to certain ecclesiastics and their lay supporters who kept alive the belief in the reality of witches (though they did not propose any change in the new, enlightened practice of the law courts). There was a naïve Dominican, Père Costadau, who in 1717 rehearsed the signs of the irruption of the forces of evil, the Devil having his own 'sacraments', modelled on those bequeathed to the Church by Christ, but as instruments of damnation. He castigated the sceptics, who were turning their backs on authoritative evidence: 'Scripture is clear, the Doctors have pronounced and the historians have affirmed . . . in the words of Saint Augustine, "when the heavens thunder, let the frogs be silent"'.²¹ Boissier in 1731 took the same line: there is no escape from the evidence of the Bible. In the following year, Daugin, claiming to write for ecclesiastics,

physicians, and judges, said many priests had no belief in magic, and he urged them to renounce their dogmatic scepticism and be prepared to perform useful exorcisms.²²

As against these die-hards, there was an intermediate position, mainly sceptical, but, like the Jesuits, not willing to throw overboard the possibility of there being more things in heaven and earth than pure reason might suppose. It was La Bruyère's dilemma: 'There are embarrassing facts affirmed by serious thinkers and it is as difficult to accept them all as to deny them all.' One motive for taking this line was the challenge of the mass of accumulated evidence from the past—could it all be bogus? This was the abbé Guyon's question in 1771: dare we say that the magistrates of all Europe were mistaken? Is it possible that they condemned to death thousands of innocent people? May it not be that there are no witches now because they had the courage 'to exercise a just rigour'? Another motive for keeping the door ajar for supernatural interventions was the century's love of the bizarre and grotesque, allied to its tendency to amass information—it was the age of the dictionary and the encyclopaedia as well as the age of the Enlightenment. 'This amused curiosity, this unavowed yearning, half-sceptical, half-credulous, for the marvellous, seems to have been the mood of many at the mid-century.'²³ In his vast compilation of superstitions, curé Thiers relished the details of Satanism, and told the world how to organize a black mass and how to greet the goat with the black candle between his horns when he appeared. He is non-committal on the reality of it all.²⁴ This enjoyment in recording curiosities is evident in Langlet-Dufresnoy's *Traité historique et dogmatique sur les apparitions* (1731); he divides the corpus of tales into a large category of unreliable fantasies and a small one of those harder to dismiss. Hair-raising stories made a book sell, of course. The abbé Fiart in the 1770s was doing well out of his discovery of 'the group of scoundrels in Paris who have commerce with devils and are in a very secret league against men of decency and merit'.²⁵

By contrast with these purveyors of wonders, the great master of curious lore of the century is solemn, high-minded, and dedicated. Dom Calmet, the voluminous biblical commentator, was also the author of a *Dissertation sur les apparitions* (1746) and the *Traité sur les apparitions des esprits et sur les vampires* (1751).²⁶ In him, credulity was reinforced by erudition as well as curiosity; whatever could be learnedly documented had to be taken seriously—not necessarily accepted as a supernatural occurrence, but at least had to be explained. There was, he argued, a serious theological consideration

against total scepticism: 'to abandon absolutely the belief in apparitions is, surely, to strike at the most sacred beliefs of Christianity, these are: the existence of another life, recompense for good actions and punishment for evil ones, the utility of prayers for the dead and the efficacy of exorcism'. Most of his two-volume treatise of 1751 is a sceptical demolition of superstition: there is no 'mark of the Devil', no sabbat, no haunting by ghosts—Satan's real work in the world is seen in war, plague, famine, and tempests, in so far as God allows them. But Calmet makes exceptions. Everything in Scripture is sacrosanct—Pharaoh's magicians, Balaam's ass, the witch of Endor, Simon Magus, demoniac possession, and the precept of Exodus 2:18, 'thou shalt not suffer a witch to live'. Also, in recent times there have been one or two cases of overwhelming evidence. At five in the morning on 6 October 1716, a miller of Bar was found on the roof of a barn and did not know how he had got there; all he remembered was meeting a group of dancing women; therefore, it must be possible to fly to and from a sabbat. The confessions of witches convinced they had been flying worried Calmet; if the evidence was strong, he inclined to the theory advanced at the end of the seventeenth century—the fearsome unguents figuring in sabbat stories must have had narcotic effects, creating the airborne illusion. Having allowed exceptions, Calmet insists they are few; most accounts of supernatural interventions are imaginary—but this does not mean the Devil is not involved, for he can work through men's minds as effectively as appearing in person. Then, with almost everything ascribed to the imagination, the author panics lest we go on to suppose the New Testament miracles to be imaginary. So he concludes that each age has its supernatural marvels; we no longer have witches and demon possession, but we do have vampires, proved by irrefutable testimony from eastern Europe. In short, Calmet hardly knew what to think; he was a sceptic, but saw scepticism as a danger to religion, and he was constitutionally incapable of throwing out any properly documented evidence; whatever else he did, he splendidly displayed an exhaustive erudition.

As against acceptance of black magic either as a reality or as a marginal possibility amid absurdity, most educated clergy were in the Enlightenment camp of ridicule and disbelief. Churchmen could hardly go along with Voltaire's theory (derived from Van Dale's commentary of 1696) that Satan's role in the books of Job and Tobit was an intrusion of Chaldean myths picked up during the Babylonian captivity, but they accepted that the Devil could not make incursions into the world except by the established processes of

tempting individuals. God has established a universe run by laws, and only by his own intervention by miracle can these laws be suspended. A curé writing in the *Journal de Verdun* in 1729 summed up the case: 'the power of Satan cannot go beyond the general laws of Nature'. Philippe Hecquet published a famous book in 1733, *La Cause des convulsions, le naturalisme des convulsions*. A Jansenist himself, he refused to accept any supernatural explanation of the convulsionist exhibitions of the Jansenists at Saint-Médard—they were the result of a mental derangement of a sexual origin. 'There are only two powers operating behind all that happens in the world,' he said, 'God and Nature; admitting that the Devil can play a role is to make his power a rival to that of the Creator.'²⁷ The fall of the old demonology marks the final victory of the theologians over the last scattered rearguards of the old Manichaeian heresy.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the ecclesiastical authorities had learned by experience what to do about allegations of 'demon possession' and the inevitable demands for exorcisms—the afflicted person was to be deprived of the exaltation arising from notoriety, and the affair hushed up to prevent hysterical manifestations multiplying. In 1680, Tronson,²⁸ the superior of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice and the keeper of the conscience of the establishment, wrote to the seminaries of Montreal and Puy, where exorcisms were being performed. 'You find one real case and you imagine many others,' he told the Sulpicians of Canada. 'I am not surprised that your *possédées* have multiplied,' he wrote to the superior at Puy; 'and I do not doubt they will go on multiplying unless a resolution is taken not to be credulous in the matter.' Three years later, he wrote twice to Puy. 'I am glad about the 49,000 devils' that have come out of one woman, he wrote ironically to one of the directors, 'but I wish you would stop doing it.' Then, in December, he ordered the superior categorically to cease exorcisms altogether. Even if the claim to 'possession' did not involve demons, but righteous spirits and divine inspiration, the ecclesiastical authorities would be suspicious. At the end of the seventeenth century in Paris, Catherine d'Almayrac, 'Sœur Rose', was famous for the visionary power she achieved through deep internal tribulations. 'I do not know if it is God or the Devil who makes me suffer, but what does it matter whether it is the master or the servant?' Cardinal Noailles, the archbishop, did not care either, and ordered her out of his diocese.²⁹ D'Argenson, in charge of the police of the capital at this time, adhered to the line of the clergy. 'Les femmes prétendues possédées', he said, should be locked up in the hospitals, and he

proposed to do the same with anyone arrested for making a pact with the Devil—five or six months in an institution for men, and women to be confined indefinitely. ‘Il me semble que de pareilles extravagances ne méritent pas d’être approfondies d’avantage.’³⁰

This reticent severity was judicious, for the explanation of diabolical intervention still sprang to mind when strange events occurred. It was advanced in 1709 when a girl in the rue du Four in Paris fell into a cataleptic trance; polite society, led by the duc d’Orléans, hastened to go to see her. At Courson in Normandy in 1717, a girl vomited lizards, and more than a hundred pins came out of the skin of her stomach.³¹ There were conferences of medical men, and Lange, a physician of Lisieux, produced the most acceptable diagnosis: it was the operation of devils working through the agency of ‘invisible corpuscules’. The *Mémoires de Trévoux*, the Jesuit journal, reacted with its usual manoeuvring along the frontiers of scepticism; far be it from these solemn apologists to deny the reality of the workings of the Devil, but they had to point out that Lange’s hypothesis was theologically incorrect since, given the permission of God, the devils can work their mischief directly, without needing ‘corpuscules’ as their agents. Furthermore, while supernatural explanations are always possible, they should rarely be invoked: ‘il faut en croyant à l’existence de la magie être fort réservé à décider qu’une maladie en est l’effet’. This was a standard line of Christian apologists. The Oratorian Le Brun’s *Histoire critique des pratiques super-stitienses* (1702, 2nd edn. 1732) did not entirely reject interventions from the other world, but declared that we may generally assume that the stories of this kind ‘owe more to the duplicity of men than to the malignity of the Devil’.

For some reason, Normandy seemed to be the favourite province for the incursions of the forces of evil. In 1720, the archbishop of Rouen had to deal with a crisis in one of his parishes.³² The curé had exorcized two hysterical girls, and they had accused a farmer, one Gaudouet, of bewitching them and being responsible for various recent deaths. Gaudouet went to law to clear his name. The archbishop and the magistrates of the parlement combined to get a royal *lettre de cachet* locking up the curé in a monastery and the girls in nunneries. The bishop of Bayeux had to deal with another case in 1732. The daughter of the local seigneur, Vaillement de Laupertie, had been exorcized by the curé eight years earlier at the time of her First Communion; now, along with the serving-girl at the vicarage, she began howling and blaspheming during the parish mass. The bishop went down in person, decided it was lunatic hysteria, and got

a *lettre de cachet* confining the curé and the girls in religious houses. Incensed at the diagnosis of madness in his family and preferring to have an incursion of Beelzebub, Vaillement de Laupertie hired doctors of the Sorbonne to give a consultation affirming the reality and possibility of demon possession.³³ One reason for the persistence of the belief was that it made embarrassing manifestations easier to bear for families.

The wisdom of the episcopal policy of quiet containment was proved by a case in which it had not been applied, a murky scandal forced through to a lawsuit before the parlement of Aix in 1731—the last such affair coming to a verdict in a parlement.³⁴ Catherine Cadière, a penitent of the Jesuit Père Girard, showed hysterical signs, and was exorcized by her brother, a priest. In the process she accused Girard of seducing her and bringing her into the power of demons; he had breathed on her, casting a spell which immediately made her desire him, and he had then pronounced a formula inducing her to blaspheme. The bishop of Toulon mishandled the affair, and Cadière's family went to law. In a preliminary hearing, a small group of magistrates decided she was a liar and ought to be hanged; this led to riots against the Jesuits at Marseille, Toulon, and Aix. Twenty-four magistrates then sat on the case and divided equally, twelve for burning Girard and twelve for imprisoning his accuser. The *premier president* of the court then did what should have been done in the first place: declared there was no secular crime for Girard to answer for and sent him to the ecclesiastical court of Toulon, and sent the girl home to the custody of her mother. The ecclesiastical judges cleared Girard, and he moved away to the Jesuit house at Dôle, and La Cadière was heard of no more. Only by the luck of a tied vote had things not ended with either a hanging or a burning. The affair had been a sensation over the whole country, and proved to everyone—churchmen, magistrates, and families—that nothing but discredit for all concerned could arise from allegations of demon possession and exorcisms.

III

Judicial condemnation of witches did not entirely cease after the edict of 1682. There was a burning at Rouen three years later. Two years later still, at Pacy-sur-Eure, a shepherd, one Hocque, was condemned to be hanged for putting evil spells on people and animals on the estate of the local seigneur; in deference to the edict, the

parlement of Paris commuted the penalty to the galleys. In prison, awaiting transfer to the coast, Hocque confessed to a 'stool pigeon' insinuated into his cell that he had buried his magic potion in a stable, and that another shepherd, Bras-de-Fer, was implicated in his sorcery. As a result, the judge of the local court at Pacy condemned Bras-de-Fer and two others to the stake—once again commuted to the galleys. Shepherds, marginal figures in village life and wandering in lonely places unobserved, were easy targets for suspicion of witchcraft. The parlement of Rouen in 1692, 1694, and 1703 condemned shepherds, though one case was essentially sacrilege, entailing the use of consecrated Hosts to kill the sheep of rivals. In 1692, at Montigny-la-Resle, near Auxerre, five women were thrown into the river in the presence of a notary hired to record whether they sank or floated (only witches stayed on the surface).³⁵ There were burnings at Mantes in 1715, Bordeaux in 1718, Toulon in 1731, and Lorient in 1736—this was the last.³⁶ The *présidial* court of Laon in 1750 sentenced a band of shepherds to death, but the indictment, while vaguely alleging the use of 'magical and diabolical arts', also referred to numerous robberies and assassinations—they were part-time highwaymen.³⁷ In the area around Lille, trials in 1758 and 1762 led to long sentences of banishment. But by now, witch trials were infrequent. In Alsace, they had been dying away since 1650, and some that took place ended with the accusers fined for calumny; there were none at all after 1700.³⁸ In Douai, there was only one in the eighteenth century; in the first half of the seventeenth century there had been sixteen, and in the second half three. From 1651 to 1700 the parlement of Flanders received accusations against fifty-six women and eleven men; in the whole of the eighteenth century there were three of each.³⁹ Indeed, within the jurisdiction of these magistrates, delation was coming to be a risky business: a man was flogged and banished for levelling charges of witchcraft in 1699; in the following year another was banished for ten years; and in 1748 and 1767 there were fines and heavy costs.⁴⁰

Yet superstition persisted in the countryside. It thrived on the meanderings of the mentally deficient; one, believing he had been made invulnerable by the Devil, attacked a soldier and was killed, his curé declaring that his death was 'an example to warn us not to trust in pacts with the Father of Lies'.⁴¹ In an odd way, too, the belief in witchcraft survived because it provided an escape from humiliation for men who were afflicted by sexual impotence, a phenomenon often found in the countryside because of poor diet and the late age of marriage among the peasants. It was believed that there were

noueurs d'aiguillettes who invoked the aid of the Devil to prevent the consummation of marriages by making a knot in a tagged lace with appropriate incantations. In a voluminous work retailing and, mostly, refuting superstitious beliefs (1696, new edition), curé Thiers made an exception in this case, and took the *aiguillette nouée* as a terrible reality. He exhorted sufferers not to resort to counter-spells, but to rely on fasting, prayer, and pilgrimages. He was, however, prepared to countenance a few dubious measures of folk practice as well—holding a cross in the left hand during the nuptial benediction and having a coin in the shoe and salt in a pocket, or, after the damage had been done, going back to the scene of the wedding and pissing in the lock of the church. Irresponsibly, Thiers himself did his bit to promote rust in church ironwork by publishing the formula of the spell promoting impotence: one knot tied while saying the *Miserere* backwards, and three during the wedding service, saying ‘Ribald’ with the first, ‘Nobel’ with the second, and ‘Vanarbi’ with the third.⁴² The eighteenth-century statutes of the diocese of Coutances took the knotted-lace magicians seriously,⁴³ and a sober handbook of the confessional, *La Conduite des âmes* (1750), repeats the advice of Thiers: no resort to counter-witchcraft, but only prayer, and if prayer is not answered, to bear the burden with patience, knowing there will be a recompense in heaven.⁴⁴ A variant of this sexual magic was used by persons unknown against Marie Antoinette to prevent her having children; the Court heard of the plot when the queen's stolen wedding-ring was returned after the birth of her first child, the curé of the Madeleine having received it under the seal of the confessional.⁴⁵

The whole business of spells and counter-spells was also kept going by the activities of the wandering *devins* who cured illnesses, lifted spells, and, occasionally, identified those who had cast them. It was easy to understand why people resorted to them, said a curé in 1724, ‘for if country folk are stricken by some extraordinary illness, almost invariably they imagine someone is plotting against them’.⁴⁶ Not just rustics: a fishing boat has ill luck—the wife of one of the sailors has a pact with the Devil; some little girls collapse at a catechism class—an old woman has ‘shaken a poisoned handkerchief against them’.⁴⁷ In the world of magic, there was always someone to blame. The assumption proved expensive to a peasant family in Montesquieu in the diocese of Condom in 1785. To find out who was putting a spell on their crops they hired a *devin* (a surgeon who did this as a sideline for 6 livres a consultation), and when he identified a neighbouring family as responsible, went to law against them.⁴⁸

The court found for the defendants, and levied 223 livres damages and costs on the accusers, and they had further costs to pay when they went on appeal to the parlement of Toulouse.

Though the sabbat was no more, among a few decadent *grands seigneurs* taking a perverse pleasure in flouting all decencies, the black mass lived on. The 'La Voisin' affair under Louis XIV and its revelation of the role of Mme de Montespan in the sacrilegious masses of the terrible abbé Guiberg prefigured the stories of the experiments in the black arts of the regent and the maréchal de Richelieu—the sacrament given to goats and toads and ritual murders in a quarry at Montmartre.⁴⁹ These contained an element of truth; later adventures in diabolism tend to be hoaxes set up by charlatans. A prince missed seeing the Devil after signing a pact with him because his companion, a duke, upset the ink-well, and all Paris laughed at the two high-born ladies who had their clothes stolen at a séance and had difficulty explaining their nudity and proving their identity to the police.⁵⁰ Dabbling in Satanism continued, and at the end of the *ancien régime* stories are told of the adventures of the duc d'Orléans ('Égalité', descendant of the regent) and the king's brother, the comte de Provence.⁵¹ For do-it-yourself invocations of the Devil without the sacrilege of the black mass, the abbé Montfaucon de Villars's *Le Comte de Gabalis ou entretiens sur les sciences secrètes* (1670) was the handbook. In 1722, in the château of a poor noble family of the Vivarais, a tutor and his 7-year-old pupil resorted to the cellar to use it, and were alarmed when a black cat came out from behind the barrels. The boy, the future Cardinal de Bernis, told his mother, and was taken to a *grand vicaire* of the diocese for confession and absolution.⁵²

There were those who believed that communication with unseen powers could bring material rewards, and there were others ready to take their money and furnish them with passports to cross the frontiers of reality. The soothsayers were comparatively harmless—the queen herself was given advance information about coming events in Europe by a girl with divinatory powers.⁵³ With Alliette (writing under the name of Etteilla) the whole business was professionalized into the art of reading playing-cards, given to the world in 1753 in his *Abrégé de la Cartomancie*. Other publications followed, including the *Zodiaque mystérieux* (1772) and a sequel ten years later on the art of divination by the Tarot pack (devised in a four-year-long conference of seventeen sages held 171 years after the Flood, recounted in the *Book of Thoth*).⁵⁴ For quicker profits, however, there was alchemy, its practitioners tending to congregate in the

faubourg Saint-Marceau. In 1708, the police arrested one of them in possession of a certificate signed by a bishop as a witness of his achievement in turning iron nails into silver; and in 1723, they questioned the abbé Bournement about his methods of turning lead into tin and wine into liqueurs.⁵⁵ In the following year, the ecclesiastical court of Paris dealt with an ex-naval chaplain who, when celebrating mass, was surreptitiously blessing metal plaques provided by an iron merchant. Dom Pernety, the Benedictine monk who was chaplain to Bougainville on his voyage round the world, believed that he could make gold; but it was white magic he practised, being confident in the power of Our Lady, 'this great and divine Mother whose very name, the Immaculate, strikes terror into hell'. Even so, he had to take refuge in Prussia as librarian to Frederick II.⁵⁶ Others in Paris at the end of the *ancien régime* sought the philosopher's stone: Barrière, who left his law practice in Rouen to follow the quest; Duchanteau-Touzay, who expected to be given the secret by living for forty days on his own urine and who died before the knowledge was vouchsafed; and the Jew Falc, employed by that now aged but ever disreputable maréchal de Richelieu. The comte de Saint-Germain, who had lived for centuries, could make diamonds, and Cagliostro, equally long-lived, selflessly served his fellow men by magical healings. Thus, said a contemporary, 'the finest hour of philosophical unbelief has become the epoch of the blindest credulity—evocations, apparitions, divinations and other tricks performed by the most blatant charlatans'.⁵⁷

The credulity of human nature, the procedures of the old demonology and the utilitarian preoccupations of the Enlightenment were all combined in the eighteenth century in the dangerous game of searching for hidden treasures. At the end of the seventeenth century, there were two magical procedures to detect a thief, recover stolen property, and find things lost, both methods under censure from churchmen. One was to harness the forces of evil, constraining them by spells, rings, or pacts;⁵⁸ the other was to resort to the forces of salvation, and have a mass said with the appropriate intention: a mass of the Holy Spirit to catch a thief, a mass of St Anthony of Padua to recover a lost object.⁵⁹ Presumably, Heaven and Hell could both be invoked with dark incantations allied to Christian symbols. Something of this kind was done in French Canada by a soldier in 1742 to recover the stolen savings of a cobbler of Montreal, using powders, candles, a knife, and a crucifix. Whatever he did, the worst interpretation was put on it, and he had to appear at the door of the parish church, clad only in a shirt, candle in

hand, and halter around neck, with a placard 'Profaner of Holy Things', before being flogged at every crossroads and sent to the galleys for three years. The bishop held a procession of expiation, and put the crucifix in the chapel of the *hôtel-Dieu* and, in 1782, the Pope granted a plenary indulgence to all who went there on the first Friday of October to venerate it.⁶⁰

The principles of treasure-hunting were much the same as those for recovering lost or stolen property, except that a straightforward mass of intention was not a logical possibility for information about property other than one's own. The test case of the theologians was that of the lady who had been turned down by the Sorbonne when she offered to pay for a novena of masses for the soul of Cardinal Richelieu, in the hope of invoking his specialist knowledge of hiding-places for the funds of the Crown.⁶¹ But in defiance of ecclesiastical prohibitions, treasure-seekers continued to try to contact the dead. In an age when few resorted to banks and when life was so precarious, many people must have had concealed hoards and taken their secret with them to the grave. Nor was it always necessary to contact a specific individual, for, according to one theory, the dead in general are vouchsafed such information. Apparently, it was possible to say special treasure-hunting prayers at a deathbed, sacrilegious ones doubtless, for a priest was sent to the galleys for life by the parlement of Paris in 1758 for this sort of activity.⁶² A less outrageous, but far from blameless, device was to find someone—often enough a young woman—who had psychic powers, like Marie-Anne de la Ville, an 18-year-old from Bordeaux, who fell in with a band of 'chercheurs de trésors' in Paris in 1698, and made a living by calling up her 'spirit' for them, until the police intervened in 1703. One of the band, a credulous priest, the abbé Pinel, lost his comfortable benefice, and vanished into the ecclesiastical prison at Bordeaux on bread and water for life; Marie-Anne was given the same sentence in lay confinement, but was released by the regent after fourteen years in her cell, shaven and in sackcloth.⁶³

But there were more sinister methods of treasure-hunting. An agreement might be made with the Devil, who would rejoice at the opportunity to capture a soul and to put corrupting riches back into circulation. *Sorciers* who finished up in the Bastille for duping their aristocratic clientele had usually relied on the paraphernalia of demonism, like the pact signed on goatskin to obtain 15 million, for which the duc d'Olonne and Mme de Montboissier paid 600 livres or so in 1749.⁶⁴ But to do things properly, a black mass celebrated by a renegade priest was needed. The priest referred to by D'Argenson

in 1712 as committing sacrileges to ‘conjure up spirits to achieve the discovery of the treasures the earth conceals’, another hanged and burned by the senate of Savoy six years later, others caught in Brittany in the 1730s celebrating mass in the open air and profaning Hosts, and duly sent to the stake or the galleys, were all guilty of such sordid collaboration with treasure-seekers.⁶⁵

Two well-documented cases brought to trial in mid-century reveal something of the popular superstition and the judicial ferocities underlying the crystalline wit and sophisticated adventures of thought of the Enlightenment. In the 1730s a group of treasure-seekers was formed at Lorient.⁶⁶ It included five rope makers (an occupational group as nucleus), three widows of minor officials (lonely, better-class women seeking new interests on the dangerous edge of things), a naval officer and his wife who had graduated from the use of the divining rod to more serious investigations (the leadership element), the inevitable cobbler (figuring in everything revolutionary), a woman pub keeper (not averse to increasing her custom by encouraging the meetings in her *cabaret*), and an aged notary who had come to her establishment to fix up a marriage contract, and had stayed for three days drinking with the conspirators and getting inextricably involved. They hit upon Le Rouzic, a priest of peasant family who had taken to drink and been interdicted by the bishop; no doubt, as he said when interrogated, ‘il n’a fait cela que dans la veue de vivre au depend des dit particuliers’. The group possessed a *grimoire* of prayers to Lucifer, Beelzebub, and Astarte which they signed in blood (of a mole—nothing more serious, Le Rouzic explained); they despatched many bottles of wine; and had masses said in old buildings where they dug frantically—and saw apparitions of a chained devil, a girl with hair down to her waist, a dancing sailor, and demons in the form of rats and mice. But they did not discover treasure, perhaps because the rector’s housekeeper refused to allow them to borrow a surplice and a purple stole, or because their efforts to buy an unbaptized baby (even for as much as 700 livres) failed. All this came out when the death of the tavern keeper led to the discovery of the demonological cache of the treasure-hunters, their documents, powders, and Hosts, bringing in the parlement of Brittany and the ecclesiastical court of Vannes to investigate, aided by the publication of *monitoires* from the pulpits stirring up a horde of witnesses. The sentences of the lay magistrates show that the crime was sacrilege, and the major criminal the priest. Six of the treasure-seekers were condemned (in their absence) to five years in the galleys; others were banished from the locality for five or ten years;

but Le Rouzic had to make the *amende honorable*, and was branded and sent to the galleys for twenty years.

The Lorient affair was on a smaller scale than the Lyon scandal which broke six years later.⁶⁷ Once again, the conspirators were detected by accident. In 1742, the *maréchaussée*, the police of the countryside, picked up a young man, one Benoît Michalet, in a village near Lyon, carrying a cassock, candles, and parchments of magical formulas; he confessed to being engaged, with others, in bringing down the angel Uriel, the revealer of hidden treasures. About the same time, in a separate incident, a dubious priest, Bertrand Guillaudot, was found, using a false name and in possession of books of black magic. It turned out that he had already been sentenced to banishment from the kingdom, but had returned, and to the galleys, and had escaped. The ecclesiastical court of the archbishop of Lyon condemned him to bread and water and the recitation of the seven penitential psalms for the rest of his days, a sentence changed by the *bailliage* court of Chalon-sur-Saône to examination by torture and hanging, which the parlement of Dijon finally upgraded to burning alive. Before his execution, Guillaudot made a full confession, and his avowals, together with Michalet's, led to twenty-nine arrests in Lyon. The charge was sacrilege, and the parlement of Dijon acted with terrifying ruthlessness. Of the twenty-five lay folk arrested, twelve were acquitted, and four executed (with the preliminary torture of the *question* for two or three of them), with lesser punishments for the rest. Four priests had been swept into the net. The ecclesiastical court acquitted two, and condemned the others to ten and three years respectively on psalms and bread and water, the parlement changing these sentences to burning in one case and hanging in the other.

In these trials, the secular judges were more severe than the ecclesiastical ones. It is tempting to suppose that, while the edict of 1682 constrained them to limit the charges to sacrilege, they were driven by atavistic fears of occult forces in their subconscious minds. Yet, even in charges of sacrilege uncomplicated by fears of black magic (like the theft of 'sacred vases' from churches), they used the penalty of burning, with or without cutting off a hand. Whether the magistrates were themselves religious or not made no difference. Religion was the foundation of the social order, to be defended with all the ferocity their predecessors had shown in warding off the legions of Beelzebub.

IV The Clergy and Morals

This page intentionally left blank

31 The Confessional

I

Almost everyone would have to make a confession at some time, and many would have their own regular confessor. But a tiny minority, those who had leisure to do so and sought perfection in the spiritual life (and others, a fashion among ladies in high society, who sought the reputation for seeking it), would have a *directeur*. The director might also be the confessor, but not necessarily so, for that office might be fulfilled by some humble monk or vicaire, while the director would have studied the byways of prayer and devotion, the paradoxical workings of the mind, and the hopes, fears, and temptations of Court and salon, as well as the manuals of casuistry. Jansenists and rigorists apart, the tradition in which he worked would be that of St François de Sales,¹ who had assimilated Renaissance humanism into Christianity, naturalizing Castiglione alongside Charles Borromeo in the lore of the confessional. The raw, uncompromising demands of the gospels were tempered by qualifications derived from the necessities and adornments of social living. In classifying between right and wrong there were 'things indifferent', and as between extreme courses there was a *juste milieu*. An adventurer bringing silver from Peru need not limit himself to the profitable essentials; he could, if he wished, add curious monkeys and parrots to his cargo. In this spirit, a Christian may enjoy the things of this world. A girl may go to a ball, making herself as pretty as she can when doing so, but she must not set her affections on dancing, and must not conform to any convention of society which might endanger her chastity. Included in the Christian's duty to seek to convert the world were the ways and means—in St Paul's phrase, 'becoming all things to all men', maybe involving 'losing one's peace and wholeness, but what does it matter, provided men are healed and in the end they are saved?' Work is not a hindrance to the Christian life, but an essential part of it; and when rulers, merchants, lawyers, and housewives pass from prayer to their daily tasks, they are fulfilling God's will in both activities. And those of high degree

and in high office have a duty to their rank and station: they must act out their part on the stage of society as well as under the judgement of God. For the scrupulous, these principles needed sophisticated interpretation by the director, for they could easily be abused.

The secular stereotype for aristocratic conduct at the court of Louis XIV had been the *honnête homme*, a man of honour, of politeness. As a moral concept, it had been a failure, too superficial to inspire, except to hypocrisy.² As La Bruyère said, anyone could qualify provided he did not commit highway robbery. Later, Toussaint in *Les Mœurs* was to define it as ‘requiring a self-satisfied air, a comfortable fortune and fashionable vices’. It added a civilized veneer to sexual adventures: a cardinal looking back at his un-regenerate youth said he ‘had to reproach [himself] as a Christian, but never as an *honnête homme*’.³ Mme Lambert in 1728 made the same distinction: her advice to her son was to pursue ‘glory’ (a quest denounced by St François de Sales) and to study the art of pleasing, while her daughter, by contrast, was to ‘wrap herself in the mantle of religion’—the boy was to be *honnête*, the girl pious.⁴

Christian apologists saw the danger of the concept of *honnêteté* serving as camouflage for immorality. It was censured by the Jesuit Père Crasset in his *Parallèle des mœurs de ce siècle et de la morale de Jésus-Christ*, an uncompromising analysis based on the premiss, ‘salvation is our unique affair’. But writers in the Salesian tradition, while appreciating the danger, preferred to annex the worldly stereotype and reform it, seeing no reason why a devoted Catholic should not exemplify politeness and *savoir-faire* in an altruistic form without self-regard. Such was the theme of *L'Honnête Homme chrétien* (1710) by Père Buffier the Jesuit⁵ and of Morvan de Bellegarde's *Le Chrétien Honnête Homme, alliance des devoirs de la vie chrétienne avec les devoirs de la vie civile* (1736). The influential masterpiece of the genre was Le Maître de Claville's *Traité du vrai mérite de l'homme* (1734), running into twenty editions in the next twenty-seven years. He legitimized pleasures under the Salesian rules, though less dourly applied, and he confined them within the cadres of duty. ‘If there is a middle way between a coquette and a Carmelite, between a Capuchin and a debauchee, it lies in the fulfilment of the duties of the state in life we have chosen.’⁶ One result of this suave humanizing of Christian conduct among the aristocracy was a reluctance to make piety ostentatious—evident in the dropping of the elaborate religious invocations in the last will and testament, a turning from the crude and dramatic processions of the Pénitents, the change from public dying to family partings, the rejection of Gothic imagery in the adornments of

churches. Two examples of baroque devotion⁷ in the reign of Louis XV illustrate the parameters of taste. Meditation in the presence of a skull was accepted—after all, the queen said her prayers before one, said to be that of Ninon de l'Enclos. On the other hand, the penitential discipline of the maréchal de Noailles, crawling under the funeral pall to have the office of the dead read over him, was judged excessive, too near the boundaries of the ridiculous. Life was to be lived to the full in the world, with Christian commitment shorn of ostentation, pleasures accepted but never obsessively pursued, never detracting from the rigid observance of public and social duty.

At the end of the *ancien régime*, a new secular model for conduct emerged in the cult of *sensibilité*. It proposed the Christian duty of charity without accepting Christianity. It was not that the Enlightenment believed in ‘the natural goodness of man’, for the readers who wept over *Paul et Virginie* also savoured the *Liaisons dangereuses*.⁸ It was, rather, that here was an optimistic hope of improving human beings progressively by science, education, and reforming government, without the need to invoke divine grace to overcome the legacy of original sin.⁹ Well before it became a moral guide, *sensibilité* had been an emotive theme in literature, evident in *Manon Lescaut* (1733) and in the tearful dramas of Nivelles de la Chaussée.¹⁰ Rousseau's interventions made it the key to living; in the social order Mme de Staël was to describe as ‘too civilized’, in which everyone acted a part, he demanded ‘transparency’ in human relationships,¹¹ and he imposed the obligation to obey the dictates of the heart. The humanitarian drive of the Enlightenment promoting acts of ‘benevolence’ was etherealized and given a new compulsiveness by Rousseauism. The new ideal of conduct was exemplified in Restif de la Bretonne's story of the *grand seigneur* of the Court and his wife who picked up an injured drunk and sent him to the hospital in their carriage while they walked home themselves—‘la haute noblesse en France est pleine de sensibilité.’¹² It was a generosity extended to animals, no longer considered as Cartesian ‘machines’—docking horses' tails was ‘barbarous’.¹³ There were enthusiasms—and affectations—for equality, evident in the cult of Mesmerism.¹⁴ The duc de Lévis made generosity to social inferiors the heart of politeness, and Sénac de Meillan declared: ‘the rank of a man is no longer considered when seeking his company, but only if he is *aimable*’. An example to savour was the maréchal de Castéjas's rebuke to the snobbish land agent who refused to eat with the servants: ‘l'homme le plus honnête est celui que j'estime le plus’—this was Babeuf, the future egalitarian conspirator. There was an enthusiasm for the

simple life of virtuous peasants, 'bonheur sous le chaume'. Rustic fêtes were invented, with fashionable ladies giving prizes of virtue to village maidens. New 'religions' of sentiment and mystery flourished, to the profit of adventurers like Saint-Germain, Cagliostro, Mesmer, and Martinez. Pilgrims streamed to Rousseau's tomb on the isle of poplars at Ermenonville, paying homage to Jean-Jacques, the lay confessor, 'le maître des âmes sensibles', the high priest of natural religion, preacher of a relationship with God and a hope of immortality granted directly to the just.¹⁵

The cult of *sensibilité* involved the cultivation of feelings and, almost inevitably, talking about them and the good intentions they engendered; this could sound affected, or hollow, or self-regarding. On these grounds, Mme de Genlis¹⁶ ridiculed the fashion, though contributing to it herself by founding an order of chivalry to give prizes for virtuous conduct. *Sensibilité* could be used in a psychological game of refined self-indulgence; the prince de Ligne offset his leading passion for military glory with a formula for organizing each day in genial relationships. Find a means for giving pleasure to someone, he says unexceptionably, but makes it less demanding by adding—look out for agreeable and interesting persons, and in the case of a lady who is attractive, try to appear agreeable and interesting oneself. Even so, there was less difficulty in incorporating *sensibilité* into Christianity than there had been with the *bonnête homme*, for this concept had precluded humility. The writer of an Easter sermon made an attempt at a broad generalization to show how the two interlocked.¹⁷ 'La sensibilité morale' works to bring us to a final certainty in the Christian hope of resurrection to 'une jeunesse éternelle', conversely, 'sans l'immortalité la sensibilité morale est un malheur', for it deepens our sorrow at the death of our friends—without life beyond the grave, it merely drives us to despair. The director of conscience, however, would not be able to deal in generalities; he would have to advise on the relevance of *sensibilité* to the details of life-style—he would have to look at motivation, to censure every beginning of pride and introspective self-congratulation. The 'âmes sensibles' could so easily become the new Pharisees.

Alongside the *bonnête homme* and *sensibilité* and their adaptation under the Salesian rules, the eighteenth century still retained the old tradition of the inner fortress of prayer from which the world was excluded, except in penitential exercises of loathing. Duguet the Jansenist, in 1725, published his *Conduite d'une dame chrétienne pour vivre saintement dans le monde*. At first light there are long intercessions and half an hour's meditation, mass, and family prayers at 9 a.m.; at

night, a quarter of an hour's prayer and compline. The meditations might be organized in a programme: a writer in mid-century proposed using them as a preparation for receiving communion, choosing as subjects the different ways in which Christ comes to the believer—as husband, shepherd, brother, healer, friend, head, king, victim, and judge.¹⁸ Père Roger Daon's *Conduite des âmes dans la voie du salut* (1750) proposes long sessions of prayer, reading, and meditation morning and evening, while during the day there must be continual acts of thanksgiving or resignation, with grace before and after meals, the Angelus at midday, and prayer with absent participation when the church bell announces a mass is to be said. The director would have to harmonize the demands of such over-full and unrealistic programmes with St François de Sales's and Le Maître de Claville's acceptance of pleasures and emphasis on the fulfilment of practical duties. Daon's continual acts of thanksgiving and resignation throughout the day were a pointer to an answer.

To what extent were reflections of the higher spirituality of the eighteenth century transmitted in the guidance offered by directors of conscience? An example for speculation may be taken from the now famous spiritual letters of the Jesuit Père de Caussade¹⁹ to the nuns under his care. Since Fénelon's doctrine of *pur amour*, the devotional writers and educated laity had been haunted by the dilemma posed by La Rochefoucauld: *amour propre* enters into all our actions, our very virtues are the mirror into which we gaze to stimulate our pride. To extreme Jansenists, there was nothing left but to despair of human nature, contaminated by the Fall. There is a terrible passage in Nicole where even the exaltation of the mystics is 'but a refinement of pride'—'there is an infinite and imperceptible circle of reassessment within reassessment, of reflections within reflections in the workings of the soul, and there is always within us a certain depth for ever unfathomable, a root for ever unknown'.²⁰ Père de Caussade accepted the impossibility of understanding, but true to his Jesuit heritage, he refused to despair of human nature. He spoke of 'abandonment to the Divine Providence'. We do not ask questions about ourselves or our spiritual progress; all we have is the 'sacrament of the present moment', where we meet the cross, the tasks, the consolation, or the darkness God sends to us. We say, 'Fiat, thy will be done'. This was supposed to be a way accessible to laymen in worldly employment, but the condition of 'striving for perfection' was hard to fulfil, and some Jesuit writers held this total and exacting serenity to be unattainable to all but the very few who choose 'the passive' as against 'the active' way. Yet in the Jesuit

confraternities of the Messieurs, in sessions of instruction and in retreats, something of the discipline may have been passed on to pious laymen. There was a bridge—the classical education in the *collèges* lauded the Stoic ideal, and with this as an introduction, a modified, compromise version of the abandonment to Divine Providence may have been transmitted, especially when the director talked of preparation for dying.

Moral and spiritual direction, when given and accepted with pious intensity, not just for outward show, was so complex, all-embracing, and involved in psychological challenges that its detailed content can only be guessed at. But the straightforward operation of the confessional, where the rules were clear and the handbooks explicit, is more accessible to the historian, in spite of the obligations of secrecy—and it is the straightforward operation of the confessional which involves the history of the overwhelming majority.

II

‘Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis, in nomine Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti.’ Here was the crucial point in the relations between clergy and people—the words of absolution which opened the door to receiving communion. By the law of the Church, everyone with a ‘mortal’ sin on his conscience was obliged to go to confession before approaching the sacrament of the altar, and this had to be done at least once a year, at the season of Easter. (Most sins were mortal; a venial sin would be something like speaking an idle, frivolous word, or stealing something of no consequence like an apple or a pin.²¹) From the age of 7, a child was regarded as capable of understanding the concepts of sin and personal responsibility; according to one strict handbook, from that age confession ought to be made four times a year, increasing to once a month as the time of First Communion drew near.²² Laymen had the right to choose their own confessors, and to this extent they could manœuvre around the fringes of the disciplinary structure of the Church;²³ on the other hand, not every priest was entitled to hear confessions, but only those who were authorized by the diocesan bishop, who could withdraw his permission at any time. There were exceptions to this rule, though they did not significantly weaken episcopal control: a monk in priest’s orders could direct the consciences of fellow monks of the same community, while any priest, even one who was suspended or excommunicated, could give absolution to the dying.²⁴

Each bishop listed certain grave sins as *cas réservés*—that is, reserved for consideration by the bishop himself or his officially designated representative, some canon or *grand vicaire*.²⁵ Similarly, certain major crimes were reserved for papal absolution—issuing forged bulls, striking a cleric, and burglary of church silver being the chief. In theory, the *cas réservés* were strictly enforced. Suppose one of these sins has been committed by an octogenarian who lives twelve leagues from the episcopal town and the time of Easter communion draws near: his curé cannot absolve him. This is a severe example; in fact, the rules were generally interpreted with a bias towards the penitent. The sin ‘reserved’ had to be a public affair: committed in secret, it could be absolved in secret; the dying were exempt from the reservations, so too were young people under the age of puberty, while the exceptions made by a particular bishop applied only within his diocesan boundaries. As for Roman prerogatives, it was normally sufficient to demonstrate the impossibility of making the journey across the Alps.

The secret of the confessional was inviolable. A confessor was not allowed to speak, even to the penitent himself,²⁶ about anything that had been revealed under the seal of secrecy, and he was forbidden to make any use of information so gained. A curé might know, by this means, that an applicant for a certificate of good morals was a rogue; similarly, a couple might be asking him for their banns to be called when they were, in fact, disqualified from marriage by an impediment; a penitent in the parish confessional might be concealing his role as an accomplice in a grave crime; unknown to her parents and everyone else, a girl might be pregnant, and she and the unborn child be in danger of death if she continued to lie about her condition. The curé was helpless: he must sign the certificate of morals, celebrate the marriage, absolve the sinner, let the girl and her infant die.²⁷ The situation was different when information came to the confessor outside the seal of secrecy, whether directly from the penitent or from a third party. Beaumarchais believed that the collection of what was owing to him from the controller-general might be hastened by spreading the rumour that his wife had complained to her confessor about these unpaid debts,²⁸ and Choderlos de Laclos portrays the sinister Valmont plotting to seduce Mme de Tourval by winning the approval of her spiritual director, a naïve and unctuous friar, in the guise of a repentant sinner.²⁹ In these cases, it was assumed that the confessor might take some action; even so, great care would have to be exercised to avoid any suspicion of abuse of confidence. The pious handbooks concede that, on the very margins

of the obligation of secrecy itself, there were interventions a confessor could make, though with the utmost discretion. A dictionary of *cas de conscience* instances three highly unusual cases in which—significantly—the mission and reputation of the Church are at stake.³⁰ Suppose, through the confessional, I know of three deplorable characters—a heretic engaged in secret conspiracy against sound doctrine, an ecclesiastic unworthy of office in the Church, and a priest who is using the confessional to seduce female penitents. So far as the heretic is concerned, I may warn the bishop, though only in general terms, with no reference to the individual. Concerning the unworthy ecclesiastic, my special knowledge may not be used to evict him from a post he already holds, but if he is an applicant for promotion and I am an elector, I may vote against him. As for the criminal seducer, it is indeed my duty to delate him to the bishop, but I can do so only if I manage to persuade my informant to speak out or, failing that, to release me from the obligation of secrecy. Certainly, the officials of law enforcement could expect no help from a confessor. If the police tried to interrogate a priest about a penitent, he simply remained silent. In June 1736, the *buisriers* of the parlement of Rennes descended on the recteur of the parish of Saint-Louis in Lorient concerning the recent death of a woman who was supposed to have known about a cache of demonological books and instruments for ‘treasure-hunting’. Recteur Cohalan refused to talk to them, and would not even countersign their report of his recalcitrance.³¹ If a priest broke the seal of the confessional, under whatever duress, he was liable to drastic penalties, secular as well as ecclesiastical. In February 1778,³² the sons of a murdered man held a pistol to the head of their curé until he revealed to them which of his penitents had been the assassin. The parlement of Toulouse ordered the curé to be burned alive and the two brothers to be broken on the wheel; as for the murderer, he went free, the evidence against him being God's secret, not to be admitted before any earthly tribunal.

Had the manuals of the confessional been obeyed, the confessor's interrogations would have been remorseless, and his penances grim. The sacrament had once been regarded as an undemanding device to improve relationships in the community, ending feuds and reconciling enemies. But after the Council of Trent it became focused on the sanctification of the individual, probing his thoughts, demanding an exact account of his doings and dispositions. The confessional box, invented by Charles Borromeo, was the outward symbol of this new intensity.³³ The emphasis within this new orientation on extreme rigorism was intensified by the tensions of the feud between

Jansenists and Jesuits. The Jesuits were accused of laxism, absolving their penitents undemandingly, to build up a clientele for their Order. They were said not to insist on contrition, but to accept 'attrition' as enough—that is, sorrow for sin arising solely from fear of the consequences—and to follow the doctrine of 'probabilism'—that is, if a single casuist can be found to approve a certain course of action, it is blameless, irrespective of majority condemnation and common sense. Pascal's attack in the *Lettres provinciales*³⁴ had an enormous effect on opinion, even though his censures were directed at Jesuit casuists who were not French, and his citations were slanted out of context. The Assembly of Clergy in 1655–7 condemned laxism in all its forms. Thereafter, Jansenists rejoiced in their triumphant rigorist principles, and the Jesuits adopted them in self-defence. It is easy to find unrealistically exaggerated definitions of sin, especially in sexual matters, in the confessional handbooks, but the main effect of rigorism went beyond these details: it was a question of what penances should be imposed—more especially, should weak and habitual sinners be excluded from communion by the refusal of absolution?

By definition, we do not know what was said in the confessional, but the handbooks of the clergy reveal what was supposed to happen. The penitent had to come prepared by self-examination: it was a mortal sin to add to the others to fail to do this.³⁵ The circumstances of each offence had to be revealed. It was not enough to say 'I have committed adultery', 'I am a thief', for fornication (say) with another man's wife or stealing from someone who is poor is a more serious sin than simple adultery or theft. Even generous standards of pride had to be abandoned: a peasant, for instance, who killed his unmarried sister in a rage because she was pregnant must not conceal his motives to protect her reputation.³⁶ The confessor had a stock succession of questions to ask about the circumstances of each offence; 'Quis quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quo modo, quando' was the formula to remember them by.³⁷ Fully informed, the confessor had to evaluate the sins: were any of them *cas réservés* which had to go to the bishop or the Pope? Were they mortal or venial? (Mortal were such as separate from an amicable relationship with God.) Did they arise from ignorance, negligence, habit, recklessness, or sheer defiance? These questions lead on to an evaluation of the dispositions of the penitent; did he show true 'contrition', or was he merely in a state of 'attrition', divorced from the love of God and charity, moved rather by fear of Hell or the desire to conform to respectability? No doubt the point could be made to sophisticated

penitents, but would this be possible in a rural parish? According to Mme de Sévigné, a dying man who confessed to two monks told his family afterwards, 'les disent que j'ai l'attrition', thinking it was the disease that was killing him.³⁸ It was important to distinguish case from case, since a soul evidently moved by sorrow for sin might be slipping into scrupulosity, an introspective and enervating condition. Here, the priest might have to reflect on his reading of the manuals of the confessional, and draw on their instances of casuistry. For example (avoiding the great issues of the century which will be looked at individually later), he might have to point out that it was illicit to buy and sell on a Sunday, yet a promise to pay in such a transaction must be honoured. Similarly (though there was a contrary view), a prostitute must be paid for services rendered, even by a client who repented of having used them. A bankrupt may conceal a sum sufficient to keep his family from starving, provided there was no crime involved in his failure and the creditors were better off than he was.³⁹ Under certain circumstances, restitution was not required if it involved public dishonour: the money could be given to the poor. There were some casuistical distinctions that were trivial. At the end of the seventeenth century Tronson had ruled that ecclesiastics could not play boules, presumably because it was a game witnessed by all and sundry, but for health's sake they could play tennis, provided it was in a private *jeu de paume*, that they retained their ecclesiastical costume, and did not play for money.⁴⁰ There were, too, distinctions which preserved the principle involved, yet allowed the penitent to carry on in a common-sense way the same as everyone else: an *avocat* was not allowed to take on an unjust case, except if a life was at stake; however, he would not know if a case was unjust until he had looked into it, and thereafter he could not back out, because this would betray his client to the other side.⁴¹ Thus, the manuals of the confessional, in thinking of everything, made sin complex and interesting, and so it no doubt often was for ladies in high society and their spiritual directors. In most places, however, and certainly in rural France, existence was harsh, folk ways constricting, private life subject to communal surveillance; what was volunteered in the confessional was, so often, crude and predictable. A curé rarely needed to exercise the logic-chopping expertise they had tried to teach him at the seminary.

Before pronouncing absolution, the confessor would prescribe a penance. This would probably be the performance of certain pious duties, possibly acts of self-denial (one bishop in the century regretted that the practice of imposing long fasts on bread and water

had gone out of fashion)⁴². Admissions of theft or fraud would be likely to involve restitution; a quarrel would call for a reconciliation; openly scandalous conduct might have to be atoned for by some public reparation. Sins of the imagination, drunkenness, and sexual misdemeanours would call for a promise to avoid the places and circumstances of temptation. If the confessor was dissatisfied with his penitent's dispositions, he could, in the last resort, defer absolution. The handbooks listed the grounds for such a serious step: lack of knowledge of the faith through laziness or indifference, unwillingness to flee from occasions of temptation, failure to make a serious effort to break a sinful habit, refusal to make restitution or seek reconciliation.⁴³ Were such delays of absolution frequent? If they were, it would show that the clergy were making sustained efforts to exercise direct control over the morals of the laity, with, no doubt, serious effects on the relationship between the ministry of the Church and the people.

The trouble with the delay of absolution was that it deprived the penitent of communion at the very moment when he most needed encouragement: its virtue was that it took sin seriously, and proclaimed an elevated view of the sacrament of the altar. The Jansenists took the line of severity. Antoine Arnauld, in 1643, in his *Théologie morale des Jésuites*, and in his *Fréquente Communion*, faced the dilemma, and made the protection of the sacrament from profanation and the enforcement of discipline his priorities. In a letter of 1689, he claimed to have been an innovator, since the great churchmen of the first half of the century had been ignorant of the value of a policy of delaying absolution; indeed, it appears to have been the case that, apart from Saint-Cyran, spiritual writers had not recommended it.⁴⁴ In 1679, a decree of the Holy Office in Rome supported some of Arnauld's rigorist formulas; so too did the Assembly General of the Clergy of France, under the leadership of Bossuet, in 1700; there was an intention to encourage confessors to be stricter, though there was ambiguity about whether banning unsatisfactory penitents from the altar was the best way of doing this. Significantly, however, when the bishops who accepted the bull *Unigenitus* in 1713 issued a pastoral letter, they went out of their way, in dissociating themselves from Quesnel and Jansenism, to defend the right of confessors to withhold absolution—for public crimes, habitual sins, refusal to offer restitution or accept reconciliation, for crass ignorance and unsatisfactory dispositions generally.⁴⁵ In a theological dispute, neither side can afford to appear to be lax about moral issues as compared with the other; thus the feud between Jansenists and the orthodox continued

to encourage the progress of rigorism in the moral theology of the eighteenth century. The Jesuit Père Antoine in 1726 was prescribing the withholding of absolution from relapsed and habitual sinners; Père Collet, the Lazarist, seemed willing to maintain such delays for years; Louis Bailly (in 1789) would admit habitual sinners to communion only if they had not received a previous warning, or if they were dying. So far as theory was concerned, the sympathetic ideas of the *Theologia moralis* (1753–5) of the great Italian bishop and casuist Alphonsus of Liguori, making communion the support and encouragement of the defeated, rather than the reward of the successful Christian soldier, were little known in France until after the Revolution.

Yet it would be dangerous to infer that eighteenth-century France was full of anxious or angry laymen striving or refusing to satisfy demanding confessors. The Church was generous to sinners in desperate circumstances and overwhelming need. At a deathbed⁴⁶ the confessor might speak of damnation to bring a hardened sinner to repentance, but his message was essentially of consolation, urging resignation to the loss of earthly things, but offering the love of Christ on the cross, seeking to save. The confessor supported the dying man, ‘praying with him and for him’. Only in improbable circumstances would absolution be refused, and even then, extreme unction would not be withheld. Soldiers and sailors going into battle were brought together for prayer and given a general absolution by their chaplain.⁴⁷ These official remissions to certain categories of penitents were, no doubt, extended, *mutatis mutandis*, to other individuals in grave difficulties. Certainly, the handbooks for the guidance of the clergy make quiet reservations once the ruthless principles have been stated. One, which would debar a habitual swearer from absolution even when he has got his oaths down to two a day, also insists that anyone who says he detests his sins and promises amendment should be believed; indeed, anyone who can say he is sorry that he is not sorry for having offended God should be accepted.⁴⁸ Another stern moralist warns against demanding too much: do not dishonour a man by imposing public humiliations; do not inflict great mortifications for sins of the imagination, but encourage cheerful thoughts on harmless subjects; do not create obsessions with sin by overemphatic condemnations.⁴⁹ Le Camus, the Jansenistically inclined bishop of Grenoble, in 1670 gave a moving description of the duty of the shepherd to lead his flock at a comfortable pace and by easy stages:

Usually we make . . . special rules to bring men to salvation, and as soon as we see people acting outside our guidelines . . . we despair of them. But God often intervenes to save them by ways we'd never have foreseen . . . Never judge anyone, never despair of anyone who retains faith and some fear of God's judgements—it is the destiny of only the very few heroic souls to do canonical penance, to renounce everything to follow single-mindedly in the steps of Christ crucified. In the ordinary way, grace does not destroy our temperament, our inclinations, and our bad habits: it changes them little by little, as imperceptibly as they were formed. Those who are summoned *potentissima et efficacissima vocatione* should be gentle . . . with those who progress more slowly, and take care not to drive them to despair, at the beginning of their conversion, by laying upon them burdens they are not yet able to bear.⁵⁰

In the normal parish, there was not likely to be time enough for the clergy to revive 'the ancient discipline of the Church' so loved by Jansenists. 'A spiritual director who has only three penitents to look after', said Le Camus, 'can, if he thinks fit, [defer absolution], but in a diocese, this is impracticable.'⁵¹ The curé indeed, for good or for bad reasons, was so often a man in a hurry—thus, the bishop of Boulogne complained in 1744 that his parish priests drove people away from the confessional 'by their lack of assiduity in hearing confessions and, when they do hear them, it is in such a rush and in such a dry and negligent manner that the penitents are put off and scandalized'.⁵² In tightly knit communities where everyone knew everyone, the penitent who went to confession yet missed Easter communion would be noticed—what then of the rule against imposing a public humiliation, of the precautions necessary to preserve the secrecy of the confessional, and of the precept of the Church making Easter communion obligatory?⁵³ Rigorist confessors would find their clientele going elsewhere, or be in danger of coming under suspicion of Jansenism and being interdicted by the bishop.⁵⁴ From what we know of the relations between curés and parishioners, it seems unlikely that excessive rigorism would prevail, and had it been so, we would have heard more in the form of anti-clerical grumbling. In most dioceses most of the time there is no evidence of the people missing Easter communion because parish priests were delaying absolution. Two exceptions early in the eighteenth century are the dioceses of Pamiers and Alet under Jansenist bishops who insisted on extreme rigorism. The result was the collapse of Easter communions, in some places 50–80 per cent absentees.⁵⁵ In a community of bargees who had no alternative to working on Sundays, only 80 out of 700 performed their Easter

duty. It was a warning to the clergy that the use of the confessional as a weapon of discipline would de-Christianize the countryside.

III

Preachers continually denounced the failure of Christians to organize their lives in accordance with their beliefs. Charles Borromeo and the other saints of the Counter-Reformation hoped that the confessional would generate the discipline and guidance to bridge the gap between belief and conduct. The curés in a multitude of parishes knew better. The refinements of spiritual direction of a Fénelon, Milley, Caussade, and Duguet were for an élite—often their works had been written as letters to nuns and other dedicated souls. Probably their elevated and subtle advice, in simplified forms and from simpler men, extended further down the scale of piety than one might at first sight imagine. Even so, though the confessional could be a therapeutic and civilizing institution, it could never be a popular one. If the Church uses machinery for gaining control of the world, it means that the world infiltrates the Church. Obligatory confession meant routine confession, a formal religious activity circumscribed by anticlerical scrutiny. It could never be a device by which the clergy controlled the morals of society.

While the manuals of the confessional dealt with an array of complex and challenging cases, their authors sometimes conceded that most of them were irrelevant for the majority. One urges his clerical readers to persevere with studying his book: say you were offered promotion to a prestigious town parish; here, you would be confronted by conundrums of casuistry not known elsewhere—how could you accept with a good conscience if you did not know how to deal with them? In the countryside, confessions concerned repetitive and crude offences. On the eve of the Revolution, a reasonably devout peasant-farmer in Normandy⁵⁶ made a list of his sins over a lifetime: drunk ten times, sexual relations with a servant and casual encounters with two other women, eyed the girls lustfully more than eighty times and had impure thoughts during mass and vespers, stole four trusses of hay from the curé on one occasion and twice carted hay on a saint's day, wished his father dead a hundred times and felt no regret at the death of his mother, was anxious to get rich, and went on a pilgrimage to pray for a well-dowried wife. When the curés generalized about the morals of their parishioners, they talked of coarse simplicities of misconduct they knew they could not

change. An episcopal enquiry in the diocese of Reims in 1774 collected the verdicts of parish priests about the conduct of their people.⁵⁷ ‘Vicious’, ‘spiteful’, ‘vindictive’, are well-used adjectives to describe them; they victimize their clergy as one of their expressions of a general hatred of authority—‘they blame God and the great ones for their miseries’. ‘The parishioners’, said one curé, ‘are somewhat republican [“bolshy” would be the modern word], loving their independence, gambling, wine, dancing and pleasures; lively, petulant, choleric, blaspheming as much as they gamble, and during pilgrimages and masses making scandalous scenes.’ In other parts of France the curés would put less emphasis on malice and resentment of authority, but practically all would have agreed that the besetting vice of the flesh was drunkenness. Vauban's famous estimate of 40,000 *cabarets* for the 36,000 parishes fell short of the truth. A parish in the Nivernais had eight drinking establishments for its 500 inhabitants; a town of 3,000 in Languedoc had one *cabaret* and six *auberges*; another of 4,000 had three *cabarets* and one *auberge*; in addition, everywhere there were the new-fangled roadside *bouchons*, twenty-four-hour taverns.⁵⁸ The clergy complained of their religious festivals being drowned in torrents of wine or cider. ‘They don't ask about the saint whose festival they are observing, they think only of drinking.’⁵⁹ But for the royal ordinance closing all bars on Christmas Eve, many would spend the whole season of the Nativity in befuddled stupor.⁶⁰ The clergy had to strive to get the menfolk to give money to their wives to feed the children before the tavern swallowed up their wages.⁶¹ True, there were priests who enjoyed toping themselves, perhaps, like the marquis de Mirabeau's curé, because getting merry to the point of embracing and singing drew closer the companionable bonds of society; but few would have denied that drink was the curse of the working classes.⁶² The other chief vice of rural France, not unconnected with the first, was violence. ‘They go to the fair with big sticks seeking fights,’ said one parish priest.⁶³ And with the fighting, swearing—‘coquin’, ‘salop’, ‘bâtard’, ‘gueux’, and ‘gueuse’, ‘bougre’ and ‘bougresse’, and ‘cornard’, with ‘foutu’ attached to all as the adjective.

This was a rough and poverty-stricken world, and the curé had little hope of reforming it. He was indispensable in the quest for divine intervention in crises of plague, famine, or other disaster, and as presiding over and sanctifying the rites of birth, marriage, and death; but he was not regarded with reverential awe—no taboo protected his cassock. He would be short-changed in the tithe and his sheaves and livestock stolen; he was not accepted as a censor of

morals unless it was a case where the village community condemned the offender. The confessional gave him hardly any leverage. According to Mercier,⁶⁴ in the godless Paris of the latter years of the *ancien régime*, it was hard to get anyone to come at all: a few bourgeois, some being hypocrites, came, a few old people alarmed at the approach of death, serving-girls because they would be suspected of dishonesty by their mistresses if they stayed away, and schoolboys dragged there by force to make a series of identical admissions. In the countryside they came in so far as the rules obliged, but with what dispositions? Early in the century, the curé of the miserable village of Sennely-en-Sologne described his peasants at the confessional: forgetting to make the sign of the cross, with no recollection of when they had last confessed, and having failed to do their last penance; they justified themselves, complained of their poverty, argued that black was white, muttered their worst sins through clenched teeth so they could not be heard, saving up fornication, arson, and major crimes for their deathbed—‘il ne faut pas se fier à tout le monde’.⁶⁵ On mission campaigns in the fishing villages on the Breton coast, the preachers asked detailed questions in the confessional. ‘Why don't you do like our parish priests?’, said the people; ‘all they ask us is “do you understand your religion and say your prayers”? When we say “yes” they tell us to say five Paters and five Aves for a penance and give us absolution. Why ask more?’⁶⁶ At the end of the century, a curé of the diocese of Comminges⁶⁷ complained of being universally vilified and duped by his parishioners, ‘and what is most embarrassing is their attitude in the tribunal of penitence, for there they are all honest folks, never have poultry or firewood unless they have paid for them’. No doubt educated people also had their subterfuges and reticences, and knew ‘la manière de se confesser sans dire tout’.⁶⁸ The position of the curé as a regulator of morals was rendered more difficult by the fact that some of the rules zealous bishops expected him to enforce were impractical for the very poor. Early in the century, the Jansenist bishop Soanen made notes on one of his visitations:

Many feuds, often accompanied by blows. They are too avaricious to pay for a schoolmaster for their children, which is why so few of them are educated. Blasphemies and oaths the normal practice. Ovens and mills working on Sundays and the taverns open all day during the church services. Fathers and mothers have their children sleeping with them and they let brothers and sisters sleep together. Some declare they steal the tithe and work on Sundays. Too much ardour for temporal possessions and too much violence in their passions.⁶⁹

This rigmarole of censures shows a losing attempt to impose Sunday observance on tough characters who had to work and wanted to drink, educational expenditure on families too poor to afford it, and sexual innocence on people too ill-housed to observe the decencies.

In 1761, a curé declared that he could only be welcome to his flock 'by letting them live as they please, by getting drunk, swearing and gambling with them, and omitting his bounden duty to instruct them by homilies'.⁷⁰ Within the community, the inhabitants sought material advantages by scrounging, bartering, and marrying, and when blows did not settle their feuds, families resorted to the law courts. The curé had to stand aloof from these webs of relationships and rivalries: only a team of missionaries descending might try mediation. In contrast to these internal struggles, the community was united against reforming intrusions from officials and churchmen alike.⁷¹ A sort of mafia code operated. There were unwritten laws about pitched battles and cudgel play: unless expensive hats and wigs were missing, it was unlikely there would be a prosecution. When a crime was committed, it was hard to find witnesses, unless a professional criminal or outsider was involved. Courts examined all evidence in private, as no one would testify in public: 'j'ai cru avoir droit de mentir pour sauver un homme de la potence' was an accepted maxim. Women were entitled to steal to feed their children, and wives were expected to conceal the crimes of their husbands—though the courts would not extend this indulgence to concubines.⁷² There were collective crimes in which all participated. One was smuggling, and if contraband goods or salt escaping the tax of the *gabelle* stayed a while in crypt or vestry, why not? Another was the pillaging of shipwrecked vessels.⁷³ A third of the wrecks within the jurisdiction of the admiralty of Quimper were looted (though things were improving towards the end of the century). A barrel of oil or grog would be left at the presbytery, and it was not unknown for a parish priest to be asked to say a mass for wild weather suitable to endanger shipping. One curé who tried to stop a rush of looters had to flee, and never dared return to his parish. When the government ordered the reading of a *monitoire* excommunicating all who had engaged in plunder, the bishop of Boulogne pleaded with the minister for realism—it was absurd to put in anything about restitution.

The gloomy comments of the clergy about popular morality do not adequately represent the spirit of their mutual relationships. Their parishioners were miserable sinners, yet there was a great deal

of laughter, understanding, and almsgiving once the duties of censure and calls for improvement had been performed. Two curés reporting on their flocks early in the eighteenth century were censorious, yet in the last resort, sympathetic. At Sennely-en-Sologne, the people's religion was little more than a love of processions: they were 'baptized idolators'. They drank, stole and showed no love to their aged parents. 'Yet they would share their miserable crust with a starving beggar.'⁷⁴ It was a place of desperate poverty; ill-health was universal; and life was short. They were harsh and bitter, but generous on the margins of survival. Another curé in a prosperous place refers to the 'negligence and lukewarmness' of his people 'concerning the affairs of their salvation', and their excessive love of material possessions.⁷⁵ 'Even so,' he says, 'there are numerous honest folk and of a great number of these one can say nothing but good. Indeed, of almost all the parishioners one can say they have much charity for the poor. I believe God will save them by this means.'

IV

No doubt many curés would gather round them a small group of sober and devout people; to these, good advice would be given in the confessional, and they would welcome the assurance of forgiveness. Unbelievers were prepared to concede the possibility of these benefits, and to accept the confessional as a possible instrument for encouraging the practice of virtue, without (as Mme Roland said) 'any intermixture of ridiculous mysticism'.⁷⁶ Among the philosophes, it was proverbial to regard confession itself as useful (no doubt as giving psychological release) but absolution as a superstitious invention of clericalism. Hence the supposed exchange between Montesquieu and Suard:

'Convenez M. Suard, que la confession est une bonne chose.'

'D'accord, M. le president, mais convenez aussi que l'absolution en est une mauvaise.'⁷⁷

Anticlericals naturally hated the confessional, the strategic point at which the clergy claimed the exclusive right to intervene between their fellow men and God, exerting a power to bind and to loose which Heaven itself would ratify. To them, any scandals were welcome—hence the furore which arose in 1731 over the case of the Jesuit Père Girard and Catherine Cadière. In that year, the parlement

of Aix had to deal with accusations by La Cadière, a girl of 22 who spent all her time in religious observances and claimed to have received the stigmata, against Jean-Baptiste Girard, the rector of the royal seminary in Toulouse and her erstwhile confessor. She alleged that he had sexually abused her while she was in spiritual trances, had bewitched her, and procured an abortion by giving her doses of a sinister potion. The ecclesiastical court of the diocese of Toulouse had called her to book originally for these accusations, but her family lawyers used the procedure of *appel comme d'abus* to go before the parlement of Aix,⁷⁸ and the Jesuits seem to have regarded their case as so manifestly unassailable that they did not exercise their right to have it 'evoked' before the Royal Council. Probably the nearest we can get to the truth of what happened is the account given by the marquis d'Argens;⁷⁹ his own adventures were such as to qualify him to assess shady incidents, he was in Aix at the time, and his father was *procureur général* of the parlement there, with access to the documents. According to d'Argens's *Mémoires*, Catherine Cadière put the marks of crucifixion on her hands and feet by applying an ointment, and she had a mark on her left breast anyway, there since childhood. Girard was foolish enough to look at it. Otherwise, the Jesuit was innocent (there was, though, a deposition in the legal documents from a servant concerning his spending many afternoons entirely alone with his penitent).⁸⁰ The fact was, said d'Argens sardonically, Girard acted stupidly because the Cadière girl fitted in with his ambition to become known as a notable director of élite souls. 'The reputation of making saints was as dear to him as the desire to pass for one was her obsession.' When he—and the bishop of Toulon—finally came to disbelieve the claims and 'miracles' of this postulant for sanctity, she sought revenge, and did so in alliance with her new confessor, a Carmelite friar who was a Jansenist, and therefore a hater of Jesuits. D'Argens goes so far as to say, unconvincingly, that the Carmelite confessor really did seduce her. The affair bitterly divided society throughout Provence, and led to popular tumults against the Jesuits, so that in the end, the army was called in to restore order. The parlement, deadlocked, reached no verdict, so everyone could believe what they liked. Either way, the confessional came out badly, since if Girard had not used it to seduce La Cadière, the Carmelite had used it to encourage her to denounce Girard. Anticlericals enjoyed a field-day. The voluminous legal depositions of both sides, printed, as was the custom, sold for huge sums in Paris until a new edition satisfied the demand, and they were translated in full into English to let Protestants see 'by what villainous and

diabolic acts the *Romish* Priests, but especially the Jesuits, usurp and maintain an absolute dominion over the Consciences as well as the Persons of their *Devotees*.⁸¹

Though the Cadière affair was so sensational, authentic scandals concerning the confessional were, in fact, rare (with so many mocking wits about in eighteenth-century France, we may be sure that few would go unreported). Anticlericals had to do their best with limited material: like the donations for charity supposedly given in the confessional to the abbé Grisel, *sous-pénitencier* of Notre Dame, by Billard, cashier of the *fermiers* of the postal system, who abstracted the money from the coffers he was supposed to be guarding,⁸² and the anonymous Cordelier who authorized a young man to exchange his dirty shirt for a clean one on a housewife's washing line.⁸³ Even so, the novelists liked to have a heroine seduced by her confessor, or to hint at a romance between a lady of quality and her spiritual director.⁸⁴ When, as a boy, Billaud-Varenne found the portrait of a handsome monk in a casket in his mother's bedroom—and got a box on the ears for his pains—he clearly suspected that life in his family circle was beginning to imitate literature.⁸⁵ The standard anticlerical caricature stopped short of accusations of sexual misconduct. There was an attachment of ladies of fashion (so it ran) to their spiritual directors and, maybe, competition for his exclusive regard. Within this relationship, worldliness was justified decently, and the flowers of spirituality were cultivated without the roots striking painfully deep. The picture goes back to Boileau; the director well fed and vermilion-cheeked, complaining about his infirmities so that the ladies brought him soups and syrups, liqueurs and sweetmeats.

Mais de tous les mortels, grace aux dévotes Âmes
Nul n'est si bien soigné qu'un Directeur de femmes!

In return, he makes the road to Paradise easy, justifying rouge and expensive dresses as duties to fashion and to rank, gambling as a substitute for gossip, and intrigues on behalf of one's friends as laudable efforts to keep important employments out of the hands of worldly people. 'Tout est sanctifié pour une âme pieuse.'⁸⁶ From then onwards, the confessor regaled by the ladies is a stereotype of satire. A husband in Marivaux, ruined by his wife's lavish entertainment of her attendant ecclesiastics, complains: 'nothing was too dainty a morsel for these great servants of God, while I dined only moderately with my worldly, sinful friends'.⁸⁷ Montesquieu is kinder: the confessor in the *Lettres persanes* has a light-hearted air and a high complexion, but he also has a subtle appreciation of feminine

psychology, rendering flattering attentions and sophisticated compliments, indispensable as an adviser on many a detail of conduct, and the very man for charming away a headache.⁸⁸

The thought of the Enlightenment, believing in the regeneration of man by social engineering and psychological conditioning, did not take the concept of sin in the serious Christian fashion. So, while the confessional could be accepted as a psychological device to improve the unintelligent majority, it was not a little suspect as a machine invented by the clergy to promote their own influence. At the end of the *ancien régime*, as an offshoot of the cult of *sensibilité*, an odd sentimental fashion began which was revealing. Throughout the century, economic conditions in the countryside were improving, bringing new possibilities of civilized living to a larger number. The family life around the fireside depicted in the novels of Restif de la Bretonne became possible for more households as they climbed above starvation level. Fashionable writers and ladies of high society could turn to the long-enduring Virgilian pastoral myth, seeing what they wanted to see in the life-style of the better-off peasants in the good years and in the summer sunshine. In 1766, the *Année littéraire*⁸⁹ (a journal rather more favourable to the clergy than to the philosophes) published the story of 'La Rosière' of Salency, where Mme de Genlis had just crowned with a wreath of roses the most virtuous girl of the commune, and the villagers had danced on the grass outside the chapel to the sound of shepherds' pipes. According to the lawyers,⁹⁰ the prize at Salency had begun in the age of Clovis with a legacy from St Médard, bishop of Noyon. A great lawsuit before the parlement of Paris in 1773 (to guarantee the popular election of the girl against the ill will of the local seigneur) publicized the Salency ceremony still further, and prizes with crowns of flowers were instituted in other parishes.⁹¹ In 1780, the bishop of Boulogne recommended all seigneurs to found such an award—a crown of 'sagesse' for a poor and virtuous girl in the parishes under their jurisdiction. Make haste, O Greuze, with thy canvas and thy brushes! The whole scheme of moral awards was made into a national institution by the benefaction of M. de Montyan to the Academy in 1782 to finance an annual discourse 'in praise of an act of virtue' in the Paris area within the last two years. "The doer of the celebrated action, whether man or woman, must not be of a status above the bourgeoisie, and it is hoped the chosen individual will be from the lowest ranks of society."⁹² The new fashion was more welcome to the men of the Enlightenment than to churchmen, for here was humanity competing in contests of virtue, rather than languishing in

the darkness of original sin. The unreal world of the Revolution, proposing to induce and celebrate virtue by processions and prizes, was beginning to take over from the harsh routine of the confessional, where the curés strove, without great hope, to keep up appearances and make their parishioners' lives a little more decent, and their mutual relations a little more charitable.

32 Commercial Loans and Lotteries

I

'Why is this usage authorized, or at least tolerated, by prelates, by spiritual directors, and—when they descend to practicalities—by all the casuists, even though they forbid usury in their sermons, in their writings and in their public disputations?', asked the doctors of the Sorbonne in 1673.¹ They went on to give an answer, by implication, to their question. Though they could see no way in which the law of the Church could be amended to allow loans at interest, they conceded that without them, commercial exchanges would come to a standstill. They did not make any deductions from their statement of the dilemma, but merely complained of the chaotic state of theological thinking and ecclesiastical discipline.

Counter-Reformation Catholicism maintained the ancient prohibition of 'usury', and refused to compromise with the changing circumstances of an advancing civilization. Perhaps one of the reasons for this rigorism was to dissociate the Roman faith from Protestant laxity; Calvin had held that loans for production, or for purposes allowed by the secular authorities, were lawful for Christians, provided the poor were not oppressed and charity reigned in all undertakings. Protestant England and Holland had by law authorized the taking of commercial interest. By contrast, Rome not only maintained the old prohibitions, but also condemned some of the traditional devices for outflanking them. In 1580, the 'triple contract' was repudiated (that is, loans engineered by separate contracts of association, sale, and insurance, giving a share in the profits to the lender on the ground that he was sharing in the risks). In 1679, the so-called *mobatra*² was condemned (in this arrangement, the lender sold fictitious merchandise to the borrower, to be paid for at a later date, then bought it back immediately for a lower price). The Assembly General of the Clergy of France³ in 1700 tightened up some of the rules concerning loans, and in particular rejected the argument from risk, the *periculum sortis*—for if the degree of danger

of loss involved in a loan dictated differential charges, the poor borrower might well have to pay more than the rich one.

The casuistical situation, as set out in the *Conférences ecclésiastiques de Paris sur l'usure et la restitution* in 1718 was complex and impossibly austere.⁴ A lender might claim compensation for an expense he incurred in making a loan (the *damnum emergens*) and for the loss of income which he might otherwise have obtained from the money (the *lucrum cessans*). But these pleas were hedged around with restrictions; the *lucrum cessans*, for example, had to be demonstrated so clearly that only a merchant with flourishing trading opportunities could invoke it. The risk incurred when money was lent, the *periculum sortis*, was judged irrelevant. The result in practice was: there were virtually only two ways of drawing interest with a clear conscience. One was to be involved in insurance business,⁵ the other was to buy an annual income—the necessary condition for the legitimacy of such a *rente perpétuelle* being that the capital was genuinely alienated (subject to the right of the borrower to wind up his obligations by returning it). Investing in such a *rente perpétuelle* was deemed to escape the net of ecclesiastical prohibitions because, strictly speaking, there was no question of 'lending' money; there was, simply, the purchase of an annuity. Difficult and marginal cases were interpreted strictly. Suppose I lend money to a friend and he buys an estate with it and lives handsomely on its fruits—I have no claim on him. What if my creditor fails to repay me on the due date—may I demand interest from him? Only if I had originally stipulated it, and even then, my motive must have been solely to ensure prompt payment: I must not have been hoping to draw an extra fee. (A more realistic book of casuistry in 1757 said that after a delay of six months, interest would fall due; even so, it was a long time to wait.)⁶ Suppose I am a guardian holding in trust a sum of money for a minor, how do I look after it? This is difficult, for the law of France entitles a ward to sue for interest on his trust fund, so, presumably, I am permitted to resort to investments other the *rentes perpétuelles*, unsuitable in this case because the capital would be alienated.⁷ And then there was the major question of borrowing money for the urgent needs of the State, maybe to buy grain in a famine, or to maintain the armies on the frontier facing a foreign invader. Casuists throughout the century tended to be generous to the necessities of the Crown, admitting the overriding importance of public safety.⁸ Ideally, those who lend to the State and draw interest on their advances ought to have patriotic motives or, at least, be obeying the king's direct orders; the *Conférences* of the diocese of

Angers, however, in 1776 went further, and legitimized the activities of financiers who drew a higher interest from the government than that which they paid to the smaller investors whose contributions they centralized.⁹

The law of the State, in theory at least, supported the rules of the Church, the lawbooks citing a capitulary of Charlemagne of 789, an ordinance of 1274, and another of 1579 as forbidding usury of any kind.¹⁰ As for the allowable *rentes perpétuelles*, from time to time the amount of interest which could be stipulated in these contracts was officially determined; in 1720 it was 2 per cent, four years later it was 3.3 per cent, another year later 5 per cent, and at this figure it stayed, except between 1766 and 1770 when it was 4 per cent.¹¹ The parlements varied in the degree of severity with which they enforced the rules. The magistrates of Grenoble, Pau, and Gex were lax; those of Paris, Rouen, and Rennes severe. In 1713, the parlement of Paris ordered all who had drawn illegal interest for forty years past to return it; typical cases of 1736, 1745, and 1777¹² show money-lenders convicted of 'usurious interest' being sentenced to fines of 100 livres or so, to a standard term of nine years' banishment with, perhaps, the pillory or the *amende honorable* as a further public humiliation. As ever in eighteenth-century France, there were privileged exceptions; the good city of Lyon was exempted from the regulations, and the government itself, when raising money, did not show much respect for the niceties of moral principle which kept the theologians occupied.

The issue of usury was much debated. A conservative estimate puts the number of books published on the subject in the eighteenth century—by canonists, moralists, jurists, and economists—at more than 200, something like 60,000 pages of disputation.¹³ The case against the legitimacy of interest was based partly on a definition of what was 'natural', citing the Aristotelian dictum that money is 'sterile': profit should only be made from honest labour usefully directed. Then, there were the arguments from Scripture, starting with the Old Testament rules concerning the observance of justice towards the people of one's own race (Ex. 22: 25, Deut. 23: 19, Lev. 25: 36–7).¹⁴ These were precepts for fugitives wandering in the desert without any commercial opportunities, said Voltaire sardonically.¹⁵ Then, after the wilderness period, there was the thunderous condemnation of the prophet Ezekiel: '[He that] hath given forth upon usury and hath taken increase: shall he then live? . . . he shall surely die.' In the New Testament there was the Dominical exhortation in Luke's gospel: 'Lend, hoping for nothing

again, and your reward shall be great.' Granted, this was a counsel of perfection, but two stories were cited to suggest that those who manipulated money in the abstract were suspect. Peter had gone fishing from time to time after his call to discipleship, but we never hear of Matthew taking up part-time work in his old tax-gathering profession; similarly, Zacchaeus, another publican, in announcing his conversion had felt obliged to give no less than half his goods to the poor.¹⁶ (What about the parable of the talents, Voltaire replied: the man with five put them out to the bankers and finished with ten—100 per cent interest, and he is commended!)¹⁷ There was, too, a succession of decisions of Councils of the Church in favour of rigorism, from that of Arles in 314, which forbade ecclesiastics to collect interest on loans, to those of Carthage (348) and Aix (789), which prohibited the practice to the laity as well. The argument which retained most force, however, was that of St Thomas Aquinas:¹⁸ to levy interest is a sign of the misdirection of our whole lives, revealing our attachment to worldly things and our indifference to the poverty of Jesus; if we have money to put to use, why not give alms or hand it to the poor free of charge? Otherwise, we misuse resources confided to our care, while misery all around us cries out for relief. None of this, however, answered the practical difficulty which the doctors of the Sorbonne had noted in 1673: observance of the tradition would end all commercial activity in the modern world. Père Hyacinthe de Gasquet,¹⁹ in his *L'Usure démasquée* (1766), and the abbé Prigent,²⁰ in his *Observations sur le prêt à intérêt dans le commerce* (1783), faced the problem heroically. You say the borrower gains as well as the lender: true, both gain at the expense of the poor. You say these loans are necessary to commerce: look at our commercial cities, a spectacle of opulence alongside rags and poverty! We should abandon the improvements of civilization for which so many pay so high a price, and live simply.

There was a peculiar Jansenist contribution to this debate, apparently forcefully rigorist, yet ambiguous. Jacques de Sainte-Beuve, who allowed the taking of interest in cases of 'great necessity', in 1694 said: 'Usury, according to human reason, does not seem to be absolutely evil and unjust, and it is only by the light of faith that we can see the malice of it.'²¹ Antoine Arnauld went further, holding Aquinas to be mistaken—by natural law, interest was reasonable, and it stood condemned only because a certain tradition of biblical interpretation had been imposed by the magistracy of the Church. He drew a parallel with polygamy. A reasonable case can be argued for it, and if we accepted it, the conversion of the

heathen would be facilitated; even so, since the Bible and the Church condemn it, we must do so also.²² Not all Jansenists disapproved of loans at interest,²³ but those who did generally followed Arnauld's lofty line. The spirit of Port-Royal, one says, is to follow the tradition of the Church in preference to natural reason; it is 'pernicious', says another, 'to examine the precept before submitting to it'.²⁴ Those who resisted the rulings of ecclesiastical authority on doctrinal matters did well, perhaps, to be strict in other ways and give obedience to the letter of the law in matters of morals.

By the presuppositions of the Enlightenment, Arnauld's admission that loans at interest conformed to natural reason gave away the whole case, for while religion might complement reason, how could it contradict it? To Montesquieu, the loan at interest was 'a natural institution'.²⁵ People who require money for use must act in the same way as those who want to borrow furniture—hire it. There is nothing un-Christian about this, provided we reject the scholastics with their absurd reverence for Aristotle, and rely only on the gospels.²⁶ Christianity encourages us to lend free of charge, but this is no more than advice, directed towards obtaining for us a reward in heaven. 'C'est une action très bonne à prêter à un autre son argent sans intérêt, mais on sent que ce ne peut être qu'un conseil de religion, et non une loi civile'²⁷—the Christian advice can never be the basis of a secular law. If the law is misused in an attempt to prevent usury altogether, or to restrict it to an unreasonably low figure, the result will be—as in ancient Rome and in the Middle Ages—an onrush of ruthless exactions; lenders acting outside the law will be, by definition, shady characters, and they will want huge indemnities for the greater risks they run.²⁸ Montesquieu hated 'avarice', the hoarding of money; his ideal was an expansionist economy primed by State spending and with cheap loans available to stimulate business enterprise²⁹—nowhere were his ideas more welcome than in the great commercial metropolis of Lyon. It was from Lyon that came, in 1763, the most effective defence of commercial interest of the century, in the form of a *Lettre à Mgr l'archevêque de Lyon dans laquelle on traite du prêt à intérêt à Lyon*.³⁰ The writer began by defining the rôle of religion, he did not deny that there would be matters of higher concern, but insisted that the promotion of human happiness must always be included in a religion's objectives—the presuppositions for the achievement of happiness being defined as peace, order, plenty, and the multiplication of mankind. In this endeavour, money has an essential part to play. It is not to be treated as sterile and evil: everything depends on the use

made of it by the possessor (or the borrower). It can be used to purchase honours and dignities, to set armies in motion, or, more usefully, to keep a great city like Lyon in full employment and prosperity. Why are the clergy so sanctimonious about hard cash, asks the anonymous magistrate of Lyon; they themselves have devised a remarkable trick for getting it—a yard of cloth of a special colour thrown over their shoulders brings in an income of millions. In his *Traité de l'usure et des intérêts*, in 1761, La Forest³¹ had been harsher still, accusing rigorists of driving souls to perdition rather than saving them; as the world is constituted, he says, a merchant has no alternative but to give and take interest, so if unrealistic casuists convince him by their arguments, he will simply have to go on as before, sinning against his conscience, thus incurring a double damnation. 'Let the whole earth go hang' is the motto of the rigorists, 'so long as we go to heaven.' Later in the century, the *Encyclopédie* and Turgot made more precise the idea of the moral neutrality of money—a commodity the same as any other, to be bought and sold according to the laws of supply and demand.³² From this followed the extreme view that interest was not only legitimate and necessary, but that there ought not to be any limitation on the rate at which it was levied. It was not an idea that the eighteenth century could accept. Only Turgot, Dupont de Nemours, and Le Trosne seem to have believed in it, and then only in theory. Other thinkers of the same physiocratic school, like Quesnay and the marquis de Mirabeau, rejected it; the marquis, indeed, hankered after the prohibition of loans at interest altogether.³³ As Turgot was to discover (on the issue of allowing grain prices to rise to their natural level), there were few people in eighteenth-century France who could imagine a flourishing economy along with the preservation of public order without the intervention of a paternalistic government.

II

Though there were various publications by churchmen on the liberal side of the usury controversy, no major work appeared to renew casuistical speculation and bridge the gap between theology and reality. In retrospect, we can see where the point of breakthrough to a new casuistry lay. The principle to be established was risk-taking as vital to commercial enterprise, and worthy of encouragement by rewards; once that was granted, arguments might be developed to find some moral value in the fostering of

associations of mutual risk-takers, each accepting such degree of danger as his circumstances allowed. As it happened, though by somewhat indirect arguments, the legitimacy of reward for risk came to be accepted in the eighteenth century, not so far as interest, but so far as lotteries were concerned.

The general opinion of lay moralists was unfavourable to gambling. While the government was concerned only by the social consequences, the Enlightenment thinkers thought of it as an unworthy pastime, its debased thrills falling short of true happiness. Describing the formal sessions of gambling at cards in the royal circle at Versailles, Voltaire said they were tedious.

On croirait que le jeu console,
Mais l'Ennui vient à pas comptés.

Later, he defined the essence of a satisfactory game to lie in the overcoming of difficulties, like the races of the Olympic athletes of antiquity—slouching over hands of cards was the antithesis. What he was prepared to do, of course, was to bet on certainties. In 1729, he and the mathematician La Condamine saw that the government had miscalculated the odds in the lottery to pay off the *rentes* of the Hôtel de Ville; for nine successive months they collected the prize money, laying the foundation of their riches. ‘To make your fortune in this country,’ said Voltaire, ‘all you need to do is to read the regulations of the Royal Council.’³⁴

Among churchmen, the basic liberal casuistry on the subject of the workings of chance was published in 1700 by Père Menestrier, a Jesuit who was already his Order's expert on the morality of theatrical performances. There are problems of distributive justice, he argues, which are intractable to logic, yet have to be settled: at a conclave to elect a Pope, the cardinals draw lots for which cell they will occupy, just as nuns do to share out the names of individual patron saints for the year. St Mathias was chosen as an apostle in this fashion, and by this device Joshua identified the thief who had abstracted a purple mantle from the spoils.³⁵ The appeal to chance is, therefore, unexceptionable in itself, and we may accept it in certain affairs of State—for electing magistrates, and in commerce—as is done in Holland for the sale of houses, and in amusements—as in drawing for prizes at a fairground. Menestrier's chief aim, however, is to defend the big lotteries for charitable purposes, especially those helping to finance the two chief hospitals of Lyon. But certain rules must be observed.³⁶ The secular power must consent to the lottery, and between a fifteenth and a tenth of the proceeds must go to

charity. Money must not be accepted from those who cannot afford it, or from servants or children or, indeed, from married women if their husbands have not consented. There must be no dubious manoeuvres—no misleading evaluation of prizes, no use of false names, no unseemly mottoes on tickets. Though the author distinguished between lotteries and gambling in general (on the ground that the number of cards in a pack or faces on a die are few, compared with tickets in a draw³⁷—presumably meaning that this intensified competition beyond due bounds), his rules could be applied to all games of chance. And indeed they were in the Jesuit *collège* of Lyon, where the boarders were allowed an occasional flutter. ‘As often a game becomes dull if nothing is at stake,’ said the school regulations, ‘it is sometimes allowable to play for small sums of money’; boys in the lower forms could lose up to five sous daily (10 sous on holidays), while those in the upper forms had no limit but were debarred if they won or lost a large amount.³⁸ Menestrier's views were taken up and extended to all gambling by the Christian writers who were trying to reconcile the polite ideal of the *bonnête homme* with religious austerity, more especially Le Maître de Claville (1734) and the abbé Du Préaux (1749). Gambling to them was a matter ‘indifferent’, provided it was indulged in as a recreation, without passion or obsession or undue waste of time or money.³⁹ The trouble with this view (as the Jansenist abbé Coudrette pointed out in his *Dissertation théologique sur les loteries* of 1742⁴⁰) was that it took no account of the tempting example held out before weaker brethren, and it minimized the envious passions which rivalry for prizes can inspire. By now, however, lotteries were securely legitimized in the Church. In 1748, the *Conférences* of the diocese of Paris solemnly defended them on Menestrier's lines; and, indeed, the magnificent new façade of the church of Saint-Sulpice was paid for by the sale of tickets in a prize draw.

Like the parish of Saint-Sulpice, the government used lotteries to raise funds painlessly; the *Loterie royale*, devised by the controller-general Clugny in 1776 to rebuild the navy, raised twelve million (though contemporaries noticed the moral effects; an increase in crimes and suicides on the two days in the month when the draws were made).⁴¹ As for other forms of gambling, there was an accumulation of edicts, *arrêts*, and ordinances of the Council, the parlements, and the police to ban them, or at least to regulate them.⁴² There are cases in the eighteenth century of parlements sending the proprietors of illegal gaming-houses (playing ‘Pharon’) to the galleys.⁴³ The government's only concern was to regulate a social evil. The liberal

casuistry admitting gambling was accepted; at least, gaming was one of the principal relaxations of the royal circle at Versailles. Before he came to the throne, Louis XVI had been persuaded by his confessor to overcome his distaste for games of cards and dice and to join the gambling sessions around Louis XV. 'C'est un des amusements de la cour le plus honnête et le plus innocent, s'il est modéré'; it banishes boredom, draws the nobles together around their king, and keeps them away from other, clandestine sessions where 'the fortune and honour of a family can be lost on the turn of a single card'.⁴⁴ The great object was to impose moderation upon a frivolous and spend-thrift aristocracy. Hence the ordinance of the Tribunal des arbitres de la Noblesse in 1760 which declared losses of over 100 pistoles by an individual to be irrecoverable,⁴⁵ and Louis XVI's attempt in 1779 to persuade courtiers to give their winnings to the poor.⁴⁶

The churchmen's admission of the legitimacy of gambling was mostly theoretical, for if all their qualifications concerning the mental dispositions of gamblers had been met, a family hand of whist would have become the limit of brinkmanship. Even so, as religious casuists made their concession to frivolity, secular moralists began to turn against it.⁴⁷ Dusaulx's *De la passion du jeu* of 1779 reveals one reason why: the growing recognition of the extent of the corruption which gambling was bringing into the social life of the upper classes.⁴⁸ The optimistic rationalism of the first half of the century was giving way to sentimental ideas of benevolence and patriotic ones of the austere duties of the citizen, and of personal fulfilment by self-discipline on the way to higher forms of pleasure. Dusaulx relished the paradox of the apparent exchange of roles as between religious and secular preachers of morality. In the 1750s, he says, a layman visiting La Trappe heard that the monks had permission to repair their finances by running a lottery; he persuaded the abbot to abandon such an unworthy venture—'Ah, *mon Père* . . . what a scandal for the faithful, when they hear the [ticket sellers] shouting in the streets of Paris, *Loterie de la Trappe!*'⁴⁹

It was odd that churchmen in the course of the eighteenth century came to accept the appeal to chance in lotteries, yet did not transfer the principle to the casuistry of usury. Why should the winner of a huge prize at very long odds be justified, when the lender of money incurring a certain degree of risk, was not entitled to the very modest prize which he had earned? No doubt it was the highly personal relationship between lender and borrower which stood in the way. Yet, in the seventeenth century, a defence of the taking of interest based on the idea of reward for risk had been arising. It

formed the basis of the Jesuit Joseph Gibalin's treatise of 1656 (an exposition of the 'triple contract') and of Père Jacques Tiran's manuscript essay which enlarged on the theme (not published because of the great outcry against Jesuit casuistry),⁵⁰ also of Frère Emmanuel Maignan's *De usu licito pecuniae* of 1673.⁵¹ Significantly, the two Jesuits were stationed in the commercial metropolis of Lyon, and Maignan's volume was published there. Quesnel,⁵² the Jansenist, in 1689 described the prohibition of interest as a counsel for clerks and for seekers after perfection; provided a lender kept within the laws of the State and made it a rule to defend the poor and the weak, he was entitled to a reward proportionate to the degree of risk incurred (a position near to that of Calvin). The road ahead to a new view of commercial interest on the reward-for-risk principle had been charted, but the way was blocked by the Roman repudiation of the triple contract and the refusal of the Assembly of Clergy of 1700 to admit the *periculum sortis*.

The prohibition of usury made sense in a feudal, agrarian society, since a peasant contracting a loan to survive in a year of bad harvest (a loan, not of production, but of consumption) ruined his family and reduced them to servitude. If we look away from the commercial bustle of eighteenth-century Bordeaux, Marseille, and Lyon, and limit our view to rural France and to the poorer stratum of the peasantry, the reasons for the prohibition, or at least for the regulation of usury, are still apparent, and they apply also among the poorer artisans in the towns. There were so many people who lived on the margins of survival; in a bad year, only outright charity could rescue them from immediate starvation or from the cycle of malnutrition, debt, and despair which merely postponed the inevitable.⁵³ Higher up the social scale, the mania for the purchase of office among the bourgeoisie, and the spendthrift traditions of the aristocracy alarmed sober moralists. It was not unreasonable for them to attempt to keep easy borrowing facilities out of the reach of peasants, social climbers, heirs, and those whose rank called for conspicuous display. So many hospitals and other charitable institutions lived by the sale of *rentes perpétuelles*,⁵⁴ with government regulations keeping down the interest rates; there was a case for shepherding small investors away from the glitter of higher profits on other kinds of lending. The moral content of a loan, unlike that of a book or a play, could not be verified by censorship. The arguments in favour of the legitimacy of the theatre, elaborately developed throughout the eighteenth century, were made easier because liberal thinkers were able to cite simple safeguards against abuses: there was no parallel

system of control which could be devised to grade lenders and creditors upon a moral scale, and distinguish loans of production from those of consumption.

Though no new casuistry emerged, there were signs that more intelligent churchmen were faltering over the issue of usury. Jansenists looked northwards to their sister church of Utrecht, and saw there a compliance with the Dutch commercial system which made severe moralists like bishops Colbert and Soanen wince.⁵⁵ Pope Benedict XIV, in his circular letter *Vix pervenit* of 1745, repeated the old arguments against usury, but left plenty of room for redefinition and manoeuvre. One contract is not the same as another, and the confessor must judge them not only in the light of tradition, but also of reason.⁵⁶ The *Nonvelles ecclésiastiques* was disappointed: "There are expressions in the letter which favour the partisans of usury . . . Would it not have been better for the oracles to remain silent rather than pronouncing only to increase trouble, division and uncertainty?"⁵⁷ Later, signs of a liberal evolution in Roman attitudes were seen in pronouncements of the Holy Office in 1780 and 1784, speaking of 'compensation' for hazards and delays in repayment. There can be no doubt that the hesitations and reconsiderations of churchmen over the traditional doctrine of usury were widely reflected in the advice given in the confessional.⁵⁸

The Jesuits of Lyon were in league with the laity in regarding the loan at interest as indispensable to the city's economy. When M. Emery, that most austere of confessors, was head of the seminary there, he did not contradict them: he taught the formal doctrine of prohibition, but added a rider concerning the 'grave authorities' who took the opposite view, advising his pupils to bear this clash of opinions in mind when they became responsible for penitents—it was as well to assume that they were in the thrall of invincible ignorance.⁵⁹ As with the Jesuits of Lyon, so too with those of Marseille, where their enemies accused them not only of teaching the legitimacy of interest but also of allowing a member of their Order to make profits out of money-lending. The Capuchins had a story about their mission of 1751, when Bishop Belsunce, under Jesuit influence, forbade them to preach against usury; they disobeyed him, and what is more, converted him, so that he appeared in the pulpit on the last day of the evangelistic campaign to make a public retraction of his weakness.⁶⁰ The abbé Bergier, the soundest theologian of the French Church in the century, in the article 'Usure' in his *Dictionnaire théologique* of 1782, more or less invited the government to settle the confessors' problems for them by a

pre-emptive law. 'If today the legislator decides, for the maintenance of our national commerce, that all money borrowed commercially must yield interest to the lender, who would dare to object to such a law and declare it unjust?'⁶¹

According to Turgot, the prohibition of taking interest was universally ignored.⁶² In the chief towns, he said, the rate was 6 per cent; as an intendant, this concerned him, since in his town of Angoulême, the rate was so much higher, 8–10 per cent, which was throttling business enterprise. In Marseille, as in other commercial cities, the law courts settled disputes concerning loans according to the custom of the market-place, not according to the regulations of Church and State: they were prepared to enforce contracts bearing an interest of up to 6 per cent.⁶³ Here, the municipality and its two bureaux (concerned with financing food supplies in time of famine and relief in time of plague), the Chamber of Commerce, and the three big charitable institutions—the *hôtel-Dieu*, the *hôpital général*, and the Mont-de-Piété (the official pawnshop) lived by borrowing. Half the total number of contracts for loans which they made during the century were without alienation of capital, thus coming theoretically under the ban of both Church and State, and these represented 68 per cent of their borrowed capital. Their *rentes perpétuelles* were far from being perpetual in reality, since more than half the contracts were redeemed within five years. As for the ideal which the ecclesiastical prohibition of usury was supposed to foster, the multiplication of interest-free loans to benefit the poor, these were represented by one in every 200 contracts; the *hôtel-Dieu*, chief beneficiary of such generosity, received only 1.85 per cent of its loan support in this truly Christian fashion.⁶⁴ In the great commercial cities, it was unthinkable that churchmen should show more than a token disapproval of commercial loans at interest. In 1763, the *cour des monnaies*, the *sénéchaussée*, and the *présidial* of Lyon, the chief law courts of the city, lamented the departure of the Jesuits from their *collège* and protested against the proposal to replace them with Oratorians, because the Oratory was known to be difficult about usury. Big capitalists, they said, lend 12 million a year to our merchants to buy raw silk overseas, and without these loans our chief industry would grind to a halt; our archbishop and our curés, they added, two universities in Spain, and five in Germany, and the bishop of Bâle have all certified the morality of our trading; so too had the departing Jesuits.⁶⁵

Here was a defence of capitalist procedures. But as much could be said in justification of the private individual: if he had savings, and

was disinclined to become a property owner, and at the same time wished to retain his capital intact to pass on to his heirs, what could he do but invest his money at interest? Hence, the small sums out in notarized loans recorded in the wills of the better-off curés of the diocese of Gap,⁶⁶ and the huge sums loaned to great noblemen by Cardinal Le Camus.⁶⁷ Cardinal de Tencin, archbishop of Lyon, according to Voltaire, loaned out his savings at 5 per cent, 1 per cent higher than the moderate sage of Ferney charged.⁶⁸ So too with institutions. The friary of the Cordeliers at Belley was accustomed to lend at 5 per cent to local peasants and tradesmen; it was a breach of principle, no doubt, but what else could they do with the tiny savings of Père Laurent, and the 100 livres left to them by a notary in 1742 to pay for six low masses a year in perpetuity? Without investment, after twenty years there would have been no more masses.⁶⁹

The legislation prohibiting usury remained in force up to the Revolution. Various proposals to legitimize the taking of interest, from Colbert onwards, were devised, then dropped.⁷⁰ Turgot and Necker would both have been glad to abandon the archaic prohibitions, but the former was not in power long enough, and the latter, as a Protestant, was hardly qualified to promote changes calculated to arouse the wrath of the Sorbonne and of the parlements. The Crown solved its own problems concerning borrowing by simply overriding the law when necessary. The corporation of the *Fermiers-Généraux* and the *Compagnie des Indes* were institutions outside the rules; so too were Turgot's *Caisse d'Escompte* and the Parisian *Mont-de-Piété* of 1777.⁷¹ The edict of December 1774 announcing a government loan was specific in its breach of secular and spiritual regulations: it proposed 'to conserve to the lender the ownership of his capital with interest at 5 per cent; he is guaranteed its return at the expiry of the 20 year period'.⁷² On the question of usury, Church, State, and all the commercial and legal institutions of the *ancien régime* had reached a sort of absurd, yet workable, equilibrium. The uncompromising prohibitions of the Church were dispensed with as required in the confessional. The law of the State was strict in appearance, but the government operated outside its own rules, and the great commercial centres carried on business under their customary system, backed by the local courts ignoring the ill will of the parlements. Spiritual and secular measures combined to keep down interest rates, and there was machinery available whenever it was required to deal with local usurers who oppressed the peasants and extortioners who tried to get spendthrifts of the upper classes into their clutches. In times of famine and crisis, the rich were

confronted with the duty which they owed, but so rarely rendered, to the poor; most often, they would act according to their concept of their station and its duties, but if they were tempted to profiteer, a whole barrier of normally unenforced prohibitions would rise against them. Tocqueville complains that the place which the notion of law should occupy in the human mind was empty with the men of the *ancien régime*.⁷³ The reality was less bleak. The law of both State and Church was one element in a complex structure of tradition, custom, deference, manoeuvre, threats, and incentives that stood between a sophisticated civilization and the disorder which always threatened to arise from its injustices and inequalities.

On 2 October 1789, Achard de Bonvouloir, a deputy of the *noblesse*, proposed a decree to the National Assembly: 'money is commercially negotiable at the interest rate fixed by law'. The aim was to make loans cheaper and easier to obtain. In the debate on the following day, though one bishop recorded a protest, virtually everyone else agreed with the proposal, clergy included.⁷⁴ It could hardly have been otherwise; so out of step were law and practice that no logic could have been devised to defend the old prohibitions. Strictly speaking, it was a separation of secular legislation from ecclesiastical moral standards, though for long, society, with the connivance of churchmen, had used those standards as a device of social pressure among others, rather than observe them. It was certainly not a case of a capitalist victory over an old hierarchical society, or of a triumph of the Enlightenment over obscurantism. It was one of those uncontroversial adjustments bringing archaic laws into accordance with long-established practice.

33 Sexual Passion

I

The clerical moralists regarded sexual desire, especially the lust of the eye, as the most dangerous and least resistible of temptations. This was a lure that could not be outfaced with straightforward resolution: flight was the only refuge. A former mistress must not visit an old admirer when he was dying, for the sight of her would awake memories of passion and imperil his eternal salvation.¹ The theologians allowed Christians to read plays at home, but not to see actors performing them on the stage, for the eye would redouble the vividness of the lustful imagination.² The denunciation of revealing dress fashions for ladies was a commonplace of ecclesiastical eloquence: how could a Christian girl, asked Languet, bishop of Soissons, go round with ‘la gorge et les épaules découvertes’?³ To his colleague the eccentric archbishop of Arles, even unrevealing dress with excessive accentuation was suspect—*paniers* (hooped petticoats) were ‘engines of Hell’ and ‘receptacles of iniquity’.⁴ At their mission in 1712 the Jesuits of Lyon asked their preachers to censure ‘indecent nudities’—to call on great ladies to set a good example, and to bring all the dressmakers together to warn them of their terrible responsibility. Twenty years later the Jesuits of the same house recoiled in alarm at the thought of allowing women to come in for spiritual retreats: ‘will not our *asceterium* be regarded as a women's club, a harem, a haunt of shameful libertinage?’⁵ There were catechisms ordering children to dress and undress without nakedness, and even not to take a bath unless necessary.⁶ The Christian must be vigilant against statues and pictures which might be suggestive, down to the very portraits inside the lids of snuff-boxes; even dissipated parents, said Père Croisset, the Jesuit, would be ashamed to give their children deliberate lessons in libertinage, yet what are statues but permanent visual lessons calculated ‘to light a criminal fire’ in the bosoms of the young?⁷ Books present a similar danger; ‘scarcely is the volume opened’, said Père Porée, ‘and in a few moments the unhappy child knows everything’. So too, says a casuist, with the

sort of music which is the food of love, 'airs that exhale uncontrolled movements, or recall to the mind things contrary to chastity'.⁸ The civilized bishop of Boulogne, Partz de Pressy, aroused the ire of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* by casting doubt on the recommendation in the Book of Job to avoid looking at beautiful women—all he had said was: 'We may cast a single glance at what is beautiful and agreeable in them and take the occasion to lift up the soul to God, from whom they have received these gifts.'⁹

Since sexual temptation was so potent and ubiquitous, churchmen made sustained efforts to keep the sexes apart. Parents were warned not to allow boys and girls over the age of 5 or 6 to sleep in the same bed or to come into the matrimonial bed, where they might gain precocious knowledge.¹⁰ Inevitably they gained such knowledge from watching the animals; nothing could be done about this, except for a curé of Alsace, who in 1789 put in his village *cabier* a plea for the enclosure of open land, so that it would no longer be necessary to send the young to watch over the flocks and thereby learn how they multiplied.¹¹ Severe bishops made rules for boys and girls to be educated separately and banning schoolmasters from teaching girls. The curés knew this was impractical. In their synod at Lectoure in 1747, they persuaded their prelate to the extent that he agreed to a common class-room, provided the sexes were not 'mixed *pêle mêlé*'.¹² Where a parish had only a schoolmaster, if the girls could not come to his classes, they would receive no education at all. 'Such an abuse', said a curé in 1781, 'is less grave and less dangerous than that of letting children of one or the other sex wallow in ignorance.' His bishop half yielded to his plea, deciding the master would be allowed to teach the girls, but only in a separate class, thus ensuring that boys and girls alike would receive only half the schooling they might have had.¹³ Curé J.-B. Thiers's learned treatise on the recreations allowed to Christians (1686) proclaimed the invariable separation of the sexes at play, adding a further reason to the obvious one: 'the mixing together of persons of different sexes makes people take more pleasure in the game . . . thus becoming more attached to it, and God is thereby more offended'. His basic premiss was that pastimes are needed only because of the Fall; even so, he said, this is no reason for choosing to resort to them, since it is always possible 'to read good books, visit prisoners in gaol and make ornaments for churches'.¹⁴

Of all divertissements, dancing was the most dangerous. Here was a matter in which the Jesuit Père Croisset had to steer a careful course, for ballet was included in his Order's curriculum for schools.

He agreed severe censorship was needed—‘there are ballets which would inflame the imagination of anchorites’. But, given a judicious subject, restrained choreography, and an absolute ban on female performers, it was defensible.¹⁵ Not so with dancing involving the mingling of the sexes. Christians should never go to a ball. The Jansenist bishop of Agde (dd. 1702) said it was all the same going to a ball as to a witches' sabbat: one was public homage to the Devil, the other private.¹⁶ ‘Are dances part of the pomps of the Devil we renounced at our baptism?’, asks the innocent Balsamie in Dr Collot's book of pious ‘conversations’ for young ladies. Yes, they are, and ‘mark you well, no paradise without accomplishing the promises we made at our baptism’. Here was the knock-down argument. ‘Paradise is worth infinitely more’, says little Balsamie, ‘than all the foolish joys of the world.’¹⁷ It is hard to understand how theologians could be so out of touch with reality. From the palace of Versailles to the village green the dance was the most agreeable of pastimes, and furnished the customary meeting-place of the sexes. Learned argument was useless against it—‘the sound of the violin is more powerful than all your citations of the Fathers’.¹⁸ Fortunately, not all churchmen were opposed, and not all learning was on the side of the rigorists. Bonnet's *Histoire générale de la danse sacrée et profane* (1723), published with the approval of the Parisian clerical censor, cited David dancing before the Ark and the many kings of France who had indulged in the pastime, and made further citations to show how the Church in both East and West had not resorted to official prohibitions before the thirteenth century.¹⁹ There must have been many curés like the one in Touraine who encouraged his people to dance their leisure time away: ‘evil is rarely done in public, so I find it splendid to see the meetings of the girls with their swains should take place here rather than elsewhere—in the woods or the fields’.²⁰

The impractical rigorism of the clerical moralists has to be assessed against the background of the society and intellectual climate of their time. The period of the Regency and some years afterwards was notorious for debauchery in high places; the memoir writers tell many a story of orgies and the adventures of the womanizers of high society (the sodomizers too, the *arracheurs de palissades* of court circles²¹). In less blatant guise, sexual immorality continued to be prevalent throughout the whole reign of Louis XV. The procession of royal mistresses seemed endless, and the gilded veneer on the royal infidelities vanished into crapulousness with the harem of teenage girls in the Parc aux Cerfs and the uncultured *éclat* of Dubarry.

Among the great, the fashion of ‘marrying one woman, living with another and loving only oneself’ had become a way of life, and those who loved their wives avoided seeming eccentric by concealing the fact. In novels and essays the psychological aspects of sexual relationships were brilliantly and cynically debated. Wherein lay the reality of ‘love’: was it just Chamfort’s ‘l’échange de deux fantaisies et le contact de deux épidermes’?²² Even if not, the age had to agree with Diderot, that ‘il y a un peu de testicule au fond de nos sentiments les plus sublimes et de notre tendresse la plus épurée’. With Crébillon, ‘chance’ and ‘the moment’ reigned, and all ended in bed, whether from avarice, indolence, curiosity, delicacy, the thirst for pleasure, boredom, or vanity. Love could be an instrument of domination, and there was a perverted pleasure in using the defeat of religion to heighten the intensity of self-gratification: ‘let her believe in virtue and sacrifice it to me’. It could also be used, pathologically, as an instrument of revenge—the *Liaisons dangereuses* was the coruscating finale of an epoch of decadent thrills and disillusionment.²³

By contrast, there was a fund of prudery in the mores of society. A playwright must not put in a seduction scene; this was permissible only in a novel; and even a word like ‘father’ might need replacement by a euphemism to avoid referring to the crude generative process.²⁴ The duchesse de Sully died because she would not let the surgeon see her abscess in a secret place—her maid took the surgeon’s directions through a half-open door.²⁵ Girls of good families could grow up without learning the facts of life: Mme de Sabran was as embarrassed as her daughter when she enlightened her on the wedding eve.²⁶ Restif de la Bretonne, recorder of the crudities of life, did not believe in kissing before marriage, and tells the cautionary tale of the man who wished to see his wife naked, got his wish, and praised her beauty, and thus began her descent into corruption.²⁷ The clerical moralists, celibate themselves, were members of a sort of establishment of prudery in the national life, and leaders of its crusade against the manifold immoralities in high society and against the implications of the sardonic psychological investigations which seemed to be depriving the idea of love of its high solemnity and dutiful appeal.

The Church needed a new casuistry of sex, more sophisticated and more liberal. St François de Sales had laid the foundation for it by legitimizing, within strict bounds, straightforward sexual pleasure in marriage. Yet, entangled in the tensions of a social order where the extremes of licentiousness and prudery were so alarming, it was difficult to shake off the old gloomy suspicion of sexual temptation.

The writers on spirituality, as yet not accepting the inevitability of fantasies of desire flitting pleasurably through the mind and their generally harmless nature, concentrated unrealistically on purity of thought—witness the contention that a very good man on his deathbed could be lost for ever by admitting the entrance of an impure desire.²⁸ They were therefore all the more reluctant to make concessions, wishing to keep the wall of exclusion against sexual temptation solid and unbroken, however dull and tense they made the lives of married couples, and however harshly they abrogated the joys of courtship and companionship.

II

Given the blight of distrust cast by the clerical moralists over ordinary friendly relationships between the sexes, their detestation of prostitution was uncompromising and relentless. Here was the extreme case of temptation promiscuously flaunted, the occasion of sins thrusting their evil tendrils into every crack in the social edifice, crumbling the binding cement of moral certainties. Schoonaert's manual of the confessional published at Douai in 1740 revealingly lists the questions to be asked of a penitent prostitute: had she committed the sexual act with a married man, a person sworn to celibacy, a young man without previous experience? If so, as often would be the case, this was not just fornication, by itself the most deadly of sins; it was also the degrading of the sacred bond of marriage or the undermining of an ecclesiastical vocation or the introduction of an innocent to a career of vice. Furthermore, the confessor was to ask if there had been resort to 'unnatural positions'. The full force of this question can be interpreted from the manual of a casuist of the seventeenth century: not only was this a sin additional to fornication, it was also the apprenticeship of a man to techniques he would teach to his wife, corrupting her mind in the same way as his actions might transmit disease to her body. There was a tradition in Christian thought, claiming the authority of St Augustine, conceding that a statesman, who had to cater for the wickedness of unregenerate human nature, might reasonably license brothels as the least of the inevitable evils, to keep disease in check, to maintain public order, and to allow men who were determined to fornicate to do so with mercenaries instead of with their servants and other people's wives. But this realistic ruling was rejected by the French theologians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Only with Alphonsus of Liguori in the mid-eighteenth century was the idea brought back into casuistical discourse in France, and then only as a possible hypothesis and not a recommendation, and in any case referring to big cities alone.

Though they hated prostitution, it might have been supposed that the clergy would be charitable to individual prostitutes, seeking to understand the pressures driving them to vice and sympathetically hoping they might be saved by the magic of religion. One of the greatest saints of the gospels was a reformed prostitute, converted to become a mourner at the foot of the cross and the first witness of the Resurrection, the only disciple to be privileged to meet the Risen Lord alone. Yet the story of Mary Magdalen was not invoked as an adjunct to a mission of sympathy and rescue in the France of the Counter-Reformation. In their fear of sexual temptation, the theologians and spiritual writers diverted it from its natural earthy implications—a strange chapter in the history of Christian devotion.

Though the later seventeenth century saw an extensive production of sentimental literature about Mary of Magdala—songs, poems, handbooks of pilgrimage, and the like²⁹—her cult was becoming less attractive to the clergy than it had been. For long, patriotic pride had rejoiced in her as ‘the first Apostle of France, who preached to the French the marvels of religion’; she had landed on the coast of Provence, ‘planted the standard of the Cross and converted the idolators’, lived in penitence in a grotto near Marseille, and was finally laid to rest in a tomb at Aix.³⁰ Citizens of that proud city tried to keep the legend alive, but they lacked evidence, arguing only from tradition, the testimony of miracles, and the consideration that God would not have allowed his people to be deceived. Their contentions had been demolished by Jean de Launoy in 1641, and with documentation to prove the negative by the abbé Lebeuf in 1729.³¹ There was also a haze of doubt over the accepted identification of Mary of Magdala with Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus: Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples in 1517 had demonstrated its improbability. The Sorbonne had hastened to declare his critique ‘dangerous’, and in the eighteenth century Dom Calmet did his best to defend the tradition; even so, the new liturgical calendar for Paris put the observances of the two Marys on different days of the year. What remained intact about the story of Mary of Magdala, however, was her identification with the sinful woman of Luke 7 who anointed the feet of Jesus. Jacques Lefèvre had voiced his doubts here too, but a consensus had developed to

reject them, so Mary Magdalen remained as the example of a great saint who had been a prostitute.

This being so, the clergy put their refuges and *maisons de force* for fallen women under her invocation; and in popular parlance, not without irony, the phrase for one of these ladies who reformed was ‘une nouvelle Magdeleine’.³² Even so, the preachers and spiritual writers were not happy with Mary Magdalen as a patron saint for the work of the redemption of prostitutes. They did not deny the sexual misdemeanours of her past; indeed, St François de Sales had exaggerated them—‘a cauldron blackened with a thousand sorts of filth and a receptacle for filth’. But this was to contrast her old state with her total reformation, ‘enrolled under the banner of the purity of Our Lady’. Soon, however, it became the fashion to concentrate on her transformation, to elevate her to a pinnacle so lofty that her sins became irrelevant, as if they had been committed by a different person. Bérulle's poetic meditations in his *Elevations à Jésus-Christ Notre Seigneur sur la conduite de son esprit et de sa grâce vers Sainte Madeleine* (1627) marked the high point of the dream. In the house of Simon, the uncomprehending Pharisee, she had cradled the feet of Jesus to wash them with her tears and dry them with her hair, and there she had heard the words of reconciliation: ‘her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much’. At that moment, she was instantly perfected, ‘the beginning of a new grace in the order of grace and love’; henceforward, she was indwelt by the incarnate Lord. While François de Sales pictured her at the cross, deprived of the sight of his presence by the darkness, glimpsing only the ‘ghastly dim whiteness’ of his agony,³³ Bérulle knew that the darkness was no darkness with her, for Christ remained the sunshine of her being. ‘Noli me tangere’: in the garden, the Risen Christ orders her not to touch him, for he is bringing her into a new relationship of love, a deprivation of his immediacy until he can bring her into spiritual union when he is completely deified. ‘O humble penitent,’ exclaimed Bérulle, ‘O divine lover beloved of Jesus!’ In Bremond's words, she had become ‘la sainte du pur amour et de la quiétude mystique’.

In accordance with this etherealization of Mary Magdalen, she became detached from the charitable principle of trying to rescue prostitutes, and the lesson of her story was the overwhelming duty of penitence. For long this view had dominated in the tradition of artists. They would show the saint either in the garden adoring the Risen Christ, or as the eternal penitent with the skull and mirror as accessories. The French masterpiece of the genre was painted by

Georges de la Tour in 1652: in the darkness, there is a single candle hidden by the death's head black in silhouette, the light falling on the haggard face of the Magdalen and on the mirror, which reflects not her face, but the eyeless sockets of the skull.³⁴ The sermons preached about her are redolent of this atmosphere of boundless mortification in love. Bourdaloue's panegyric comes to its climax in recommending her example of total penitence and denouncing those who delay their conversion: she came to Christ because she knew him, and we, through Christian experience, know him better, so 'pourquoi tarder d'avantage?' For the eighteenth century, this was a model sermon, praised by the abbé Maury in 1777 in his essay on pulpit eloquence.³⁵ He might have cited Bossuet too, who put it more dramatically: 'Magdalen, the perfect model of reconciled souls', 'swept by the Spirit that moves mountains and uproots the cedars of Lebanon' to penitential adoration at the feet of Jesus.³⁶

In the eighteenth century, the more outrageous unbelievers of the Enlightenment enjoyed suggesting that Mary Magdalen had carried on her old career as the mistress of Jesus, adding to the scandal by hinting at the dubious nature of his friendship with St John.³⁷ This confirmed churchmen in their insistence in cutting the saint off from her past. Massillon's two sermons³⁸ woven around her place in the sacred story are concerned with her exemplary penitence. We must imitate her in abandoning worldly splendour, more especially in dress, in devoting ourselves to prayer, mortification, and good works, and in making public reparation—she did not weep in distant lonely places, or come to Jesus by night like Nicodemus, but made herself a spectacle of shame, and (says the preacher quaintly) this was at 'a social gathering to which she had not even been invited'. All her career is an indication of the final reality behind perfect penitence: it springs from love. Frey de Neuville, the greatest of the Jesuit preachers of the century, takes this sublimated interpretation further.³⁹ When Mary Magdalen came to the feet of Jesus, she was granted a unique forgiveness (shared only with the penitent thief on Calvary) far beyond the ordinary meaning of the word, being restored to her original potential perfection: 'le péché fut entièrement et totalement effacé et pour la culpé et pour la peine'. In another sermon of mid-century, he describes how, after Christ's earthly sojourn was over, she devoted herself to a penitence of unimaginable rigour, living in solitude and desolation, 'nourishing herself only on her tears and her regrets', 'destroying her charms' by the ruthlessness of her austerities, and 'not even consoling herself with [the memory] of having known and loved Jesus and having

been loved by him'. Hers was a total forgiveness and a total penitence beyond the reach of other mortals. She was a haunting ideal of perfection within the inner circle of Jesus, closer to the Master than any other disciple. There was no evidence for this story of grim, lifelong mortification; it was postulated as necessary by the preferential abhorrence of the theologians for sins of a sexual nature, and their overwhelming fear of sexual temptation.

While the detestation of the clerical moralists for prostitution was evident in their flinty harshness to women of the *métier*, as might be expected, they had to make concessions derogating from their principles, partly because they could not dictate the policies of the secular authorities, and in one respect, to protect the reputation of the Gallican Church. The problem of prostitution⁴⁰ was acute in Paris, the seaports, and the industrial towns. In the capital, there were, perhaps, 20,000 professionals (13 per cent of the women of possible age), concentrated in the districts of Saint-Denis, Belleville, Montmartre, the Louvre, and the Palais-Royal, with other girls who traded as amateurs when unemployed and desperate. The numbers were exaggerated by journalists—at the end of the *ancien régime* one estimate was 40,000, another 100,000, while a wry computation of the money spent on these ladies every year was about equal to half the interest on the royal debt.⁴¹ In provincial towns like Aix and Angers, they were few; Montpellier was an exception because of the presence of soldiers, students, and the travellers who passed through this centre of communications.⁴² In the countryside, a reasonably sized village would have one or two recognized whores, and there were others who congregated at fairs (for these there might be an accepted code of identification, as at the fair of Beaucaire in 1775, where it was a rosette of yellow ribbon on the hat).⁴³ Army regiments had their camp-followers with official duties as nurses and provision sellers, as well as their well-understood sexual sideline, and the lowest of the low were the wretched women who failed to become accredited with a regiment and wandered nocturnally as near as they dared to military encampments.

The laws against prostitution were Draconian. There were terrifying penalties (not often exacted) on women who hung around army camps and on procuresses: the first category could have their noses and ears slit; the second could be flogged, branded, paraded on an ass facing backwards with the placard 'maquerelle publique', and banished. For rank-and-file offenders the punishment was imprisonment in a *maison de force* or being expelled from town. Sometimes, the magistrates would issue a general edict of exile, as happened at

Toulouse in 1776 and Bordeaux in 1786. In Paris, the better class of *filles* with their own apartments had a certain safeguard, in that they had to be sentenced by the lieutenant-general of police; the *commissaire du quartier*, however, could send them to gaol until the great man had time to deal with them. The standard sentences to a *maison de force* were for two or three months, more in the case of a woman who had offended before or had betrayed an influential protector (at the time of Law's Scheme, when deportation to the colonies became an option, Manon Lescaut was sent to the New World⁴⁴). Below this level, prostitutes had virtually no rights beyond the ruling of the ordinance of 26 July 1713 that before the police could make an arrest, they had to take depositions from neighbours. It was an illusory safeguard, and many a girl was wheeled off in the high-sided cart on its tour of collection without knowing how she had come to figure on the blacklist of the authorities. A whore was debarred from levelling an accusation of rape, and had no means beyond those she could devise herself for ensuring she received her fee. Hence, there was a nice point for the ecclesiastical casuists. Aquinas and other authorities insisted promised payment must be made, but reservations were put forward by some in France: an excessive amount, or one to be paid from money properly belonging to a religious institution or to the family of the client, could be reduced or refused.

Yet if prostitutes were at the mercy of authority and were easily victimized, they were not subject to continuous harassment. The clergy were concerned about the morals of society; the police were concerned only with public health and order, and the administrators of the government regarded the presence of loose women as an inevitable feature of the urban scene and an outlet for male lust. When the bishop of Agen set up a refuge for females of easy virtue in his episcopal city, the intendant was helpful, but said he had no intention of interning all of them: 'courtesans are, unhappily, a sort of necessary evil'.⁴⁵ Similarly, the intendant of Clermont replied to a curé who was demanding action: 'public order does not suffer any prejudice from this sort of trade, and the only remedies you can resort to are exhortations to persuade them to change their conduct'.⁴⁶

In Paris, the police had a contemptuous dehumanizing tolerance for the miserable women who had nowhere to ply their trade but in alleyways, yards, and stables, those described in Restif de la Bretonne's sardonic classification of whores as the *guines* and *barbotenses*.⁴⁷ They allowed them to solicit in certain streets, but not to enter taverns without a male escort—for here they would spy out

potential customers with fat purses to be filched.⁴⁸ Occasionally, if vice was becoming too obtrusive, there would be a round-up, as happened in November 1778, when an ordinance was issued against street-walking and soliciting from windows. The higher class of prostitute who was in a brothel (kept by a woman called a *maman* or a *mère abbesse*, or, if haled before justice, a *maquerelle*) normally worked without harassment. Some of the keepers of the more expensive, plushy establishments were public figures:⁴⁹ La Dhosmont who carried on a literate correspondence with the lieutenants-general of police, La Gourdon who numbered dukes among her clients (until, in 1775, she had to flee), and Françoise Bienfait who did not stint on commissioning masses for the salvation of her soul. The police would always crack down, however, on a procuress who was debauching under-age girls, witness the full routine of branding and flogging inflicted on Jeanne Moyon in 1750. But tolerance had its price: the police required information from the girls about foreigners, libertines, *fils de famille* who were ruining themselves, ecclesiastics, courtiers, and bourgeois citizens who were supposed to be respectable. (This was also the police line on sodomists: an outrageous case might incur the extreme penalty of burning at the stake, but most were simply kept on the files as informers.⁵⁰) The heyday of this espionage network was from 1730 to 1770; Louis XV enjoyed reading the chronicle of scandal the spy system provided, but Louis XVI ordered the discontinuation of the reports.

To facilitate the imprisonment of loose women, in 1684 the government had ordered the *hôpitaux généraux* throughout the country to build separate annexes for them; this could not always be done, so in provincial towns, the prostitutes might be huddled in among orphans, the old, and the feeble. In Paris, the incorrigible were sentenced to the most notorious house of correction in France, the Salpêtrière; in this vast hospital there was a central core, La Force, in four compartments, one for 600 or so habitual prostitutes, one for 500 women serving life sentences, and two smaller units, one for women imprisoned by the orders of the king, the other for those shut up at the instance of their families. It was a grim, stinking place, with the inmates six to a bed in low-ceilinged rooms and the days filled with work and obligatory religious exercises. Other institutions of the capital serving the same purpose were La Madeleine and Sainte-Pélagie, both taking women whose board and lodging was paid, whether by families, charitable organizations, or whoever had engineered the arrests—the one was under the invocation of Mary Magdalen, the other of the legendary St Pélagie who had thrown

herself out of a window into the sea to preserve her chastity from marauding soldiers. There were other foundations of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the Bon Pasteur (1686) and the houses of Sainte-Théodore (1687), Le Sauveur (1699), and Sainte-Valère (1706). These and similar institutions in the provinces were run by nuns, though in the Salpêtrière they were sisters who took no vows, usually recruited from former inmates, and every house had many lay associates. Financial assistance and advice in smaller towns was provided by groups of pious ladies. All these houses were inevitably uncomfortable and sometimes cruel in their discipline—the inmates were not easy to deal with, and money for even elementary amenities was usually lacking.

Towards the end of the *ancien régime*, the attitude of the authorities towards prostitutes became harsher still.⁵¹ In Paris, of those brought before the lieutenant-general of police in 1745, only 26 per cent were condemned to a period of detention, while 59 per cent were banished from town. Things were different in the second half of the century: most of those arrested (running at 600 to 700 a year) were imprisoned, generally for three months, and there were no merciful banishments. This changing attitude is also seen at the Bon Pasteur in Montpellier.⁵² Until mid-century, half its income came from charitable donations, and half its admissions were sponsored by the pious ladies of the town organized in the committee known as the 'Miséricorde'. By the end of the *ancien régime* charity provided only 3 per cent of the finances, and most of the women arriving were under arrest on the orders of the *bureau de police*. In the past, the women had been released when they had demonstrated suitable penitence; now they came under sentences graded according to their degree of demerit, running up to five years for a recidivist or a procureress. When they arrived, they underwent a fortnight's conditioning in solitary confinement on bread and water with daily whippings; thereafter they had to work hard at spinning or weaving under the spur of small privileges and the threat of condign punishment.

This treatment represented the conviction of the thinkers of the Enlightenment that men and women, no longer regarded as trapped in the toils of original sin, could be reformed and improved by rewards and punishments: the worthy poor would be assisted, the unworthy and depraved coerced. By a different route, and with different principles, the clergy seem to have come to the same practical conclusion. Their faces were set against prostitution, and they did not expect to find among the women in that sordid trade any who could achieve a penitence remotely resembling that of

Mary Magdalen. The *filles* who swarmed in the big cities, by their origins and by the milieu of their activities, were the furthest of all the inhabitants from the machinery by which the Church might have helped them. About two-thirds of them in Paris and Montpellier came from outside. Some came in from the countryside (in the case of Paris often from nearby towns) intending from the first to make money by selling sexual favours, but most came to find employment, and when they were dismissed, or seduced and abandoned, they made a living by the only method left open to them. In either case, they were slipping into an urban milieu which was on the way to being de-Christianized, away from the charitable committees and confraternities of the parochial scene. Their alienation made it easier for the clergy and the pious philanthropists to go along with the regime of punishment. In the past, the emphasis in charity had been on the donor saving his soul by reckless giving, perhaps seeking out the dregs and defeated of the world. But by a synthesis with Enlightenment ideas, and in accordance with the principle of Gregory of Nazianzus that 'the kingdom of heaven is not necessarily confined to fools', churchmen now thought of the complementary duty of giving efficiently for maximum social usefulness. But the history of institutional policy is not the whole story. Government, municipalities, and police dictated the principle of internment, which the clerical institutions operated. The religious sisters ran the administration and the pious observances, and the lay sisters disciplined the inmates. What normally happened in prisons, on the galleys, or on the scaffold no doubt prevailed in these houses of correction: the confessors represented Christian charity amid the surrounding bleakness. The grimmest institution in Paris was the Bicêtre, where infected prostitutes were sent for the *grands remèdes*, the painful mercury treatment, a course of two months in sordid circumstances worse than the Salpêtrière and more harshly regimented. Restif de la Bretonne tells how one of the confessors rebuked the staff: 'these wretched unfortunates are true members of Jesus Christ by their very sufferings, merited though they are; they are his, just as we are, perhaps more so than me, for I am a notable sinner'.⁵³

As the official keepers of the conscience of the community, the clergy regarded themselves as having the duty of denouncing sexual immorality. The Court preachers rebuked Louis XV to his face; the pulpits of the capital thundered against the vices of high society; and the theologians stood firm in their refusal to admit the 'lesser evil' and connive at brothels in the interest of public order. But the world

went its way. Since the king had to marry for reasons of high policy and not from preference, the view of the unspiritual rank and file was that he could take mistresses: as Barbier said, if this was not allowed, he was in a worse situation than any of his subjects. By an extension of this respect of persons, social acceptance was given in Paris to the dancers and actresses kept by great nobles and financiers in a splendour often guaranteed by a formal contract.⁵⁴ The police of the capital always spied and occasionally harassed, but they hobnobbed with the *mamans* and allowed the trade to go on. In the capital, the clergy had to make the best they could of the policy of the authorities and the mores of lay society. There, their role was largely confined to helping individual families—a curé would be called in by parents to solicit an order taking their daughter from the milieu of prostitution and locking her up until she reformed; this was how Restif de la Bretonne's sister Geneviève was put in Sainte- Pélagie for eight years, getting out only when her stepfather died.⁵⁵ Only twenty-four of the *cabiers* of the clergy of 1789 ask for measures against prostitution. At Beauvais, the request was not for suppression, but for concealment—that is, a common-sense acceptance of the inevitable, but insisting that temptation should not be flaunted in the face of the inexperienced and the weak-willed.

In villages and small towns the situation was very different. The watch by spies and agents and the drag-net occasionally rounding up prostitutes in the cities did not operate in the countryside. Rural France was largely self-policing. The riders of the *maréchaussée* were few and rarely seen, and the tough characters employed by the *fermiers généraux* along the internal customs boundaries cared only about smugglers of illegal salt. The local whores were few and well known. When a mere two or three women were debauching local youth, the remedy was obvious, said a handbook on the duties of curés: they must be driven out, and the parish priest was the man to ensure this.⁵⁶ What usually happened, however, was that collective opinion led the way. Perhaps it might be tacitly assumed that an individual woman could be tolerated for the time being; but if 'public scandal' was being caused, the curé would be expected to take the lead, making enquiries and putting himself forward as a witness to the lay magistrates. Thus the curé and vicaire of Saint- Nicolas in Boulogne testified to the activities of a girl they found 'nue en chemise', while a local lady summoned the curé of her parish church in Béziers to show him how 'a certain Madeleine Géraud, aged 55 years, is in the bedroom of one called Pierre with whom she is asleep stark naked'—the curé had her sent to the

magistrates at the Hôtel de Ville.⁵⁷ Public opinion could easily be aroused against the local drab—she would be censured for tempting labourers to waste the money needed to feed their children, or for seducing young men of decent families. But a couple living together respectably without marriage vows would usually not arouse such resentment. To the clergy, this was ‘living in concubinage’, but if they wanted action, it had to be through the ecclesiastical machinery and by ecclesiastical penalties. The curé would give the offenders three warnings in private, then a fourth in the presence of witnesses, before finally sending a report to the bishop, who could have the couple summoned before the ecclesiastical court of the diocese, with the possibility of the proclamation of a formal excommunication.⁵⁸ But how often did this happen? Concubinage was rare in the countryside, while in the extensive slum parishes of the cities, like Saint-Eustache in Paris, there would be too many cases to cope with. Few dioceses mentioned the problem in their synodal statutes, let alone laid down procedures. In the diocese of Cambrai, where concubinage cases were solemnly brought before the ecclesiastical court, they were few, and after 1770, there were no more.⁵⁹

In the milieu of prostitution in Paris an odd collaboration between Church and State took place, unavowed, with sacrifice of principle on both sides and a common-sense outcome.⁶⁰ An ecclesiastic who broke his vows and committed fornication ought to have been arraigned before a church court; in practice, the full canonical procedures tended to be reserved for offences involving grave breaches of pastoral trust, like the seduction of a penitent, and even then, a *lettre de cachet* might intervene to remove the disgraced cleric, with a minimum of publicity, to some house of discipline of the kind run by the Filles du Bon Pasteur at Caen. These arbitrary interventions in the cause of decorum were the model for the conduct of the Parisian police: clergy they caught with prostitutes were not passed on to be tried before the *officialité* of the diocese—their adventures were hushed up. Normally, the police merely spied upon the clients of the brothels without taking action against them, but an exception was made in the case of ecclesiastics—indeed, the *mamans* were required to summon the police when one of the girls was entertaining a monk or an abbé, and an officer would rush down to catch the offender in the act. A long deposition was drawn up, and the offending churchman had to sign it. This done, a few of them (one in five) were taken before the lieutenant-general of police, who would pronounce an admonition and, in a few cases, make a committal of two or three days to the old diocesan prison. But the vast

majority caught by the police were allowed to go free. Seminarists and monks would be sent discreetly in a closed carriage to their house and handed over to the superior; the secular clergy would depart, though if they were visitors from the provinces, they might be given an order to go home.

In the fourteen years from 1755, 1,000 arrests of clerics were recorded. At least a quarter of them, probably many more, were tonsured, but had not proceeded to the order of subdeacon or beyond—that is, they had not undertaken the obligation of celibacy, and they could return to lay society if they wished to do so. Of the others, a higher proportion than were found among the normal clientele were voyeurs, or in search of sexual stimulation short of full intercourse. It could be that some of them were hoping to limit their gratification to acts which, though sinful, did not fall into the grave category of the *cas réservés*. A few claimed that they had gone there to exhort the girl to forsake her deplorable ways, and one or two may have had that intention in the first place. It looks as though some were ‘framed’—one prostitute in 1759 trapped no fewer than thirteen clerics. La Dhosmont, an expert if ever there was one, was genuinely sorry for some of the abbés she reported—‘qui n'auraient fait d'autre mal que de baiser les filles’, but for others she had an almost righteous contempt—‘they make religion a mere trade which provides them with a laugh’. Yet, when all qualifications have been made, there was material in the police files for grave scandal. The 206 cases in *La Chasteté du clergé dévoilée* (1790), apparently authentic though no doubt selective, include forty canons (including one each from the great foundations of Chartres and Beauvais), two vicars-general, and two royal chaplains, one of whom later became a bishop—all their adventures discreetly concealed until the fall of the Bastille left its archives open to anticlerical researchers.

Clearly, there was collusion between the ecclesiastical and the temporal authorities, and it was not just the police dealing with the monks and abbés they happened to find—they were specifically looking for them. It could be that the holder of the *feuille des bénéfices* was wanting to know of these escapades, so he could take them into account when awarding Crown patronage. No doubt the police welcomed the opportunity to get a hold over ecclesiastics so that they could blackmail them to spy, perhaps to find out what went on in monasteries. But the deliberate policy of making arrests and the procedures followed in them point to an understanding between the lieutenant-general of police and, presumably, the archbishop of Paris. The procedures were designed to frighten and humiliate, in a

sinister way resembling the routines of the confessional, asking how the affair had come about, what particular sexual practices were used, how often, and the like. They were a warning and punishment clandestinely administered, taking the place of canonical action which would have been noted by the public to the discredit of the Gallican Church. On the question of legitimizing brothels, the clergy refused to admit the doctrine of the lesser evil, but they applied it where the reputation of the ministers of religion was concerned.

III

While the evidence for the activities of the twilight world of prostitution is, of necessity, short on reliable statistics, with the rise of demography it has become possible to study the premarital sexual affairs of the mass of the population in a precise fashion, going beyond the denunciations and gossip of contemporaries. Yet the harmonization of the demographical and the literary evidence is not straightforward. We know the general effect of the pressures of religion and society upon conduct; but in the last resort the details of that conduct escape us—perhaps one of the few cases where the historian ought to be pleased that his prying curiosity is thwarted.

In rural France, custom allowed great, though formalized, familiarity between the sexes, and this was not always under the eyes of supervisory elders—in the diocese of Boulogne, a report of 1725 said ‘girls wander out at night with boys and fathers and mothers allow it’.⁶¹ If novelists and journalists are to be believed, in fine weather there were many opportunities for encounters in hay-ricks and hedgerows. According to a memoir of 1776 addressed to the Royal Society of Medicine, children had sexual experience from the age of 7, once they were sent out to mind the flocks.⁶² According to Restif de la Bretonne, 10 to 11 was the time. The standard ways in which the first adventure arrived are listed, not without malice, in Diderot's *Jacques le Fataliste*: the ‘Master’ asks Jacques how he lost his virginity, with the village whore, the servant of the curé or, better still, his niece, or at the tavern on market-day. In the case of Jacques it was at the age of 18 with the little seamstress Justine, his friend's girl-friend, in the hayloft. The age of marriage was late, and though poor nutrition delayed the onset of puberty, there would be a dozen years or more for most young people to socialize before the rites of the Church would sanctify their sexual endeavours.

Yet the figures for illegitimate births are astonishingly low: in Brittany 0.8 per cent, Languedoc 0.5 per cent, and the same in the Beauvaisis, and in the vast Paris basin from 0.5 to 1 per cent. Special circumstances caused variations. The figures were always higher where troops were encamped. In Normandy, the coming and going of sailors pushed the Port-en-Bassin figure up to 2.5 per cent, while around Troan in the *bocage* country, where farms were isolated, the figure was 3 per cent, for masters abused their serving-girls without the pressure of the village community to help their wives to keep them in order. There was a tendency for the numbers to rise throughout the century, especially after 1750.⁶³ At Meulan, from 1730 to 1759 it was a standard 0.59 per cent, from 1760 to 1789 it was 2.3 per cent. In the cities, things were very different, for here the barriers of restraint were breaking, and illegitimacy was on a larger scale. A rough rule seems to have been that the bigger the urban concentration, the higher the figure.⁶⁴ In Nantes, there was a rise from 3.1 per cent to 10.1 per cent; in the 1780s the figures stood at 12.5 per cent in Lille and Strasbourg and 25 per cent in Toulouse—in each place at mid-century the numbers had been half.⁶⁵ In Paris from 1770 to 1780, 30 per cent of the baptisms were of foundlings, two-thirds of them being illegitimate.

A multitude of tragic individual stories lie behind these illegitimacy statistics of town and country, but broad generalizations about the general pattern of vulnerability are easy to find. In rural society, the opportunity to escape from surveillance played a role, the key months for illegitimate conceptions being July, with its warm weather, and January, with its holiday festivities. The mothers were not usually very young, most being over 20 years of age, but they were mostly poor, illiterate, and without protectors, often orphans, the loss of the fathers being of crucial importance. In the Angers–Châteaugontier area, 80 per cent of them were servants, and half of these were seduced by their masters; practically all of them were living away from their parishes of origin. Social rootlessness, geographical displacement, poverty, and helplessness were the causes of rural illegitimacy. In the cities, the figures were high because displacement and rootlessness were a mass phenomenon. The surges of immigration were creating a whole class of people outside the parochial structure, deprived of the sense of community. And in any case, the towns had always had a large population of female servants, an easy prey to men when they fell out of employment, and liable to seduction by their masters and the sons of the family. The tightly integrated social order had become geared to keeping the population

within the resources available, ensuring that the age of marriage was high and restraining births outside wedlock. The girls, whether in city or country, who were not protected and controlled by the community were vulnerable.

The law of the state backed up the constraints of the community. At three-monthly intervals the curé read out in church the royal declaration that unmarried pregnant women must declare their condition to the local magistrate; this was a provision to guard against abortions (condemned by the Church in papal bulls of 1588 and 1679) and infanticide. The magistrate would appear when the woman was in labour to demand the name of the father, pain and shame conjoined being regarded as operating like a truth drug; the father would be dunned by the community to pay for the *mois de nourrice*. Unless the seducer was a priest or a man of consequence, the rules required that his name be put in the baptismal register, though with a note that he was absent from the ceremony. The curés more and more became disinclined to make such contentious entries. In the cities at the end of the *ancien régime*, the rising number of illegitimate births made the locating of fathers and coercing them to pay into a major police operation; in 1786 in Paris, 755 men were arrested and humiliatingly marched through the streets.⁶⁶ In fact, most girls did not name the father, though rather more identifications were forthcoming in Brittany, Flanders, and Languedoc than elsewhere; a pamphleteer in 1787 guessed the overall figure was one in ten.⁶⁷

In some provinces, especially Languedoc, there was a communal custom to bring the father to book: a procession of the girl's family to his door.⁶⁸ In a frontier village of Provence in the diocese of Vence, a legalistic variant of the ceremony is recorded in the year 1766.⁶⁹ On 14 May, Elisabeth T—informed the village officials, the *consuls*, that Louis E—, bourgeois, was the father of the child she was expecting. On 2 July, a boy was born. Her father informed the *consuls*, and the law officer of the place with the midwife carrying the infant marched to the house of Louis. The door was locked, so the official smote upon it with a hammer to alert the neighbourhood. Then the child was taken to the *consuls* with the request that they order the father to provide for its upkeep. The father refused. The facts that he was much older than the girl and she was 'simple' were aggravating circumstances, so he was gaoled. He consulted two *avocats* from Aix, and they advised him to pay. It had been an expensive seduction—500 livres for the girl plus the lawyers' fees. But how reliable was the word of a girl likely to be? At the beginning of the

century the ecclesiastical court of Paris would accept her oath as establishing a presumption strong enough to oblige the man to pay unless he could disprove the allegation. But the injustice of accepting unverified testimony was obvious, and the similar court of the diocese of Cambrai decided to take the girl's word unsupported only when she was a servant accusing her master, or if she had been given a promise of marriage.⁷⁰ In the course of the century, the credence given to this limited number of cases was also abandoned. In 1743, the intendant of Languedoc declared that no arrests on paternity charges would be made unless corroborative evidence was forthcoming. Families could still make their point by processing through the streets, except, from 1726, in Flanders, where the parlement ordered an end to 'these ridiculous ceremonies'. As time went on, the courts also ceased to enforce the death penalty for infanticide, usually with the excuse that the child must assuredly have been stillborn.⁷¹

Yet, while the law was being tempered, the forces of communal disapproval remained arrayed to humiliate the girl and, if known, her paramour. The baptism was the solemn occasion when the collective disapproval was manifested. Instead of the entry on the register saying 'fils légitime et naturel de X et de Y sa femme', it read: 'fils naturel de N et de M'.⁷² A vicaire, alarmed at having to put in such a censorious entry where two distinguished families were concerned, put in the 'légitime', then realizing this would not be allowed, crossed it out and added his own apologetic gloss, 'J'approuve la nature'.⁷³ An improvement in the art of obloquy, heard of in Brittany, was putting the entry concerning illegitimacy upside down. Often, there would be no godparents: 'personne n'a voulu'.⁷⁴ In the little town of Villedieu-les-Poêles, where illegitimate infants began arriving from 1771 with the stationing of troops nearby, one Guillaume Bertrand, a butcher, was there every time as the only volunteer.⁷⁵ The general picture is one of the prohibitions of the Church so bound up with government ordinances and the conventions of the social order that it is virtually impossible to isolate and assess the role played by religion in the premarital sexual restraints of eighteenth-century France. It is a case of religion and community opinion fused into one to guarantee a basic principle on which the viability of society depended.

A question arises with as yet no entirely convincing answer in sight: how can the literary evidence about the sexual activities of the young people of the countryside be harmonized with the low statistics of illegitimacy? Since demographical analyses of births

within marriage are continually revealing evidence of the adoption of contraceptive practices, why not postulate such practices as habitual before marriage? This will hardly do, since the denunciations of ‘the cheating of Nature’ by contemporaries all refer to activities within marriage, not outside it. It would also be hard to explain why in vast areas of France married people did not resort to family limitation, except here and there and among the better-off peasants. Perhaps the best guess is that the extreme limit of the sexual familiarities of the unmarried in rural areas was usually mutual masturbation. The machinery of moral censure was not geared to denounce it as a solitary practice. True, the medical profession declared it to be unhealthy, Dr Tissot ascribing to it a whole range of maladies, ranging from spotty faces to epilepsy and madness.⁷⁶ Less was said about female masturbation, though M. D. T. de Bienville warned of its dangers in his diatribe on ‘nymphomania’.⁷⁷ By contrast, the clergy issued only nominal condemnations. There is more than a hint of a liberal attitude in the volumes of moral advice to his clergy by Godeau, bishop of Vence, posthumously published in 1709. A priest ought not to worry about involuntary ‘pollution’, he said, even if it was brought on by reading on matters sexual, provided the object was to be more expert in advising penitents, and if it happened when actually hearing confessions, he should carry on with his duties undisturbed.⁷⁸ The handbooks of casuistry, so severe about the activities of the marriage-bed, allowed a wife to excite herself before intercourse with her husband and, if necessary, afterwards.⁷⁹ Masturbation by a man was a sin, but not one that fell within the *cas réservés*—that is, any confessor could grant absolution. A curé of Périgord in 1790 said that masturbation was general among young people and regarded this as inevitable—the only remedy he could suggest was early marriage. In 1744, the bishop of Boulogne had been remarkably permissive on the subject. Many young folk, he said, did not count *mollesse* among the sins of the flesh, and it was not worth while to try to enlighten them; his synodal statutes told the clergy not to press questions about it. In considering the advent of contraception within marriage, perhaps one should recognize that mutual masturbation outside wedlock facilitated the transition to coitus interruptus within it.

If the coincidence of social pressure and Christian precept makes the statistics of illegitimacy a dubious criterion for assessing the power of religion, the same does not necessarily apply to the statistics of pre-nuptial conceptions. In some places the formal arrangement of the marriage between the two families was taken as the point

when sexual relations or, even, cohabitation could begin, setting aside the Church's insistence on the wedding ceremony. There were great variations in the number of pre-nuptial conceptions from place to place, no doubt depending on the custom of the locality. In a collection of villages in northern France, these ran at 4 per cent in the seventeenth century, and had reached 10 per cent by 1789. In the tragically poor village of Sennely in the Sologne, the figure was between 10 and 14 per cent. In other small places there was a wide range: in Crulai 2.3 per cent (the illegitimacy figure was 0.9 per cent); in Bonnières-sur-Seine 8.8 per cent (illegitimacy 1 per cent); in Troan 2.3 per cent (illegitimacy 3 per cent). In the towns the figures tended to be high, rising progressively according to the size of the conurbation, but there were exceptions. In the small town of Meulan there were 8 per cent pre-nuptial conceptions to 1739 and 12 per cent from 1740 to 1790; in Sérignan, a tiny silted port on the Mediterranean, the rate was up to 40 per cent in the second half of the century. Soundings at Lyon suggest that 20 per cent was the level, and the definitive study of Rouen shows the same figure at the end of the *ancien régime*, having risen from 7 per cent in the seventeenth century. The anticipation of the ceremony was a trait of popular mores: in Rouen,⁸⁰ it was rare among the notables and the Protestants, that is, in milieux where the standard of living was more comfortable and the pressures of respectability more insistent. There is some evidence that women who were older when they married, more especially widows, were most inclined to anticipate the church ceremony; life was precarious, and those most conscious of its brevity made haste.

Some zealous bishops tried to ensure abstinence until after the wedding by putting the *fiançailles* only two or three days beforehand.⁸¹ But the parish clergy do not seem to have made an issue out of this moral problem. After all, it was a principle of theology that mutual consent makes a marriage in the eyes of God, and the tight constrictions of village life would ensure that a marriage contracted between two families would certainly take place. Indeed, if the birth had been no more than two months early, the curé might decide to put it in the register as 'né en légitime mariage'.⁸² It looks as though the clergy were not striving to proclaim the rule 'and if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?' Whatever actually happened in sexual activities before marriage in rural France, it was certainly true that the social organization and its pressures and the indoctrination of religion prevented the arrival of illegitimate children, and that was what mattered.

IV

The clerical moralists' distrust of sexual desire extended even to sexual relationships within marriage. In a theologian's dialogue between a mother and her daughter (1683), the mother tells Pauline that marriage is 'a cross'—she must turn her mind to God when having intercourse, striving to avoid sensual pleasure, and if this proves impossible, make an act of disavowal of concupiscence.⁸³ Gérard de Villethierry (1695) wanted the married to abstain from intercourse in their first three days together, on all feasts of the Church, at all penitential seasons, and when preparing to receive the Sacrament.⁸⁴ Paccori (1726) wanted them to abstain as much as possible. Borromeo was available in French translation from 1648, and those who read him would almost be convinced that visual and tactile sensations were illegitimate extensions of the necessary act. Looking forward in pleasurable anticipation or backwards in satisfied retrospect were culpable vagaries of the mind diverting the Christian from his duty to reflect continuously on things concerning God. Père Le Semelier, in the official theological handbook of the diocese of Paris on marriage (1712, new edn. 1741), condemned all 'unnatural' positions—unnatural as resembling the congress of animals, or having the woman on top and thus vaguely superior, or in so far as certain positions were supposed to be less likely to lead to conception.⁸⁵ St Paul had described marriage as a 'remedy for concupiscence'; but Nicole, with Jansenist severity, did not regard this apostolic ruling as making the sexual drive any less dangerous: 'le mariage règle la concupiscence, mais il ne la rend pas réglée'.

Marriage guidance of this austere kind came from celibate theologians. It would be unfair to suggest that they were subconsciously motivated by envy; but they still clung to the old idea that the contemplative monastic life was the highest of all vocations. One late seventeenth-century writer urges wives to recognize that marriage necessarily involves unhappiness—noise, confusion, bereavement, children behaving wickedly (perhaps being condemned to the scaffold), husbands turning to debauchery—rejoice, he says, for the sight of your tribulations will create monastic vocations in others.⁸⁶ From the unexceptionable proposition that the Christian life must be focused on God, they moved to the disputable one that all things, even human affections, that can divert the mind from God are dangerous, failing to recognize that for most people these relationships are the highway to the vision they are seeking. The overwhelming force of sexual temptation, especially visual, which was

the rock of shipwreck to the devotional life of celibates, created a suspicion which was extended by inference to the lives of married people, so that they too must be warned and restricted. This grudging attitude to sexual relations within marriage was tinged with lingering memories of a grim proposition of ancient theology, still not entirely exorcized. The idea that woman was the eternal temptress came from the Fall story, and from that story too came the theme of her continuing punishment. 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee' (Gen. 3: 16). Bossuet was eloquent on this legacy of condemnation: 'Fecundity is the glory of woman,' he said, 'and it is here that God has located her punishment . . . she is unhappy and accursed in all her sex.' He also followed up the Genesis text concerning inferiority to the husband with the absurd argument of creation from a supernumerary bone of Adam—it was Bossuet at his fundamentalist worst.⁸⁷ Implicit in the Garden of Eden tragedy was the suspicion of sexuality that haunted the theologians. Its denouement was the discovery of nakedness, marking the end of innocence. Woman the temptress was responsible, and her punishment, to continue to the end of the world, was bound up with the sexual act and followed from it. The prayer devised by Bishop Godeau of Vence in 1646 for women giving thanks after childbirth embodies the dark imagination that there can be no sexual intercourse that in some way is not sinful: 'although the holiness of marriage rendered my conception legitimate, I confess that concupiscence had mingled its venom, making me commit faults that displease You'.

It could be that the Catholic moralists hesitated before turning to a more sympathetic understanding of sexual relationships because rival moralists had got there before them; as can happen in religious controversies, one side hardens its attitude to emphasize its difference from the other, to establish its greater righteousness. Protestants, refusing to accept the superiority of the religious vocation, accepted the pleasures of Christian marriage as Godgiven—as Calvin said, 'a remedy for concupiscence' to be 'used joyously'. Bayle, that menacing figure representing both Calvinist heresy and Enlightenment scepticism, in the course of a controversy with the Jansenists, published a remarkable essay on pleasure, *Dialogues entre MM. Patru et d'Ablancourt sur les plaisirs* (1701).⁸⁸ Use the enjoyments God gives us, he said, with moderation, not being obsessed with them nor striving overmuch to grasp them, but with cheerfulness. In this spirit the sexual intercourse of married people

‘renders them happy and innocent both together’. As against views like these, coming from Protestant and liberal sources, it was tempting for the Catholic casuists to remain frozen in harshness, accusing the opposition of making Christian morality unworthily easy.

Fortunately, as against gloomy rules to take the pleasures out of marriage, there stood the generous teaching of François de Sales, who allowed the good things of the world to Christians on the same conditions as Bayle was to lay down later—they must not obsess the mind. Going beyond this general rule, he also conceded the importance of sexual enjoyment in keeping the married pair in companionable affection. For long, the implications of Salesian liberalism were lost on the writers of the manuals of casuistry, not finding acceptance until Alphonsus of Liguori turned them into rules of the confessional in the mid-eighteenth century. But the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries at least succeeded in breaking through the barrier to a generous view of marital relationships constituted by the grim teaching of the Fall story. Bossuet's reactionary certainties were dated even as he proclaimed them. The idea of the punishment of women through the pains of childbirth had appeared unconvincing since the physician Mauriceau had published his *Traité des maladies des femmes grosses* in 1668: he had demonstrated that pain was physiologically inevitable and that the concept of a hereditary punishment was immoral.⁸⁹ As for the subjection of the wife to the husband, the eighteenth century saw ‘the discovery of women’. Bossuet's eloquence about the sin of Eve and its consequences was a deviation from the respect for women inspired through the centuries by the Church's veneration of the Virgin—as the picturesque conceit of the hymn writers had it, Eve's transgression had been annulled by the dedication of Mary to the will of God at the Annunciation. The Church had always insisted that free consent was the basis of Christian marriage, consent given by the woman no less than by the man. Fénelon, at odds with Bossuet in this as in so much else, wanted women to come to marriage as well educated as their partners, though they should study different subjects with their own feminine vocation in view. The lawyers of the ecclesiastical courts treated husband and wife equally when their cases for separation were heard. More and more, the churchmen of the eighteenth century came to regard women in the spirit of Père Bosc's aphorism: ‘not slave or mistress, but companion . . . honoured equally by God in creation and moving towards the same destiny’.⁹⁰ For other reasons, and by other routes, society was moving to a more elevated view of women. One result was that husbands showed more

consideration to their wives, and their growing sense of equality in companionship showed itself in a turning to contraceptive practice to alleviate the burdens of unplanned pregnancies and perpetual drudgery. At this point, the spirit of liberalism among churchmen, allying them to the best of Enlightenment thought, stopped dead. François de Sales had refused to allow the least concession on birth control, and so, *a fortiori*, did all the theologians after him. The primary ground for the existence of the sexual impulse, it was ruled, was to enable procreation, to have children to bring up in the fear of the Lord. It was sinful to take any measures to evade this responsibility, not just as a long-term intention, but in every single act of sexual intercourse.

Strictly speaking, the argument was that it was sinful to have intercourse without the intention of creating a child. Only extremists would press this proposition literally, for, as Saint Augustine had said, a married couple coming together motivated by desire alone were committing only a venial sin. From 1643, the doctrine of the necessary intention to procreate was generally taken to mean that the intention must be there when taking the marriage vows—it need not be kept in the forefront of the mind afterwards. But, given the basic theological premiss, there could hardly be a defence of intercourse without insemination. There was a key scriptural text in Genesis 38: 9: Onan was slain by God's vengeance for refusing to inseminate Tamar, 'spilling his seed'. Avoiding parenthood in this way, said Bossuet's catechism, was 'an abominable crime'. In the *Conférences ecclésiastiques* of Paris on marriage, Père Le Semelier said penetration without insemination was a sin 'as grave as incest or the rape of a nun'. For reasons of virtuous self-discipline or danger to health, a married couple could decide to sleep apart by mutual consent; otherwise natural fertility must take its course. What of a poor family faced with feeding a multitude of children? The casuists had nothing better to say than that God would provide. On this point, the standard dictionary of casuistry provided a monumental example of unworldly insensitivity. 'Ausone', with six children, is abstaining from sexual intercourse because of his poverty—is he justified? Answer: only if his wife is in full agreement. But while some authorities would accept—even praise—this mutual abstention, the author of the dictionary differs. There will be a powerful temptation to seek extra-marital satisfaction, so he judges it best for Ausone and his wife to carry on risking more children to feed. Let them not despair, for did not David say: 'I am now old, and yet saw I never the righteous forsaken or his seed begging their bread' (Ps. 37: 25);

besides, are we not better than the ravens, neither sowing nor reaping, 'yet God feedeth them' (Luke 12: 24).⁹¹

In defiance of the rule of the Church, the art of 'cheating Nature' was coming into the lives of married couples in eighteenth-century France; essentially, this meant coitus interruptus, the rudimentary condom being known only in high society and in the milieu of prostitution. There was a growing awareness that contraception was being practised and that the custom was spreading. The Eudist fathers preaching missions in Normandy in the mid-seventeenth century refer to the rise of 'le péché déshonnête'; this is early, but Normandy, while traditionally a pious area, was also renowned for the obstinacy of its inhabitants, and it was a province of dense population where the customary law prescribed the division of property among heirs. From 1701 to 1750, specific literary references to contraception in France total only seven; from 1751 to 1760 there were fifteen; thereafter to 1790 there were seventy-one.⁹² Some suggest a wide dissemination of the practice: according to Moheau in 1775, the 'funestes secrets' unknown to the animals and peculiar to man were spreading everywhere—'on trompe la nature jusque dans les villages'. Not all the complaints concerned the moral issue; indeed, most came from panicking populationists under the mistaken idea that the national labour force was in decline.

From early in the century, the highest aristocrats, the dukes and peers, were practising severe family limitation. Free from economic constraints and anxious to ensure the perpetuation of their lineage, they married early, their wives often being under the age of 20. Yet they had few children. From 1700 to 1749, the average was 2.7 for a family, from 1750 to 1790, two. Their wives were young when the last child was born—in the second half of the seventeenth century 31, then in the eighteenth century 26, falling to 25, an early age for the decision that the family was complete. The Malthusianism of the nobles of Toulouse was not so drastic, but from 1730 it is evident by the same indicators, the declining number of children and the falling age of the wives at the last birth—33 in the last decades of the *ancien régime*. The pattern of family life among the aristocracy of Toulouse was much the same among the notables of the cities.⁹³ The word was passed around, said an observer in Caen about 1670, 'in equivocal observations' about the 'delicate and ingenious method' (*manière ingénieuse et délicate*) to be used. As in Caen, so in Bayeux and Rouen, the other two principal cities of Normandy. In Rouen, the 'contraceptive toboggan' was beginning to slide in the generation before 1700. The intervals between births lengthened, and women

had their last child earlier. There was a dramatic limitation among the notables from 1670 to 1699, and thereafter the practice carried on steadily and spread to other classes in a pattern suggesting the transmission of an idea and attitude by social osmosis, first the shopkeepers, then the artisans, and finally the ordinary workers. There was no difference between indigenous families and those of the many new immigrants, and though Protestants were not hampered by the prohibitions of religion, their progress in birth control did not run ahead of the Catholics. Unlike France generally, there was no leap into massive contraception at the Revolution, just the continuation of the steadily rising graph: 'the fall of the Bastille did not accelerate a contraception which had been triumphing for over a century'. In towns outside Normandy, a similar phenomenon is found, the rule seeming to be that in smaller places, the advent of birth control, though certain, is delayed. At Verdun (10,000 inhabitants) it came in mid-century, leadership as ever provided by the more prosperous and better educated—the notables, the richer farmers living nearby, and soldiers (no doubt from reasons of lifestyle and wider contacts). Here, it was not a question of lengthening the intervals between births but of 'contraception par arrêt'. The average age of the mother when the last child was born was 37.6 years from 1750 to 1769, and 34.9 from 1770 to 1789. But couples who married at an early age, presumably helped by superior economic circumstances, seem to have resorted to severe limitation from the outset.⁹⁴ A similar picture is seen in Chartres. The working classes here began to follow the example of the notables in restrictive practice from mid-century, again by stopping short at a limited number of children. Possibly, the collective decision came instinctively because the fecundity of women was increasing as economic circumstances improved (intervals between births became less from 1730 to 1759). As in Verdun, couples marrying early were restrictive from the start.⁹⁵

It was an eighteenth-century commonplace that the cities were haunts of iniquity, from which evil customs spread to the comparatively innocent countryside. The curé of Athis wrote to the bishop of Bayeux in 1774 complaining that the people of the towns were passing on to the peasants the 'art of cheating nature' in marital relationships. One can see how this would be so, for town and country were more closely interlinked than they are now. Citizens of substance owned rural properties to which they retired during the heat of summer and on rumours of epidemics; peasants came in to market; and city mothers sent their babies to wet-nurses in the

countryside—this probably a key point of contact. But country folk did not need urban gossip to inform them about the ‘fatal secrets’, but just encouragement to overcome inhibitions. In times of famine the rural birth rate collapsed, partly from the effect of sheer malnutrition, but also because husbands and wives dared not risk a pregnancy. In 1789 the *cabier* of Bloutière described the poor farmer ‘watering with his sweat and tears the furrow of his plough’, knowing the crop would not be sufficient to feed his family; ‘he turns his back on the sweet instinct implanted by Nature inspiring father- hood, in the fear of increasing the number of the starving’.⁹⁶ This is neatly put: he abjures not sexual relations, but fatherhood. There was a contraception of despair: it had been evident among Protestants when Louis XIV’s storm of persecution had fallen on them; it was the resort of peasants in time of famine; and the hardships and fears of the Revolution were to generalize it.⁹⁷ The turning of country folk to the contraception of prudence, already common in the towns, was facilitated by their residual memory of the survival tactics of their village in the last crisis of starvation.

The clear and widespread resort to contraception in the countryside is established for the area of the Paris basin from mid-century.⁹⁸ From 1760 to 1789, the average birth interval increased from thirty- one to forty-eight months. The proportion of families resorting to limitation was, if the case of Bonnières-sur-Seine is typical, about 15 per cent after 1755.⁹⁹ In the Norman rural areas a similar lengthening of birth intervals has been noted in various villages—from twenty- five months up to forty.¹⁰⁰ It is true that the progress of research and the refinement of methodology sometimes cast doubts on examples originally held to be certain, for the long-term decline of fertility and the increasing intervals between conceptions is not an invariable pointer to coitus interruptus.¹⁰¹ On the other hand, the use of more sophisticated techniques is revealing a resort to birth control in areas once taken as representing the norm of ‘natural fertility’. Villages where infant mortality is high proceed with family replacement at a faster rate than those where deaths are less frequent, and parents with a sufficiency of boys past the danger age for survival (about 8 or 9) stop striving to increase their family circle, being able to look forward to a degree of security in their old age.¹⁰² Revisions are inevitable, and new evidence will continually become available, but enough has been done to establish the growth of contraceptive practice in the century and to plot the areas which led the movement before the Revolution generalized it.

The linkage between the rise of contraception and the decline of

religious practice is evident in the big towns. There was also a broad correspondence in rural France—the apparent rarity of birth control in Brittany and Anjou and its widespread use in the Paris basin. But detailed comparisons between various parishes in towns and between adjacent rural areas and more studies of the social classes and income groups concerned are needed before the relationship can be interpreted. And in any case, an important reservation must be made. The apparently iron front of the Church against birth control needs closer examination, for the suspicion arises that this was a sphere of human experience where what the clergy said, or refrained from saying, in the confessional did not tally with the official prohibitions. This would help to explain why contraception begins and flourishes in the higher reaches of society, among people capable of interpreting the nuances of argument and seeing through the clergy's pose as professional proclaimers of certainties.

In the age of the Enlightenment, the prohibitions of the Church, largely unreasoned, were bound to be questioned, not only by educated laymen, but also by the more intelligent churchmen pondering the advice to be given to troubled individuals in the confessional. A shift in attitudes to Nature was taking place: its processes were no longer accepted fatalistically; they could be investigated and modified by techniques. The classical case was inoculation against smallpox. After half a century of argument, the victory over prejudice was won in 1769, when the government ordered the inoculation of the cadets at the military academy of La Flèche. Voltaire invented the myth that this was a triumph of philosophy over reactionary churchmen demanding submission to the decrees of Providence. True, the Sorbonne had originally pronounced against the innovation; but opinions change, and, in fact, the Jesuit *Mémoires de Trévoux* came out for inoculation before Voltaire, and later in the century the bishop of Castres went round on his visitations with a physician in his train to impose the new benefit on the children of his parishes. The *Conférences ecclésiastiques* of Angers, noted for rigorism, in 1776 gave grudging acceptance to progressive medicine. Not for us, said the theologians, to authorize inoculation, for 'clever doctors say there is some danger'; but 'without betraying our ministry', we can go so far as to endorse the right of physicians to make decisions in particular cases 'following their expertise and their prudence'. The question was bound to arise: how far could theologians go, 'without betraying their ministry', in allowing the use of techniques in matters sexual? The abbé Nollet and Spallanxi published an account of their experiments using condoms on male frogs, *Expérience pour servir à*

l'histoire de la génération (1785); this, apparently, was allowable. But in 1777 the theologians had had Dr Guilbert de Prével banned from practising medicine for his experiment to show how similar precautions in human beings constituted a preservative against venereal infection—hardly surprising, since, in full-bottomed wig and chemise, he gave a personal demonstration with two whores in a public session presided over by the duc d'Orléans.¹⁰³

We can only guess at what the clergy actually said in the confessional to their penitents. Not all were influenced by the thought of the Enlightenment, but all were aware, more than other members of the educated classes, of the stern handicaps under which the poor struggled to feed their children. They must have known, or at least suspected, that infanticide was practised by refraining from striving sacrificially to keep alive weakly infants, by 'overlaying' babies in the family bed, and by pushing them out to wet-nurses when the odds against survival were manifestly high. In the cities, the abandonment of children was becoming a feature of the lives of the disinherited classes—not just illegitimate infants, for a third of those left at the Enfants Trouvés and similar establishments in Paris were taken there by married couples, often hoping against hope that in later years they might be prosperous enough to reclaim them. In times of famine in the countryside the fall in the birth rate was so evident that it would be impossible not to suspect contraception—would it have been reasonable to condemn it? In areas where Protestants and ex-Protestants were numerous, the curé would be aware that they were practising birth control—as Calvin said, bringing up healthy and well-educated children instead of disadvantaging them by 'a disorderly procreation'. Many curés would be angry, but others might begin to ask themselves what was in the best interests of their people. The basic principle of casuistry was the rule of 'choosing the lesser evil'. The adamant precepts which churchmen were obliged to hold in public might not be imposed as mandatory on starving or worried people in their secret personal lives.

In fact, two major precepts of the confessional about sexual relations in marriage were contradictory. First, the husband must show the utmost consideration to his wife. He could not give her orders. Blanchard's handbook for the confessional (1713)¹⁰⁴ prescribes asking wives if they have paid attention to their husband's 'advice' and 'remonstrances'—no reference to commands. Women were free and independent beings, their 'obedience' the expression of friendship and loyalty. Amid the dry precepts in which casuistry was formulated, this civilized modification of traditional male superiority

would be affirmed with a growing emphasis, for the whole trend of the century was towards elevating the status of women and, with them, their children.¹⁰⁵ As economic life diversified, women were able to make greater contributions—in shop and counting-house, dairy and farmyard, inn and tavern. The late age of marriage among ordinary people meant that women came to marriage mature in mind, capable of helping in practical business, and, maybe, having amassed a dowry by a decade of work or having inherited possessions from one or both parents. In sexual relations, as in others, women, if not equal partners, were active, friendly co-operators. Child-bearing was a dangerous ordeal (Mme de Sévigné's advice to her daughter was: don't get smallpox and don't get pregnant¹⁰⁶). It was a specific rule of the confessional that a husband must not have intercourse with his wife if a pregnancy would put her life in danger—in those days, this would frequently be the case. How was abstinence to be achieved? The confessor could only recommend relying on the power of prayer.

The other, contradictory rule of the confessional was that a wife must not refuse her husband unless she was putting her life in danger by accepting his advances. The argument was that the deprived husband would almost certainly resort to other women—'debauchery', the handbooks called it. A willing wife was a safeguard against the deadly sin of fornication. This was why, according to a country curé, the local seigneur called him in to persuade his difficult wife to come back to his bed. A visit to the château, the citing of the great casuists Pontas and Sainte-Beuve, and all was well—'the good husband never ceases to admire the powerful eloquence of his curé which achieves such great results'.¹⁰⁷ Here was a rule which showed up the unreality of the standard advice about reliance on prayer. For most penitents it was not expected to be effective in producing sexual forbearance. The casuists were obliged to admit this when considering the problem of the resumption of sexual relations after the birth of a child. Once the mother had been blessed by the curé at the *relevailles*, the 'churcing', there was no longer a taboo on intercourse, but it was well known that a new pregnancy would ruin the mother's milk, and thus imperil the life of the infant.¹⁰⁸ Sanchez had faced the dilemma honestly, admitting that abstinence by the man for a long period could not be expected. Hesitantly, he concluded that debauchery was the greater evil, so if the man could not abstain, the infant at the breast would have to take its chance. The disastrous fashion, general among the better-off though extending to every class of society, of putting babies out to a wet-nurse was one which

had the gloomy backing of the clergy. As the *Dictionnaire des cas de conscience*, the vade-mecum for confessors in the eighteenth century, declared: 'if the husband is in peril of incontinence, the wife, if she is able to do so, ought to put her infant out to nurse so she can provide for her husband's lack of self-control. If because of poverty she is unable to hire another woman to feed the child, she can refuse her husband, because he has not the right to demand intercourse at the risk of the life or health of the infant.'¹⁰⁹ It was a ruling that went, in the last resort, against Sanchez's hesitant findings, but it was one allowing the rich a self-indulgence denied to the poor, and it conveniently ignored the fact that infants sent away to be wet-nursed had a greatly reduced chance of survival. It was still preferring to risk the life of the child rather than the sexual morals of the husband.

The realistic recognition of the limited possibility of controlling the masculine sexual drive, along with the doctrinaire insistence on the wickedness of 'cheating Nature', had driven the casuists to recommendations unfair to women, showing respect to the persons of the rich and endangering the lives of infants. When, in the second half of the eighteenth century, Rousseauistic doctrines of *sensibilité* proclaimed the duty of mothers to suckle their own children as a matter of hygiene, love, and family bonding, it was a blow struck at the heart of the Church's ban on contraception. One may guess that the surge towards birth control after 1760 was due, at least in part, to families following the latest sentimental and enlightened ideas and taking up the practice of coitus interruptus during the period of breast-feeding, and continuing it thereafter as a means of family limitation.

We cannot know directly what directors of conscience said in secret to married people in desperate sexual predicaments—they had the responsibilities of finding 'the least evil' among the possible alternative courses. But officially, and in print, they can be detected manœuvring around the margins of the Church's prohibitions in a fashion suggesting that there may have been an unpublished inclination to latitude in private. What if a wife wished to obey the Church implicitly, but her husband insisted on refusing to have more children and 'committed the detestable crime of Onan', withdrawing before ejaculating?¹¹⁰ Sanchez and the other liberal casuists up to Alphonsus de Liguori declared the wife to be innocent, while the Jansenist Habert and the ruthless *Conférences* of Angers held her to be guilty. Collet (1757) could not make up his mind. Daon (1750) contradicted himself, saying both partners are blameable, then going on to reflect that the wife, having resorted to 'prayers and

remonstrances', must obey, leaving the burden of sin on her husband's conscience alone.¹¹¹ (One strives in vain to imagine how a woman could satisfy the exigencies of Habert, and what 'prayers and remonstrances' Daon had in mind.) The civilized, liberal view holding the wife to be innocent removed a major obstacle to the adoption of contraception: the clergy had much less influence on men than on women.

Another highly significant problem arose if a man had committed fornication, or, worse still, incest, and had resorted to contraception while doing so. (This moral dilemma would arise often in a particular form when a man who had visited a Parisian prostitute made his confession, for 'manualization' was a practice in vogue in place of sexual congress, welcomed by clients who feared venereal disease.¹¹²) Was contraception in adultery to be reckoned as the piling of a second grievous offence on top of the first, or did the second transgression lessen the sin? The answer was: it lessened it. Fornication 'sine seminis effusione' was less heinous than fornication with insemination, for 'the adultery had not been consummated' and, obviously, certain possible tragic consequences had been eliminated.¹¹³ The resort to contraception had removed the transgression from the category of a *cas réservé*; it remained a serious sin, but the curé could pronounce absolution without reference to higher authority. The consideration was bound to arise: might there be circumstances in marriage where resort to the sin of Onan would be the lesser evil, affording grounds for mitigation?

Finally, there was a casuistical problem which implied a threat to the whole logic of the official ecclesiastical prohibition: what if a husband had sexual intercourse with his wife, withdrew, and still did not ejaculate? This was the so-called 'étreinte réservée'. He was subverting the Church's insistence on the sexual act as necessarily linked with the intention to procreate, but he was not committing the sin of Onan in the literal sense. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, Pierre de la Palud had ruled that this method was justified in the love-making of a family with too many children to feed. This ancient liberal concession was taken up by Sanchez, who said it constituted only a venial sin, provided the family circumstances warranted contraception. In 1749, the bishop of Bayeux took this view, though he warned his clergy not to make the knowledge public, since the practice was virtually certain to collapse into the sin of Onan, bringing divine judgement on the presumptuous offender.¹¹⁴ A parish priest dealing with intractable problems of marital unhappiness might well have preferred the generosity of

Sanchez to the bishop's devious rigorism, and advised a husband to qualify for a venial sin through good intentions rather than worrying about the involuntary probabilities.

There are reasons to suppose that an intelligent and sensitive confessor would find circumstances when he would not insist on the rule of the Church against contraception. But the majority of people came to confession only once a year, at Easter. It was impossible for the curé to give them continuous guidance. And on this annual occasion, time would be short, everyone wanting to be shriven in the space of a few days. Even those who confessed half a dozen times a year were not likely to get detailed, insistent guidance. The sophisticated casuistry of sexual relations within marriage was offered only to a small pious minority. True, rigorist or boorish confessors might flatly tell a penitent that coitus interruptus was forbidden, without discussion or nuances; but it is evident that if they did, they could not follow up by refusals of absolution. They had no leverage to enforce obedience. In any case, the testimony of curés makes it clear that many penitents did not entrust them with their secrets until death was near, and they resented being questioned. In 1782 Père Féline published a *Catéchisme des gens mariés* which was a monument of naïveté. The sin of Onan was commonly practised, he said, and in thundering against it went into detail of methods, so that a commercial entrepreneur republished his work between attractive covers as a handy reference book. The confessor's difficulty, said Féline, was that married people regarded their sexual relations as private: women would not speak on the subject unless directly asked, and men were scandalized if it was raised. But by then, other confessors were coming to accept and approve this reticence of the laity. Already, at least one casuist had advised avoiding detailed questions about positions and caresses, though he was arguing from a revulsion from matters sexual rather than from generosity to human nature: 'pitch soils, however handled'.¹¹⁵ Towards the end of the eighteenth century, this attitude began to prevail for genuinely charitable and sophisticated reasons—for realistic ones also, liberal casuists recognizing the unsuitability and ineffectuality of the confessional as a regulator of married love. The theologians of the diocese of Coutances in 1770 told the clergy not to ask questions on details of sexual intercourse, and to give advice only when invited to do so.¹¹⁶ This view became generalized in the Church by the teachings of Alphonsus of Liguori.

34 The Theatre

I

For seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writers who liked to display learned references in their margins, there was abundant testimony from the Fathers concerning the wickedness of the theatre and the ambiguous status of the acting profession.¹ Theatrical representations excite the passions, more especially sexual desire; they create a fantasy world in which men become discontented with their lot; actors not only keep the system of temptation going, they also sin continuously by enacting sin. Yet, when all the patristic testimonies had been recited, a doubt remained about their validity, for the cruel games of the amphitheatre and the licentious spectacles in pagan temples which the early Christians repudiated had long since vanished from Western Europe.² In a later age, accustomed to naïve dramas of miracle and morality under ecclesiastical patronage, Aquinas had talked of the theatre as an 'indifferent', neutral institution, capable no doubt of corruption, but also of blameless and, even, therapeutic use.

This liberal view was enthusiastically put forward in 1694 in a *Lettre d'un théologien illustre par sa qualité et par son mérite* published as a preface to the collected works of Boursault the dramatist, and the 'distinguished theologian' who had written it was Père Caffaro, a Théatin monk of Italian origin. According to Caffaro, the letter was a not entirely faithful translation of a Latin essay he had put together, entirely for his own eyes, a dozen years ago, and he had not expected it to be published. Boursault's story was that he had obtained the document when he asked for advice in the confessional, and since he had found it a solace to his conscience, had felt entitled to make it generally available.³ There had, then, been no cautionary revision, and the 'theologian', who had never been to a theatrical performance, revealed himself as all too ingenuously confident about the respectability of contemporary drama and all too trenchant in his proclamation of liberal attitudes. The Scriptures, says Caffaro, give no absolute guidance, though he is encouraged by

noting Aaron's sister dancing to the sound of tambourines and Jeremiah prophesying dancing when the exiles return. As for later Christian authorities, he chose Aquinas as against the early Fathers. The stage can provide innocent relaxation. True, there will always be those who will come to seek fuel for their lust, but to close the theatres to discipline this minority would be as unreasonable as to prohibit beautiful women from going to church because their presence arouses sinful thoughts in the minds of libertines. At Court today we see cardinals and bishops crowding into theatrical representations which our kings protect and patronize. This is an example the Christian should have before him, not the prohibitions we have inherited from earlier generations. As the world evolves, the line of moral tolerance in society is drawn anew. Doctors were despised in ancient Rome, but are distinguished citizens today; innkeepers were once regarded as exercising a degrading profession, but we now call them 'wine-merchants'; stage players are no longer crude buffoons, but pillars of society noted for their almsgiving—there is no longer any reason why they should remain under the ban of the Church. 'Changing times bring changes to every aspect of life, and the equitable man ought to look at things in their actual contemporary context.'⁴

Though Caffaro's letter caused a stir, this was because it was naïve and uncompromising, rather than because it said anything new in principle. Richelieu had encouraged the theatre for political reasons; Anne of Austria had had her conscience set at rest by the signatures of half a dozen doctors of the Sorbonne certifying theatre-going as 'a thing indifferent'. In 1657, the abbé d'Aubignac had published a proposal to make the theatre a school of virtue and an instrument of public order by setting up a censorship of plays and a system of certificates of good conduct for actors.⁵ In 1681, the Jesuit Père Menestrier defended musical dramas—Pope Clement IX, when he was nuncio in Spain, had composed one, which was performed in Rome after he was elevated to the triple tiara.⁶ In the following year, Menestrier defended the ballet, another staple official entertainment in the *collèges* of his Order. Liturgical dancing, he conceded, was no longer an aid to devotion—ever since the children of Israel had danced before the golden calf, it had been suspect. But dancing as a secular relaxation is praiseworthy, conducive, as Plato had said, to the co-ordination of mind and body and to taming the passions. Besides, the Jesuits organized ballets to depict stories from the *Iliad* or the *Aeneid* or from the deeds of ancient Rome—a vivid adjunct to the teaching of literature and history.⁷ On the point of principle,

then, Caffaro was only saying more recklessly what had been said before him. As for the actual practice of attending stage plays there was no gainsaying his contention—the theatre was an integral part of life at Paris and Versailles, and was patronized by the greatest in the land. In 1689, the courtiers had flocked to performances of *Esther* by the young ladies of Saint-Cyr (who had taken the male roles as well as the female ones, and had shown off their good figures to advantage).⁸ Bossuet himself had attended, no doubt only to gratify Mme de Maintenon, though that did not explain why he had chosen to go twice.

Officially, actors were under the ban of the Church. They could be given absolution, but they did not qualify for the last sacraments, and, as a consequence, when they died, they were not eligible for burial in consecrated ground. A priest attending at the deathbed of an actor would require a formal renunciation of the stage before he would allow the viaticum to be brought. Since the Church maintained such rigours against those who spoke the verses and sang the songs, in all logic it should have been a sin to go and listen to them, and such was the conclusion of the stern moralists on both the left and the right (as it were) of the Gallican Church. The Jansenists, represented in Nicole's *Traité de la comédie* (1667),⁹ and the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament, represented in a posthumously published work of the prince de Conti about the same time, condemned the stage unsparingly. The two authors were miscast in their roles, for Nicole, the great theologian, argued from psychological considerations, while Conti, who had once been an ardent theatre-goer, specialized in rehearsing the evidence of the Fathers. Hebert, curé of Versailles, refused to attend the performance of *Esther*, though pious duchesses warned him that his absence would be interpreted as an insult to Louis XIV and Mme de Maintenon—but he preferred to follow literally the rules of his diocese. Not surprisingly, then, Caffaro's letter stirred up angry replies, seven of them before the end of 1694. In the long run, six of these hardly mattered, but the seventh—alas!—*Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie*, came from the pen of the great Bossuet.¹⁰ What would have been just another wrangle about casuistry was transformed into a disastrous incident in the evolution of moral theology; Bossuet's masterpiece of logic, eloquence, and prejudice riveted on to the Gallican Church a rigorist attitude towards the theatre which was out of touch with liberal tendencies and with social and cultural realities.

The *Maximes* contained learned excursuses about the Fathers, Plato, and Aquinas, but the heart of their argument was a psychological

analysis of the nature of the pleasure which the theatre affords. The playwright aims to compel his audience to identify with his heroes and heroines. He may claim that he is depicting a virtuous passion which is directed towards marriage, but you know, and he knows, that it is the lust of the flesh we enjoy—it is the lover we want to be, not the husband. The actors can only succeed in representing passions by recollecting those they have felt themselves—thoughts and actions for which they ought to have sought absolution, and thereafter excluded for ever from memory. According to Caffaro, confessors rarely hear penitents admitting that the theatre has harmed them; true, but this is what one would expect. Passion is insidious; however it is experienced, whether vicariously or even in virtuous circumstances, it creeps into the soul, debasing and distracting it. Bossuet goes to astonishing extremes: laughter is reprehensible, he says, and a mother would prefer to see her daughter in the grave rather than on the stage. And he makes an attack on Molière—playing in the *Malade imaginaire* as mortal illness stalked him and the inexorable judgement of God drew nearer—which carries bad taste to a pathological extreme.

It is impossible to justify this harshness, and difficult to explain it. The Caffaro letter was unfortunate. Written by a monk and a foreigner who was presuming to tell Gallican bishops and theologians their business, it appeared as the preface to the works of a playwright whose comedies were respectable in their text but owed their success to the suggestive by-play of the actors (the chief of these had just died, with the curé of Saint-Sulpice insisting that his recantation be witnessed by notaries).¹¹ According to rumour, the Jesuits were using Caffaro's injudicious publication to try to trap the archbishop into a public statement which would be unpopular either with the devout for its laxity or with polite society for its rigorism. And some things were best not defined too closely—Caffaro had blurted out opinions which were not strictly avowable, but were being whispered in the confessional to conciliate and encourage penitents.¹² All this was exasperating. And with Louis XIV sinking into gloomy piety (the Princess Palatine was to say that the theatre only became a sin when the king ceased going¹³), Bossuet was, no doubt, tempted more than ever to speak in terms of severity and repression. But the cause of his unfairness lay rather in his own mind. By now he was at bay, an 'embittered optimist' and a 'repentant liberal', haunted by conspiracies of Jansenists, Protestants, and Cartesians, conscious that his attempt to convert the establishment to a Christian way of life had failed.¹⁴ Somewhere in the story of the

vicissitudes of *Tartuffe* lies the secret of his hatred for Molière—did the original, banned version specifically refer to a priest, perhaps identifiable with a real person?¹⁵ Or was there a devious design to undermine the confessor's art of 'la direction spirituelle'?¹⁶ Certainly, in his preface to the five-act version finally performed in 1669, Molière had proclaimed the doctrine of a civilized worldliness which constituted the rock on which Bossuet's dream of a reform of society had foundered. 'I do not see what a great crime it is to be moved at the sight of a generous passion,' the playwright had said; 'the complete insensitivity which (churchmen) wish to force upon our souls is a very high degree of virtue indeed.'¹⁷

Obscurely, behind the controversy over the theatre, another question was being fought over, one which the theologians hesitated to make entirely explicit: what legitimate role in the Christian life can be played by sexual desire? There were earlier writers in the century who had damned the theatre on the ground that all human love is an imperfection, and therefore not to be the subject of imaginative reflection; God does not wish us to seek the affection of any other persons, for this is 'to divide his empire and to debauch his subjects'; 'our heart is an altar on which God forbids us to sacrifice to anyone other than himself'.¹⁸ Bossuet, following Nicole, did not rest his case on this impossibly austere argument from the duty of single-mindedness. Nicole had brought a disillusioned psychological insight to bear on the dangerous effects of the representation of passion on the stage. We are seduced because the actors create the semblance of the emotions of love within us as a surge of feeling 'sans en éprouver les inquiétudes', free from the doubts that debase the passion in real life.¹⁹ And as for the playwright's stock excuse, that he is depicting virtuous love, this is rejected as a distinction without a difference: 'the representation of a legitimate love and of a love which is not, have the same effect in practice,' the great Jansenist theologian had said; 'they excite the same movement within us, which acts diversely according to the different dispositions it encounters'.²⁰ A virtuous passion is depicted: it fuels our lust. This is what Bossuet says, but with even darker nuances. St Paul's (and Nicole's) recognition of conjugal love as a remedy for concupiscence is not his.²¹ He saw lust behind every stirring of the senses, and he believed with St Augustine that a husband's love for his wife can reach an excessive point where it indicates a secret desire for other women. To Bossuet, the theatre is condemned essentially because he wished to exclude from the Christian life every circumstance that might arouse sexual passion.

There was little new left to say against the theatre after Bossuet's comprehensive denunciation, though from time to time thereafter, a writer would enter the lists to repeat, in simplified form, some of his observations. Thus, from the bishop of Meaux's sombre psychological insights, the abbé Trublet produced pragmatic formulas: the passions are harmful, and watching their enactment inspires them within us; morality in a dénouement does not atone for the previous hour during which the emotions were manipulated; satire, far from scourging abuses, generally subjects worthy people to offensive raillery.²² These arguments, fortified by echoes of the eloquence of Bossuet and memories of his greatness, helped to create the dead weight of inertia which continued ecclesiastical anathemas against actors long after they had ceased to correspond with social realities, or to be compatible with charity.

II

Caffaro had blandly assumed that all was well in the theatre of his day; had he limited himself to liberal casuistry about 'things indifferent', he might have escaped censure.²³ In fact, there was plenty to complain about, in his day and throughout the eighteenth century. On the Bohemian fringes of Parisian entertainment were clandestine performances of outrageous farces—about the mouse that stole the Host, the abbess confessing to the Cordelier, the human stud farm of the Turkish Sultans—some of these sponsored by great noblemen. For this shady aristocratic clientele the ex-Oratorian Delisle de Sales wrote his *Vierge de Babylone, comédie érotique*.²⁴ There was also a fashion in the irregular theatres of the capital for 'la comédie poissarde', in the dialect spoken by fishwives, ferrymen, rag-pickers, porters, and the like. Apart from the eccentric comte de Caylus, the playwrights were from the proletariat themselves, and made no pretensions to respectability.²⁵ Occasionally, exception might be taken to incidents in the repertoire of the theatres of the establishment—the Comédie-Française, the Opéra, and the Comédie-Italienne (united to the Opéra-Comique in 1762)—and in the less predictable performances which were associated with the fairs of Saint-Germain (February–March) and Saint-Laurent (late July–late September). The lavish spectacles at Court and in the private theatre in the 'Petits Cabinets' (inaugurated by Mme de Pompadour with a performance of *Tartuffe* in January 1747²⁶) were not always beyond suspicion. The life-style of the acting profession

was full of scandals; in the 1730s, Mlle Sallé, the chief ballerina of the Opéra, was renowned as being the only chaste member of the company.²⁷ The rumbustious audience in the parterre, where lawyers' clerks, artisans, and café haunters jostled with apprentices who had wheedled free tickets, was given to altercation and interruptions offensive to pious ears, and the army officers, *petits maîtres*, and fancy ladies in the boxes had not always come merely to watch the play.²⁸

Yet, when all is said, and making allowances for the dubious gestures with which actors enlivened respectable prose, what strikes us today about eighteenth-century French theatre performances is their atmosphere of prudery. Kissing was not allowed, nor were direct references to adultery or prostitution. A character who declared his wish to become a father was interrupted: 'Fi! Que c'est indécent',²⁹ and there was a riot of mingled hilarity and outrage when, by a slip of the tongue, an actress sang 'foutu' instead of 'perdu'.³⁰ In the dénouement of *Mélanide*, Nivelles de la Chaussée's heroine could not say, 'I present to you my son'—this was evocative of crude physical processes. 'Je vous remets le fruit du plus tendre hyménée' maintained the proper tone of elevation. For a scene in a nunnery, audiences had to wait until Laujon's *Le Couvent* in January 1790, and then it was just the story of a marquise who went there disguised as a music teacher to check on the education of a prospective daughter-in-law—within a year came *Les Victimes cloîtrées* and other venomous anti-monastic dramas of the Revolution.³¹ In the preface to the *Mariage de Figaro*, Beaumarchais daringly tried to justify realism, claiming that the portrayal of vice is not indecent, but only the absence of a moral lesson along with it.³² Bossuet had dealt with this long ago: fallen human nature lets the moral go hang, and relishes the stimulation of the passions.

The theatre-going public (about 30,000 to 35,000 patrons in Paris, one in three being a regular) was vociferous and discriminating;³³ in response to its demands, the standard of acting was rising. The journals were full of discussions of the techniques of famous performers. In 1747, Rémond de Sainte-Albine published a technical manual of the stage, *Le Comédien*; his ideas concerning 'sensibilité', 'feu', and what was 'natural' were given subtle expansion by Diderot.³⁴ In 1774, a small royal grant was made for the foundation of an *École royale d'Art dramatique*. Actors were becoming more respectable in the public eye, and were being spoken of as 'citoyens utiles', while connoisseurs flocked to benefit nights of long-serving favourites. The Académie solemnly received a delegation from the Comédie-Française in 1732, and having praised the theatrical art,

graciously accepted the offer of free entry to performances.³⁵ In 1745, Paris was moved by the romantic La Bédoyère affair: a young lawyer, *avocat général* of the *cour des aides*, who had secretly married an actress, fought his own case in the courts against his father, who was having the marriage annulled.³⁶ The proliferation of permanent theatres in the main provincial towns (no fewer than twenty-three were built between 1750 and 1773) was welcomed by the government. The wise prince, Montaigne had observed, would encourage his people to meet together in playhouses just as in churches, to keep them out of mischief, enjoying themselves under the eye of the police.³⁷ Army commanders (accustomed to the cart-borne troupes of players which followed in the baggage trains) took up the idea to improve morale in garrison towns, and the theatres built at Abbeville, Cambrai, La Rochelle, Dijon, Bayonne, Besançon, and Lille owed much to military intervention evoking government pressure on reluctant municipalities.³⁸

As the stage became more respectable, the acting confraternity—in alliance with philosophes and anticlericals—began to press for the removal of spiritual disabilities. In 1699, the actor Roselli, when handing over the poor-rate levied on the receipts of the Comédie-Française to the administrators of the hospitals, asked why his profession was under the censures of the Church. ‘We have ears to listen’, was the reply, ‘and hands to accept the money, but we do not have a tongue to give you an answer.’³⁹ To Père Larue, his old teacher, who urged him to leave the degradation of the stage, Dancourt the actor and playwright is supposed to have said: ‘Je suis comédien du roi: vous êtes comédien du pape.’⁴⁰ The wits lay in ambush for opportunities to ridicule churchmen. One came when Mlle Lemaure, the great soloist of the Opéra, in danger of imprisonment because she had walked out on a performance, escaped by pretending to have been converted (as Mlle Gauthier of the Comédie-Française had been in 1724, vanishing into the Carmelites of Lyon as Sister ‘Augustine de la Miséricorde’⁴¹). The town was inundated with squibs and pasquinades, including a splendid burlesque ‘Pastoral Letter’ from Mlle Lemaure to her public, a parody of the pious letter of resignation from his see recently issued by the scrupulous Jansenist bishop of Saint-Papoul.⁴² In 1761, Mlle Clairon of the Comédie-Française hired the lawyer Huerne de la Mothe to publish a ‘consultation’ setting out the legal case against the disabilities of actors,⁴³ and a year later she contrived a solemn church service as propaganda for her cause. Crébillon, playwright and official censor, had died, fortified by the sacraments, and the

curé of Saint-Gervais had held the funeral service at 6 p.m., thus effectively excluding theatrical folk, whose shows began at 5 or 5.30 p.m. Mlle Clairon's riposte was to sponsor a requiem mass, evading the archbishop's jurisdiction by holding it in the little church of Saint-Jean de Latran in the Temple precinct under the patronage of the Order of Malta. The whole theatrical world turned up—everyone noticed how the actresses had forsworn their rouge—and if the celebrant was disciplined by his ordinary, he also received a present of silver.⁴⁴ It was an episode relished by Voltaire.⁴⁵ At the time, he was involved in an intrigue to try to outwit the clergy by having the Comédie-Française declared an 'academy', so that its personnel might enjoy the same privileges as the 'academicians' of the Opéra.⁴⁶ As the leading playwright, anticlerical, and philosophe, he was naturally the leader of the theatrical cause. For long he had been collecting evidence from Italian priests, including a papal confessor, about the status of actors south of the Alps, and relaying the information to the authorities in France.⁴⁷ In bitter moments, he accused the clergy of persecuting the acting confraternity because they were rivals for public acclaim: 'Passers-by never notice dogs unless they bark, and everyone wants to be noticed. Professional jealousy is a universal motive.'⁴⁸ More soberly, he described the theatre as doing as much to improve morals as the Church. 'The human spirit has never invented anything nobler and more useful for the stabilization and refinement of the customs of society.'⁴⁹ Molière he considered to have been 'un législateur des bienséances du monde' by the satire of his comedies.⁵⁰ And tragedy could be more edifying still. Voltaire's imaginary visitor to Paris from the mystic Orient goes to see a tragedy performed, and comes away thinking it must have been a religious observance, the European equivalent of a sermon.⁵¹

III

The idea that there was a formal battle between the Church and the Enlightenment is derived from selective reading, as from the pastoral letters of fulminating prelates and the conspiratorial correspondence of philosophes. If it was an organized battle, there were frequent truces, a wide area of no man's land, and numerous double agents. One of the familiar personages of the intellectual life of the age was the literary abbé, technically a churchman, but spending his time on the affairs of the republic of letters. Possibly he drew an income from some ecclesiastical benefice; he might or might not have proceeded

from the tonsure to priestly orders, and might or might not be a Christian believer (without there being a precise logical identity between the categories). Some were playwrights; indeed, dramatic composition seems to have been their preferred genre, since one in ninety of the writers of eighteenth-century France were abbés, while one in fifty of the plays produced were their work.⁵² The abbé Pellegrin, ex-monk and one-time chaplain of a warship, translator of the Psalms and the New Testament into French verse, composer of hymns ‘to be sung to tunes from well-known operas and vaudevilles’, was also the author of musical tragedies like *Hippolyte et Aricie* (music by Rameau) and *Jephté*, as well as of innumerable ballets.⁵³ He was said to be a Catholic in the morning and a pagan in the evening, dining on the proceeds of the altar and supping from those of the theatre.⁵⁴ The abbé de Voisenon, by contrast, was of an aristocratic family, and was said to have refused a bishopric, preferring his Parisian title of the ‘archbishop of the Comédie-Italienne’; from his pen flowed comedies, pastorals, operettas, about ‘despised lovers’ and ‘constant coquettes’, as well as fairy-tales and two oratorios, on ‘the madness of Saul’ and ‘the Israelites before Mount Horeb’.⁵⁵ And there were other nominal churchmen who specialized on writing for the stage—the abbés Le Blanc, Nadel, d’Allainval, d’Aunillon, Desfontaines, and so on.⁵⁶

Anecdotes abounded concerning the clergy who attended the theatre.⁵⁷ There was a standard jest concerning the mishaps of reputable clerics who went there in disguise; the police picked up an ancient canon of Notre-Dame in 1727 because he had gone dressed in the unfashionable clothes of his grandmother, which he had found in an old chest; and ten years later, they arrested the abbé Mougnot ‘avec des tétons postiches et fort sales’. But there were many fashionable young clerics who made no attempt to conceal their identity. The preacher who has just denounced the stage from the pulpit, says the marquis d’Argens, will change his cassock for the short mantle and rush off to the comedy, and the ladies will turn up to see him at both places. The threadbare abbés of the literary bohemia were too common to be noticed, but the more pretentious ones aloft in the boxes were fair game. The pit whistled vociferously at them. ‘A bas, M. l’abbé!’, they would cry (one scored by answering back, ‘I was down there once with you and had my gold watch stolen, I’m not going to risk my snuff-box’). If ladies were there in the box, the cry was ‘Haussez les mains, M. l’abbé!’ Sterne innocently asked a Parisian acquaintance what was the joke, and was horrified to discover the sexual innuendo.⁵⁸

From the milieu of the literary abbés—that half-way house between the Church and the Enlightenment—came a series of replies to Bossuet, the general line being: given reform, the theatre could be useful.⁵⁹ The abbé Claude Boyer, an academician, defended biblical dramas, as befitted the writer of the tragedy *Judith*, while the abbé Pierre de Villiers, composer of musical comedies, defended the opera (1711). In 1715 came the century's most effective reply—even though it was buried in a lengthy tome on aesthetic values—the abbé Terrasson's *Dissertation critique sur l'Iliade d'Homère* (1715). He accepted the primacy of moral instruction over pleasure as the aim of the poet. 'All Poetry derives its principal and most distinguishing and essential Beauty and Perfection, and its surest and most infallible means of pleasing, only from the Morality of the Performance.'⁶⁰ However, deist and theorist of the Enlightenment as he was, he drew a distinction: the playwright is concerned with 'Civil Morality' and not with 'the Perfection of Virtue'.⁶¹ Crafty examples are introduced later: 'gallantry' is an agreeable element in comedies, it is 'lasciviousness' we must outlaw; the Church prefers celibacy to marriage, but the legislator must encourage the multiplication of mankind, and the poet ought to help him. Applying the test of 'Civil Morality' to Molière, he finds (*Amphitryon* apart) that he generally condemns vice, unlike Plautus, Terence, and—a modern example—Dancourt, who allow impudence and knavery to triumph.⁶² Governments may fail to enforce decency (as the Spartan magistrates allowed women to wrestle naked), but given proper supervision, theatrical assemblies encourage politeness. Since the theatre became more popular in France, social life has become more civilized. Four years later, another aesthete, the abbé Du Bos, concurred: the theatre could be a school of morality by the mere fact that it depicted all human passions, including that of sexual love, which is the most general and well known—all this provided precautions were taken.⁶³ In his private correspondence, Du Bos described the campaign of the Church against the theatre as self-defeating: playgoing had become a fashion largely because sermons had denounced it.⁶⁴ In 1743, the abbé Yart came forward as another exponent of the 'school of virtue' theory—even representations of amorous passion would be helpful, provided it was shown as 'submissive to duty, regulated by the decencies and directed by reason'.⁶⁵ Another deistical ecclesiastic, the abbé de Saint-Pierre (of 'perpetual peace' fame), without aesthetic sense or belief in revealed religion, and consumed with ideas of utilitarian benevolence, pushed to a harsh logical conclusion the Enlightenment's belief in the theatre of 'Civil Morality'. In his eyes,

Molière was indeed a corrupter by his excessive individualism; Corneille, too, because he justified duels; and Racine, because he depicted crime heroically. Even *Esther* and *Athalie* he found morally deficient—they needed emendation to bring in that most useful of all religious doctrines, rewards and punishments in the afterlife to compel moral conduct in this one. Thus, he would have all plays ‘perfected’ to improve their social usefulness, with an official committee supervising the process. Within thirty years, children would be led to the theatre as to a sermon.⁶⁶ And the revising process would go on for ever, continually updating the Muse as a moral adjunct to progress.

IV

Just as the literary abbés manœuvred in the no man's land between the Church and its Enlightenment critics, so too—more austere—did the Jesuits. They were obliged to defend the theatre, since they used it to educate their pupils and to demonstrate the sophistication of their teaching methods to polite society. They were not alone in this. There were plays in the *collèges* of the Oratorians,⁶⁷ in spite of complaints of the waste of academic time and the poor examination results of the schoolboy actors⁶⁸—indeed, in spite of absolute prohibitions by the assembly of the congregation in 1776 and 1785. So too with the Doctrinaires; they officially suppressed their regular theatrical performances in 1730,⁶⁹ a prohibition that was not everywhere effective.⁷⁰ In 1777, there was a wrangle among the Benedictines of Sorez about the legitimacy of the theatre for their pupils.⁷¹ The ‘Robertins’ of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice (they attended lectures at the university) put on performances of Molière and Voltaire in their vacations, though they made emendations to the text.⁷² The Visitandines and the Ursulines of Angers wrote pastorals, burlesques, and topical songs for their girls to perform,⁷³ and we hear of the Visitation nuns of Beaune putting on the *Mort de César* with a special prologue provided for them by Voltaire (knocked off in twenty minutes while leaning on the mantelpiece).⁷⁴ Plays in monastic institutions were not always for the education of pupils and the interest of parents. If Piron is to be believed, he gave a slice of meat pie to a Capuchin, and was rewarded by being invited to the monastery's performance of *Catalina*, with the Roman Senate a row of a dozen friars with their long forked beards, incongruously splendid in specially borrowed wigs and cocked hats, with two young novices playing the feminine roles.⁷⁵

In view of the attitude of the Church towards the theatre, how could the public performance of plays in the *colleges* be justified? The subjects were supposed to be edifying. Tragedy predominated in the seventeenth century, and continued to do so with the Doctrinaires,⁷⁶ though the Jesuits of Louis-le-Grand turned more to comedy from 1695, guided by Père Le Jay.⁷⁷ The comedies, even those giving a realistic portrayal of social mores, were essentially enacted parables. Père Porée has a stock character representing a vice—a compulsive gambler, a foolish newly rich bourgeois, a libertine, a father who forces the vocation of his sons, a lazy man (who by a nice conceit founds an Academy of Sloth, the ‘Otiosi’); alongside will be a sober friend or a faithful valet to comment on the errors of his ways while trying to rescue him.⁷⁸ Père Ducerceau's *Le Duc de Bourgogne* was applauded at court for its moral: the reveller who woke up to find himself in the place of the duke soon realized how arduous and dangerous the exercise of sovereign power can be.⁷⁹ It was a rule of the Jesuits that there should be no women's parts, with a rider added later allowing exceptions if ‘*graves et modestae sint personae*’;⁸⁰ in fact, in the eighteenth century, the French Jesuit playwrights preferred not to avail themselves of this latitude. By contrast, a glance at the files of the clandestine Jansenist gazette, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, reveals how nunneries did not hesitate to put their girl pupils into male attire; the Visitandines of Beaune, after drawing lots for a play, congratulated themselves that all the parts were masculine in the story of Caesar's assassination—it was easier to have girls playing men when there was no question of sexual relationships.⁸¹ But nuns had special problems: it was not easy to find or devise a play in which all the characters were women. The Robertins of Saint-Sulpice did their best to edit out women from the tragedies of Voltaire, naïvely preferring to have an Oriental despot besotted by his love for ‘*un jeune favori*’ rather than by a mistress.⁸²

The exclusion of amorous passion, however ‘decent and legitimate’,⁸³ made Jesuit tragedy into a stilted and, to a modern eye, slightly sinister exercise, as the only driving forces were patriotism, ambition, family solidarity, suspicion, and jealousy. Tenderness was missing. Porée's *Sephoebus Myrse* (1712, in Latin with French interludes) tells how Abases, the tyrant of Persia, duped by the perfidious Barsames, believes that his son, a heroic general, is plotting for the throne; Sephoebus Myrse accepts his father's unjust condemnation, refusing to call on the army to rescue him, and drinks the official poison. The king finds out the truth too late, and takes his revenge by inflicting the poisoned chalice on the son of Barsames, who

expires before his father's eyes. This is Porée's formula: splendid heroic young men (such as he saw at Louis-le-Grand sometimes), callous fathers—Brutus, Sennacherib, Abases, and Léovigilde the Visigoth; no one investigates false accusations, and the decree of pardon arrives too late. In the light of morbid psychology, these solemn attempts to make cruel stories edifying may seem more damaging to morals than frothy comedies. Yet in formal terms, everything in a Jesuit play was scripted within a strict and unimaginative moral code. Durcerceau's preface to his drama on the Prodigal Son explains why he had to improve on the scriptural story—the upright elder brother could not possibly have been so mean; he is angry only because he has been misinformed by a pair of intriguers, and he embraces his younger brother at the end.⁸⁴

Yet, Jesuit stuffiness was thrown to the winds when the excuse was the defence of orthodoxy. Père Bugeant (who had a lot of fun ridiculing romantic novels and got into a lot of trouble for speculating about the language of animals⁸⁵) was unleashed upon the Jansenists—their convulsionists, their professional witnesses, their army of pious women, and their parade of miracles ('innocent artifices . . . to enable the Truth to triumph'⁸⁶). His *La Femme docteur ou la théologie tombée en quenouille* (1732),⁸⁷ a tale of a wife who lets Jansenists take over the household while her husband is abroad, with a printing-press in the cellar and tracts stacked in the attic, lackeys dogmatizing, the coachman swearing at the horses as 'Molinists', and a smarmy Jansenist lawyer plotting to get the hand and dowry of Angélique for his ne'er-do-well nephew, was a rollicking farce played in numerous *collèges*, Jesuit and otherwise.⁸⁸ If its partisan ridicule was allowable, it is hard to see how anyone was entitled to complain about *Tartuffe*.

But it was in ballet that the Jesuit compromise with the world was most advanced. Interludes between the acts of tragedies began in 1622—dances of soldiers, pages, satyrs, and tritons welcomed the canonization of Ignatius of Loyola, national victories, treaties of peace, royal marriages and births, or simply provided light entertainment for those who did not know Latin or did not care for portentous declamation.⁸⁹ It is easy to guess that the notables of Clermont-Ferrand, celebrating the Peace of the Pyrenees and the marriage of Louis XIV in 1660, preferred the ballet *Mars désarmé par l'Amour* with its battalion of dancing skeletons routing the enemies of France to the accompanying *Augustus Pacificus*, a Latin tragi-comedy, all recitation and no dialogue.⁹⁰ About this time, elaborate musical settings began, and the ballet became the characteristic form

of Jesuit entertainment. The subjects were edifying:⁹¹ allegorical celebrations of public occasions, extracts from Fénelon's *Télémaque*, satires on the philosophes, ridicule of non-European religions, moralizing about everyday life, and the presentation of themes from ancient history and classical mythology—but the performances, at Louis-le-Grand at least, attempted to rival secular opera. Dancers came from the Opéra to train the boys, and sometimes took part themselves. Women, strictly speaking, were excluded from the *dramatis personae*, but there were, as the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* complained, innumerable goddesses and Amazons, together with Arlequins and Pierrots and a mishmash of Christian and pagan characters.⁹² Costumes and scenery were magnificent.⁹³ Gods descended on clouds, heroes thundered past in chariots and Titans scaled the slopes of Olympus. Audiences preferred such spectacle with its accompanying music to austere tragedy and moralizing comedy, for which boyish voices were unsuitable anyway.⁹⁴ Thus, ballet tended to become a professional show, all the more so because the sons of great aristocrats took part.⁹⁵ They were not usually available for tragedies because not academically qualified, or for comedies, because ludicrous or low-born roles were not acceptable to their families. On the other hand, their parents were pleased to see them dancing and becoming proficient in the arts of courtly deportment, and rich mothers were useful when it came to paying for the ornate costumes involved.⁹⁶ Jesuit ballet was the point at which Versailles and Louis-le-Grand were in close alliance—the point too at which the Parisian theatre could most easily justify itself by comparisons with what went on in ecclesiastical institutions.

The Jesuit theatre was under continual censorious observation. Jansenists pounced on every hint of laxity; anticlericals sought comparisons to demonstrate the inconsistency of the ecclesiastical censures of the professional stage; and, indeed, the Jesuits themselves (in their *Mémoires de Trévoux*) might even cast doubt on some of their own performances.⁹⁷ In 1733, Père Porée delivered a Latin oration (which became widely known in a French translation by Père Brumoy⁹⁸) in defence of the Jesuit position. This oration sharply separates two questions: Is the theatre capable of becoming a respectable institution? and, is the theatre as we know it satisfactory? Ideally, it can be a school of morals. Obligations to parents and magistrates and other social duties are best taught by indirect and interesting means, and we learn most assuredly in moral questions when our hearts have been moved. The study of history fails to provide moral instruction, since so often crime is successful or, if it is

punished, it is by secret remorse for which no outward evidence survives. By contrast, the dramatist has the privilege of being able to use his imagination to show the triumph of virtue. As for the theatre today, there is little to praise. 'Divine works' like *Esther* and *Athalie* are few. Generally, we get plays subverting the relationships of parents and children, masters and servants, and ridiculing 'marital circumspection'. Molière, the inevitable example, was a great natural poet and also a great corrupter. Worst of all, the modern stage glorifies blind amorous passion, whereas youth ought to be enjoined to 'a disinterested prudence'. So, the good Jesuit calls us all to collaborate to reform the theatre, hissing every libertine phrase and dubious situation as we would a clumsy piece of acting.⁹⁹

V

Porée's oration did not stand alone. His colleague and translator, Père Brumoy, had just published his sixteen-volume translation of the Greek dramatists, while simultaneously the *Mémoires de Trévoux* had defended the stage against an enlarged reprint of the Oratorian Le Brun's gloomy censures.¹⁰⁰ Le Brun's principle was: the Christian must do everything 'by Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ'; the Jesuit reviewer showed how virtually all pleasures were excluded by this austere formula.¹⁰¹ In 1734, Le Maître de Claville published his famous *Traité du vrai mérite de l'homme*, a synthesis of the secular ideal of the *honnête homme* and of Christian duty. As against the standard warnings of the confessional to flee from temptation, Le Maître preferred to rely on interior self-discipline; for, he said, corruption so often resides in the eye of the beholder. Why not go to see *Tartuffe*? It might alert us to the danger of drifting into hypocrisy.¹⁰² Another step forward, albeit a hesitant one, came in 1736, when it fell to Languet, archbishop of Sens, to welcome the sentimental dramatist Nivelles de la Chaussée into the Academy. Everyone wondered how the archbishop would contrive to reconcile his academic duty with ecclesiastical regulations; his device was to applaud the new recruit, but to express doubts about playwrights in general, and to suggest that plays might be read but were best left unperformed.¹⁰³ Ten years later, the academician the abbé Batteux was describing tragedy as a humanizing agent and comedy as a civilizing one. Meanwhile, from the side of the theatre, two spokesmen emerged to suggest a *modus vivendi* with churchmen. In 1745, Luigi Riccoboni proposed a Draconian scheme of four boards of censors (representing Church,

State, authors, and actors), certificates of moral conduct for performers, the rewriting of existing plays in bowdlerized form, and the banning of love scenes in new ones.¹⁰⁴ In 1751, the playwright Fagan published some *Nouvelles Observations* proposing a less drastic version of a similar plan of reform.¹⁰⁵

Eventually, an accommodation between the Church and the Enlightenment was reached in the writings of Le Franc de Pompignan, a charming, intelligent, and slightly absurd figure, a magistrate of the *cour des aides* of Montauban and brother of the archbishop of Vienne; he was at once a devout Catholic, who founded hospitals and schools, and a poet and playwright, who claimed to be something of a philosophe. In his private papers he defended the Jesuit and Voltairean position: the theatre could be a school of virtue, provided actors lived moral lives and censors did their duty. He went further: ‘We are not devising recreations for Chartreux and Trappists . . . Human weakness is allowed frivolous recreations, so long as they are not criminal,’¹⁰⁶ and he was prepared to welcome a love interest in plays. It is refreshing to find someone standing up for frivolity; both churchmen and philosophes were all too prone to demand edifying and educative pastimes. All this was theoretical, however; in practice, Le Franc was not venturesome. Having approved of a love interest, he went on to regret its presence in most of Racine’s plays, whether as ‘unnecessary’, or unfair to women, as set in a seraglio, as showing a father as rival to his son.¹⁰⁷ In his own ‘moral operas’ and ‘philosophic tragedies’ the frivolity was too virtuous to be very entertaining, though there was an interest of topicality in *Prométhée*, which proclaimed the hope of a final reconciliation between Voltaire and the Church, between humanism and the Christian God. Jupiter pardons Prometheus, who urges mortals to forget their pride and accept the freely offered divine forgiveness.

Je résistais au dieu vengeur,
Mais je cède au dieu qui pardonne.¹⁰⁸

With the Jesuits, the literary abbés, Le Maître de Claville, and Le Franc de Pompignan, the theatre had been accepted as compatible with Christianity. The question remained: What sort of productions were licit? Here, in Porée’s reservations, Archbishop Languet’s doubts about actual performances, Le Franc’s ambivalent attitude to Racine, we see where the essential difficulty lay: the Nicole–Bossuet proposition that any representation of sexual passion, however virtuous, is fuel to our lust. Naturally, writers who are disciples of Bossuet lament anything that can arouse carnal desire—‘passion

funeste à tous les cœurs, à tous les sexes, à tous les âges’, says one of them comprehensively, in 1752.¹⁰⁹ But the same fear lurks also in the liberal writers who accept the legitimacy of the stage. So often, when they get to their pages on reform, they express distrust of Racine. The abbé de Villiers in 1711 censured Racine's recurrent theme of love undermining duty; the abbé Du Bos, while insisting that love, as the universal passion, is always dramatically necessary, complained of Racine misusing it with succeeding playwrights imitating his mistake.¹¹⁰ So too with Canon Gros de Besplas, who in 1768 accepted the whole argument in favour of the legitimacy of the stage, from Aquinas to Porée, and like Le Franc, conceded the necessity of a ‘divertissement’ for the people. And yet, he says, plays in the time of Aquinas were not like ours: ‘the passion of love was not the basis of their unsophisticated dramas, and it is this love that we are combating’. Therefore, he argues, let tragedy deal with patriotic heroes and comedy criticize manners, but let the censors strike out passion. ‘It is time to be afraid when the dangerous author of *Phèdre*, *Andromaque* and *Titus* shows you love as if in a cradle of flowers, arising from the depths of the heart with moving sighs.’¹¹¹ Racine, once more, is dangerous. This corresponded after all with the routine teaching of the confessional: the Christian must not attempt to defeat sexual temptation, more especially of the visual kind, by confrontation; he must flee from it, for alone of all temptations, it is virtually irresistible to the imagination.

Paradoxically, as the power of Bossuet's sombre eloquence faded from the minds of churchmen, the arguments of his *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie* were taken up by Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his hands they were laicized and sentimentalized—ostensibly in defence of the austere, Spartan way of life which he imagined suited his native Geneva. Replying, in 1758, to D'Alembert's plea for the legitimization of the stage in Geneva,¹¹² Rousseau challenged the smug assumption of the philosophes that the theatre was an educative institution, purging the emotions and making vice odious and virtue attractive. In fact, he argued, by the light of nature we instinctively hate vice and admire virtue, but our natural reactions are sometimes vitiated by our passions; only reason can vanquish dangerous emotions and bring us back to simplicity and goodness. Playwrights have nothing to contribute to this process of self-refinement; their desire being to sell tickets and win applause, they follow public taste rather than direct it, intensifying whatever the general inclination of the public mind may be, without attempting to change it. When a sentimental drama brings tears to our eyes, we

wallow in self-congratulation as men of feeling; yet we have done nothing—ours is a ‘sterile pity’. A tragedy purports to teach the young about ‘the illusions of love’—vain endeavour, for the idea of love, however it is portrayed, inevitably seduces them. Comedy is supposed to satirize abuses; read Molière, and see how he undermines authority in the family and how, in his eyes, the most punishable offence is not viciousness, but foolishness. Actors are unworthily engaged in creating a fictitious individuality for themselves and an artificial world around it, which inspires socially harmful emotions in the audience. Perhaps our great cities have grown so corrupt that the theatre can be justified there as a diversion from more odious pastimes (Rousseau departs from Bossuet in making this exception), but in a community of antique simplicity like Geneva, people do better to limit themselves to family parties or modest dances where young people will meet each other naturally under the eyes of their parents and mentors. Drawing dark inferences from the doctrine of original sin, Bossuet had reached the same conclusions about the theatre as Rousseau did later from a belief in the inherent goodness of human nature. The exception Jean-Jacques makes for the corruption of great cities helps to explain the apparent paradox: he was following Plato and Fénelon in their distrust of artificial pleasures which might weaken the moral fibre of the ideal republic; the bishop of Meaux feared only the temptations dragging down the lonely individual and subjecting him to the severities of the judgement of God.

The sensation caused by Rousseau died away in a couple of years. He was the lonely man according to nature, proclaiming virtues appropriate to some stern utopia in a pastoral wilderness.¹¹³ He could not diminish the popularity of the theatre in France, which rose to new heights in the second half of the century. The revenue from the sale of tickets increased in all Parisian theatres after 1750,¹¹⁴ and new establishments proliferated, like the troupe of child actors in the Palais-Royal from 1784,¹¹⁵ and the two ‘salles de spectacle’ owned by the ballerina la Guimard. The fashion for private theatricals among the great nobles was led by the duc d’Orléans, and spread down the social scale. ‘There isn’t a *procureur* who doesn’t want to have a stage on trestles and a troupe of actors at his country cottage,’ said Bachaumont sardonically.¹¹⁶ Actors enjoyed enormous prestige. Two society ladies fought a duel with pistols for Chassé the bass singer, who cared for neither of them. When Molé was prescribed wine for his illness, admirers left 2,000 bottles of choice vintages on his doorstep; when a benefit night was organized for him in 1767,

everyone who was anyone (the archbishop of Lyon included) bought tickets, and the graceless actor spent the 24,000 livres on diamonds for his mistress.¹¹⁷ The public also paid the debts of the dancer Dauberval in case he fled to England; nobles began to marry actresses instead of just living with them,¹¹⁸ and competition at the stage door was intensified by the advent of wealthy English aristocrats offering splendid establishments to their mistresses.¹¹⁹ Churchmen were not unaffected by the evolution of public opinion; certainly, there were more examples of tolerance among those of the last generation before the Revolution. The bishop of Autun in 1763 allowed the sale of the old cathedral refectory for a municipal playhouse, and the bishop of Dijon allowed the local theatre to open up two doorways on to his garden as emergency exits.¹²⁰ After disapproving greatly of the theatre, Louis XVI became an enthusiast for it after seeing *Athalie* in 1776, and carried his confessor, the abbé Soldini, with him.¹²¹ Bishops were often enough at private theatricals. No fewer than a dozen were at Mme de Montesson's in March 1778, and, according to Bachaumont, they were not put out by 'quelques gravelures' in the dialogue.¹²² By contrast, many masonic lodges were refusing to admit actors,¹²³ whether by ingrained social prejudice or because of the revival of puritanical doubts in the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

VI

Though it was axiomatic in eighteenth-century France that theatrical performances (and, indeed, social engagements generally) should not disturb the devotions of the faithful, the customary regulations were liberal. In Paris¹²⁴ (and it was much the same in the provinces) the theatres closed only on the five feasts of Our Lady, on Ascension Day, Pentecost, All Saints' Day, Corpus Christi, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and—the long annual closure—for the two weeks immediately before Easter and the week after it. In certain years there would, of course, be special additional occasions arising by accident, such as periods of mourning for royalty or of prayers against plague. Since the early start of performances prevented most workers attending during the week, Sundays tended to be occasions for putting on 'popular' shows, burlesques, farces, and the like. Most days in Advent and Lent were ordinary performing days; as the bishop of Auxerre said bitterly in 1737, censuring his people, 'They make Lent consist of a mere change of diet, passing it

entirely in their habitual amusements, the same pleasures, the same dissipations, the same indifference to the things of God.¹²⁵ Unfortunately for the bishop's zeal, Lent was a particularly convenient time for theatre-goers to enjoy their 'habitual amusement'; army officers who normally had to leave for the frontiers in early April, older folk who had not ventured out much in the winter cold, and the prosperous who spent summer on their country estates were all interested to have further concessions at such a strategic time of the year—thus, in the course of the century, various moves were made to extend the entertainment season right up to Easter.¹²⁶ One concession was that the theatres of the fair of Saint-Germain were allowed to go on until Palm Sunday (perhaps the good rents which the chapter of Saint-Germain drew from them had something to do with this liberalism). Sometimes the Comédie-Italienne got a similar extension, though the archbishop of Paris always refused it to the Comédie-Française, 'preferring *Arlequin cochon par amour* to *Zaïre* and *Athalie*'.¹²⁷ To prolong the entertainment season still further, the *Concert spirituel* was started in 1725; these musical performances were first given on Passion Sunday, then three years later moved on to include Palm Sunday and the first three days of Holy Week, and finally they were advertised for some of the eleven great festivals of the Church as well. In 1738, the *théâtre optique* was invented to reinforce these concerts of sacred music—elaborate mimes were performed against a background of picturesque sets diversified with water displays and mechanical marvels.¹²⁸ If music and spectacle could form exceptions to the rules, so too might conjuring tricks and illusionism: the theatre in the Palais-Royal where the child actors performed was handed over during the Easter recess to 'le sieur Bonthoux de Lorget, prestidigitateur', who performed 'experiments in physics and chemistry' with robots and other gadgets to assist him. The charge for seats was the same, and he performed every day except Good Friday.¹²⁹ Private theatricals sometimes broke the rules; indeed, in 1737 only the intervention of the king prevented some graceless young nobles from presenting *Alphonse, dit l'Impuissant* on Good Friday.¹³⁰ So too, occasionally, did the fairground theatres; the comic opera *Achmet et Almanzire*, billed for the Nativity of Our Lady in 1740, was withdrawn at the last moment amid murmurs of satisfaction from the pious, who little knew that its Jewish producer had cancelled the show because he preferred to attend a party with the girls of the Opéra-Comique.¹³¹ This general encroachment of public entertainment on the last fortnight of Lent and on some of the major festivals was paralleled by a change in the voluntary concession to

piety made at the Comédie-Française in the choice of plays to begin and end the season.¹³² It was customary to choose a tragedy, preferably a religious one—Corneille's *Polyeucte* fulfilled the role of concluding performance no fewer than twenty-six times between 1680 and 1715, and as the opening one fifteen times between 1705 and 1720. Thereafter, the pattern gradually changes, the first night of the season in particular becoming the occasion when some new play would be launched.

A weakening of ecclesiastical influence and a tendency towards the laicization of social life can be traced in the expansion of the theatrical year and in the change in the conventions of the Comédie-Française; yet the same is not true of the history of the censorship.¹³³ Only from 1706 did theatrical directors have to submit their plays to the lieutenant-general of police of Paris for authorization before performance; this was a convenience to actors as much as a repressive measure, reducing the possibility of an arbitrary intervention which might make their expenditure of time and money fruitless. The lieutenant of police took the opinion of a 'royal censor', and if a point of religion was at issue, the archbishop might send a theologian of the Sorbonne to help. The censorship operated chiefly to suppress references to arbitrary government, the blameless Le Franc de Pompignan having to excise a line from his *Didon* (1734) about the first king having been 'a usurper'.¹³⁴ Also, distinguished personages, famous authors among the philosophes included, were protected from ridicule. The bias of the censorship can be seen when Suard, the last censor of the monarchy, who accepted a play which the Comédie-Française rejected as morally indecent, forbade the *Mariage de Figaro* because of its political implications.¹³⁵ Beaumarchais was able to tell the authorities how he had read the manuscript in the salon of la maréchale de Richelieu, and how the archbishops and bishops present 'after being infinitely amused by it, did me the honour to proffer an assurance that they would state publicly that there was not a word in it which could give offence to good morals'.¹³⁶ Concerning religion, the abbé Charrier started a liberal tradition when he was censor early in the century. True, he suppressed a reference to a canon buying a snuff-box to have 'a portrait of his housekeeper painted on it', but he was prepared to let through Piron's *double entendres* about virginity in *Le Pucelage ou la Rose* (1726),¹³⁷ and having deleted some passages in the *Berger d'Amphrise* (1727), he asked for them to be reinstated: 'Do have the kindness to put them back, to the benefit of these poor actors, for without these lines their play would be a flop.'¹³⁸ Later on, more

especially in the second half of the century, the censorship became more rigid.¹³⁹ On grounds of offence to religion, Lemierre's *Hypermnestre* (1758), Sauvigny's *La Mort de Socrate* (1760), Fenouillot de Falbaire's *L'Honnête Criminel* (1769), and Le Blanc de Guillet's *Les Druides* (1772) were banned. The eighteenth-century fashion for dramas about pagan priests presented the greatest problem: were the impostures and cruelties of these alien pontiffs meant to represent the misdeeds of bishops, monks, and canons? Cardinal Fleury was generous; he was prepared to allow Boissy's *Alceste et Admète* (1728) to be played, with Polydecte, the high priest, a thoroughgoing rogue,¹⁴⁰ and he authorized Voltaire's *Mahomet* over the head of Crébillon, the official censor. The great theologian Bergier allowed Le Blanc's *Les Druides* to begin with a pontiff gaining credit for himself by persuading a king's daughter to go into a convent (Archbishop Christophe de Beaumont and Mme Louise, daughter of Louis XV?), and Voltaire urged his friends to rush to see this tale of 'people disillusioned with their religion, who drive out their priests and break down the altars stained with [human] blood.' (In fact, authority clamped down soon and banned the play, though not before it had been hissed by the audience.¹⁴¹) Other examples also suggest that the censors were not exigent about religion—whether or not playwrights had a quiet life depended upon who was archbishop of Paris.¹⁴² The belief in the necessity of censorship was universal, however. The fashionable reply of both philosophes and liberal churchmen to the strictures of Bossuet was to proclaim the possibility of the theatre becoming a school of morals. But to be so, it needed reform and moral oversight in the interests of society.

In practice, the attitude of the Church towards theatrical performances was half-way between Bossuet's and Le Franc de Pompignan's: the theatre was neither a Satanic invention nor a potentially educative institution; it was an inevitable evil to be regulated as far as possible. Yet actors were not even accepted as necessary evils. They remained under the ban of the ecclesiastical authorities; they could not receive communion or the sacrament of marriage, and unless they solemnly renounced their profession, they could not be given the last rites or be buried in consecrated ground. It is not true to say that they were excommunicate, for no one could be put under such a sentence in France unless the penalty had the sanction of secular law. The point came up in 1738 when the parlement of Paris was denying the right of the archbishop to refuse the last sacraments to Jansenists; the clerical lawyers replied by citing the exclusions enforced against actors, and the magistrates

countered by defining the grounds on which theatrical performers came under ecclesiastical deprivations—they were ‘men of ill repute’, exercising ‘a profession that is strictly forbidden’.¹⁴³ ‘There is no need to claim that actors are under excommunication,’ said a reactionary canon of Montauban in 1763; ‘the status of manifest and scandalous sinners (*pêcheurs publics et scandaleux*) suffices.’¹⁴⁴ This is what the diocesan *Rituels* said: that of Paris in 1654 spoke of ‘debauched women, those who live in impure and criminal relationships, concubines, actors, usurers, magicians, sorcerers, blasphemers, and other such sinners’; more succinctly, that of 1786 ordered the exclusion from communion of the ‘notoriously infamous, such as are prostitutes and actors’. Seventeen other *Rituels* of the eighteenth century said much the same, while half a dozen (Rouen, Strasbourg, Metz, Besançon, Bayeux, and Périgueux) made no reference to the subject at all.¹⁴⁵

What lay behind the rigorist prescriptions of so many diocesan handbooks? There was no papal bull or decree of an ecumenical council to be cited; the authority came from the First Council of Arles of AD 314.¹⁴⁶ Could a provincial conciliar decree dating from fifteen centuries ago be reasonably extended to cover the whole of France, more especially those dioceses which had not referred to it in their *Rituels*? It certainly did not cover Italy, where actors were free from ecclesiastical censures: for once the Gallican Church was being less liberal than papal Rome or Avignon. This was not the only absurdity; for even in France, some actors were immune from spiritual disabilities, those of the Comédie-Italienne (who normally put on less respectable plays than those of the Comédie-Française) being accepted within the community of the faithful as if they lived in Italy; this privilege also extended to any French recruits who joined them. Hence the deplorable scene in April 1789 at the funeral of Garelli, one of the Italian singers, when the theatrical confraternity of Paris turned up in force at the church of the Assumption, rue Saint-Honoré; the parish priest barred the way to the actors of the Comédie-Française, and they had to stay outside in the rain, where they uttered threats of violence.¹⁴⁷ The privilege enjoyed by the Comédie-Italienne extended also to members of the Académie royale de musique, as befitted those who enjoyed royal patronage, and, as everyone knew, this splendid title really covered the singers and dancers of the Opéra. ‘Thus’, said Grimm in 1769, ‘there is neither sin nor excommunication involved in putting on plays on the right bank of the Seine, but it's the devil's work if you promote them on the left.’¹⁴⁸

The *ancien régime* was riddled with such illogicalities, fair treatment obtained by indefensible privilege creating an injustice within an injustice. Had actors enjoyed civil equality, their quest for spiritual equality would have been more favourably regarded; but in fact, they were excluded from the ordinary operation of the law.¹⁴⁹ They could not be witnesses in the law courts or hold municipal office, and they were subject to the arbitrary jurisdiction of the *premier gentilhomme de la chambre*, one of the splendid royal officials at Versailles.¹⁵⁰ Without his permission, they could not give up the stage, and if they misbehaved, he could send them to the prison of For l'Évêque among the bankrupts. In 1762, Mlle Dubois, the reigning queen of the stage, absented herself from her role in the Comédie-Française, and took a night off as a spectator at the Opéra—for this, she was imprisoned (in great comfort, it is true) and had to repay the box-office deficit. It was not all loss being under a separate law, of course. Young ladies of easy virtue with powerful protectors got themselves inscribed as supernumerary dancers at the Opéra to escape the harsh jurisdiction of the ordinary police of the capital. And behind the suspicious attitude of Church and government there was an obscure distrust of actors in the public mind, even when they were adulated. Some plays were good, and some were bad—but actors were generally willing to play in them all, and this, somehow, made them ‘mercenary’.¹⁵¹ It was difficult to think of them without suspecting that they were always something other than they appeared, always wearing a mask; they fulfilled a necessary role in society, but, like the public executioner, it was not obvious why they had felt called to it; there was a sort of degradation involved in having to dredge up the passions of their real lives to put on a show of them to entertain others,¹⁵² in feigning non-existent sorrows, and in ‘being obliged to make me laugh to get my money’.¹⁵³ Bossuet and Rousseau had tried to rationalize this instinctive distrust, and its existence provided some sort of answer to those who asked why actors were condemned, while respectable citizens queued to see their shows.¹⁵⁴ The archbishop of Sens had proposed plays should be read but not performed, and Louis Racine said this is what his father had come to believe in his repentant later years. Desprez de Boissy in 1756 (in a work which went through seven editions in thirty years) carried on this line of thought—it was the actors who made plays dangerous; in their forms and through their voices, even *Athalie* and *Esther* became sensual.¹⁵⁵ In the last resort, actors remained unemancipated because of the deep-rooted fear of sexuality which was the essential cause of the Church's hostility to

the theatre. Imagined sexual situations, however theoretically virtuous, were traps to enmesh the unwary Christian, and with real persons providing a visual translation, temptation became overwhelming.

When law-abiding citizens who claimed to be Christians were deprived of communion, left to live in sin in default of holy matrimony, and when their bodies were refused decent burial, anti-clericals justifiably cried scandal. The formal exclusion of actors from the privileges of the faithful by their enumeration in the diocesan lists of notorious sinners began with the *Rituel* of Châlons in 1645, issued by the Jansenist bishop Vialart; Paris followed in 1654, and others later—in 1713, the bishop of Metz included all concerned with the promotion of theatrical performances, down to the very candle-snuffers. The reforming bishops' zeal was, no doubt, exasperated by Richelieu's edict of 1641, which had absolved actors, secularly speaking, from 'infamy', seeing this as an intervention by the State, for worldly motives, in ecclesiastical affairs.¹⁵⁶ The *Tartuffe* controversy, Jansenist severity, and the competing rigorism of the orthodox combined to encourage puritanical intolerance, though whether the rules of the Church were actually enforced against actors depended on the zeal (and what was probably more important, the effective administrative oversight) of individual bishops. Certainly, towards the end of the seventeenth century, the diocese of Paris was becoming strict: in 1692 Cardinal de Noailles forbade the clergy to perform the marriage service for theatrical folk.¹⁵⁷ A new solemnity was added to the usual renunciation of the stage made by actors on their deathbeds; in 1685 Brécourt and in 1693 Raison had to have notaries present as professional witnesses. In 1686, Rosimond slipped out of life unreconciled, and was buried in the corner of the cemetery of Saint-Sulpice reserved for unbaptized children, and this in spite of his reputation for piety, his French translation of the Psalms, and the book of meditations on the saints for every day of the year which he had published.¹⁵⁸

In the eighteenth century, the clergy became less intolerant. Depending on circumstances and dioceses, curés were not always exigent, and actors were ever ingenious. It was always possible to receive communion somewhere;¹⁵⁹ it was not necessary to go as far as Avignon (which Lekain did every Easter to demonstrate his piety and the injustice under which his profession laboured).¹⁶⁰ The rules about marriages were evaded. One way was to set up a fictitious temporary identity in a new domicile. (These unions were valid; when the singer Gervaise and the dancer la Tourneuse got tired of

each other, they found they were not allowed to cite their subterfuge as ground for separation.¹⁶¹) More openly, an actor could formally renounce the stage, marry, then have the *premier gentilhomme de la chambre* order him to return to his theatrical duties. In 1768, the archbishop of Paris prevented Molé from using this trick by demanding the countersignatures of all four *gentilhommes de la chambre* on his act of renunciation; Molé won in the end, however, since an accomplice slipped his application to marry into the arch-bishop's papers, where it was signed unread with the routine diocesan business. Sometimes, a parish priest was content to be deceived. 'I would rather marry actors than be the cause, in refusing to unite them, of the disorder in which they might well live,' said the curé of Grand Drancy, near Paris, in 1720, after pronouncing an actor and actress of the Comédie-Italienne man and wife. The ecclesiastical court of Paris had been generous too, for though the Italians were in theory exempt from ecclesiastical exclusions, they had had to get a dispensation, since they were cousins. 'Mario', the groom, was described on the papers of dispensation as 'officier du roi' by profession, and the good curé chuckled up his sleeve, as he knew from his housekeeper, who knew from the coachman, who they really were.¹⁶² As the 'officier du roi' entry shows, the art of being tolerant without sacrificing principle required the omission of any reference to the actors' profession from the documentation. When Dugazon, famous for his acting on the stage of the Comédie-Française and his affairs and duels off it, was married at Saint-Eustache on 10 August 1776 to Rose Lefèvre of the Comédie-Italienne, the documents showed his baptismal name only (Gourgand) and his profession as 'pensionnaire du roi'. The senior vicaire, who handled these things at Saint-Eustache, made no further enquiry, and he accepted the bride's baptismal certificate issued by a Protestant minister in Berlin.¹⁶³ Both husband and wife were unfaithful and separated legally in March 1779, a poor advertisement for the actors' case against the Church. In November 1778, Fabre d'Églantine married a girl in the troupe he was playing with at Strasbourg, describing himself on the register as 'Philippe-François-Nazaire Fabre, licencié en l'un et l'autre droit', a self-awarded legal qualification affording prestigious camouflage.¹⁶⁴ Bonnet-Beauval, the new director of the theatre at Lorient married the daughter of the conductor of the orchestra on 26 March 1784, with the bishop of Vannes providing three dispensations—from a second and third calling of the banns, for marrying in Lent, and from domicile in a parish; the profession of everyone concerned was duly recorded except

those of the bridegroom and the bride's father.¹⁶⁵ About the same time Marie-Élisabeth Joly married her army captain, Fouquet-Dulombay, whom she met on tour in Normandy—a stable, continuing marriage which did not prevent her going on to triumphs on the Parisian stage.¹⁶⁶ One might conclude that, while parish registers will not show many 'actors' receiving the nuptial blessing of the Church, those who wanted to marry managed to do so.

Deathbed scandals, outrageous when they occurred, were, in fact, infrequent. Though some actors went on to a phenomenal age, most stage careers lasted a limited time, and once an actor retired, the Church forgave everything. Mlle Clairon rushed to Saint-Sulpice on the first Sunday after she left the stage and presented (and paid for) the *pain bénit* to the congregation; it proved she was a lady of both piety and substance, back in the fold and entitled to receive the sacraments in life and at death. Members of the acting profession who fell mortally ill while still working in the theatre generally had time to renounce their profession and did so—there are three cases at least on record of actors who later recovered and broke their word.¹⁶⁷ The best anecdotes circulating concerned the renunciations and solemn ecclesiastical funerals of actors, rather than the intransigence of curés and dishonoured graves. There was Dufresny in 1724, who told the confessor to burn half a dozen unpublished comedies; Voltaire called him a coward, and reflected that the plays sent on ahead to Paradise would be very boring for the saints.¹⁶⁸ Baron, the great actor of the reign of Louis XIV, was buried in 1730; after the funeral the zealous curé picked on one of the congregation and urged him to take note of this sombre warning and forswear the stage. 'Je ne suis pas comédien,' came the answer; 'Je suis président du Grand Conseil.'¹⁶⁹ There was Carmago, the former ballet-dancer, buried splendidly at the expense of one of her former lovers, with the church hung in white because, being unmarried, she was technically a virgin.¹⁷⁰ There was Pierre-Charles Roy, dying repentant in 1764, his confessor striving to reassure him by saying his operas would soon be forgotten—'Ah Monsieur, ils sont trop beaux pour que la France les oublie!'¹⁷¹ The story went that Mme Favart was going to die unreconciled rather than risk her salary from the Comédie-Italienne, until the abbé de Voisenon, an old friend, got a promise from Versailles that it would be continued in any case.¹⁷² And there was much comment in February 1778 about the great pomp at the obsequies of Lekain, now free for ever from the discomforts of the long annual journey to Avignon.

There was, however, one great scandal in Paris which provided a

triumph for philosophes and anticlericals and, as a consequence, an object-lesson to the clergy on the folly of their intolerance. On 20 March 1730, the charming actress Adrienne Lecouvreur died.¹⁷³ There had not been time for the curé of Saint-Sulpice to reach her. The archbishop ruled that her corpse would be excluded from the parish cemetery, even from the unconsecrated corner where Rosimond lay. A few friends took the body by night in an old cab with a couple of night watchmen for escort and buried her in a garden. Circumstances combined to arouse popular indignation. There was a sinister rumour that she had been poisoned at the instance of the duchess de Bouillon, so that the Church was, as it were, an accomplice in an aristocratic conspiracy to humiliate her memory. In her will, she left 2,000 livres to the church of Saint-Sulpice. D'Argental, who had loved her with dignity, was her executor to administer the rest of her fortune for her daughters. And she had Voltaire to lament her. A year later, his verses on her death began to circulate clandestinely. In London, he said, she would have been buried alongside the kings, heroes, and poets of the nation: in France, she is thrown into an unsanctified grave. 'Nos mœurs avec nos lois toujours se contredisent.'¹⁷⁴

This was the last great scandal in Paris. The clergy made difficulties about two or three cases, but they were careful not to affront public opinion. In 1781, the curé of Saint-Eustache hastened to bury in consecrated ground the dancers who had perished in the great fire at the Opéra, forestalling his archbishop, who had been inclined to exclude them as having died *in flagrante delicto*.¹⁷⁵ The old rigorism lingered in certain provincial dioceses—not all, for in Rennes no actor was ever denied a Christian sepulchre.¹⁷⁶ By contrast, at Le Havre in 1753 occurred a picturesque illustration of the injustices, spiritual and secular, of the *ancien régime*; the curé refused to bury an actor; the troupe appealed to Versailles against his verdict, keeping the body pickled in brine to preserve it, thus incurring a fine from the administrators of the *gabelle* for using untaxed salt.¹⁷⁷ The diocese of Arras was notorious for intolerance. In Valenciennes, refusals of ecclesiastical sepulchre are recorded in 1717, 1749, 1752, 1757, and 1769, and also in 1787, the last of the century anywhere. On 31 July of that year, Devez-Dufresnel, actor and author of an *Essai sur la perfection du jeu théâtral*, was buried on the esplanade at night, without benefit of clergy, and 'in the presence of the mayor and more than 600 other persons'.¹⁷⁸

On Christmas Eve 1789, when the National Assembly¹⁷⁹ was engaged in decreeing liberty and equality for all Frenchmen, a

petition arrived from the staff of the Comédie-Française asking to be included. The legislators, they hoped, would be proceeding to reform the theatre as 'an instrument to influence morals and public opinion'. (Here it was again, the cliché of both the churchmen and the men of the Enlightenment who wished to defend the stage; the last thing they would say is that it was a frivolous relaxation, to be enjoyed as such.) Having demonstrated their seriousness, the actors proclaimed their patriotism—they had made a voluntary gift of 23,000 livres for the necessities of the State—and they asked that they be accorded the full rights of citizens. This was granted. What precisely was the effect of the decision so far as spiritual disabilities imposed by the Church were concerned? On 12 July 1790 a letter from the actor Talma was read to the Assembly: he wished to marry, but the curé of Saint-Sulpice had refused to call the banns.¹⁸⁰ This gave the legislators a chance to discuss the position of the Church in the new era of liberty. Marriage was now, they said, so far as the State was concerned, purely a civil ceremony. The curé of Saint-Sulpice could do as he liked concerning the sacrament; it was none of the Assembly's business. Henceforward, no civil disadvantages were incurred by the anathemas and exclusions of the Church. This was to imply that the moral authority of the Church would from henceforth be exercised only over those who believed in its message: it was no longer the custodian of the morals of society.

VII

When practice is irremediably lax, at some time the rules will have to be changed. But there is an intermediate period when the rigid prescription, so generally evaded, still survives theoretically intact, so that it can be invoked in extreme cases and stands as a reminder of the majesty of the law-making institution. Such was the case of the Church in eighteenth-century France. The theatres played to appreciative audiences, and loans at interest kept the commerce of the nation circulating, with the prohibitions and directions of the Church only occasionally regarded, while in more subtle and less evident ways, a gap between the mandates of religion and conduct was widening in sexual practices and mores. Keeping the austere and prestigious rules intact had become the instinctive, subconscious policy of the clergy, rather than striving in season and out of season to have the rules enforced. The confessional, in appearance an agency of control, was becoming something else as well—one of the

devices of alleviation and mitigation. This was not surprising, since the whole religious establishment itself served worldly ambitions as well as spiritual yearnings—a ransom which had to be paid for the obligatory universality of membership. Here, too, the clergy proclaimed the severe rules, then had to go along with breaking them. The etherealized doctrine of the necessary purity of vocation to the clerical state was unchallenged by argument, but bore little relation to what happened when ecclesiastical appointments were solicited and conferred. This was the basic derogation of principle keeping Church and State in close alliance, along with many others involved in that unequal collaboration. The towering splendour of the Gallican Church looming over the social and moral order created an illusion of the power of religion cherished by the clergy and resented by anticlericals; in fact, the whole imposing structure was a patchwork amalgam of spiritual inspirations and worldly interests, surviving by one-sided concessions and half-acknowledged compromises. French churchmen, so many of them heirs to the zeal of the Counter-Reformation, were curiously blind to the unreality of their situation: their ideal of a reformed Church was incompatible with universal membership and conformity.

V Crown and Parlement: Jesuits and Jansenists

This page intentionally left blank

35 The Jansenist Quarrel

'Jansenism' takes its name from Cornelius Jansen, Jansenius, bishop of Ypres, who read all the works of St Augustine ten times and the works on grace twenty-nine times, and died of a disease from the dust of old books. He left behind him a treatise, the *Augustinus*, a volume proclaiming the uncompromising doctrine of predestination, as against the Jesuit Molina's insistence on free will. The book, published in 1640, became a subject of dispute, polarizing warring parties in the Church, and the question of what was—or was not—in the *Augustinus* was made into a test of orthodoxy, a device to exclude from the fold a group of Catholics who fiercely denied that they were heretics or schismatics. This was an unnecessary tragedy. There was a 'Jansenist' current in theology, thought, and devotion, a reforming spirit in the Church, of which the vast Latin treatise of the bishop of Ypres was only one manifestation;¹ had Christian forbearance prevailed, it would have been but a minor subject of dispute, a footnote to intellectual history.

At the heart of a movement towards a new Counter-Reformation in France was an abbey of nuns, a pious family of nobles of the robe, and a charming, intense, and enigmatic churchman of deep spirituality. The abbey of Port-Royal, reformed by Angélique Arnauld, became a haunt of the *solitaires*, some of them men of great lineage, royal councillors, diplomats, soldiers, and duellists, who came to serve as gardeners, foresters, cobblers, or other simple servants, to drain the surrounding marshes, and to find peace with God. Angélique's sisters and widowed mother came to join her at Port-Royal, and the spiritual director of the family and of some of the nuns and *solitaires* was Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, abbé de Saint-Cyran.² A friend of Jansenius, he had 'plotted' with him, under the code name 'Pilmot', a restoration of Augustinian theology and Augustinian austerity in the Church. Saint-Cyran was suspect to Richelieu, as an opponent (like Jansenius) of Protestant alliances against Spain and of the royal appointment of bishops, and as a fanatic who drew men of ability and distinction to forsake their duty

to the Crown and to society for lonely seclusion. Believing as he did that if Luther and Calvin had been arrested the first time they uttered a dissident phrase, the Reformation would never have occurred, Richelieu, in 1638, incarcerated Saint-Cyran in the Bastille. The Port-Royal complex, the Arnauld family, various magistrates of the parlement, and great ladies of the Court came into a sort of alliance devoted to the prisoner's cause. When the great cardinal died in 1643, Saint-Cyran was freed, but died eight months later. His mantle fell upon Antoine Arnauld, Angélique's brother, then 32 years of age, insignificant in appearance, kindly in social relationships, ruthless in argument. He was an indefatigable writer; his immense learning—theology, canon law, mathematics, logic, grammar—rolled on, annihilating opponents, lacking in style but achieving readability by vehemence; he presented the muscles and bones of thought, said Sainte-Beuve, not the flesh and blood. In the next fifty years, forty-two volumes were to issue from his pen, all of them controversy, and mostly against the Jesuits.

Antoine Arnauld inherited Saint-Cyran's theology, predestinarian, though more moderate and sophisticated than the version of Jansenius. Although in his Sorbonne thesis Arnauld had declared unbaptized children and virtuous pagans to be damned, he had a subtle view of the working of divine grace in the human heart: not an irruption, but an insinuation calling for co-operation, and he conceived himself as finding a middle course between Calvin and Molina by holding opposed truths in tension—'Pray as if all depends on God and act as if all depends on you.' In addition to a theology, Arnauld inherited a feud. Saint-Cyran had fallen foul of the Jesuits. This was partly because he was identified with Jansenius and the attempt to demolish Molinism, but also because he embarked on new attacks of his own—on the moral theology of Père Garasse and by writing (as 'Petrus Aurelius') in defence of the rights of bishops to control the Jesuits in their dioceses. In any case, even without Saint-Cyran, Arnauld would have been expected to take the same line as a matter of family policy: his father had been the lawyer who prepared the case against the Society of Jesus when the parlement had banned its activities in France in 1594—this was 'the original sin of the Arnaulds'. This inheritance was evident in Antoine, for within a year of Saint-Cyran's death he published three books: one an apology for Jansenius, the other two denunciations of the Jesuits, their moral theology and their doctrine of 'frequent communion'. This declaration of war was applauded by a 'party'³ coming together in growing cohesion—the old allies of Saint-Cyran and the friends of the

Arnaulds and of Port-Royal, with a wider circle of sympathizers wanting a reform of the Church, and a still wider one of those who wished to see the curbing of the Jesuits. Among the latter were the magistrates of the parlement of Paris, implacably Gallican, determined to exclude all Roman influence from the affairs of the French Church and State, and hostile to the Jesuits as ‘the militia of the Holy See’.

At this point, Rome intervened against the *Augustinus*. It was a treatise taking predestinarian theology to a dangerous extreme,⁴ and its very publication was in breach of a papal rule imposing silence on all questions concerning grace bestowed and grace withheld, already a subject of unseemly disputation. It was to be expected that Rome would act in its usual way, not condemning a whole theological tendency, but laying down markers warning of dangers—this done, the speculations of the various schools could go on without further hindrance. The bull *Cum occasione* of 1653 did the task judiciously. Five grimly predestinarian propositions were condemned, but no person, book, or school of opinion was censured. Pope Innocent X, a gouty octogenarian whose affairs were subject to ridicule (he was dominated by a sister-in-law who took all his money and would not even pay for his coffin), was, nevertheless, a man of discernment. He noted that some of the ‘qualificators’ examining the *Augustinus* did not find four of the propositions convincingly in the book, and he did not say they were there. To Mazarin's agent in Rome he insisted on the words ‘cum occasione’ as vital: the *Augustinus* was mentioned only as ‘the occasion’ for the condemnation of the propositions; it was not said they were in the book, or that anyone actually held them to be true; they were warning boundary markers limiting speculation. In the course of the next three years this unexceptionable position was abandoned, and Rome blundered to disaster—every step on the way precisely established by the meticulous scholarship of Père Lucien Ceysens; ‘ventum seminabunt’, he says, ‘et turbinem metent’—they sowed the wind, and reaped the whirlwind. What can be advanced to explain this outcome on respectable intellectual grounds has been said by Bruno Neveu in a subtle analysis of the mental assumptions of the papal experts.⁵ Yet it remains difficult to understand the folly and tragedy of the affair except as the outcome of a bitter ecclesiastical feud in which the papal power of doctrinal pronouncement was cynically enlisted to serve partisan ends. The group of anti-Jansenist, Jesuit-inspired theologians in Rome, led by Cardinal Albizzi,⁶ had done their best to push *Cum occasione* into a censure on Jansenius, adding an extra

reference to the *Augustinus* at the end of the bull and attempting to insert phrases ensuring the whole pronouncement would be classed as infallible.⁷ They had support from a party in the French Church, allies of the Jesuits, and Mazarin was going along with them.⁸ Since the Pope was hostile to the French alliance with the Protestant English and Dutch, Mazarin was willing to encourage him to make pronouncements bringing him into dependence on the Crown. Only the king could enforce obedience to papal bulls in the Gallican Church. The French bishops declared the five propositions to be in the *Augustinus*, and Innocent was pushed into connivance with the statement. His successor, Alexander VII, in *Ad sanctam* (1656) on his own authority declared the propositions to be in Jansenius and to be condemned in the same sense their author gave them. Knowing the French Crown would ensure that the Gallican clergy accepted his pronouncement was probably a motive for being so explicit. The Jesuit Daubenton was to make an observation to Fénelon on the whole papal policy in the Jansenist affair that is darkly revealing: 'Peu importe que l'on confonde les jansénistes, si ce n'est pas en établissant l'infaillibilité du Pape'.⁹

Tragically, the papacy was committed. A multitude of opportunities for disputation had been created.¹⁰ Given the fundamentalist scholarship of the age, revering the Fathers, it was impossible to say St Augustine was wrong, but Jansenius had claimed to be summarizing and paraphrasing Augustine—was he mistaken? Surely this was a question for scholars to settle, comparing and collating texts. The five propositions were specifically said to be in the *Augustinus*, but textually, only one could be found there. It had to be assumed that the other four were there implicitly; but what if a diligent reader scoured the book and could not find them? Isaac Barrow, the Anglican divine, reflected how the Church would have been saved a lot of trouble if the Pope had been able to give the page references,¹¹ and there was a polemical story that the Jesuits had printed a special copy with the propositions inserted to mislead the Roman theologians.

When Mazarin was gone, Louis XIV, abandoning the traditional Gallican stance of the rulers of his country, committed the French Crown to the papal position. He had been brought up to believe, as Saint-Simon said, that the Jansenists were 'a republican party in Church and State'. This allegation was easily refuted, both then and since;¹² but the point can be made more subtly. Civil war could arise from ostensibly religious causes, and there were powerful *frondeurs* who would make sinister use of any rift in the social order.

According to an English agent, Louis regarded Jansenism as a 'faction fomented by the princes and great nobles to regain their power'.¹³ For 'the security of the State', therefore, in 1661 the king got the Assembly of Clergy to impose a formulary condemning the five propositions and explicitly declaring that they were in the *Augustinus*. Four years later, Rome, reaffirming its authority in circumstances in which it was certain of support from the secular arm, imposed its own formulary, making no mention of the king's, and this formulary was repeated in the bull *Vineam Domini* of 1705. Jansenists were prepared to condemn the five propositions, but only to remain silent on the 'question of fact'. How could one swear to the presence of propositions in a volume when diligent search had failed to find them? It was no longer a question of efficacious grace, or even of opposition to the Jesuits: it was a question of intellectual veracity and of the limits of authority.

There was now an objective test to identify a Jansenist and exclude him from office in the Church: would he subscribe to the formulary pure and simple? In this way, established boundary lines were imposed on the warring factions of the time, and one of them was given the full backing of authority in Church and State; even so, the historian is still left with the problem of trying to define Jansenism in a more meaningful way. For long, orthodox Roman Catholic historiography sought to identify those who came to be called 'Jansenists' with acceptance of what is in—or was supposed to be in—the *Augustinus*. 'A Jansenist is a Calvinist saying the mass' is Carreyre's definition,¹⁴ making the heretical accusation more certain. This unsophisticated technique was rejected by Bremond, who used as much ingenuity readmitting distinguished Jansenists to the fold as had originally been employed to exclude them; he wanted to rescue Pascal and Racine (and others in proportion to their literary greatness) for orthodoxy—'we must reclaim our property'.¹⁵ Like Bremond, though not for the same reasons, a modern description of Jansenism must break free from the guilt-by-association procedures which make 'Jansenists' of people even when they had renounced the unorthodox doctrines which were ostensibly the subject of dispute. Indeed, the standard counter-argument, living on in the writings of Gazier,¹⁶ is that Jansenism was a 'phantom heresy' invented by the Jesuits as a sort of portmanteau into which they could cram their diverse opponents for more convenient condemnation. 'The Jesuits have a phantom they call Jansenius,' wrote Mme de Sévigné in 1680, 'upon whom they pile a thousand insults . . . This seems to me like when the comte de Grammont said it was

Rochefort who had trodden on the king's dog, though Rochefort was a hundred leagues away.²¹⁷

These two extremes of interpretation—a conspiracy of crypto-Calvinists on the one hand and, on the other, a group of diverse and respectable Catholics whom the Jesuits tarred with the brush of heresy—arise from the bitterness of the contest as it was waged at the time. The quarrel has been put into a more lofty and edifying context in the overarching theory of Kolakowski,¹⁸ the historian of seventeenth-century religious sects. Just as the Jesuits were trying to extend the scope and influence of Catholicism by assimilating to it the naturalist humanism of the Renaissance, so the Jansenists were attempting ‘to assimilate and integrate certain values of Calvinism which could have given that religion an advantage in the rivalry with the Catholic Church which followed the Edict of Nantes’. This is an interesting interpretation of the inner logic of an ideological clash and an insight into the possibilities of subconscious motivation; as sometimes happens, however, with patterns deduced from the specialist study of ideas, it does not bear a close relationship to the thoughts in the conscious minds of the men of the warring factions. Even so, it is impossible to think of any other formulation to express the loftiness of the ideals at stake behind the malice and bitterness with which a supposedly theological quarrel was waged. As for the contrasting attempt to generalize from the historical left by pushing the explanation of Jansenism out of the context of a struggle of ideals in the Western Church into one of a power struggle in the social field—this theory of Lucien Goldmann¹⁹ is altogether unviable. Jansenism as the ideology of the declining nobles of the robe carries no conviction. There were magistrates of the parlement with serious religious convictions moving them into the Jansenist camp, and practically all the others were Gallicans, anxious to strike at Roman pretensions. Naturally, when the Crown abandoned its traditional Gallicanism, the magistrates were glad to affirm their own importance by backing the true, anti-Roman interests of France amid popular applause.

There were different kinds of Jansenism;²⁰ according to leading individuals, a Jansenism of Saint-Cyran, of Arnauld, and later of Quesnel—of various bishops even; according to institutions, of the University of Louvain, of Port-Royal, on occasion of the Sorbonne, and the parlements. The predestinarian theology had many nuances, and ran on in the end to involve the questioning of papal authority, bringing in the forces of Gallicanism. The movement for the reform of the Church flowered into translations of the

Scriptures, educational experiments, liturgical reform, the striving for an enhanced status in the Church for women and for the laity in general. Of all the factors involved, the most general was hostility to the Jesuits, and there is a sense in which the existence of Jansenism as an identifiable party was a creation of its enemies, like Rochefort's treasonable cruelty to animals. As distinct from the judicious bull *Cum occasione, Ad sanctam* was a theological pronouncement newly engineered to bring condemnation on an individual and the supporters of his memory—in short, on the enemies of the Jesuits.

There was a spiritual magic in the Jansenism of the seventeenth century, centred in Port-Royal; Sainte-Beuve, the unbelieving literary critic, was haunted, captured by it. But 'all the gold in the world and all the promises of heaven', he said, would not persuade him to carry his study of Jansenism into the eighteenth century. The spirit of Port-Royal was not there; 'or at least it was found only in traces, dried up like a branch of a river that has turned aside into the sands and lost itself among the rocks . . . It is found even less in the entirely political Jansenism which was, or which appeared so considerable for a moment in the 18th century, and which allowed many to be of the party, without being of the dogma, or indeed, of religion at all.'²¹ The story of Jansenism after the death of Louis XIV is indeed a story of the war of the parlements against the Crown—remonstrances, exiles, writs, denunciations, pamphlets; of the rising discontent of the lower clergy, demanding economic justice and a share in the government of the Church; of the convulsionist movement, a strange spiritual underworld of masochism and miracles. Upon this scene of political and social strife and crude illiterate spirituality Sainte-Beuve turned his back, and those who have walked with him through the world of Port-Royal will understand his bitterness. The *journée du guichet* when Angélique Arnauld renounced human affections, the night of fire of 23 November when Pascal wept tears of joy, the cold ethereal beauty of the paintings of Philippe de Champaigne,²² the intellectual adventure of the alliance with Cartesianism, the grammar, the logic, the translation of the New Testament, the plays of Racine, and the *Pensées* of Pascal—the eighteenth century can offer nothing like this.

But Port-Royal was a moment of unique perfection, necessarily transient. It was a coincident flowering of spirituality and genius doomed to wither when death removed the élite souls whose conjunction formed its greatness. Before Louis XIV's demolition squads and drunken grave-diggers moved in, before D'Argenson's police removed the last twenty-two courageous old nuns, Port-Royal was

ended. 'The Earth is becoming empty of saints, while Heaven is filling up,' said a Jansenist letter of 1695.²³ Arnauld and Nicole had just died, and of the great generation, only Racine remained, and only for four years more, a Joseph of Arimathea presiding over the obsequies of a decaying community. Port-Royal ended with the death of Racine, in the last year of the seventeenth century. With Sainte-Beuve, we mourn its passing; but unlike him, we move on into the new century where, in spite of all he says, high principles were at stake and good men were willing to suffer for them, even though their spirituality lacked the illumination of intellectual and literary genius.

What is truth? The formulary of 1665, repeated in the bull *Vineam Domini*, posed the question. In the abbé Le Roy's opinion a man could not commit his word to the obscure and unverified: 'when a thing is honest and fair, this is evident, it shows up by a self-generated light without any need for demonstration or proof'²⁴—not for nothing were the Jansenists drawn to Cartesianism. What is truth worth? Claude de Sainte-Marthe, the confessor of Port-Royal, denounced the signature of the formulary, for this was 'to take from us the means to suffer for truth'.²⁵ The word 'truth', *vérité*, became the Jansenist key word. Another Jansenist of the uncompromising school, Nicolas Perrault, urged his friends not to be blackmailed by those who talked of the wickedness of schism, by those who crucified Christ, then demanded sacrifices from others to keep his seamless robe undivided.²⁶ To sign was to throw away ecclesiastical liberties; liberty, together with truth, the other key word of the Jansenist position.

While king and pope were affirming their authority (and nothing does this more spectacularly than obliging people to abandon common sense), the question of intellectual veracity and the limits of authority had become the central issue. Yet so far, few had faced the challenge. The five propositions represented a grim theological tendency little worthy of sympathy, and the *Augustinus* was unreadable; a man might be forgiven for refraining from the high serious line and assuming that the propositions must be in the book, hidden there like thorns in a great knotty faggot. Then, in 1713, came the bull *Unigenitus*.

36 Unigenitus

On the night of Sunday, 10 September 1713, the papal bull *Unigenitus*^d was posted at Rome on the doors of the Lateran basilica and St Peter's. On the Saturday, the courier had departed for France bearing the copies destined for Louis XIV, one directly from his ambassador in Rome, and one to be presented by the nuncio; there was also a letter from Pope Clement XI to the king, reminding him how he had asked for the bull and had promised to enforce it. Simultaneously the French Jesuit agent at the papal court, Père Guillaume Daubenton, sent copies to France for the use of the members of his Order: they were to publish the bull urgently and widely, giving the Jansenists no time to react against a decree 'destined to stifle them'. 'The greatest pontiff who has ever appeared on the Roman throne', Daubenton rejoiced, has invoked 'the thunders of the God of heaven', and 'unmasked . . . the wolves ravaging in sheep's clothing, the masters of lies, the seducers skilled in every artifice'. The business of publication had been meticulously stage-managed: the bull was to be dramatically proclaimed, uncontroverted, decisive.

The ostensible purpose of *Unigenitus* was to strike yet another blow—perhaps the final blow—against Jansenism. Since 1661, all holders of ecclesiastical benefices, schoolmasters, and candidates for holy orders had had to subscribe to the formulary approved by Pope Alexander VII, condemning 'with heart and mouth the doctrine of the Five Propositions of Cornelius Jansenius contained in his book called the *Augustinus* . . . which doctrine is not that of St Augustine'. The bull *Vineam Domini* of 1705 reinforced the formulary by outlawing 'respectful silence' on the question of 'fact' (that is, are the propositions really in the book?). Thus every crevice by which a Jansenist could creep into office in the Gallican Church had been closed. A further papal pronouncement might have seemed superfluous, except that there was still a 'Jansenist' interest and, according to the preamble to *Unigenitus*, devious writers were insinuating Jansenist theology in subtle and marginally acceptable phrases. The bull struck at the chief of these. It condemned 101

statements in a book by Pasquier Quesnel,² the *Nouveau Testament en français, avec des réflexions morales sur chaque verset* published in 1692, being a conflated, expanded version of the author's commentary on the four gospels of 1672 and his commentary on Acts, the epistles, and the Book of Revelation in 1687. The Jesuits had denounced Quesnel's work at Rome in 1699 and 1700; the bishop of Apt had published a pastoral censure in 1703, followed by the archbishop of Besançon and the bishop of Nevers four years later; finally, on 13 July 1708, a papal brief of condemnation had been issued. So Quesnel's *Réflexions morales* (as it was generally termed), albeit an established devotional best-seller, had for long been controversial, a sort of flagship of Jansenist piety intermittently under fire from the Jesuits and their allies.

A number of the propositions pilloried in *Unigenitus* were unsatisfactory, and nine were indefensible. According to number 5, 'Exhortations and exterior graces serve only to harden further the heart which God does not soften by the interior unction of his grace'; according to number 59, 'the prayer of the impious is a new sin, incurring a further divine condemnation'. Similarly, numbers 38 and 39 imply that a sinner, without the gift of grace, is free only to do evil, so radically is his will contaminated. Numbers 60, 61, 62, and 63 reject all dispositions and actions, however worthy they seem, if they are in any way motivated by the fear of divine punishment; those who abstain from sin because of fear have already sinned in their hearts, and for those who repent by fear, there is no forgiveness, only despair. In these assertions there breathed the spirit of an Augustinian pessimism at variance with the Christian doctrines of hope and love.

Had the bull stopped short with the enumeration of these nine grim propositions, it would have been a judicious doctrinal pronouncement. But there were ninety-two more items to be accounted for, and the suspicion arises that some of this massed array of carefully researched and dubiously errant phrases were piled in as make-weights to flatten Quesnel with comprehensive censure. There were good reasons why he should be detested by the Roman Curia and by the Jesuit Order. For long he had been a hammer of papal pretensions, sometimes speaking of Rome, as Orcibal says, 'with a violence approaching sheer coarseness'. In an edition of the works of St Leo in 1675 (which was duly put on the Index) he cast doubts on the genuineness of certain conciliar decrees customarily cited in favour of Roman supremacy: the papal condemnation of his *Réflexions morales* in 1708 elicited his *Entretiens sur le décret de Rome*, in

which he protested against this ‘scandalous attack which strikes at the very heart of the episcopate, a work of darkness and the enterprise of a horrible cabal’. There was no question of his submitting: in the year of *Unigenitus* he published a second counterblast, *Vains efforts des Jésuites contre la justification des Réflexions*—the title identifying the ‘horrible cabal’ he blamed for the unjust treatment he was receiving. As for the Jesuits, they saw Quesnel as the figure-head and spokesman of the Jansenist cause. As a companion of Arnauld in exile in Brussels, he had collaborated in producing the successive volumes of *La Morale pratique des Jésuites*; the Order had struck back by publishing various books branding Quesnel as a ‘sedition monger and heretic’, using for the purpose private papers seized from Quesnel's study in Brussels by the police of the archbishop of Malines in 1703. The combatants in this iron age of theological feuding observed few niceties. The Jesuits had no scruples about prying into confiscated correspondence; nor had Quesnel himself—witness his resort, in 1700, to the purloined letters of the abbé Ernest Ruth d'Ans in one of the internal controversies of the Jansenist movement.

In 1713, the *Réflexions morales* had been in circulation for thirty years, and for the last five it had been under Roman censure. This censure was not allowed to be formally published in France; even so, it was hard to see why a new and urgent condemnation was required. The author was 79 years of age and an exile. His enemies might reasonably have been expected to call it a day and leave him to the mysterious judgement of God which for so long had been the underlying subject of the polemical debates between them. In fact, there was another reason for attacking the *Réflexions morales*. There was someone in high office, almost untouchable by his connections, eminence, and virtues, whose theological judgement could be brought into disrepute by discrediting the book. This was Louis-Antoine de Noailles, cardinal-archbishop of Paris, a *grand seigneur*, highly connected at Court, with two brothers marshals of France and another a lieutenant-general of the galleys—bishop of Cahors in 1679 at the age of 28, bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne two years later, archbishop of Paris from 19 August 1695. His predecessor in the diocese of Châlons had been Félix Vialart, a moderate Jansenist, who had approved of Quesnel's book in its earliest version and presented copies to his parish clergy. Following his example, on 24 February 1694, Noailles wrote to Quesnel offering to be associated with a new edition, which, in his turn, he sent to all the priests of his diocese. His letter to them, dated 23 June 1695, did not, strictly speaking,

confer a formal imprimatur on the *Réflexions morales*, but it was in enthusiastic terms.³ ‘The difficulties [of the New Testament] are clearly explained,’ he said,

and the most sublime truths of religion are expounded with the force and gentleness that come from the Holy Spirit, making them attractive to even the hardest of hearts. . . . You will find here the bread of the Word, with which it is your duty to feed your people, broken up and ready to be distributed to them, and so adjusted to their dispositions that the weak will find milk to nourish their souls, just as the strong will find solid sustenance. Thus, it is a book to take the place of a whole library for you.

This unstinted praise was welcome to Quesnel's publisher as an advertisement, and the four-volume edition which appeared in 1696 included it as a preface, proudly presented as coming from ‘Louis-Antoine de Noailles, comte de Châlons, présentement archevêque de Paris’.

Noailles was a moderate: his ‘Jansenism’ was a reflection of his pious and austere life-style and his instinctive, early acquired distrust of the Jesuits, rather than a reasoned theological stance. Having praised Quesnel, in the following year, 1696, he demonstrated his impartiality by condemning an extreme statement of predestinarian doctrines, the *Exposition de la Foi touchant la Grâce et la Prédestination*, written by the Jansenist Martin de Barcos more than twenty years previously, but only recently published. In so doing, Noailles met the fate of universal unpopularity which so often overtakes moderate men: both sides turned against him, united on the premiss that the views of Barcos and of Quesnel were identical. The Jesuits said he should now disavow the *Réflexions morales*; the Jansenists urged him to admit he had been mistaken over Barcos. His dilemma was ridiculed in an anonymous tract of a dozen pages, the *Problème ecclésiastique*, which appeared in 1698, written by a Jansenist but distributed by the Jesuits. In matters of doctrine, whom are we to believe, asked the author satirically, the archbishop of Paris or the ex-bishop of Châlons? Noailles was pushed deeper into trouble in 1705, when a new edition of the *Réflexions morales* appeared with the legend, ‘approved by his Eminence the Cardinal de Noailles, archbishop of Paris’—the publisher would not allow the letter of approval of eleven years ago to be forgotten. The book had become a millstone round the neck of the unfortunate prelate. Had he been crafty, he might have cut himself free, as Fénelon did when facing the condemnation of his *Maximes des Saints* in 1699, by a histrionic disavowal, presented with a blend of aristocratic hauteur and

Christian humility; but he was straightforward, naïve even, an easy target for his enemies. Thus a bookseller's blurb and an accumulation of personal vendettas against an archbishop with kindly dispositions to the Jansenists led to the bull *Unigenitus*.⁴

As long ago as 1675, Noailles had incurred the suspicion of the Roman Curia. In that year, at the age of 24, on the way to his doctorate, he had defended the six Gallican propositions of the Sorbonne of 1663, as part of his thesis, in a public disputation over which the great Bossuet had presided. The young abbé had wished to evade involvement with propositions 5 and 6 concerning the superiority of General Councils and the necessity of the consent of the Church for papal infallibility, but Louis XIV had been adamant—he was determined to have a demonstration at the Sorbonne against Roman pretensions. The affair had been a sensation, severely reported on by the papal nuncio. Twenty years later, in 1696, the Jesuit campaign against Noailles as a covert Jansenist gained some confirmation when he joined with Bossuet to condemn the *Nodus Praedestinationis Dissolutus*, a volume challenging the Jansenist theological position by the late Cardinal Sfondrati—a friend of the Cardinal Albani who was to become Pope as Clement XI four years later.⁵ Nine years after this, Noailles presided over the Assembly General of the Clergy of France which considered the bull *Vineam Domini* (1705) and made pronouncements circumscribing papal claims: the bull was to be enforced, but the bishops were accepting it, not automatically, but ‘by way of judgement’, and their acceptance was a condition of its obligation. From then onwards, the archbishop of Paris was marked down at Rome as the leader of the Gallican opposition. Attempts at conciliation—as sometimes happens—made the situation worse. At the Assembly of Clergy of 1710, Noailles and eleven other bishops signed an explanation of what was said in 1705, which Rome found unacceptable. On 17 April 1711, the Royal Council approved a draft by Noailles to be sent to the Pope: the bishops, he said, did not claim to ‘judge’ papal decisions, but to ‘recognize’ them, and tacit recognition would do—‘acceptation solennelle’ was not necessary. With a few amendments, this was accepted at Rome, but the ambiguity remained: on the Gallican view, consent, even if only tacit, was required; on the ultra-montane view, there was no need for consent at all. In a letter of thanks to Noailles, the Pope slipped in the ultramontane interpretation. Louis XIV, enraged at this attempt ‘to take advantage of my good nature to make the clergy of my kingdom accept propositions absolutely opposed to the maxims of the Gallican Church’, sent

the papal document back, and flatly refused to countenance any amended version. Both at Rome and at Versailles, Noailles was blamed for this fiasco and the heightening of tensions which resulted. At the Roman Curia, he was regarded as an undercover Jansenist and an aggressive Gallican—and one who, at a hale and hearty 50 years of age, seemed destined to rule the great diocese of Paris for a long while to come.

Noailles had become archbishop of Paris as the candidate of Madame de Maintenon; the king's Jesuit confessor had not been consulted. According to Saint-Simon, from then onwards the Jesuits were his foes. If so, they showed prescience, for five years later, in 1700, when their doctrines and practices were under concerted attack, Noailles lent the authority of his great office to the cause of their detractors. He presided over the Assembly of Clergy which condemned the relaxation of moral standards in the confessional—commonly supposed (without much justice) to be part of the Jesuit strategy for winning over high society. In the same year, he supported the Sorbonne in its censure of the so-called 'Chinese rites', concessions by which the Jesuits sought to acclimatize the advanced religions of the East within Christianity. The adventurous dream of converting the sophisticated civilizations of India and China was dear to the heart of the Jesuit Order, a dream to which most contemporaries were indifferent and which Jansenist rigorism rejected. In a letter from Rome to one of his colleagues at Avignon (9 September 1713), Daubenton confided that one of the objects of *Unigenitus* was to undermine the censure of the Chinese rites and to open the way for their rehabilitation. This was why the bull disqualified the two statements (propositions 41 and 42) of Quesnel which encapsulated the Jansenist attitude to non-Christian faiths: 'All knowledge of God, be it natural or in the pagan philosophy, can come only from God; without grace it produces only pride, vanity and, indeed, opposition to God, instead of sensations of adoration, thanksgiving and love', and 'only the grace of Jesus Christ can render men capable of the sacrifice of faith; without that there is nothing but impiety and indignity'. With the modern dialogue between Christianity and other religions in mind, we may reflect that *Unigenitus*, so justly decried in its age for other reasons, in this respect at least was looking forward to the future and was on the side of the angels.

Daubenton's letter, frank to the point of cynicism, listed other less apostolic objectives behind the bull. One was to obtain for his Order the monopoly of writing books of devotion. Let our Jesuit authors

beware, he said, of slipping into the use of the language of any of the 101 propositions—a revealing observation, showing he realized how the compilers of *Unigenitus* had strained beyond reason to detect errors in Quesnel. Another objective was to rout the Jansenists, ‘the Quesnellist faction’ and their allies, the Sorbonne and the parlements, and, above all, to bring down Noailles.

At Rome, Versailles, and Paris, the Jesuits were well organized. At Rome there was Daubenton, who had been confessor to the dauphine at the French court, then to Louis XIV's grandson, the king of Spain, at Madrid. From 1706, he was based at the papal court, in continual correspondence with influential ecclesiastics in France, and taking his daily walk with Cardinal Fabroni, the friend and confidant of the Pope. Fabroni, educated by the Jesuits and devoted to their cause, was pious and choleric—*un furioso*. Prompted from France by Fénelon and exasperated by the affair of the reception of *Vineam Domini* in 1705, he had long reflected on the possibility of using the *Réflexions morales* as a weapon against Noailles; if he had had his way, he would have put his name along with Quesnel's in the text of *Unigenitus*.

At Versailles the Jesuits had Michel Le Tellier, from 1709 the king's confessor. Son of Norman peasants and proud of it, abrupt in manner, and ill-favoured of countenance (‘you'd have been scared if you met him in the corner of a wood’), he had taught at Louis-le-Grand for twenty-eight years before being made *directeur* of the *collège* in 1705, then provincial of the Paris area in 1708. According to his enemies, he was pushed into these high offices against the wishes of his colleagues by orders from the general of the institute in Rome, as a ‘hard’ man who would enforce discipline. Unluckily for Le Tellier's⁶ posthumous reputation, he fell foul of the supreme master of vituperative prose and morbid psychological analysis, and became permanently enshrined in Saint-Simon's demonological portrait gallery. Saint-Simon was hardly an impartial witness—hating the Jesuits, out of sympathy with the royal policies of the last years of the reign, and enraged to see a low-born pedagogue enjoying the king's confidence and picking and choosing among the aristocratic families of the realm for the award of bishoprics and abbeys. His censures must be exaggerated: no one could be so repulsive and so consistently evil. But with allowance for overstatement, the *Memoirs* may be believed about Le Tellier's motivation. ‘His object . . . was the despotic reign of his Society, of its dogmas, of its maxims, and the radical destruction of everything hostile to it—indeed, more than that, everything not subservient to the point of blind

obedience.' Another hostile witness, Canon Le Gendre of Notre-Dame, said much the same succinctly: 'he was a Jesuit from head to foot'. Le Tellier had written against Quesnel, had denounced the Jansenist translation of the New Testament, citing 200 passages which differed from the Vulgate, had published a defence of the Chinese rites and a collection of papal documents of the last two centuries, listing censored books but omitting those written by Jesuits. He did his best to have bishops appointed who would favour his Order and give it control of their seminaries. In 1711, he was trying to organize a letter against Noailles signed by the whole of the episcopate. *Unigenitus* had no more zealous supporter. One of the vivid baroque set pieces of Saint-Simon's *Memoirs* is the account of the interview Le Tellier forced on him in October 1713 in an attempt to convert him to the bull. It took place at Versailles in a little windowless room lit by a couple of smoky candles. Faced with those burning eyes and that monomaniacal intensity, Saint-Simon nearly fainted. There, he reflected afterwards, was a man who sought nothing for himself or his family, who had reached the age when he would shortly have to render his account to God, and who yet was determined to set the Church of France on fire—for a cause which meant nothing to him except that it ensured a triumph for the school of Molina, the chosen theology of the Jesuits.

In Paris, at their college of Louis-le-Grand, the Jesuits had small groups of *scriptores* (writers) who were exempt from teaching duties and devoted their time to scholarship, apologetics, and controversy. Two of these, Jacques-Philippe Lallemand and Louis Doucin,⁷ were described by Saint-Simon as Le Tellier's close—indeed only—friends, 'aussi fins, aussi faux, aussi profonds que lui'. Proverbially, the inhabitants of Normandy are full of guile, and contemporaries did not fail to notice that all three were from that province: they constituted the 'cabale des Normands'. Lallemand and Doucin were specialists in the campaign against Jansenism. Though they wrote works of learning and spirituality, even these tended to become instruments of their controversies. Doucin's studies of Nestorianism were slanted obliquely against modern heretics, and Lallemand's great work of devotion was published in 1713 deliberately to replace the *Réflexions morales* which was being outlawed: it had the same pattern of presentation, the same format, and its title was Quesnel's with the words in a different order. When the papers of Quesnel and of Arnauld were carted from Brussels to Paris, it was Lallemand and Doucin who were given charge of them. With their aid, Lallemand in two years published three books: *Le Père Quesnel séditioneux et*

hérétique (with Le Tellier as the visiting scholar doing the heretic section), *Jansenius condamné par l'Église, par lui-même et ses défenseurs et par Saint-Augustin*, and *Le Véritable Esprit des nouveaux disciples de Saint-Augustin*—in all, just short of a total of 2,000 pages. Doucin (who had previously published a history of the Jansenist movement in Holland) used the confiscated archives for a sinister purpose, checking out the names of covert Jansenists and preparing notes to aid D'Argenson, the lieutenant of police, in his interrogation of the suspects in the Bastille. In the end, prying into other people's confidential files did the Jesuits no good. They confirmed themselves in the view that Jansenism was a conspiracy to the point where they saw nuances of theological subversion lurking in everything Quesnel wrote, and they pushed the Pope to condemn what they thought they saw rather than what would be evident to the ordinary intelligent reader.

By the beginning of 1710, three French bishops had censured the *Réflexions morales*, and two more were preparing to do so. But the 'cabale des Normands' had a more intelligent and influential ally in the episcopate in reserve, a foe of Noailles who preferred to act against him covertly. François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon,⁸ archbishop of Cambrai, deviser of pastoral utopias and of practical schemes for the reform of France, preacher of reconciliation to persecuted Protestants and friend of the poor, devoted pastor of souls in his war-ravaged diocese, and steeped in a haunted mysticism which strove to serve God without hope of reward, was also an implacable hater and devious, with a feline deftness at insinuating himself on to the moral heights of every argument. Once, he had been well disposed to the Jansenists and had complained to the king about the persecutions they endured, and in 1696 he had written to Noailles approving his views on the theology of grace. Yet even at this time of their apparent friendship, the two churchmen were drifting into opposition. Two years before, Fénelon, involved with Madame Guyon and her quietistic spirituality, had been constrained to come to the 'Conference of Issy', where his views were examined by Bossuet, Noailles, and Tronson, superior of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice; he had accepted their precautionary 'articles', but with reluctance. In 1699, Noailles, once more joined with Bossuet, condemned Fénelon's *Maximes des Saints*—the prelude to a papal censure. The author's retraction was spectacular, but there was bitterness in his soul. Once Bossuet was dead, Noailles remained as an object of his vengeance. In 1703, he was recommending a specific way to achieve his object: 'il faudrait examiner le livre du Père

Quesnel, approuvé à Châlons’—that is, censure the *Réflexions morales*, which Noailles had approved.⁹ His ally in Rome, Cardinal Fabroni, took up the idea. The decisive move was delayed until 1710, when the bishops of La Rochelle and Luçon published a joint pastoral letter condemning the *Réflexions morales*. They were acting at the instigation of Fénelon (allied with Le Tellier), and he helped them to formulate their arguments (solemnly denying that he had had any hand in the matter). When, in the following year, he drew up plans for the reform of the government (in anticipation of his old pupil, the duc de Bourgogne, succeeding to the throne), they included the solicitation of a papal bull to uproot Jansenism, the deposition of all bishops who opposed the papal ruling, and giving Rome permission to take severe measures against Noailles: ‘il n’y a pas un seul moment à perdre pour le discréditer’. In 1713, he wanted similar drastic measures to enforce the acceptance of *Unigenitus*—the bishops to be placed under duress and Noailles to be tried before a National Council of the Gallican Church, or even to be arrested and sent to Rome as a prisoner. When *Unigenitus* was fulminated, Fénelon’s comment was revealing: ‘quelle honte pour les approbateurs d’un tel livre’.¹⁰ It was not so much the book itself that mattered, but those who had approved it and were now brought into contempt. He had fifteen more months to live: time to savour his triumph and for the recognition of its futility to dawn.

Left to himself, Pope Clement XI would not have issued the bull *Unigenitus*, or, if he had, it would have been very different. There was a time when he had commended the *Réflexions morales*; three witnesses have said so—true all were Jansenists, yet they were solemn ecclesiastics and ought to have been speaking the truth. The idea of invoking the thunders of a bull against a devotional handbook seemed incongruous to him: ‘What a case we’d be in if there had to be a constitution issued every time a bad book is published. We’d have to start afresh every day.’ He sensed instinctively (a view he shared with the French ambassador) that a bull, if there was to be one, ought to be limited to the condemnation of a few glaringly erroneous propositions: only against his better judgement did he allow the inclusion of a heterogeneous multitude. A judicious and moderate man, he was also weak and self-doubting, given to fits of weeping; Fabroni dominated him in the interests of the Jesuit Order. This was the easier to do, as Clement XI had been educated by the Jesuits in their Roman college, and always felt grateful to them. Throughout his pontificate, opinion at the Curia was hardening against Quesnel and Noailles and Jansenism generally. Lists of

dubious passages in Quesnel's book kept coming in from France—from the *scriptores* at Louis-le-Grand, from episcopal pronouncements, and from individual denunciators like the Capuchin Timothée de la Flèche, who walked to Rome in 1703, a friar who had forsworn all the pleasures of life except the thrill of complicity in ecclesiastical politics. By the beginning of 1711, the dossier was bulging, and the wavering Pope on the way to conviction that a great blow should be struck. But there was still one difficulty. Would a bull be dutifully accepted by the Gallican Church? An essential interest of Rome, as important as Jansenism, Noailles, or Quesnel, was the affirmation of papal infallibility.

At least, that was how Daubenton saw it.¹¹ ‘The Romans are not especially interested in the condemnation of Jansenism’, he wrote to Fénelon on 13 July 1707, ‘if it is not done by establishing the infallibility of the pope . . . our Romans are more attentive to establish the infallibility of the pope than to destroy Jansenism.’ In March 1709 he wrote to a colleague in Cambrai setting out what he saw as the Curia's objective: to show how the Pope alone, without either the formal or tacit consent of the Church, can condemn heresy. ‘The argument of the necessity of consent is the phantom that scares them.’ The necessity of consent was precisely what the Gallican Church—the Sorbonne and the majority of the episcopate—had been trying to establish: by the Sorbonne's six articles of 1663, by the four Gallican articles of 1682, by the writings of Bossuet—consent by a General Council, by the blend of tradition and actuality involved in the concept of ‘Peter's Chair’, by the bishops acting ‘by way of judgement’ as they had when accepting *Vineam Domini*. The papal reaction had begun with the bull *Cum ad aures* of 1665, which disowned the Sorbonne in its condemnation of a Jesuit essay in defence of papal infallibility. Antoine Arnauld wrote a treatise on this incident. Up to now, he said, the popes ‘have connived at being treated as infallible, but have not attributed infallibility to themselves. But Pope Alexander VII has begun to do it by this bull.’ Fourteen years later, to Arnauld's satisfaction, Innocent XI abandoned *Cum ad aures*, perhaps inadvertently, by approving Bossuet's *Exposition*, a summary of Christian doctrine which minimized papal claims in an attempt to win the Protestants. Since then, in 1691, Rome had publicly condemned the Gallican articles. To no avail. The conduct of the French bishops at the Assembly of 1705 struck at the heart of papal claims; here was a bull being accepted ‘by way of judgement’, the ‘consent of the Church’ with a vengeance. ‘Does it become inferiors to take decisions concerning their superior’, complained the

Pope in a brief to the French episcopate, 'and to subject his judgements to examination? Be it said without offence, it is intolerable that a handful of bishops, bishops of churches whose honours and prerogatives derive exclusively from the favour . . . of the Apostolic See, should raise their heads against the author of their dignity.' These were strong words for the record: at the time they were but a peevish lamentation. There was only one way to affirm infallibility: issue a decisive bull on contentious issues with the whole Church unquestioningly accepting it.

At this point, the opportunity came. On 16 November 1711, Louis XIV sent to his ambassador in Rome, the cardinal de la Trémoille, an instruction asking for a bull against Quesnel's book. The king wished to see a draft in advance, and if he was satisfied, he would enforce it. 'I engage myself to have this new constitution accepted by the bishops of France with the respect which is due to it.'

From the start, Louis had detested the Jansenists as 'a republican party in Church and State'. As the years passed, they became in his eyes a standing challenge to his absolute authority, subtle and evasive, exasperating him in proportion to his incomprehension of their ideals. As he drew near to death, he was more and more concerned to accumulate merit as a defender of orthodoxy. In his policy of repression he tended to treat the papacy as an auxiliary: the campaign to root out heretical divergences in the Gallican Church was his personal affair. Early in 1710, Rome had condemned a pastoral letter of the Jansenist bishop of Saint-Pons; the parlement forbade the publication of the Roman decree in France. According to the king, the magistrates had merely done their duty. However, he urged the Pope to produce a bull repeating his censure, written in concert with Louis himself—such a bull would be proclaimed in France, because he would enforce it. The Roman Curia, foreseeing nothing but humiliation ahead in such a dubious collaboration, wisely refused; unfortunately, three years later, Clement XI was to yield to the temptation of another such offer from Versailles, and drift into the disaster of *Unigenitus*.

As the idea of a bull against Pierre de Montgaillard, bishop of Saint-Pons, was abandoned, the idea of another, directed against Louis-Antoine de Noailles, archbishop of Paris, arose. For the king, Noailles was marked down as dangerous ever since his presidency of the Assembly of Clergy of 1705. 'The cardinal', Saint-Simon noted, 'emerged from this Assembly in disfavour with the king, who took against him as strongly suspect of Jansenism.' Since then, death had

removed from the Court friends of Noailles who might have spoken for him. Le Tellier, the royal confessor, was his foe. Madame de Maintenon, once a supporter, was now demonstrating zeal against Jansenism, hoping to muster ecclesiastical support to persuade Louis to recognize his marriage to her publicly. If only the archbishop would join her. 'I'd shed my blood', she wrote in October 1708, attempting to persuade him, 'to hear it said: M. le cardinal has definitely decided against Jansenism.' He disappointed her, and she abandoned his cause. Yet, even under the autocracy of Louis XIV, a great aristocrat in an episcopal see was almost invulnerable. Barring some crisis, Louis and his archbishop of Paris might have carried on in an equilibrium of ill will for the king's few remaining years.

The crisis came in the summer of 1710, with the publication of the joint pastoral letter of the bishops of La Rochelle and Luçon. They were friends, both former pupils of the Jesuits, pushed into decisive action by Le Tellier and Fénelon. Their manifesto revived the whole Jansenist quarrel and pilloried Noailles: the five propositions are indeed in Jansenius; they are repeated in Quesnel; and Noailles, Quesnel's backer, is the chief of the heretical party. In February 1711, Fénelon widened the front of the assault by publishing a 'denunciation of the theology of M. Habert'—in a textbook written for the seminary of Châlons on the orders of Noailles and kept in use there by his brother, who had succeeded him in the diocese. The bishop of Gap joined in with another pastoral letter, while private letters from other bishops ('hypocrites trembling for the purity of the faith', said Saint-Simon) poured in to Louis XIV. These had been prompted by Le Tellier. A leak revealed the conspiracy. Exasperated, Noailles barred a number of Jesuits, including the spiritual directors of some of the great, from preaching or hearing confessions in his diocese; he also proscribed the pastoral letters of the bishops of La Rochelle and Luçon and Gap. The three prelates appealed to the king and the Pope against him. Louis XIV ordered a settlement by negotiation, with the dauphin, the new heir to the throne, presiding, and required Noailles to retract his approval of the *Réflexions morales* as a preliminary. He refused. His thinking was muddled, but his intentions honourable. If the Pope pronounced, he said, he would submit. This angered the king, to whom he was not proposing to submit, and it was a sort of proof to Louis that recourse to Rome was the only way. To Colbert, the unyielding Jansenist bishop of Montpellier, Noailles wrote on 14 December 1711: 'I admit to you Monseigneur, that I have never read the book in its entirety, and that I took the opinion of various people on the

parts I had not looked at.' Even so, he added, he would not withdraw: 'You don't find the truth in the midst of troubles and in the heat of a dispute.' In short, I am not absolutely sure about the *Réflexions morales*, but while it is being attacked and while they are putting pressure on me I'll stand by it—a quixotic rigidity.

Louis had reached the end of his patience. There was an uproar in society, and unpopularity was coming his way. The Noailles clan was agitating on behalf of its senior member, and (according to Fénelon) 'the court and all Paris are for them'. The power of a diocesan bishop in spiritual matters was such that even the king could not get permission for the banned Jesuits to officiate: the duc de Chevreuse wrote to Fénelon on 4 September 1711 describing Louis' anger. Publication and counter-publication abounded, including the inevitable contribution from Quesnel, exasperating enemies and doing friends no good. Any trouble which a papal bull might provoke could hardly be as damaging to royal prestige as what was happening. So Louis decided to call in the Pope.

The abbé de Boussu, a young aristocrat who was later to become archbishop of Malines, was present when Clement XI read and reread Louis XIV's letter. Asked for his opinion, the abbé gave a warning: 'A constitution would have terrible consequences,' he said; he knew the king sufficiently well to fear 'that all the promised deference would not be forthcoming'. The Pope sat silent, elbows on table and head in hands, for three-quarters of an hour. Then rising brusquely, he said: 'I cannot refuse this favour to a king who asks it from me with such insistence and who has rendered such great services to the Church.' Decisive words, but haunting problems remained. Could Louis' guarantee of enforcement be trusted? In the interval, just short of two years, before *Unigenitus* was published, Clement XI was on the rack. There was no relaxation of the French king's ruthless Gallican policies. In the very year of *Unigenitus*, he was to direct the young abbé de Saint-Aignan, newly nominated to the see of Beauvais, to defend the Gallican articles in his thesis. The possibility of a Roman refusal to confirm Saint-Aignan's appointment did not move him: 'my intention being not to abandon—for whatever considerations—the maxims of the Church of my kingdom'.¹² Small wonder the Pope was apprehensive. He sent Père Timothée de la Flèche as a special envoy to Louis to give him a detailed account of his concern. On 8 June 1713, Père Timothée made his report to the king.¹³ Clement XI, he declared, had been afraid from the start that his bull 'would not be received as it ought to be' by the clergy and parlements, but, relying on the king's

assurance to have it accepted without opposition, he had 'seconded his pious wish'. Since then, the pope had heard of dark doings in the Sorbonne—an institution he wants disciplined—and in the Benedictine Congregation of Saint-Maur, which he wants suppressed altogether. There are, too, the intrigues of Noailles and the *procureur général* of the parlement of Paris: he fears they may deceive the king and divert him from his promise 'to have [the bull] received with perfect submission'. Père Timothée had been allowed to see 'a good part' of the Pope's notes on the propositions to be censured, and he was to communicate their general tenor to the king. This item of the Capuchin's mission is revealing. Louis had insisted that he must be shown a draft of the bull beforehand, and the Pope had acceded; it seemed to have dawned at Rome that the royal demand was scandalous, as if 'the Holy Spirit came from France' and a lay sovereign was entitled to correct a spiritual document.¹⁴ Père Timothée's mission included an attempt to offer something less than promised. What happened in the end was: Cardinal de la Trémoille, the French ambassador in Rome, was given a draft (with the actual propositions omitted), and crossed out a word or two which might have infringed the Gallican liberties. But no one ever got away with fobbing off Louis XIV. On 14 September 1713, while the courier with *Unigenitus* in his saddle-bag was still on the way to France, he revoked his guarantee of support—it would not come into effect until the document had been checked under his supervision. Such were the relations between the Pope and the Christian king: the Pope wanting the king to coerce the clergy into accepting his doctrinal pronouncements, and the king wanting to check those pronouncements before they were published.

Controversy in France had accumulated censurable propositions from Quesnel in the papal files. They were reviewed in a preliminary way by a few theologians, the ablest being Castelli, a Lazarist, who had the advantage of good French. A hundred and fifty-five were tagged for investigation. It was agreed this was too many, but the object was to finish with a sizeable total, to make the condemnation more crushing. Then came the setting up of a special commission of theological assessors, excluding the Holy Office from its usual role in these matters—and excluding its anti-Jesuit theologian, Tabaglia. The nine assessors, all monks, were able scholars, judiciously selected from seven different religious Orders, and including only one Jesuit, a Spaniard. Suspicious Jansenists still found grounds for complaint: seven of the experts were Italians, one the Pope's confessor, and, apart from Castelli, none of them was

confident in French—the commission had to work from a Latin translation, with a French copy on the table. Ledrou, a Belgian Augustinian friar, the only assessor who had a history of opposition to the Jesuits, was sent back to his native Louvain at the end of August 1712, half-way through the investigation. But plenty of time was taken.

In the next stage, starting on 9 February 1713, the propositions still under scrutiny were put before a commission of six cardinals. Of these, Fabroni and the aged Sagripanti were devoted to the Jesuits, and Paolucci, the Secretary of State, was an ally of Fabroni; Ottoboni, great nephew of Alexander VIII, was a pensioner of France and a correspondent of Le Tellier's; Spada rarely came to the meetings; Ferrari, the Dominican, was the odd man out, a moderate man and a serious scholar—according to the Jansenists, he was put on the commission to camouflage the bias of the others. In twenty-three sessions, the cardinals completed their task, proposition by proposition: the theological experts' opinions were read out, the cardinals gave their individual opinions, and the Pope (who had taken careful notes) gave the final ruling. The upshot was that 101 propositions were damned. It may seem a strange number. According to one story, Louis XIV had been told that 'over a 100' were deserving of blame, so this was the minimum required to satisfy him. In fact, a stranger story is actually true. There ought to have been only 100, but Fabroni contrived to keep in an extra one (number 33) which all the other cardinals and the Pope himself had declared ought to be omitted. The Pope subsequently accepted its inclusion, but it was an odd incident in a bull intended to demonstrate infallibility.

The completed bull was printed behind locked doors, lest its secrets be revealed prematurely. Up to the last moment, it seemed as if the fearful Pope would refuse to publish it. The Jesuit party had to use (in Daubenton's words) 'an infinity of methods' to keep up his morale, and 'a hundred times' they despaired, thinking they had failed. They managed to have the document held back from the whole college of cardinals—here, it would almost certainly have been rejected. Finally, on 10 September, the bull was posted, and the courier departed: the decision was irrevocable. Immediately, opinion in Rome was hostile. Among the anecdotes circulating was that of the Pope seeking reassurance from Cardinals Carpegna and Casini and being told that 'the best thing he could do was to throw the bull on the fire'. In France Saint-Simon collected stories of groups of cardinals calling on Clement XI to complain about not

being consulted. But what mattered most was the reception of *Unigenitus* in Paris. On 9 December, Daubenton described the court of Rome as ‘greatly troubled about the delay in France in accepting the bull. They say it ought to have been received from the start with blind and respectful submission.’ Anxiety for news had made the Pope ill; if there was trouble, as over *Vineam Domini*, said Daubenton, he would surely die. Christmas came with the sky darkening and with the sound of distant thunder in the air. But Clement XI could still continue to hope. Then the storm broke.

37 The Appeal to a General Council

I

What was wrong with *Unigenitus*, ‘that diabolical Bull . . . which destroys the very foundation of Christianity’, as John Wesley called it?¹ In the first place, it was unjust to Quesnel. He had written a book which had edified a whole generation of pious readers.² Père de la Chaize, the Jesuit confessor of Louis XIV who preceded Le Tellier, had used it for his meditations. Père d'Avril, another Jesuit, had plagiarized it in his *Saints et heureux retours sur soi-même*. Bossuet had written an essay in its justification, posthumously published in 1710, saying Quesnel spoke the language of the saints and of the Bible. On the face of it, a worthy book; as Voltaire was to say, ‘the good in it is evident everywhere; as for the evil, you have to search for it’. If, after years of such searching, prosecuted with partisan diligence, theological errors were detected, this was hardly a reason why its author should be portrayed as a heretical conspirator. Yet this was how the preamble of the bull³ presented Quesnel. He was included among the ‘false prophets’ against whom Jesus Christ had given a salutary warning—‘wolves in sheep's clothing’, ‘masters of lies’, ‘seducers full of artifice’, ‘sons of the ancient father of lies’, who ‘insinuate the poison of the most criminal error under the authority of the word of God’. Though on the surface his *Réflexions morales* appears respectable, it was said, ‘with a style smoother than oil . . . and appearances of piety’, the book in fact contains ‘false and dangerous doctrines’ and ‘pernicious maxims’. In 1713, with standards of debate becoming more sophisticated, sanctimonious vituperation of this kind gave the bull an archaic flavour, let alone constituting incongruous exaggeration in a pronouncement of the Vicar of Christ. Not content with the 101 propositions which followed as justification for its rhetoric, the preamble spoke of additional errors too numerous to particularize: ‘we have remarked many other propositions bearing much resemblance and affinity to those we have just condemned’. In addition, there were passages

sinister in a more arcane fashion, inciting to ‘disobedience and rebellion’ by the trick of exhorting the reader to exercise ‘Christian patience’, a sort of code word for implying the existence of a persecution (of the Jansenists). ‘More intolerable still’, the preamble goes on, ‘we see the sacred text of the New Testament altered’, departing from the Vulgate, which Catholics are required to regard as authentic; ‘bad faith has been taken to the point where, in place of the natural sense . . . a foreign and often dangerous meaning is substituted’. No specific examples of these manifold errors, incitements, and falsifications being given, the reader could hardly judge them, and Quesnel would not find it easy to devise a refutation.

The final strands of the web of charges woven around the *Réflexions morales* came with the allegation of ‘the renewal of diverse heresies, principally those contained in the notorious propositions of Jansenius, taken in the sense in which they have been condemned’. This was a particularly wounding accusation. The standard, long-established Jansenist position was: not to challenge the validity of the condemnation of the five ‘notorious propositions’, but to deny that they could be found in the *Augustinus* of Jansenius. Only a few unreasonable fanatics on the extreme predestinarian wing of the Jansenist movement would defend the doctrine of the five propositions. In fact, Quesnel was a Jansenist moderate,⁴ and in the *Réflexions morales* he contradicts these extreme views: we can resist grace, he says; there is an accord between grace and free will; God does not command the impossible; Jesus is the redeemer of all. His theology has a different and less pessimistic starting-point than that of the *Augustinus*. The two theologians differ in their view of the relation of nature and grace in the age of Adam's innocence. To Jansenius, in nature and in man there is an inbuilt fault, a tendency to self-destruction; according to Quesnel, there is no infirmity in nature or in man as created—only, God has put all his creation in a position of dependence. So long as man acknowledged that dependence, the love of God—that is, the grace of God—was in his heart. Even so, Quesnel does not go out of his way to dissociate himself from Jansenius, and their views on the operation of grace (efficacious, free, and non-universal) are identical, leading in propositions 5, 38, 39, and 59 to sombre statements at variance with Christian hope and love. Indeed, Quesnel was not consistent; he was trapped in the illogicalities which arise when theologians try too literally to reconcile human free will and divine omnipotence. But did his errors in a deeply spiritual treatise deserve these baroque denunciations, these accusations of vicious conspiracy? And as the

book had been read with edification by so many for so long, could it possibly contain such a multitude of dangerous errors, specified and unspecified?

The *Réflexions morales*, so comprehensively condemned, had not been examined by procedures which accorded with natural justice. The author had asked to be allowed to appear in his own defence, or to be given a note of dubious passages so that he could either explain or retract them. As Quesnel made a publication out of everything he did, everyone knew about his request and its rejection. In a private letter a generation later,⁵ Pope Benedict XIV admitted the injustice: before an author and those who have approved his book are 'branded on the face', he said, they have a right to be heard. Nor were reasonable efforts made to take opinions from experts who might have testified on Quesnel's side. Only one theological assessor (soon removed) out of the nine, and one cardinal out of the six, was at all inclined to his cause. The examination of the book was conducted on an unscholarly basis. Since only three of the fifteen examiners—assessors and cardinals—knew French, deliberation proceeded by reference to a Latin translation; it was accurate, but nuances may have been missed. And the 101 propositions were taken from the early versions which Noailles had approved; but in subsequent editions, Quesnel had changed or omitted 21 of them.⁶ Did the Church take no account of repentance?

The broad strategy of the listing of the 101 propositions is evident. The theology of outright predestination which annihilates both human freedom and the concept of natural religion is outlawed; in this respect, the bull did service to the progress of Christian thought and evangelism. More especially, the way was opened for a dialogue between the Christian and non-Christian faiths, a possibility which the Jesuits had glimpsed but which has been realized only in our own century. A whole series of observations which might have made a reference to the hierarchical nature of the Church but did not do so were rejected, more especially those with Jansenist reforming implications, proposing a greater intellectual freedom and a more active role for the laity, women included. The method used did not involve definition of doctrine; it was, rather, a steering intervention, proceeding by negations, which in less troubled times might have been convincingly put to the faithful as the setting of a course away from suspected hazards, with the possibility that, later on, the rudder of Peter's barque would be swung the other way. But, as was well known, the whole design of the bull sprang from the Jesuit–Jansenist feud and the vendetta against Noailles. The pilot's motives were

suspect. Every one of his sailing directions would be carefully looked at. And there were 101 of them.

To cite so many propositions was folly. By mathematical probability, almost certainly, something would go wrong. Clement XI and the French ambassador in Rome knew it, and Père Timothée de la Flèche, who had made the promotion of the bull his life-work, was aghast when he saw so many.⁷ A multitude of errors denounced made the branding of Quesnel and Noailles more shameful, and the demonstration of papal authority more resounding, but the risks were high. Unlike the five propositions ascribed to Jansenius, manifestly extremist theology and supposedly hidden in a vast Latin tome, the 101 propositions of *Unigenitus* were authentically in Quesnel, in French, in a book which everyone could read and which many people possessed. The strength of a chain is in its weakest link. If a single proposition was unfairly condemned, the Pope was not infallible. France was Gallican, standing by the articles of 1682, by which the Pope's judgements were not irreformable without 'the consent of the Church'. The Sorbonne, the parlement, the Jansenists, and some of the bishops were lying in ambush for statements from Rome which would confirm the Gallican thesis.

According to opponents of *Unigenitus*, in some of the 101 propositions the Pope condemned the actual words of Scripture, in others, phrases from the Fathers and the saints.⁸ In commenting and meditating on the New Testament, Quesnel often had occasion to paraphrase the biblical texts, and his writing was full of scriptural and patristic echoes. The Roman theologians, looking for quotable errors in this theological minefield, considering themselves entitled to include censures of statements which were valid yet were susceptible to misuse, and anxious to include as many items as possible, slipped into decisions which were hard to defend. For example, proposition 30 runs: 'all those God wishes to save by Jesus Christ, are saved infallibly. John 6: 40'. The Johannine text cited reads: 'For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth in him, should have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' Proposition 2, which Quesnel bases on the text 'I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing', runs: 'the grace of Jesus Christ, the efficacious principle of all good, is necessary for every good action, great or small, easy or difficult—for its beginning, continuance and completion. Without it, nothing is done, nothing can be done. John 15: 5.' What Quesnel is saying inclines to the terminology of predestinarian theology (which is, no

doubt, the reason for the Roman condemnation), yet it derives from the scriptural texts and is faithful to them (as Jansenists also pointed out, proposition 30 is word for word from St Fulgentius). In our day, we can say that the Fathers or Scripture are mistaken: it was not possible then. A sacred text could be analysed and explained philologically, linguistically, mystically, allegorically, and set in contrast to other sacred texts, but it could not be jettisoned. Thus, when the Assembly of the Gallican clergy in 1700 was discussing the morality of mental reservations, the case of Jacob pretending to be Esau proved an impossible obstacle; they had to conclude with St Augustine, that this apparent fraud was an unfathomable mystery.⁹ This respect for established authority posed a dilemma for Clement XI when giving his opinion on proposition 12: ‘suspect of heresy—unless it is the actual words of Saint Prosper’. That is, if indeed the proposition can be found among the labyrinthine hexameters of St Prosper of Aquitaine's *Carmen de ingratis* (c.428), we dare not act against it—if not, suspect of heresy. The Jansenists, masters of sophisticated exegesis within the current fundamentalist parameters, at the end of 1713 published *La Constitution Unigenitus en quatre colonnes avec le jugement des saints Pères*, setting each of the censured propositions alongside texts of the Bible and the Fathers, showing identities and affinities. By 1714, this work had grown to be the *Hexaples*, a six-column demonstration which in later editions ran to seven volumes. Later in the year appeared the *Lettre d'un évêque de France à Monseigneur Fabroni sur la constitution Unigenitus* drawing new parallels: the homilies of Clement XI himself contained sentences identical to some of those denounced in Quesnel. The Pope was plunged into despair. ‘If the Bull was to do again,’ the French ambassador reported from Rome in February 1714, ‘his Holiness would take more care.’¹⁰ To have foreseen the folly of the 101 propositions and yet to have gone along with them, was a grievous burden to bear.

The ‘diabolical’ section of the bull which Wesley spoke of begins with proposition 72. In this and the next five, the Church is described as ‘the assembly of the children of God . . . adopted in Jesus Christ’, with ‘its head the Incarnate Word’. There is no reference to the hierarchy and the papacy, and presumably this is why the censure is incurred. After this, with proposition 79 comes a series of seven, which can be taken to be included on similar grounds—that is, no reference is made to the supervisory role of the clergy, and too much initiative is left to the laity. Even so, they make astonishing reading.

- 79 'It is useful and necessary, at all times and in all places, and for all sorts of people, to study the Scriptures, and to know their spirit, piety and mysteries.'
- 80 Concerning the Ethiopian eunuch reading Isaiah in Acts 8: 28, 'the fact that a man of business and finance reads, shows how Holy Scripture is for all'.
- 81 'The holy obscurity of the Word of God is no justification for laymen dispensing themselves from reading it.'
- 82 'Sunday, which succeeded the Sabbath, ought to be sanctified by pious readings, above all, of the Holy Scriptures.'
- 83 Concerning Jesus and the woman by the well of Samaria, this shows that the mysteries of religion and the Bible should be available to women. 'It is not the simplicity of women but the proud science of men that has caused the abuse of the Bible from which heresies arise.'
- 84 To refuse the people the right to read or hear the Scriptures is, as it were, 'shutting up the mouth of Jesus'.
- 85 Forbidding the reading of Scripture, more especially of the gospels, is imposing 'a sort of excommunication' on the 'children of light'.

The next proposition (86) ties up with the seven preceding propositions, as it asks for the right of 'simple people' to express themselves in the liturgical services.

In their discussions¹¹ of those exhortations to Bible reading, the Roman theologians had favoured the formulas: 'temeraria', 'favens haereticis', and, less frequently, 'iniuriose Ecclesiae'. No doubt with the Protestant Reformation in mind, they saw the idea of the Bible open to all as dangerous, an encouragement to heresy, harmful to the Church. Had they spoken only positively, declaring the mission of the Church to direct the faithful in interpreting the Scriptures, they would have presented a small target to their critics. As it was, using the device of condemning statements rather than defining doctrine, they were trapped by their method; within the narrow circle of their cloistered logic, they issued what appeared to be a manifesto against one of the most obvious of Christian duties.

By contrast to the astonishing inclusion of propositions 79–86, the appearance of 91–101 can easily be understood, for in them Quesnel was speaking as a Jansenist under 'persecution', exhorting to patient suffering under unjust censures, and complaining of the imposition of unnecessary oaths. But the papal censure of proposition 91 was to arouse the wrath of the Gallican lawyers.

The fear of an unjust excommunication ought never to prevent us from doing our duty . . . Even when the wickedness of men seems to have excluded us, we are never out of the Church, so long as we are attached to God, to Jesus Christ and to the Church itself, by charity. John 10: 22–23

This sentiment had a familiar ring to Frenchmen: it was more or less what the French bishops had said, protesting their loyalty, when Pope Gregory XIV had excommunicated Henri IV. There were examples of the use of excommunication against the political authorities within living memory—by the archbishop of Malines against a high legal official in Belgium thirteen years previously, and by the Pope against Louis XIV twelve years before that.¹² The jurists were determined to allow no refurbishment of this weapon in the ecclesiastical armoury. More than this, the law courts protected the laity in their rights to the sacraments and other privileges as members of the Church; the Church belonged to the nation, not to the professional ecclesiastics. Public opinion rallied behind the lawyers, since proposition 91 was a defence of the laity against clerical pretensions; it was simple to understand and was obviously true—a statement no rational or moral man could deny. At this point, the deviousness of the Roman draughtsmen became evident, for even with propositions of unexceptionable veracity like this one, they had provided themselves with inbuilt excuses for condemnation.

This indeed was the final count against *Unigenitus*: its intellectual evasiveness—one might almost say, dishonesty. The 101 propositions were subjected to a global censure. ‘Respectively’, they are said to be ‘false’, ‘captious’, ‘offensive to pious ears’, ‘harmful to the Church’, ‘seditious’, ‘impious’, ‘blasphemous’, ‘heretical’, and so on: altogether twenty-four adjectives or adjectival clauses. The reader is not told what is wrong with any single proposition, so he is deprived of the opportunity of making an intellectual assessment of the Pope's judgement. ‘Offensive to pious ears’ is like ‘conduct prejudicial to good order and discipline’ in the British Army Act, a phrase to put on the charge sheet when all other charges fail. This was how apologists for *Unigenitus* defended the censure of proposition 91; it was a truth, but a truth indecent to state, since the mere mention of the possibility of ‘an unjust excommunication’ may offend ‘pious ears’.¹³ Thus the shadow of heresy, blasphemy, and impiety was thrown over Quesnel's book, apparently in specific detail; yet in no particular instance did the Pope substantiate his allegations. At this point, the Jansenist protest slips into mesh with the thought of the Enlightenment. The thinkers of these two intellectual tendencies, so

obviously contrasted in every other way, share a common basic conviction: belief means, not acquiescence before a ruling of authority, whether spiritual or secular, but the free giving of rational assent. A man—and a Christian—has a right to be able to do this. Those who demand his allegiance must put the issues before him honestly, without obfuscation. Already, *vérité*—‘truth’—was the key word of the Jansenist party. In 1718, Nicolas Petitpied, their leading scholar, summed up in a memorable phrase the reason for rejecting *Unigenitus*: ‘il ne suffit pas d'être catholique pour être sauvé: il faut encore rendre témoignage à la vérité.’

II

The news of the bull *Unigenitus* was received in Paris with incredulity and derision. The nuncio Benvoglio, looking back afterwards at the disaster, described how in the court at Versailles and in the capital, there was a general outcry. In their salons, women led the way in ‘impertinent discussions of the deepest mysteries of religion’. Satires and pamphlets abounded, he said, and clandestine manuscripts circulated, ridiculing the papal document. The long Latin text, archaic in phraseology, authoritarian in tone, stood for Jesuit conspiracy and Italian intrigues, for papal pretensions against the Gallican Church, for clerical manœuvres against the laity, for injustice to Jansenists in general and Quesnel in particular, for an insult to the worthy archbishop of the diocese, for an obscurantist attack on scriptural piety. It was, too, a monument of the tyrannical will of the ageing king. ‘The Bull’, said a contemporary, ‘made a million Jansenists.’

The story of the adventures of Benoît Fourgon in Lyon in the first half of 1714 throws a harsh light on the passions and tensions of the times.¹⁴ As a young deacon from a rich merchant family, he walked out of the church when the archbishop's pastoral letter accepting *Unigenitus* was read. The *official*, the diocesan legal registrar, sent for him to be examined under oath. Fourgon lectured him on the impropriety of imposing an ‘unnecessary’ oath; nevertheless, he took it, reserving the right to refuse to implicate other people. He was next taken to the episcopal palace to be confronted by the archbishop; he refused to name his confessor, and was put in the episcopal prison with two army officers and some prostitutes; here, he reformed the gaoler from eating meat on Fridays and allowing social activities in the chapel. The news came that his father had

disinherited him. Then he was ferried off to the grim State prison of Pierre Encise, and incarcerated in a dank cell in the rock, with a sordid latrine bucket emptied only once a week. The archbishop and the *prévot des marchands* (the mayor of Lyon) next interviewed him. Fourgon said that he would not accept the Pope's verdict, but only that of a General Council, or perhaps, of a French national Council, provided it met in accordance with 'due procedures and with liberty'.

'What is this liberty that you ask for?' raged the archbishop. 'To listen to these *Messieurs*, we are not free, all is done by conspiracy and violence; you'd think we were under the reign of a tyrant.'

Fourgon defined 'liberty': the bishops to attend 'exempts de crainte et d'espérance', no pressures, no bribes.

The *official* interrupted: 'You believe you'd be damned if you give blind obedience?'

'Oui, Monsieur, je le crois.'

Fourgon went back to gaol excommunicated. Unwittingly, the legal registrar had summed up the Jansenist case against *Unigenitus*. Blind obedience leads to damnation.

Amid the tumult, Noailles behaved impeccably. In a letter to the bishop of Agen in December 1711, he had stated his position. He would stand by gratuitous predestination even if this meant he was a Jansenist—this he regarded as the doctrine of St Paul, St Augustine, and Aquinas. Those who differed from him—'Molinists', Jesuit supporters—would nevertheless be employed in his diocese, provided they were strict in the confessional. As for Quesnel, religion can get along without any particular book, so if the Pope condemned the *Réflexions morales*, he would submit. In a letter to the French ambassador in Rome on 11 January 1712,¹⁵ he formally made the same undertaking. On 28 September 1713, he was as good as his word; he issued a pastoral letter revoking the approbation he had given to Quesnel's book and forbidding his flock to read it.

Louis XIV now proceeded to enforce the acceptance of the bull on the Gallican Church, the Sorbonne, and the parlement of Paris. On 16 October 1713, twenty-nine bishops met in Paris at an *ad hoc* conference—not an official assembly. They were to sit for five months, to 5 February 1714, with other prelates coming in to join them (by 23 January 1714, there were forty-nine altogether). The Pope wanted simple acceptance from them without appearance of examination: as the Roman Secretary of State wrote to the nuncio, 'the Pope has sent the bull to France, not to be examined, but to be

obeyed'.¹⁶ Noailles and eight other bishops (seven in the end, for one retracted) wished to ask the Pope for explanations or, failing that, to accept only 'sous réserve des explications'. The majority rejected this course, which would have led them into unpredictable hazards. Yet, while they accepted the bull, they drew up—as it were in parallel with their acceptance—a draft pastoral letter explaining it.¹⁷ Without difficulty they justified the condemnation of extreme propositions on predestination. Those concerning the Church as a divine society under the headship of Christ might be taken to imply the true Church to be an invisible corporation, to which only the perfect may belong. The propositions on the Scriptures, they said, were true enough, only they did not allow for the marginal possibility of the few people for whom reading the Bible might be dangerous or inappropriate. As for proposition 91 on excommunication, they held this to be veracious as far as it went, except that allowances needed to be made for the moral blindness of those who refuse to have their wrongdoing censured and who invent 'duties' for themselves which cannot possibly be the will of God.¹⁸ It was an intelligent document, though the convolutions of argument made it obvious that the bull had disquieted them. Cardinal Rohan's letter to the archbishop of Arles at the end of their deliberations shows how they hoped to have it both ways, preserving the Gallican liberties and episcopal power without a direct confrontation with Rome. 'The bishops have received the Constitution [*Unigenitus*]', he said, 'purely and simply, not as mere executors of the orders of the Pope, but as pronouncing the same judgement with him, because they recognize in the bull the doctrines of the Church.' The explanations they propose to give would not be 'limiting' or 'modifying' the papal document, but 'making its true bearing more evident'.

Such elegant manœuvres were not available to the doctors of the Sorbonne facing the express order of the king to register the bull, though with the finesse of theologians they contrived to slip ambiguity into their obedience.¹⁹ On 24 February 1714, Rohan, the *grand aumônier*, warned the *syndic*, Le Rouge, that *Unigenitus* had to be registered at the next formal Faculty meeting (these were held on the first working day of every month). On 1 March over 200 doctors gathered to face a *lettre de cachet* giving peremptory orders. Dr Habert seized on the recently published pastoral letter of Cardinal Noailles (25 February) as an excuse to propose obedience to the royal command while rendering it meaningless: let the bull be registered 'by express order of the king', but let its effect on doctrine, morals, and discipline be suspended until Rome furnished the 'explanations'

required by the archbishop of Paris. On 3 March the Faculty met again to be confronted by a second *lettre de cachet* forbidding 'delay or modification'. Le Rouge tried to panic his colleagues into surrender by telling the clerks to put down anyone who expressed a reservation, however timidly, as an 'opponent of the king—Scribe Adversatur Regi'. Dr Léger craftily suggested registering the papal document with the two *lettres de cachet* attached to it—future readers of the minutes would know what to conclude. There was a third meeting on 5 March, with Le Rouge carrying on his bullying tactics; voting was confused, but in the end he declared that the decree of registration had been passed (it had, more or less, but not in its final precise wording). On 10 March, at a meeting attended by fewer than fifty, the decree was ratified. However, on 4 April, seven doctors (subsequently turned out of the Sorbonne by the king for their pains) accused the *syndic* of falsifying the vote, and at the following formal session on 2 May, Dr Hullot declared that since Dr Léger's motion of 3 March had met with general approval, the registration of the bull had been an empty formality: it had never been 'accepted'. At the next meeting in June, twenty-eight doctors drew the inference that the *syndic's* decree could not possibly have represented the authentic will of the Faculty, more especially because it concerned a papal pronouncement contrary to 'Christian morals, academic freedom, the rights of the Gallican Church and the laws of the kingdom'. Enough had been done to enable some future meeting to dissociate the Faculty from *Unigenitus* without weakening its authority by admitting past compliance.

The magistrates of the parlement, led by the *procureur général* Daguesseau and the *avocat général* Joly de Fleury, did their best to put off the angry king, who was demanding instant registration. First, they had to wait for the beginning of the Law Term; then the bull had to be considered by the bishops. Meanwhile, Daguesseau was organizing an examination of the bull by the magistrates on three political counts: there was proposition 91, with secular implications concerning excommunication; there were propositions 80–5 on the reading of the Scriptures, which concerned the rights of the laity; and there was the question of the effect of the bull on newly converted Protestants, who had been given assurances about Catholic beliefs which *Unigenitus* contradicted. Finally, in the last resort, there was the argument that an *ad hoc* assembly of about forty bishops, 'arbitrarily convened and happening to be available', could not be said to represent the Gallican Church. But by 15 February 1714, parlement's delaying tactics were exhausted, and the king's letters

patent accepting *Unigenitus* were registered with a clause of qualification reserving the Gallican liberties.

Noailles had withdrawn his approbation of the *Réflexions morales*, but this did not mean that he accepted the disproportionate maledictions cast on the book, and on 25 February 1714 he forbade his priests to accept *Unigenitus* without his authority—he had asked Rome for ‘explanations’, and he awaited an answer. Having terrorized the magistrates of the parlement and the doctors of the Sorbonne, Louis XIV would now have to discipline his archbishop of Paris. On the evening of 19 July, he exclaimed before his courtiers: ‘without being a theologian, I can see from all I’ve heard today, that the cardinal de Noailles is a heretic, and that being so, he ought to expect that I’ll use all my authority to deal with him’.

Dealing with a cardinal-archbishop in revolt allied to other prelates bristled with legal problems. Stories of a plot to cut through formalities circulated:²⁰ Noailles to be kidnapped and whisked off to Rome to be judged. It was an improbable rumour, but as late as 2 August 1715, Le Tellier was devising an official version of it, with a royal *lettre de cachet* arresting the cardinal and a carriage taking him to the prison of Pierre Encise at Lyon en route to Rome.²¹ The king and his advisers, Mme de Maintenon and Cardinals Rohan and Bissy, were too civilized to countenance such sinister ingenuities, and, as Gallicans, they could not give a Pope *carte blanche* to judge a French bishop. La Trémoille, the ambassador in Rome, hoped to persuade Noailles to issue a pastoral letter restating his position in a fashion the Pope could accept—a vain endeavour. One possibility of disciplining the archbishop remained: trial before a National Council of the Gallican Church. In December 1714, Amelot, a diplomat and high-level administrator, was sent to Rome to press for this solution.²² He was to offer guarantees: the assembly would be under the presidency of papal legates, and Noailles and his supporters would not be present as voting, deliberating members, but as accused clerics brought to trial (a promise which, in fact, exceeded the legal powers of the Crown in matters ecclesiastical). Amelot found no disposition in the Curia to allow the Gallican Church this opportunity to demonstrate its authority. Fabroni, indeed, made ‘the violent and unheard of’ suggestion that the king should deprive Noailles of his French nationality, so that the Pope could judge him without infringing the Gallican liberties. In July 1715, Louis finally decided to call the Council on his own authority by a declaration registered in Parlement.²³ On 13 August, when leading magistrates warned him that such a declaration would be rejected, he replied

that he would go down in person and hold a *lit de justice* by which he could override all opposition. As he spoke, the hand of death was upon him.

On 15 August, Louis took to his bed. Gangrene was creeping up his legs. Ten days later he received the last sacraments. The next day, in the presence of the Court, he declared his allegiance to 'the Catholic, apostolic and Roman religion'. Addressing Le Tellier and Cardinals Rohan and Bissy, he laid on them the responsibility for the most recent crisis in the affairs of the Church: 'I only followed your advice and did only what you counselled me to do. That is why, if I have done wrong, it is on your consciences . . . You will answer before God for me.'²⁴ And he protested that he had never hated the archbishop of Paris: 'I was always sorry about what I did against him, but I was told that this is what I ought to do.'²⁵

Would the two meet and be reconciled? Noailles had written a moving letter to Mme de Maintenon, and she read it to the king. Louis said he wished to embrace the cardinal—if he would submit to the Pope. Rohan, Bissy, Le Tellier, and Mme de Maintenon consulted in the embrasure of the window. Rohan said nothing, but the other three told the dying man that he must stay firm and exclude the archbishop from his presence if he would not accept *Unigenitus*. When Louis sank into his final coma on the night of 31 August, the stench of the gangrene had driven away the courtiers and the very doctors, but Le Tellier and Rohan were with him: Noailles was still excluded.²⁶

III

At the news of the death of Louis XIV, there were bonfires in the streets of Paris: he had reigned too long, and taxed his people too much to pay for his wars and his splendour. The persecuted Jansenists could breathe again. Jean Soanen, bishop of Senez, one of them, wrote jubilantly to Noailles: 'Never did a miracle of Providence more manifestly intervene, never was a prodigy so sudden and so dazzling . . . God has arisen to defend his cause, and all his enemies are overthrown.'²⁷

Philippe of Orléans became regent on behalf of the boy-king Louis XV. A decision of the parlement of Paris removed the checks on his powers which the testament of the dead king had prescribed; the parlement, in return, regained the right of remonstrance which Louis XIV had arbitrarily taken away. Often, in the century to come, this right was to be used by the magistrates in defence of

Gallican and Jansenist causes. The regent, intelligent, courageous, debauched, eternally bored and trying to divert himself with orgies, black magic, and practical jokes, had no religion, but he respected piety in others, and he was drawn to Noailles. He was also much influenced by his bevy of wayward daughters, especially the two oldest. The duchesse de Berry, an alcoholic and a nymphomaniac, encouraged him in dissolute living, while Mlle de Chartres, a nun and a self-styled Jansenist, drew him to the cause of the appellants. Sœur Bathilde (her name in religion) became abbess of Chelles in 1718; she was a strange superior for a religious house, making her abbey a centre of musical and theatrical performances, riding like a whirlwind, and practising pistol shooting to the terror of the novices, but her religion was real and she had bouts of fanatical austerity. She was the handsomest and cleverest of the family, and her father was devoted to her. But there were also sound political reasons why the regent should abandon the tyrannical policies of Louis XIV. He had to manage the great families of the aristocracy, now they no longer danced attendance on the Sun King, and the Noailles clan was influential. He was beholden to the parlement for breaking the old king's will and increasing his own authority, and he wanted to be a figure of reconciliation in society to attract wide support for his candidature to the throne if the sickly boy-king should die. Living in Paris at the Palais-Royal and not in the artificial environment of Versailles, he was in touch with the public opinion of the capital—the wits, the *frondeurs*, and the ballad makers; he knew how unpopular *Unigenitus* and its Jesuit supporters were, and he did not mean to be associated with them.

In place of the old absolutism exercised by ruthless personal supervision of a few ministers, the regent set up a system of half a dozen councils under a Council of Regency. For religious affairs, there was a 'Conseil de conscience'. To the astonishment of the papal nuncio, Noailles was made its chairman, and also took over the *feuille des bénéfices* which Le Tellier had held—he would now make the recommendations for high ecclesiastical appointments. Three Gallicans of the parlement joined Noailles on this council: Daguesseau, Joly de Fleury, and the Jansenist abbé Pucelle, a *conseiller clerc* (an ecclesiastic attached to the magistracy), one of the few who had dared to defy the old king to the end. Jansenist prisoners were freed from the Bastille; contrary to what was expected, there were not many of them, no more than 'a cart load'. Benoît Fourgon was released from his cell at Lyon; everyone now praised his conduct, even the archbishop's *official*, and his father put him back in his will.

The archbishop of Tours and the bishop of Châlons, banished for their opposition to *Unigenitus*, now appeared in Paris again. Le Tellier, who had been named by Louis XIV in his last days to be confessor to the boy-king, came to Orléans for instructions. ‘*Mon père* you are mistaking me for someone else,’ said the regent; ‘it is for your superiors to dispose of you, not me.’ And he was banished to Amiens with a comfortable pension. The Jesuits were universally decried. ‘Everyone here speaks of the late king and of the Constitution [*Unigenitus*] with astonishing freedom,’ reported a Benedictine at Saint-Vanne from Paris on 16 October 1715: ‘it is rare to see Jesuits in the streets, and the few who walk there rarely escape being insulted. People stop them, even if they are driving in a carriage, to ask them the latest news about the Bull.’²⁸

So many people who had given lip-service to *Unigenitus* under the shadow of Louis XIV now emerged into the sunshine of conscientious protest. Thirty-two bishops signed a letter inviting the government to ask the Pope to give explanations of his bull. On 1 October the exiled doctors came back to the Sorbonne; Le Rouge, the sycophantic *syndic* who had used royal *lettres de cachet* to throw them out, having the humiliation of having to read a letter from the regent readmitting them. The Faculty then elected a new *syndic*, Dr Ravechet. On 2 December, Humbelot, an ultramontane, did his side a disservice by a provocative speech: when he declared that the Pope had been insulted, there was laughter, and when he insisted that *Unigenitus* had been accepted, there was a clamour for him to withdraw. After three more meetings, on 4 January, the Faculty resolved that the decree accepting the bull had been ‘false and suppositious’; it was to be struck out of the registers, the bill for printing it would not be paid, and those who had engineered the fraud would be disciplined. The Faculty was able to rewrite its past history by citing the faulty procedures of Le Rouge and his supporters and the protests of the majority, but Dr Léger summed up the strict logic behind the Faculty position: ‘*Non fuit acceptata, quia non fuit deliberatio.*’²⁹ Theologians cannot be supposed to have subscribed to a statement if they have not been allowed to discuss it. After a year’s interval, the faculties of theology of the universities of Nantes and Reims followed the Parisian example and withdrew their acceptance of *Unigenitus*—Nantes on 2 January 1716, Reims on 26 June and 1 July.³⁰ A year was, perhaps, the average for the provinces to lag behind the capital, though, given the merciless rule of Bishop Beauveau at Nantes and Archbishop Mailly at Reims, this caution was not surprising.

Some of the bishops who had issued pastoral letters accepting the papal constitution had set about enforcing acceptance on their clergy. Most parish priests had security of tenure, but their bishop could interdict them or impose a penalty of three months' discipline in a seminary—a punishment rarely used except for offenders against sexual morality. There were some sad incidents at Reims:³¹ curé Cabrisseau in black cloak without a surplice taking a place in his parish church below the lowest of his assistant clergy, and three canons and three curés of the town moved from their comfortable lodgings to the rigours of seminary existence. When the revolt of the theological faculties of Paris, Nantes, and Reims came, there was a design among orthodox bishops to refuse to ordain any candidate who had studied at a university which did not accept the bull. These threats to the rights of the parish clergy and to the privileges of the universities brought in the parlements.³² They had a legal weapon to hand, the *appel comme d'abus*,³³ by which the sovereign courts could act against any ecclesiastic who exceeded his powers, whether infringing the canons of the Church, the law of the land, or the Gallican liberties. Monseigneur de Mailly, Archbishop of Reims, was convicted under such an appeal, and the three canons and the three curés were triumphantly restored to office. Nine curés of Nantes appealed to the parlement of Brittany against their bishop's description of *Unigenitus* as 'a rule of faith'. In November 1716 the parlement ruled the bishop out of order and, for good measure, issued a definition of infallibility in the Church as residing 'in the whole body of pastors'.³⁴ Given its contingent of magistrates favourable to the Jesuits, the parlement of Aix might have been expected to stay aloof. However, the archbishop of Arles drastically issued a public and canonical admonition against the mayor (*premier consul*) of his episcopal city for ridiculing *Unigenitus*; parlement, dealing with the case by *appel comme d'abus*, realized that the rights of the laity were indeed in danger, and took a careful look at the pastoral letters of the various bishops within the area of its jurisdiction. Letters of the bishops of Toulon and Marseille proclaiming excommunication against those refusing the bull were banned: so too was one from Toulon against the universities, and another from Marseille calling for prayers for rain with the proviso that God would not open the clouds for those who refused to obey his ministers.³⁵

Early in the summer of 1716, the regent decided to try to settle the controversy by persuading the Pope to give 'explanations'. The warfare between bishops and parlements was embarrassing; so too was Clement XI's refusal to issue bulls to candidates nominated for

vacant bishoprics, on the ground that Noailles held the *feuille* and his recommendations could not be trusted. On 1 June, instructions were drawn up for the abbé Chevalier, a special envoy to Rome, with a parallel memorandum for the ambassador.³⁶ Four options were to be put to the Pope. He could make a statement saying he had never intended to derogate from the doctrines of St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas; he could give elucidations of the bull of a more specific kind; he could allow the French bishops to do so and declare his approval of their views; or he could issue a censure of the various publications which had attacked *Unigenitus*, slipping in explanations as part of his demonstration of the errors of the writers. If he refused to co-operate, dark hints could be dropped of the possibility of calling a National Council of the Gallican Church, or even (on the analogy of the Emperor Theodosius and the Council of Ephesus) of the convocation of an Ecumenical Council on the authority of the king of France acting independently.

It was a hopeless mission from the start. The 'explanations' idea had been the invention of Noailles and the Jansenists, and the sight of the Jansenist Père Laborde of the Oratory as assistant to Chevalier did nothing to reassure the Curia. There was an extraordinary assembly of cardinals on 27 June at which Clement XI spoke for two and a half hours, and afterwards Chevalier saw the Secretary of State and various cardinals. But there was never any intention of making concessions. It fell to the ambassador to tell the regent what ought to have been obvious to such an intelligent politician, why the proposals were doomed. Once, rightly or wrongly, infallibility had been laid on the line, the Pope could not risk compromising it. Explanations might win over the minority bishops, but equally might anger the others. Besides, disastrous as the bull had been, it had at least kept within the context and method of doctrinal reticence. The Pope did not approve of credal statements, he simply 'did not disapprove'. He hit out against dangerous assertions, but he did not make positive ones himself; for to do so would end debate on problems 'about which theologians argue and concerning which [His Holiness] wishes to allow free speculation'. If anything, the effect of the Chevalier mission was to steel the hesitant Curia to offensive action.³⁷ On 6 December, four letters from Rome arrived in Paris. One, from the Pope to the regent, declared the intention to discipline Noailles and the Sorbonne. Another, from the Sacred Congregation to Noailles, was a final appeal to him to come over, balancing the threats of the papal letter with praise and unctuous phrases. Third was a circular to the acceptant bishops, praising their

fidelity (the regent forbade them to receive it). Finally, there was a brief to the Sorbonne, withdrawing all papal privileges and forbidding the Faculty to admit to any degree or doctorate. The parlements of Paris, Rouen, Rennes, Dijon, Toulouse, and Bordeaux denounced this document, and forbade its publication.

Since Rome was adamant, the French government consulted the bishops. Fifty-eight of them met in Paris through December, and on 3 January 1717 they had a session in the presence of the regent. Some wanted to keep to the old line of accepting the bull, not as bowing to authority, but ‘with the Pope’, thus preserving the Gallican liberties. Noailles stayed by his position: he would not accept without explanations. By now he was regarded as the leader of all churchmen opposed to the Jesuits, for on 12 November he had banned them from preaching, catechizing, and hearing confessions in his diocese (directors of conscience of some of the great excepted). The regent had gone along with him, apologizing publicly for allowing the Jesuit La Ferté, son of the duke of that name, to preach the Advent sermons at Court. He also broke the tradition of having a Jesuit as the royal confessor, appointing the abbé Claude Fleury, the ecclesiastical historian, 77 years of age and aloof from the quarrels of the day, to be keeper of the conscience of the boy-king. Pressure was building up to encourage Noailles to strike against the bull. The parlements revoked the acceptance which Louis XIV had imposed on them:³⁸ Paris on 16 December, Rouen 22 December, Reims 24 December, Dijon 28 December, Bordeaux 7 January 1717. On 12 January, 110 doctors of the Sorbonne assured Noailles that the bull was theologically unreceivable, and 39 curés of Paris joined them. On 19 January, the Oratorians of Nantes published an open letter to him describing *Unigenitus* as ‘a constitution conceived by hatred, born of error, and extracted from the First Pastor of the Church by a prestigious but ill-counselled authority (*une autorité respectable mais malheureusement surprise*)’—the nearest they dare come to indicting Louis XIV.³⁹ In the event, Noailles stayed in the background and let others take the lead. Four bishops—of Mirepoix, Senes, Boulogne, and Montpellier—were determined to reject the bull outright as beyond the scope of any possible explanation. Joachim Colbert de Croissy of Montpellier was ruthlessly insistent. On 21 December he had written to Quesnel repudiating the subterfuges to which churchmen were stooping to explain *Unigenitus*; it was ‘a mockery of good faith’ to receive the bull by attributing meanings which were not the natural ones, ‘unworthy of the gravity of bishops and entirely opposed to the spirit

and the simplicity of the Church. This Bull cannot be received in any fashion.’

The four bishops turned to the ultimate weapon in the Jansenist–Gallican armoury, the appeal to a General Council.⁴⁰ The threat had been hinted at during the abbé Chevalier's negotiations. A few months previously, Nicolas Le Gros, in his *Renversement des libertés de l'Église Gallicane*, had produced a learned defence of such a proceeding, along with a plan for allowing the parish clergy to join in through synods and local councils. The decisive precedent came from Louis XIV. In 1688, under secret excommunication by Innocent XI, he had obtained the approval of the parlement of Paris and of an *ad hoc* gathering of bishops, canons of Notre-Dame, doctors of the Sorbonne, and curés of Paris, and appealed to a General Council against his treatment by Rome. Quesnel had heard the news with satisfaction; it was ‘a new remedy for an old evil’, an action ‘without the least shadow of schism’ and, indeed, ‘a real service to the popes’. He was sealing the alliance between Jansenism and the Gallican tradition of royal absolutism. Now, twenty-eight years later, this was the remedy invoked against *Unigenitus*.

On 1 March 1717 the four bishops signed their appeal, and on 5 March they went to the Sorbonne to register it. Ninety-seven doctors adhered immediately. In the course of the month, the faculties of theology and of arts at Paris, of theology at Nantes, and the whole university of Reims followed suit. Twelve more bishops appealed—Bayonne, Verdun, Pamiers, Auxerre, Angoulême, Saint-Malo, Agen, Condom, Laon, Dax, Lectoure, Mâcon—making a total of sixteen prelates in all.⁴¹

Idealistic protest makes strange bedfellows. The bishop of Senez was Jean Soanen, a commoner, who had managed to get himself appointed to a diocese—the most miserable in France, thirty parishes among bleak mountains—by sycophancy to the Jesuits and by denouncing the general of the Oratory, his own community, as a Jansenist; but he was now standing for theological issues he believed in, and was to be a ‘martyr’ for *la vérité*.⁴² At Boulogne, Pierre de Langle ruled with exemplary piety; he was of a poor noble family and had served for twenty years as *grand vicaire* in his native town of Evreux, before being promoted to his bishopric at the age of 54. As befitted a *grand seigneur* and the nephew of Colbert, the great minister of Louis XIV, Joachim Colbert de Croissy, had become bishop of Montpellier at the age of 29.⁴³ His palace was resplendent with gilded furniture, tapestry, and crimson damask hangings, yet he was austere in his morals and demanded austerity from his people.

Another nephew of the great Colbert was the bishop of Saint-Malo, François de Marez, who had held high rank in both army and navy before turning to ordination for a sphere of more peaceful leadership.

Whatever their social origins and life-style, all the appellant bishops were men of serious pastoral commitment. As their action demonstrated, they were all Gallicans. Indeed, Verthamon of Pamiers declared this to be the whole issue: 'to anyone of impartial judgement the entire quarrel comes down to a protest against the papal claim to infallibility, and support for the liberties of the Gallican Church'. Similarly, by rejecting *Unigenitus*, they all made themselves, as it were, 'Jansenists'; but as one of them, Hébert, bishop of Agen, protested, this was not his case, nor that of some of the others.⁴⁴ With one exception, they all continued to exact the anti-Jansenist formulary from their clergy, allowing no restrictions.⁴⁵ The exception was Colbert, and he hesitated over the issue, and vehemently denied belonging to a Jansenist party. As for the bull itself, there were nuances in the attitudes of the appellant prelates. Both Colbert⁴⁶ and the aged and autocratic Hippolyte de Béthune of Verdun were predestinarian in their theology, as their diocesan catechisms manifest in sombre fashion. Yet they had accepted the condemnation of the five propositions, and it was not the pre-destination issue which they raised. Hippolyte de Béthune looked carefully at the 101 propositions and agreed that 63 of them were dangerous; but 20 he saw as orthodox. He had no brief for Quesnel; like Noailles and, indeed, almost all the bishops, he was not prepared to go on recommending a book which Rome had condemned—in so far as 63 propositions were concerned, justly condemned. But the Pope had denounced twenty unexceptionable statements: that invalidated the bull for him. By contrast, Colbert stood foursquare by the *Réflexions morales*. When Louis XIV in 1711 withdrew the official 'privilege' to print the book, Colbert declared he had been reading it for twenty years and found it 'excellent'. Nobody—king, pope, or anyone else—could compel him to change his considered intellectual judgement. He was a haughty, intolerant figure, but he stood for independence of judgement. Voltaire wanted to tolerate all opinions and have freedom of debate. Colbert had read a book, made up his mind about it, and there was an end to it.

Some of the appellant bishops were conscious of representing their clergy, going along with them. Noailles was being swept along on the tide of wrath against *Unigenitus* in his diocese. Caylus of Auxerre⁴⁷ was much loved for his charity (he sold his silver for the

starving in the cruel winter of 1709), and there was an ingrained Jansenist attitude among his parochial clergy. He had accepted *Unigenitus* under pressure from Louis XIV, but now changed his mind with his diocese backing him. Another who had accepted the bull originally was Bernard d'Abbadie d'Arboucave at Tarbes, but in December 1718 he followed the unanimous decision of his cathedral chapter and issued a pastoral letter on the side of the appellants.⁴⁸ By contrast, Pierre de Langle at Boulogne only had his canons (except four), the Oratorians, and the Récollets for him—the rest of the diocese was hostile.⁴⁹ Colbert never had more than a third of his clergy on his side, and the bishops of Mirepoix and Pamiers were more isolated still. Hippolyte de Béthune had support at Verdun, but forbade anyone to manifest it.⁵⁰ 'I have appealed for myself', he announced dictatorially, 'and for all my diocese.' Later he invited his cathedral chapter to join him, but by and large, he regarded the *Unigenitus* quarrel as the business of no one but himself.

Outside the circle of the sixteen appellants, there were a few other bishops inclined to their cause. Some Jansenist hopes foundered when death overtook Louis Thomassin of Sisteron in July 1718: a stern moralist and foe of the Jesuits, he might have been persuaded to join the friends of *la vérité*.⁵¹ Another loss to the cause by death was Edmond Allemand de Montmartin of Grenoble, who published a pastoral letter retracting his acceptance of the bull in 1719. Two years later he died in Paris, where he had gone to register his appeal. According to the Jansenists, he was stricken by a heart attack when the pupils of the Jesuits stoned his carriage; according to the Jesuits, he collapsed in a tavern at Fontainebleau.⁵² Guy de Sève, who in 1717 had ruled the diocese of Arras for forty-seven years, by all external evidence was a Jansenist; he warred against the Jesuits of Douai, forbade the laity to receive communion frequently, compelled his clergy to attend annual retreats, prevented them from joining in the festivities of their parishioners, and ruled their lives in minute detail, banning tobacco ('a sort of debauchery') and wigs, even those with built-in tonsures. He would not appeal, but he would not promulgate *Unigenitus*: having accepted the bull, he ignored it.⁵³ A different way of accepting dismissively was adopted by Henri-Charles du Cambout de Coislin of Metz. A great nephew of one of the legendary *messieurs* of Port-Royal, he had appointed Jansenist *grands vicaires* and waged the usual feuds against the Jesuits, while keeping safely on the official side as pope and king prescribed. Confronted with *Unigenitus*, he accepted it in his famous pastoral letter of June 1714.⁵⁴ Taken in the sense of Luther and Calvin, he

said, the propositions on grace are censurable, but taken in the sense of St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas, they are praiseworthy. Similarly with the propositions concerning Scripture: only if the inference is drawn that salvation is impossible to those who do not read the Bible, does criticism apply. Even ‘the prayer of the impious is a new sin’ could be justified, for Quesnel surely meant prayer offered in the spirit of the Pharisee of the parable. In short, while the bull was formally accepted, it was trivialized into a mere device for clearing up possible misunderstandings among simple-witted Christians. Quesnel had been right all the time. Louis XIV and the Pope combined to pronounce anathema upon this remarkable pastoral letter; even so, it was indicating a way ahead for the future, towards the formation of a party above and outside the warring factions.

There were bishops not inclined to Jansenism who took the line of burying *Unigenitus* even as they praised it, simply to keep peace in their dioceses. The bishops of Béziers, Castres, Sarlat, and Périgord accepted the bull, then kept quiet about it. Honoré de Quiqueron de Beaujeu of Castres, a Gallican, complained of its ‘obscurity’ beyond his elucidation.⁵⁵ No doubt there were others who, from charity or idleness, did much the same. Phélypeau, bishop of Lodève, of a great family of the nobility of the robe and of the high administration, was a special case of this episcopal forbearance. Splendid and handsome, he resided canonically in his diocese, accepting the bull but keeping on friendly terms with his clergy, Jansenists included, and their great inspiration, his austere neighbour, Colbert of Montpellier. His tolerance came from temperament and indifference to religion. Saint-Simon mordantly describes him: ‘He kept mistresses openly in his palace—kept them there to his dying day; just as openly, he was not ashamed to demonstrate, indeed to say as much in company, that he did not believe in God. And he was allowed to get away with this all his life—but then, he bore the name of Phélypeaux.’⁵⁶

Sixteen to twenty bishops did not form a nation-wide network for the appellants; in so far as this existed, it consisted of the Congregation of the Oratory, the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, and the Benedictines of Saint-Vanne—the latter a congregation whose abbeys were concentrated in Lorraine, Franche Comté, and Champagne. Before issuing *Unigenitus*, Clement XI had foreseen the resistance of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, and in June 1713 had urged Louis XIV to strike first and suppress the congregation.⁵⁷ On the open, official level, the Maurists had waged a scholarly debate

against the Jesuits, who alleged a Jansenist bias in their massive edition of the works of St Augustine.⁵⁸ Clandestinely, cells in various abbeys had circulated Jansenist publications—on predestination, the luxury of bishops, the history of the movement, and about the ‘martyrs’ for the cause. Dom Gabriel Gerberon, who had been in exile with Quesnel in Brussels, had organized publication in Holland and distribution through the abbey of Orval in Luxembourg. In the crack-down following the publication of *Unigenitus*, two monks had vanished into the fortress of Vincennes, and the police swooped on the abbeys of Saint-Vincent at Laon and the Blancs-Manteaux at Paris, where they collected subversive documents but were too late to catch their writers. When the Diet of the Congregation met in May 1715, a royal *lettre de cachet* arrived deposing three superiors of houses, followed by orders to nominate theologians to write in favour of the bull.⁵⁹ One of the dismissed superiors was immediately elected prior of another abbey, and the two monks from Rennes selected to write the king's propaganda refused. Once Louis XIV was gone, the congregation was free to express its opinions. At the Diet of the province of France in 1717 (meeting to elect deputies to the general chapter), twelve priors and 121 representatives adhered to the appeal of the bishops. In the following year, all the confraternity of Saint-Germain-des-Prés appealed except Dom Coustant, who had just written a learned book which he wished to dedicate to the Pope. All the houses of the province of France joined except Meulan and Saint-Nicaise of Reims. The capitular registers of the abbeys of Tronchet and Saint-Jacut in Brittany record the solemnities of the decision. At Tronchet on 9 October at two in the afternoon, the prior, Dom Le Boucher, assembled his five colleagues by the sound of the monastery bell. *Unigenitus* was read aloud (which must have taken until nearly 3 p.m.). The prior spoke of the Gallican liberties, the Councils, and of St Augustine. The intention of the Holy Father, he said, could not have been to condemn the propositions themselves, but only ‘an arguably (*prétendu*) unsatisfactory meaning’ thereof, which was ‘not the natural one’. ‘It had never been the usage of the Church to condemn the actual words of Christ or of Scripture on the pretext heretics had abused them.’ The Pope had failed to consult his cardinals, and ‘it is impossible to know what the Holy Father thought of each proposition in particular, as the qualifications are given *in globo*’. Besides, the bull is against the Gallican liberties. So they appealed.⁶⁰ They would have to take their document to the diocesan registry at Saint-Malo, they noted, as their own at Dol would certainly refuse it. At Saint-Jacut, more briefly, the seven

Maurists declared ‘the Apostolic Chair is the centre of union and the pope is pre-eminent above other bishops’; but for all that, ‘Christians are not obliged to execute blindly all the orders which come from thence’. The parlement of Brittany undertook the defence of these two abbeys, forbidding the bishop of Dol to proceed against them on pain of the sequestration of his temporalities.

Jansenism had taken over the Congregation of Saint-Vanne⁶¹ from the 1670s, spreading from the Cistercian abbey of Hautefontaine to the abbey of Saint-Mihiel and thence to all the others, helped by the ‘academies’ or discussion groups which were characteristic of the Vannist organization. So overt was the Jansenist domination that in 1703, the congregation had faced suppression, and escaped only because the general chapter of that year elected moderates to all important offices. In 1717, this party of *politiques* was still in control, and headed off a majority proposal to make a collective appeal from the general chapter, though having to concede the right to individual houses. But the academies were reviving and initiating a ferment of discussion, and Dom Thierry de Viaixnes, one of the heroes of the old Jansenist days (gaoled in Vincennes from 1703 to 1710 and from 1713 to 1715), was still alive to remind his colleagues how all bishops are equal and Rome is only accidentally the centre of unity. Eventually, three-quarters of the abbeys joined the appeal, though the general chapter of 1718 was a tense affair, with the danger of a split between the appellants and the *politiques*.

The Oratorians, taking no permanent vows and chiefly engaged in teaching, had the reputation of being the free-thinkers of the Gallican Church—‘wishing to subject everything to questioning’, said Le Tellier, Louis XIV’s confessor. When the dispute over Cartesianism had raged, they had been Cartesians; then in due course they were Jansenists, consistent with their stance of opposition to authority. As Jansenists, they could not approve of *Unigenitus*; nor could they as Cartesians, for what could be further than the language of the bull from Cartesian ‘clear and distinct ideas’? When the issue of an appeal to a General Council emerged, they naturally supported it. According to Le Tellier, this was because of their bias against authority: ‘in their houses you breathe the atmosphere of an *état populaire* . . . everything with a republican air enchants them’.⁶² Almost every Oratorian establishment contained a nest of appellants, even in ruthlessly orthodox dioceses like Marseille and Angers.⁶³ At Nantes, it was their denunciation of *Unigenitus* which created a Jansenist movement among the clergy of the town which had not existed before. For their promotion of the appeal, they had to pay a

price; in these early days they were deprived of the control of the seminary at Nevers and banned from preaching and hearing confessions at Clermont and Grasse—penalties duplicated later on in other dioceses. They were, probably, more important in the opposition to *Unigenitus* than the two Benedictine congregations: the monks added the distinction of learning to the appeal, but the Oratorians had more contact with the laity and the parochial clergy in the provincial towns.

Perhaps 3,000 ecclesiastics in the whole of France registered their appeal to a General Council; this would be 3 per cent of those eligible to do so. Some others made an appeal in due form before a notary, but kept their action secret. The diocese of Paris was at the heart of the movement; of its 450 curés, 385 appealed, including practically all those in the capital itself; in addition, 460 minor ecclesiastics of the city joined. According to a hostile observer, the diocesan registry was open day and night to take the signatures—monks, friars, nuns, and (a sardonic touch) even choirboys were in the queue.⁶⁴ Other dioceses where considerable numbers joined were Orléans, Reims, Beauvais, and Rouen. There were uncharitable incidents at Orléans and Reims, where the bishops were rigidly orthodox. The youngest curé of the town of Orléans, the abbé Fleury, joined with eight other parish priests in a letter to their bishop declaring their intention of appealing. In April 1718, the bishop had him arrested for forgery of an episcopal letter, and he was sent to the Bastille, where he died before the true forger confessed.⁶⁵ In Reims, on St Nicolas' Day 1718, when the children of the town went to the episcopal palace for their traditional treat, Archbishop de Mailly sent away those whose parish priests had not accepted *Unigenitus*.⁶⁶ He had already been condemned twice by parlement for excommunicating Jansenists (and faced a large bill for legal costs), so he was being harshly logical in visiting the sins of the fathers-in-God upon the children.⁶⁷ As distance from Paris increased, knowledge of the issues and concern for them declined, and in any case, most curés had more absorbing concerns than an obscure papal bull and a book of spiritual meditations. There is evidence, from the dioceses of Reims⁶⁸ and Montpellier, that the appellants were more learned than the rest of the clergy, and therefore more attuned to controversial intellectual challenges. An impartial observer in the diocese of Grenoble⁶⁹ in 1717 judged 478 of the 615 clergy there to be indifferent to the quarrel, 60 to be Molinist (chiefly Jesuits, Capuchins, Récollets, and the curés of the city), and 77 to be aligned with their bishop as Jansenists, though mostly moderate ones.

Some dioceses were long-established fortresses of orthodoxy, where a Jansenist agitation had no chance. Autun⁷⁰ had been ruled by anti-Jansenist bishops since 1632, and Rennes⁷¹ since 1639 (the date of the accession of La Mothe-Houdencourt who, according to Mme de Sévigné, marked the places in his breviary with slices of ham). The strong Jansenist tendencies in the diocese of La Rochelle had declined once Frézeau de la Frézetièrre became bishop in 1694; an ex-colonel of dragoons whose three brothers were killed in the wars, and a conscientious visitor of his diocese, he had regimented his clergy into orthodoxy. Étienne de Chamflour, succeeding him, carried on the process and managed to restrict the appeals to the dean and six canons (out of twenty), the three principal curés of the town, three Oratorians, and the Ursuline nuns.⁷²

In the South, there were hardly any appellants in the dioceses of Aix, Arles, Marseille, and Fréjus, and few in Toulon.⁷³ Belsunce of Marseille and La Tour-du-Pin Montauban of Toulon were both from converted Protestant families, and had been educated by the Jesuits—a combination which was a sure formula for intolerance. They made life difficult for their people, but in three years' time the virtues of rigidity were to be seen in their heroic conduct in the great plague. Another hero of the plague was Forbin-Janson of Arles.⁷⁴ Though notoriously simple-minded ('say little and never write a word' was the advice of his uncle the cardinal), he was fanatically austere and honest; he ordered his clergy in synod to accept the bull, and not a voice was raised against him—even the Oratorians obeyed. The bishop of Nevers,⁷⁵ facing the danger of a rush of appeals from canons, Oratorians, canons regular, Dominicans, and curés, declared all appellants *ipso facto* excommunicated, and by the threat, limited their numbers to twenty-five. Other bishops who waged a relentless campaign for the bull were those of Grasse, Clermont, Dol, and Luçon.⁷⁶

Prelates in some dioceses kept out the agitation by craft and reasoning. Languet de Villeneuve de Gergy⁷⁷ at Soissons was the great persuader, from January 1718 issuing his *Avertissements*; he was one of the few writers who made anything like a cogent refutation of the arguments against *Unigenitus*. True statements, he said, can be justifiably condemned because of their context—for example, 'Jesus died for the elect' in the writings of a Jansenist implies that he did not die for the others. Odd-looking provisos in a bull do not disqualify it; the Holy Father is the shepherd who sees noxious weeds in a field and therefore moves the flock elsewhere; who are we to judge weed by weed and cast doubt on his prescience? And it is not

only the Pope we are being asked to obey, but also a majority of the bishops. What right have a minority of sixteen to challenge the consensus? Though he had the mortification of seeing his cathedral and the abbey of Saint-Médard reject his arguments, he preserved the rest of his diocese. Fleury, bishop of Fréjus, was another persuader—operating by avoiding reasoning altogether. In his pastoral letter accepting *Unigenitus* in May 1714 he did not mention Quesnel, and made the bull sound esoteric and marginal. ‘Why argue about very obscure matters which God has not chosen to reveal clearly to us. Following the example of St Augustine, let us submit to the Church’—it was a nice reference to St Augustine, the patron saint of Jansenism. Vintimille, archbishop of Aix, invited his cathedral canons to dinner when they refused to join him in accepting *Unigenitus*. According to an angry Jansenist, the canons and the whole diocese would have appealed, had not Vintimille won them over. They did not regard the bull as ‘a rule of faith’, he said, no more did he; ‘he permitted them to think and say anything they liked, but he prayed them not to cause a sensation and not to appeal’.⁷⁸

IV

Not everyone who detested *Unigenitus* appealed against it. Canon Le Gendre of Notre-Dame was ‘terrified’ at the accusations of heresy levelled against propositions ‘which in their natural sense, present nothing but pious and Christian ideas’; yet, he said, ‘The bull decides nothing’, so why not just accept it?⁷⁹ Nor were all the appellants well motivated. There were some, said Voltaire, who joined the sect out of ‘the secret pleasure of belonging to a party and the desire to be different’.⁸⁰ Extreme cases of eccentric recruits were a canon of Tours, a Rabelaisian from the country of Rabelais, reading his long poem against the bull in the taverns of Paris,⁸¹ and a vicair of the diocese of Vence who enjoyed nocturnal sessions with a group of ladies singing hymns in the Provençal dialect and made *risqué* observations to widow Merless: ‘vous avez la jambe bien faite’.⁸² Even so, the appeal was an idealist cause in an age of few ideals, promoted by people who, in most cases, had nothing to gain and a great deal to lose. It was a cause which the laity could understand—perhaps better than the clergy; a demand for plain language, fair dealing, and free decision. It was a chance to laugh with anticlerical glee at the follies of religion, while at the same time applauding the party of the

severest morality. It was a French national issue, to support the Gallican Church against the presumptuousness of Rome. It was also an agitation involving the daring idea of political freedom, an attempt to overthrow one of the monuments of Louis XIV's hated absolutism.

This was a century of appeals. The persecuted Protestants appealed to a fundamental compact before society began, more binding and lasting than the dishonoured edict of Nantes; the philosophes were to appeal to the law of nature against the injustices of the hierarchical social order. But these were abstractions they invoked, of no force to change the world. Now, the Jansenists were appealing to a General Council, a remedy at once traditional and tangible, against the absolutism of popes. There had been an Estates General once in France, and one day it could be a resort of the nation against the absolutism of kings. A complex of ideas was beginning to form, seeking traditional remedies for grievances, yet revolutionary in temper. With the appeal of 1717, an outlet for expression came. With some exaggeration (for he was prone to assume what Paris thought was the sum total of French opinion), Voltaire described the situation: 'The acceptants [of the bull] were the 100 bishops who had adhered under Louis XIV, the Jesuits and the Capuchins. The refusants . . . were 15 bishops and all the nation.'⁸³

38 From the Regent to Fleury

The appeal to a General Council was a gesture without a future. There was no hope of such a gathering ever being convened. The idea was anathema to Rome, and Catholic Europe outside France had accepted *Unigenitus*. The regent, who had a copy of Rabelais bound within the covers of his mass book, was not going to emulate the Emperor Theodosius summoning the Council of Ephesus. The appellants were like the Chinese students of our day in Tiananmen Square; having demonstrated for their beliefs, they had nowhere to go, and having stood up to be counted, in due course they could be victimized.

The regent ordered all parties to the dispute to observe silence while he continued negotiations with Rome. In July 1717 he sent a circular to the bishops forbidding appeals ‘without necessity and while the negotiations last’, a phrase put in by the persuasion of Noailles. The acceptant bishops published the document with this phrase omitted, and Orléans sent round another letter reinstating it. On 7 October a formal declaration of silence was registered by the Vacation Chamber of the parlement. Meanwhile, Cardinals Rohan and Bissy submitted a doctrinal statement to the papal Curia for approval: they hoped to persuade Noailles to accept it along with the bull. In May 1718, things looked hopeful. Having received some sort of assurance from the French ambassador about the orthodoxy of the candidates, Clement XI issued the bulls of appointment to the vacant bishoprics—by now there were fifteen of them. But in July, he refused to accept a new nomination for the archbishopric of Tours. Opinion in the Curia was moving towards forcing a show-down. On 8 September, the letters *Pastoralis Officii* were placarded in Rome.¹ Far from being obscure, *Unigenitus* was declared to be clear to the eyes of the true faithful, and all who refused to submit to it were cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church. This document reached Paris on 20 September, and blew up the policy of silence and temporization on which the regent had pinned his hopes. Noailles, who had not yet formally joined the appellants, published his appeal on 24 September, and the doctors of the Sorbonne, the

canons of Notre-Dame, and the curés of the capital joined him, virtually unanimously. The archbishop's appeal and its accompanying justification were printed, and sold 10,000 copies immediately.² The parlement of Paris banned publication of *Pastoralis Officii*, with the other parlements following suit. Since negotiations with Rome had failed, the appellants considered themselves entitled to break the regent's code of silence. With *Unigenitus* officially declared crystal clear and its opponents excommunicated, there was no hope of bringing Rome to any sort of accommodation.

The regent now had to make up his mind which side he was taking. He would have preferred to float above the mêlée: hence, in April 1718 he got the maréchal d'Huxelles to urge Rohan to form a 'third party'.³ The cardinal scorned the proposal: 'united to the Pope and 100 bishops' as he was, why should he bestir himself for change? The Pope and a hundred bishops were a tall order for the regent, a libertine who wanted a quiet life; it would have required the grinding authoritarian determination of a Louis XIV to take them on. The reaction against the tyranny of the old reign had run its course, and the experiment of government by councils collapsed. In January 1718, the Gallican Daguesseau,⁴ now *chancelier*, was removed from office, followed shortly by the duc de Noailles, nephew of the cardinal, who had presided over the council in charge of financial affairs. Finally, in August, the whole system was abolished. The honeymoon with the parlement of Paris also ended.⁵ From the start, the magistrates had criticized Orléans for his favour to John Law, the Scottish adventurer, whose bank and company were meant to transform the French economy by the rapid circulation of paper money; in 1717, they denounced the suppression of the payment of interest, the penalty which was incurred by state creditors who refused to transfer to shares in Law's company; in May 1718 they made remonstrances against the manipulation of the currency, and at the end of the year against the transformation of Law's bank into a royal institution. To punish this opposition, in July 1720, the regent exiled the parlement to Pontoise, where it stayed until December, when Law's System finally collapsed, bringing so many unwary speculators to ruin. The fact that the magistrates had been proved right did nothing to endear them to the regent and his circle at the Palais-Royal. With the parlement in disgrace and the *conseil de conscience* abolished, the appellants were left vulnerable.

At this point, whatever inclination Orléans may have had towards the Jansenist cause evaporated. A contemporary, a former Jesuit, interpreted his early support of the parliamentary–Jansenist interest

and the Noailles clan as a temporary expedient to build himself a party until his rule was firmly established; once this object was attained, he returned to the fold of the old establishment.⁶ But the change of policy may have been less coldly calculated. In 1720, Orléans was still willing to extend protection to individual Benedictine monks of the Congregation of Saint-Maur at the prompting of his daughter, the abbess of Chelles.⁷ Once negotiations had failed and the crossfire of appeals from one side and excommunications from the other had begun, he may have felt he had run enough risks for the sake of harmony and toleration, or, more likely still, the government's policy changed because its direction slipped more and more from the hands of the regent himself into those of his old tutor, the abbé Dubois, whose power started with the conduct of foreign affairs and expanded until he achieved the status of first minister. From 1716 to August 1718, Dubois brilliantly engineered a revolution in French foreign policy, beginning with a secret treaty with England, moving on to a triple alliance which included the United Provinces as well, and concluding by bringing in Austria, making the alliance quadruple. This reconciled old enemies and brought Western Europe together to guarantee enforcement of the treaties which already forbade the union of the crowns of France and Spain—precisely what the regent wanted, for if Philip V of Spain was excluded, he himself could hope for the throne if the young king died. Dubois in 1720 was 66 years of age, devoted to the work of ruling with astonishing single-mindedness (even his mistress was a political schemer). In return for his services, he demanded rewards, not that he desired to indulge in lavish expenditure, but simply to gain recognition. The son of an apothecary of Brive-la-Gaillarde (which the great call 'being born in the gutter', he complained), he turned to the Church, in which he had been tonsured, to provide the compensations of rank and income which he could get nowhere else. He accumulated the revenues of seven abbeys *in commendam*, and in 1720 succeeded Fénelon and, more appropriately, Cardinal La Trémoille the diplomat, as archbishop of Cambrai. For the purpose, he ran through all the orders from sacristan to the priesthood in a few days, and was consecrated bishop in the church of Val-de-Grâce in splendid ceremonies which rejoiced the hearts of anticlericals and cynics; here was a 'sacre' that was a 'massacre', they said. His income was immense, 4,000 times that of a parish priest, and to crown his honours, he was elected to the Académie Française, the Académie des Sciences, and the Académie des Inscriptions. But there was one further distinction he coveted, one which would give him

precedence in the government over dukes and peers—the red hat of a cardinal. In the quarrel over *Unigenitus*, therefore, he had to be on the Roman side.

In the early months of 1720, Dubois took up the problem of the appellants, spurred on, no doubt, by seeing the coveted red hat awarded to the archbishops of Reims and of Bourges, two hammers of the Jansenists. As an expert in diplomacy and a realist indifferent alike to doctrinal issues and ecclesiastical feuds, he saw the futility of any further forays into the Roman labyrinth. The only way to get results was to start in Paris and bring the appellants to some sort of acceptance of the bull, however unsatisfactory, then present this to Rome, appropriately fudged, as a victory for papal claims. Daguesseau, excluded from politics but anxious to get back, was sending in memoranda suggesting exactly this course.⁸ Since the papacy is ‘more jealous of its authority than about doctrine’, he said, anything resembling a submission would be accepted. Besides, he added, there was great virtue in spinning out time. ‘The appellants are not immortal; their successors will accept the bull, indeed, they won't be chosen as such unless they do. The appeal will last only for the lifetime of the appellants.’ There was another consideration which he did not mention, which could hardly have escaped the notice of Dubois: even if the Jansenists could not be won over *en masse*, they might be divided—which is, in fact, what happened.

Committees on Christian doctrine which need to make decisions should find a suitable unbeliever to act as chairman. Dubois, presiding over a group of theologians, rapidly produced a *corps de doctrine* which was accepted by Cardinals Rohan and Bissy (who had been engaged in a similar exercise for a decade), by Bishop Languet, the chief propagandist for orthodoxy, and by Noailles, the senior appellant. On 13 March 1720, thirty-three bishops assembled at the Palais-Royal to sign the document, described as ‘explanations’ of *Unigenitus*. ‘I have just bridled my asses,’ said the regent as they left.⁹ Eventually, ninety-four French bishops altogether were to subscribe to this accommodation drawn up by Dubois. The bishops of Mont-pellier and Boulogne wrote to Noailles and their fellow appellants protesting against these proceedings. The bull was ‘contrary to the good faith and the simplicity of the ordinary language of the Church’, so how could a statement of doctrine rescue it? ‘Detours, equivocations and explanations’ are never found in the Christian creeds. They did not believe that the Pope would countenance the explanations: the acceptance of the bull would be boastfully proclaimed,

and the conditions of its acceptance forgotten. Their demand for a General Council had been formally made: no one could cancel it. The diarist Marais followed the controversy with a sceptical eye. Who knew what Christians would next be asked to believe? The invention of comic book titles was a fashionable pursuit: the latest was *The Koran for General Reading now Awaiting the Pope's imprimatur: Printed at Rome by the Jesuits*. However, he thought an 'accommodation' had undoubtedly been agreed—'somebody's head will soon be accommodating a cardinal's hat'.¹⁰

Having given his agreement to the *corps de doctrine*, Noailles reluctantly published a pastoral letter, not exactly saying that *Unigenitus* must be received, but admitting that the condemnation of the 101 propositions had been satisfactorily explained. By now the Jansenists despaired of him—a cardinal's hat on a weathercock, a senile waverer, a 'conscience in ruins'. In truth, though *Unigenitus* had been aimed at him, Noailles had never been one of those who wanted to use it to settle once and for all the sheer fallibility of the papacy. He was a Gallican, believing the 'consent' of the Church was necessary for doctrinal formulations, but not seeking occasions for proving the case in the abstract. A fudge by 'explanations', an ambiguous acceptance of an ambiguous bull, would preserve whatever principles he thought were at stake in the quarrel, and he would be able to go on administering his huge diocese in peace, which is all he had ever wanted to do. He had never been the archetypal appellant: his natural place was with the 'Tiers Parti', the third, the middle party which some contemporaries talked of, bishops who did nothing against Rome and as little as possible against the Jansenists. Such a one was Philibert-Charles de Pas de Feuigières, bishop of Agde, who a few months before had written to Caylus of Auxerre complaining of his local appellants: 'Who obliged them to brandish their shields (*faire cette levée de boucliers*) in a diocese where nobody is saying anything against them?' Those who reject *Unigenitus*, he thought, and those who accept it are giving entirely different meanings to it; there was no incompatibility between them except their choice of meanings and the fact that one party wanted to use the bull to humiliate the papacy and the other did not.

Those who say he [the Pope] is not infallible are right. Yet, since for the good of the Church we must hope that he will make as few mistakes as possible, we must not undertake a sort of dedicated mission to make a rigorous search for all his failures, nor impute such to him unless they are inescapably evident. There are not many examples of popes who have fallen into misapprehensions or formal errors; but there are enough of

them, so there is no need to seek to prove papal fallibility by identifying more in the person of the present occupant of Peter's Chair.¹¹

In short, stick to the Gallican view by saying the bull is ambiguous, but accept it, and leave the Church in peace—which is precisely what Noailles's recommendation of the explanations would do.

The clergy of Paris gave their cardinal-archbishop's pastoral letter a frosty reception.¹² The courier who took it round the parishes was offered refreshments by the curé of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet. 'You've saved my life,' he said in thanks; 'I've covered the whole of Paris and no one has offered me so much as a glass of water.'¹³ On 1 April, when Noailles paid an official visit to the Sorbonne, not a single doctor of the Faculty was there to welcome him. A list of 300 appellants who repudiated the accommodation was circulated—'le régiment d'Asfeld', so called after the abbé d'Asfeld whose name came first (a severe and learned priest of Paris from a wealthy family which had bought itself a patent of Swedish nobility). A royal declaration forbade appeals and all attacks on the bull, on the episcopal letter of 1714 which had accepted it, or on the accommodation by explanations which Dubois had engineered. In December, the parlement, worn down by the boredom of exile in Pontoise, gloomily registered this declaration along with the bull itself, but reserving the Gallican liberties, the rights of the Crown, 'the power and jurisdiction of the bishops of the kingdom', and the rights of Frenchmen generally against illegal or politically motivated excommunications.¹⁴ 'The Constitution is accepted with explanations that explain nothing,' said Marais, 'and the Declaration is registered as if it wasn't registered.'¹⁵ In the spring of 1721 there was a wave of renewed appeals. The abbé d'Asfeld assumed the leadership by publishing an account of his interrogation by the lieutenant of police on 6 March. The young king and his ministers, he had insisted, were not entitled to lay down rules for the beliefs of the clergy; nor were they justified in silencing conscientious protest. And he invited his readers to compare the personal morality of the two sides in the quarrel. 'For 40 years I have studied religion, employing eight to ten hours a day in doing so, without—by God's grace—taking time off for intrigue, for courting those who can confer favours, for good cheer or for pleasure—let them say as much.' Marais thought this 'worthy of the confessors of the early Church', though 'he could have been more humble'.¹⁶ Three bishops, 500 Benedictine monks, 300 Feuillant monks, and 1,500 other ecclesiastics were numbered in the ranks of these 're-appellants'.¹⁷

While Dubois was striving to edge the Jansenists into an ambiguous submission, negotiations for the cardinal's hat were being pursued in parallel. As a Catholic sovereign, the English Pretender had the right to make nominations, and, for a consideration, was prepared to do so. This was a convenient way of operating, as it avoided a formal application from France, which would have led to the other Catholic powers asking for compensatory favours. The Pope's nephew, Cardinal Albani, was promised a substantial sum in Roman crowns once the promotion went through. Three months after Dubois was consecrated as archbishop of Cambrai, the regent wrote to the Pope asking him to consent to the award, and on 15 August 1720, Cardinal Bissy sent a follow-up letter. Clement XI was not to be hurried: suppliants for a berth on Peter's barque had to pay for their passage before boarding. However, on the last day of the year, it was reported from Rome that he had finally yielded, and had promised the Pretender to elevate Dubois, provided the courts of Vienna and Madrid did not make difficulties with envious applications. These matters stood when Clement XI died.

On 8 May 1721, the conclave of cardinals elected Cardinal Conti as Innocent XIII. The triple tiara could not have been his without French support or, at least acquiescence, for apart from other methods of influencing votes, each of the Catholic crowns had the power to veto one candidate. The French delegation demanded a price, and Conti paid it. He promised the red hat to Dubois.¹⁸ The French diplomatic correspondence leaves no possibility of doubt: the best the Pope's apologists have been able to do is to suggest that the engagement was not actually in writing. Yet there undoubtedly was 'un écrit', 'une pièce', 'un billet', 'le petit papier auquel le pape tenait beaucoup'. On 16 June, it was announced in Rome that Innocent XIII's nephew was to be made a cardinal; there was no reference to Dubois, and the French delegation became suspicious of the Pope's good faith. On 23 June, a letter from Tencin in Rome to Dubois spoke of threatening to 'publish a writing which up to now has been known only to those who were involved with it'. On 28 June, the regent ordered Cardinal Rohan (who was in charge of French affairs at the papal court) to leave at once if a definite understanding on the red hat was not received. On 11 July, Dubois wrote to Tencin, 'I have a good piece of evidence (*une bonne pièce*) which is in writing'; unfortunately, he added, 'vengeance is a mere consolation and can only be wreaked with damage to oneself'. However, drastic action turned out not to be needed, for on 16 July Dubois was made a cardinal along with the nephew. Two years later there was a sad

little epilogue. On 8 June 1723, a letter of Dubois to Tencin refers to the 'billet' being sent back to Rome cut in pieces 'to avoid indiscretion'.¹⁹ This fits in with the report on the death of Innocent XIII sent to Paris in 1724 by Cardinal Polignac; he says the Pope's end was hastened by worry over the leakage of the story of his election promise and by the long delay on the part of the French Foreign Office in returning to him the compromising document.

Innocent XIII, in frail health and sincere and pious, suffered torments of conscience,²⁰ for in giving the undertaking to France, he had committed simony, in this respect making himself the successor, not of St Peter, but of Simon Magus, who sought spiritual powers by offering money, and was rebuked by Peter as being 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity' (Acts 8: 18–24). Yet, given the cynicism of the Catholic crowns in the exercise of their power in the conclave, his action can be justified. Ill health apart, he was an excellent candidate, and if his modesty forbade him to think so, there were others who would remind him, for he was the choice of the Zelanti, the party putting the interests of the Church above all other considerations. Indeed, once the Austrian veto had excluded Paolucci, the Secretary of State, he was the only cardinal around whom a willing consensus could have rallied. By the standards of the day, the application for a cardinalate for Dubois was perfectly respectable. When a Catholic monarch bespoke the red hat for one of his subjects, he usually got what he wanted, without any pretence that moral worthiness entered into consideration. The dignity conferred no spiritual or pastoral functions, and did not even command a salary from ecclesiastical sources: it was an honour politically conferred for political reasons. Clement XI had agreed in principle. No doubt he had done so reluctantly; by contrast, Conti was probably genuinely favourable to the idea. He was an opponent of the Jesuits, and to his friends had declared *Unigenitus* to be a personal manifesto by Albani, not a judgement of the Holy See.²¹ The juggling with 'explanations' which was going on in France must have seemed to him the only hope of allaying the furore caused by Albani's ill-fated bull. In promising to elevate Dubois, he was merely giving a formal undertaking to do what he had already decided was for the good of the Church. Thus he ensured that his election—the clear will of the conclave—was allowed to go through. The alternative was to have kept clean hands, leaving the cardinals obliged to elect a candidate they did not want.

On 9 June 1721, a month before Dubois became a cardinal, seven bishops—of Pamiers, Senez, Montpellier, Boulogne, Auxerre,

Maçon, and the former bishop of Tournai—wrote to Rome repudiating the scheme of accommodation which Dubois had promoted.²² ‘The more the explanations are in conformity with true doctrine,’ they said, ‘the more they would be opposed to that of the Constitution. It is uniting Yes and No, light and darkness, truth and error.’ A General Council must be called—‘where is the pilot who dares to awake the Lord and implore him to quell the raging seas?’ They were going beyond the bounds of reason in inviting the Pope to call the Council himself, and beyond the bounds of secular Gallicanism in corresponding directly with Rome without the permission of the Crown. As they said in a letter to the king a year later, in defence of their action, their ministry came directly from God and was in no way dependent on the secular power. In this letter and in publications by Caylus of Auxerre and Colbert of Montpellier, they cited the old Gallican commonplaces of controversy, but giving them a specific reference to the times and a new cutting edge: Pope Honorius I posthumously convicted of heresy by the Council of Constantinople in 681, the Council of Basle defying Pope Eugenius IV from 1431 to 1439, and the decretal of John XXII in 1322 suspending a decretal of Nicolas II. They claimed the right to proclaim their conscientious views independently of the policy of the rulers of their country, and they proposed reform of the government of the universal Church, with a General Council examining the orthodoxy of Clement XI and cancelling his bull.

With his accommodation spurned, Dubois turned to severity against the appellants. No doubt he was exasperated by their unreasonableness and the far-reaching implications of their demands. Perhaps he was also trying to live up to his new distinction as archbishop and cardinal: it was common for worldly prelates to make a parade of rigid orthodoxy to divert attention from their backsliding in other respects. More positively, as his presidency of the Assembly of the Clergy of France in 1723 was to show, he was not averse to adding the role of leadership of the Gallican Church to that of first minister of the State. The appeal would last only for the duration of the lives of the appellants, Daguesseau had said. In a letter to Tencin of 8 August 1722, Dubois adopted this sentiment and outlined a policy of ruthless containment.²³ The regent would blacklist Jansenists when he was putting up nominations for vacant bishoprics, and at a lower level of control, appointments to canonries and parochial cures would be limited to clergy of undoubted orthodoxy. Every time there was an agitation by the Theological Faculty of a university, a number of doctors would be excluded, and the

process would be repeated until the majority against *Unigenitus* was lost.

The machinery of this policy was already in operation. In June of the previous year, the *syndic* of the Sorbonne had been replaced by a royal nominee, and various doctors had been banned from attendance at meetings. On 11 July 1722, a royal declaration²⁴ had ordered bishops and universities to require signature of the formulary as reinforced by *Vineam Domini* from all seeking admission to holy orders, benefices, or degrees. The logic of this declaration was followed up in 1723 when the king ordered future general chapters of the Benedictines of the Congregation of Saint-Vanne to exclude all who refused the formulary and all who had appealed since 1720.²⁵ A Jesuit, Père Linyères, was appointed to direct the conscience of the young king. For the space of a year, Noailles refused to grant Linyères the necessary licence to hear confessions, but since the coronation of Louis XV on 25 October 1722 and the official ending of his minority, the refusal appeared as a gesture of unparalleled defiance, and the archbishop gave way with reluctance on 27 March 1723.²⁶ Two months afterwards, the Assembly General of the Clergy of France met and asked for the convocation of provincial councils to deal with the appellant bishops—this was at the instance of the prelates of the province of Reims, who wished to break Jansenism in the diocese of Boulogne. This vote of the clergy opened the way for a disastrous event four years later, the meeting of just such a council for the province of Embrun, accompanied by scandalous circumstances which were to delight sceptics and anticlericals even more than the publication of *Unigenitus*.

The cardinal-archbishop of Cambrai, first minister of the regent, heir to the tradition of Richelieu and Mazarin, presided over this Assembly of the Clergy in person, delivering a polished oration written for him by Fontenelle, another unbeliever. This was the last great appearance of Dubois on the public stage. On 10 August following, he died in terrible agonies, made worse by surgical intervention, which provided a few days of ghoulis gossip for the heartless public. The apothecary's son clung to the last to the honours he had won, sending away the curé of the parish who brought the last sacraments, and claiming his rank, demanded that they be administered by a fellow cardinal. Saint-Simon, who hated him, wrote his epitaph in terms of 'the ungodly' of Psalm 37, 'who seeth the righteous and seeketh occasion to slay him'. 'What a monstrous fortune! . . . and how rapidly he fell! Truly, the saying of the Psalmist can literally be applied to him: 'I went by and lo he was gone:

I sought him and his place could nowhere be found.' His brief period of rule had been significant in French foreign policy for an imaginative new departure which broke away from the ingrained international hatreds of the last reign; in ecclesiastical policy, it had been significant for the opposite reason—for the renewal of the old intolerance of Louis XIV to the Jansenists, doubly regrettable because it was a persecution carried on without conviction, both the regent and his minister being indifferent to religion and disinclined to despotic rule. As some bishops of the 'Tiers Parti' had already shown, it was possible to accept *Unigenitus* and then ignore it; adopted by the government of France, this policy would have had the advantage of ending the unnatural alliance between Gallican rulers and Roman infallibilists, of conciliating the parlements, and enriching the French Church with a diversity of intellectual talent and fervent vocations which were otherwise excluded. If controversy between Jesuit and Jansenist had become too strident, there could always have been recourse to the well-tried expedient of a 'declaration of silence'. As it was, the repressive policy of Dubois carried on under his successors, and the chance of breaking away from the harsh legacy of Louis XIV was lost.

On 2 December, four months after the death of his cardinal first minister, Orléans was stricken down by apoplexy. Unlike Dubois, he died without pain, though tragically neglected: the duchesse de Falari, who was with him, for a long time could not find a servant, let alone a doctor. The reins of power fell into the hands of the duc de Bourbon, whose rule, from the end of 1723 to the summer of 1726, was incompetent and self-interested. In ecclesiastical affairs, he was inclined to be, if not tolerant, at least easygoing. But having many enemies and his policies making more, he was anxious to avoid trouble with the majority of bishops—hence his declaration of 14 May 1724 making it difficult for Protestants to evade the ministry of the Catholic clergy when children were born or relatives died, and his continuance of Dubois' severities against the appellants. In this respect, he was ruthlessly policed on the Council by Hercule de Fleury, bishop of Fréjus and former tutor to the king, high in royal favour. The injection of rigidity into government policy at this particular time was unfortunate, for early in 1724, a new Pope was elected, and for a few years there was an unexpected and fleeting chance of bringing the Jansenist quarrel to a compromise truce. Cardinal Orsini—Benedict XIII—was a marginal candidate who won because the Austrians again vetoed Paolucci, and the Franco-Spanish bloc of cardinals barred the nominee of the Zelanti; he was a

Dominican friar who had ruled as bishop in three Italian dioceses, an ineffective administrator who left business in the hands of venal subordinates, but a devoted pastor—hearing confessions in person at the jubilee of 1725, holding synods himself, and encouraging the bishops generally to do so, spending endless time in discussions about proposals for canonizations. Though he stood by the constitution *Unigenitus*, he had never liked it, and had no objection to producing explanations of it so long as the appeal to a General Council was abandoned. In 1723, he had reconciled the Augustinian doctors of the Faculty of Louvain by assuring them that not everything Jansenius had said was condemned, but only what was summarized in the five propositions. As a Dominican, he wished to give honour to the doctrines of Thomas Aquinas, who was, with Augustine, the theological master the Jansenists claimed to revere. Hence, the papal brief *Demissas preces* of 6 November 1724 was music to their ears: it denounced those who maliciously affirmed that the theology of Augustine and Aquinas had been infringed by *Unigenitus*, and proclaimed the importance and the validity of the doctrines of efficacious grace and predestination without prevision of merits. The anti-Jansenist bishops of France were alarmed: as Forbin Janson of Arles remarked, the Pope ‘had got so much of the dust of the School of Thomism on his monkish sandals that there is a good deal too much left on his papal slippers’. In view of the theological reassurance conveyed by *Demissas preces*, the general of the Congregation of Saint-Maur and thirty or forty of his monks accepted *Unigenitus*; so too did the Dominicans of Paris. Rome had gone halfway to the offering of explanations.

Noailles, whose appeal still stood, was only awaiting a show of explanation to come back to the orthodox fold, and once again he had devised a theological summary for papal approval. The Jansenist insistence on the divine omnipotence was enshrined in the article, ‘No one can resist the absolute will of God’, and the severity of the confessional was covered by the elevation of the obligation to love God to the rank of a commandment superior to all the others. The notorious difficulty about the ‘unjust excommunication’ proposition was dealt with obliquely by denying the validity of any excommunication which forbids an act of virtue. The bishops of Saintes and Marseille rejected these doctrinal articles, but the Holy Office at Rome found no fault beyond small discrepancies between the French and Latin versions. The Pope was willing to give explanations, and Noailles had defined what explanations were needed. The question now was: would the French government send Noailles’

document officially to Rome actually proposing a papal statement? Matters came to the crunch at the meeting of the Royal Council on 7 March 1725. Fleury was adamant against the least concession from Rome; the Pope, he said, by giving explanations 'would dishonour his pontificate'. He won the day, and prevented the move for an accommodation coming from the French side. Meanwhile, in alliance with Cardinals Rohan and Bissy and the nuncio in Paris, he worked to influence opinion in the Curia to divert Benedict XIII from any new doctrinal pronouncement. On 19 October 1725, Fleury and the two French cardinals wrote to the Pope with lapidary finality. Noailles, they said, was laying a trap to extract from Rome an admission of 'the ambiguity of the bull', and he must be told that 'there cannot be two ways of expressing submission to the dogmatic decisions of the Church'; he had to accept *Unigenitus* as it stood, without a word of qualification. Two old men, Benedict XIII and the cardinal-archbishop of Paris, had been willing to come to an agreement to end the feuds within the Church; a third old man, Fleury, prevented them. And he had done this by Gallican means,²⁷ defending the ultramontane claim by preventing the Pope from doing what he believed was right, coercing him to an uncompromising defence of his predecessor's bull.

Two colourful ecclesiastical rebels of the previous regime were victims of the Bourbon–Fleury ecclesiastical policy. With her father the regent no longer there to protect her, the abbess of Chelles's career of adventurous frivolity on behalf of Jansenist rigorism was brought to a halt. A profession of predestinarian theology circulating in her name was suppressed, and after a bizarre incident in which she terrorized Cardinal Bissy, she was forbidden to venture outside the gates of her abbey.²⁸ Action was finally taken against Colbert de Croissy, who for so long had defied the whole world and two-thirds of his own diocese from the splendours of his palace at Montpellier. He had made a nonsense of the royal declaration of July 1722 ordering the taking of the formulary without reservations by coolly adding to it 'without derogating from the Peace of the Church of Clement IX', a reference to a tolerant interval in 1668 when strife had died down because no questions were asked of those who appeared to submit. Only canonical ecclesiastical procedures could have suspended him from his spiritual jurisdiction, but in the king's name, by secular order, the temporalities of his bishopric were sequestrated, and his other benefices were declared vacant. With his luxurious life-style ended (though not his alms) Colbert carried on defiantly—preventing nuns from choosing non-appellant confessors,

publicly censuring government action against other ecclesiastics of his party, proclaiming Jansenist miracles, and applying to his foes the biblical prophecies concerning the ‘mystery of iniquity’ and other apocalyptic phenomena of the evil days to come.

Bourbon, unpopular for his disastrous conduct of foreign affairs and the rapacity of his entourage, incurred an extra meed of criticism from the ecclesiastical policy which Fleury imposed on him. Parisian opinion put him down as a slave of the Jesuits; even the marriage of the young Louis XV to Marie Leccsynska daughter of the ex-king of Poland, was ascribed to their machinations—her father was a fanatical follower of Jesuit piety, and she was nicknamed ‘Unigenita’. This erosion of Bourbon's credit made him expendable. As for Fleury, his aim throughout was to remain the power behind the scenes by his influence on the young king, proving his indispensability by strategically timed resignations.²⁹ When Bourbon finally fell in June 1726, he emerged from the shadows as first minister, though he refused the actual title, getting himself a cardinal's hat from Rome to guarantee the necessary precedence over the other members of his administration. France was once again governed by a cardinal-bishop. But, unlike Dubois, Hercule de Fleury was a genuine churchman who, for seventeen years (1698–1715), had ruled a tiny diocese on the shores of the Mediterranean with exemplary pastoral care³⁰—though always hoping for some more splendid rôle: ‘by divine wrath’ he once signed himself, ‘bishop of Fréjus’. Also, by contrast with his cynical predecessor, he genuinely believed in the importance of ensuring uniform doctrinal orthodoxy as defined by the Pope. The Parisian gossip about his early Jansenist inclinations (extending to making a free distribution of copies of Quesnel) was a fabrication put about by his enemies:³¹ Noailles was told the story, and declared it a mistake: ‘we studied for our degrees together; he is a twenty-four carat Molinist’—that is, a believer in the theology of grace favoured by the Jesuits. True, as an intelligent man, Fleury realized the impossibility of harmonizing the concepts of divine omnipotence and human free will: ‘the doctrine of grace,’ he said, ‘like all the other mysteries, is enclosed between two principles which appear to contradict one another, and it is not in our power to bring them into accord’. He was also well aware of the shortcomings of *Unigenitus*: he told Dorsanne that the 101 propositions were not condemnable individually, but only when they were all seen together, as much as to declare the bull useful to steer a course in the broad, approximate sense, but not defensible in all its clauses. ‘I know better than you that the bull is worthless,’ he told a

magistrate of the parlement in 1732, 'but Louis XIV asked for it, the king has received it—his authority would be compromised if it is rejected: so, it has to be received.'³² Fleury was an authoritarian. There could be no compromise, he said, 'with those who are at the head of a party opposed to the Church and to the State'.³³ The director of the police of Paris wrote to him in November 1726 describing the bishop of Montpellier as 'le chef de la nouvelle république'.³⁴ This was how Fleury saw the Jansenist movement, almost as Louis XIV did, a surge of feeling within the Gallican Church to create a 'republic' in which individual bishops had freedom of action and the lower clergy had freedom of opinion—and worse still, the laity. In his pastoral letter on leaving his diocese for the Court in 1715, he had painted a picture of the intellectual free-for-all which he feared. 'Everyone sets himself up as a judge of the Faith, although most do not understand what they are saying or what they are deciding . . . Women above all, proudly producing five or six passages of the Scriptures of St Augustine ill-understood, think they know more than doctors of theology.' Once give acceptance to the movement, and the Gallican Church would be on its way to joining the Protestant sects. In 1728, he wrote to Noailles, requesting him to silence two Jansenist preachers in his diocese: 'if, under the very eyes of your Eminence, it is permitted to declaim such maxims from the pulpit, there is only one step more needed to go off and unite ourselves to Geneva and all the Protestants'.³⁵ To his mind, there ought to be no blurring of the hierarchical pattern of the government of the Church, and no blurred margins around the edges of the beliefs demanded of the faithful.

Old men with strong convictions coming late to power might be expected to be in a hurry, but Fleury moved slowly towards his goals, as if fate was his acolyte. He was ruthless, but as his foreign policy showed, he liked to wear a mask of peace. Once he was in sole charge, without Bourbon there to take the blame for his intransigence, he craftily manoeuvred towards an accommodation which might end the thirteen years of bitterness which had followed *Unigenitus*. The repressive policy carried on: the police of Paris clamping down on the press, measures taken against the appellants among the Oratorians and the Benedictines, and Rome encouraged to refuse the benefits of the jubilee to the inhabitants of the diocese of Paris. At the same time, however, silence was imposed on the hot-heads of the anti-Jansenist party: 'What authority in the Church of France will your pastoral letter have?', wrote Fleury in June 1727 to the bishop of Châlons, who had just denounced the appellants; 'it

will infallibly be followed by another from M. le cardinal de Noailles, which will be more bitter still. You will exchange insults, the public will be very little edified, and religion will draw small advantage from it all.³⁶ Meanwhile, members of the Noailles family were being prompted to bring the cardinal-archbishop to see reason: the maréchale de Grammont, a niece, used her artifices, and the duc de Noailles, a nephew, his arguments. The Oratorians, the group most likely to carry conviction with the appellants, were called in to devise yet another theological form of words to adorn a draft pastoral letter in which Noailles was to accept the bull. Père de la Borde wrote it; his general, Père de la Tour, approved it; both Noailles and Fleury saw no major fault in it. 'Never was an honourable peace for all parties nearer,' writes Hardy, the modern historian of these negotiations.³⁷ The duc de Bourbon, in exile at his château of Chantilly, heard the news with chagrin: 'this merciless operator (*ce bourreau*, executioner) is doing everything he prevented me from doing,' he complained; 'I would not be at Chantilly or he in office, if I had wound up the affair of the cardinal de Noailles'.³⁸

This flare-up of hope at the eleventh hour was a brief illumination which quickly died. Cardinals Rohan and Bissy, twin professionals at unsuccessful negotiations, ruined the Oratorian project. Three weeks of theological cogitation on its terms by Bissy led to amendments whose unacceptability was underlined by Rohan's clumsy diplomacy. Far from being willing to be led into a submission, the Jansenists became aggressive. From Noailles' circle a *Relation fidèle* appeared, showing how Fleury had consistently ruined all the chances of an understanding which the pontificate of Benedict XIII had made possible. On 16 May 1727, thirty curés of Paris and 120 other ecclesiastics of the diocese addressed a letter to their archbishop urging him not to accept the bull. On 5 September, the thirty curés appealed to the king, making the startling claim to a full say in all ecclesiastical affairs by virtue of their office: 'dans le gouvernement de l'Église, tout doit se régler en commun'. A new force was arising in the French Church in alliance with Jansenism—the parish priests coming forward to express their grievances and aspirations. Noailles, old, confused, and discredited, no longer carried much weight: winning his submission now mattered only marginally. Dorsanne pointed this out to Fleury, and urged him to prepare a document of accommodation himself; the cardinal was at first inclined to try, but soon realized the hopelessness of the situation: the divide caused by *Unigenitus* was unbridgeable.

After this disappointment, Fleury turned to ruthlessness. During

the previous four years, proposals had been made for the calling of provincial councils in which the Jansenist bishops would be disciplined by their assembled episcopal colleagues. In 1723, the archbishop of Reims and his suffragans had wished to proceed in this way against Pierre de Langle, the appellant bishop of Boulogne. Nothing came of this initiative, for in the following year Pierre de Langle died, and a severely orthodox successor, Henriau, was appointed, called 'the wolf of Boulogne' by the Jansenists since he exiled their leaders from the diocese by the use of royal *lettres de cachet*. In 1725 and 1726, the Assembly of the Clergy of France had recommended the summoning of provincial councils as a general 'remedy for the ills of the Church', one of their advantages being their virtual immunity from the interference of the parlements—they would 'forestall the frequent recourse to the secular tribunals'. Behind these applications was the hope to bring Colbert de Croissy of Montpellier before the bishops of the province of Narbonne, and Armand de Lorraine of Bayeux before those of the province of Rouen. The duc de Bourbon, for once showing independent states-manship, had angrily refused the clergy's requests. It was a principle of the royal absolutism to prevent subjects from leaguering together to make corporate demands: the Assembly of Clergy had to meet to vote taxation—that was enough. Colbert and Lorraine were proud and reckless *frondeurs*, belonging to great aristocratic families; the whole of polite society would be in a ferment if they were forced to defend themselves.³⁹ As so often happened, there were problems in reconciling Gallican independence and Roman pretensions; the Pope claimed to be the sole judge of a bishop in a case of grave misconduct, and might disavow proceedings unless his authorization had been sought and the verdict submitted for his verification. The trial of an appellant bishop would not simply be a matter of ecclesiastical discipline: issues of doctrine would arise, thus bringing in the interests of the other national churches, and some of the Gallican canonists doubted if any assembly less than a General Council was entitled to act in such a case. All in all, the possibilities of trouble were legion, and Bourbon was well out of it. Yet this was the method Fleury decided to use.

At the beginning of 1727, Soanen, bishop of Senez, published a pastoral letter proclaiming the Jansenist and appellant case against the policies of Rome and Versailles. This brought him to dangerous notice at the very time when Fleury was seeking to make an example of one of the rebels. Perhaps, at the age of 79, Soanen wished to make one last decisive act of 'witness to the truth' before

he died, and was willing to become a martyr. He was a commoner, with no influential connections. His tiny diocese, lost in the mountains, which he had made into a minuscule enclave of Jansenist clergy, was of no importance in the Church of France. Quite apart from being an appellant, so far as theological opinions went, he was the archetypal Jansenist. As an object-lesson for condemnation, he was the ideal candidate, and a defenceless one at that. As Cardinal Bissy told the bishop of Luçon: 'Que voulez-vous qu'on y fasse? Il faut bien faire un exemple et on ne peut le faire que sur la personne de M. de Senez.'⁴⁰ There was no danger of the bishops of the provincial council acquitting the intended victim.⁴¹ Pierre Guérin de Tencin, the archbishop of Embrun, was a political churchman devoured by ambition, a sycophant of Fleury, and next in line for a cardinal's hat by the usual channel of recommendation by the English Pretender. Of the other bishops of the province, two were in poor health and longing for a quiet life, one was a tough ex-naval officer heavily in debt, the other two were Fleury's own appointments, one of them not yet consecrated. Knowing that under the present administration of France his rights would be respected, Pope Benedict XIII made no difficulties; on the contrary, through his Secretary of State he expressed his joy at the idea of a council, and in a brief of 26 August assured it of his protection.

At the end of February 1727, the design of prosecuting Soanen got under way. The government invited Tencin to give his views on the feasibility of proceeding by a provincial council; he replied with a conventional declaration of his unworthiness allied to willingness; he was sure Soanen would feel obliged to attend, since as a Jansenist he believed in synods and councils; it might be an idea, Tencin added, to summon a few clergy of the Second Order to join the bishops to give an impression of the wider involvement of the Church. On 16 August the Council of Embrun began its sessions with a sermon from the archbishop, written for him by La Motte, the well-known author of operas and comedies; the two ecclesiastical officials in charge of business, the *promoteur* and the *secrétaire*, were friends of the Tencin family, and two Jansenist theologians from Paris, attending under false names to help the defence, were excluded. Tencin behaved impeccably, inviting old Soanen to enjoy the comforts of the episcopal palace rather than roughing it in lodgings, and keeping his temper when the accused denied the competence of the Council on the grounds of the known immorality of its president. Some extra bishops were called in towards the end to provide the full complement needed by canon law for a sentence of

deposition. On 28 September, the sessions ended. Soanen was reduced to lay communion and exiled to the abbey of the Chaise-Dieu in Clermont, and a decree was passed declaring that all must accept the bull *Unigenitus* without qualifications. Soanen wrote an effusive letter of thanks to Tencin for his hospitality, and Tencin wrote a letter to the government asking for a more comfortable place of exile for the ex-bishop of Senez, making sure these generous sentiments became public knowledge. Fleury refused. Pope Benedict XIII ratified the decisions of the Council. Jean Soanen, layman, was taken to the abbey of the Chaise-Dieu on its snow-swept plateau, where he survived for thirteen years more, revered by the Jansenists as the chief of their martyrs. The newly appointed bishop of Grasse, Charles-Octavien d'Antelmi, who had called at Embrun on his way to his diocese,⁴² issued a first pastoral letter to his flock praising the 'spirit of charity' which had reigned in the conciliar deliberations, while Henri-François-Xavier de Castelmoran de Belsunce, bishop of Marseille, one of the assessors called in to join in the verdict, told how the illumination of the Holy Spirit had suddenly descended on the judges to inspire their sentence.

The Council of Embrun did incalculable harm to the cause of religion in France. A pious, austere octogenarian, a commoner holding his modest bishopric by merit, had been deposed and sentenced to prison in a rigged trial presided over by an aristocratic churchman of dubious morals who had risen by intrigue and influence. The astonishing outburst of rage, bitterness, and anticlerical hilarity which swept through Paris at the news of the Council's verdict can be fully understood only in the light of Tencin's reputation. For some years now, the Parisian public, avid for scandal, had rejoiced in stories about the Tencins, brother and sister, on the make in the political world where the great prizes were awarded. The two of them, Claudine-Alexandrine and Pierre, were victims of the common policy of aristocratic families making use of the Church to provide a living for younger sons and surplus daughters: he had been pushed, willingly, into holy orders; she had been driven, unwillingly, into a convent, from which, after fifteen years (from the age of 15 to 30), she managed to escape by courage and the use of every legal device to get her forced vows annulled. Thereafter, intelligent and beautiful, she had made up for lost time by plunging into the loose living of Parisian high society, mistress, briefly, of the regent, Bolingbroke, Matthew Prior, and others, and over the longer term of Dubois. (Paradoxically, yet logically, they kept the liaison secret until promotion to archbishop and cardinal came through;

then they flaunted it.) Helped by his sister's influence, Pierre had accumulated rich benefices held *in commendam*, in the course of this empire-building becoming involved in the technical ecclesiastical offence of 'confidence' (a secret convention keeping the revenues of a benefice which is nominally given to someone else), a charge which hung over him for long afterwards. Dubois had made him chargé d'affaires at the papal Curia; here, Tencin was a party to the bargain of simony by which his patron got the red hat and Cardinal Conti obtained the papal throne. His great reward had come finally on 8 May 1724 while he was still in Rome, with promotion to the archbishopric of Embrun; he had not exercised any pastoral office or been concerned with diocesan administration before. The latest incident in the Tencin chronicle had come on 6 April 1726, when Charles de la Fresnaye, a magistrate of the Grand Conseil, shot himself at Mme de Tencin's house in Paris. He had been one of her lovers, and made his property over to her to avoid distraint by his creditors; now he asked for it back, she refused—until he paid certain debts she had incurred on his behalf. Archbishop Tencin, who lived next door (rather than in his diocese), was called in and sent for lawyers, but even his influence and her connections could not save her from indictment and imprisonment in the Bastille while allegations against her in the dead man's will were investigated. The two abbés who were to be *promoteur* and *secrétaire* of the Council of Embrun were among her visitors and advisers here. On 3 June 1726, the Royal Council annulled all charges, and she was released. Although ambitious, worldly, and vocationless, Tencin had been unlucky. His affection for his sister and his attempts to rescue her in the La Fresnaye affair had brought his name into a major scandal which encouraged the gossips to rake over all the old ones, as well as to invent accusations of incest, which were almost certainly groundless. In August 1726 he escaped from Paris to the shelter of his distant diocese, still cherishing hopes of eventually winning a cardinal's hat and achieving a major role in French politics. In August of the following year, he began his presidency of the Council of Embrun.

Dom Dassac of the Congregation of Saint-Maur summed up the incongruous spectacle:⁴³ 'it is pitiable to see worldly bishops of the Court assembling in council to proceed to the condemnation of the very venerable Jean Soanen, eighty years of age, grown old in the practice of all the virtues'. It was an elementary, scandalous contrast, easily grasped by the multitude of ordinary folk who had but dimly appreciated the affronts to intellectual honesty presented by the bull *Unigenitus*. A soldier in garrison at Embrun wrote to his

wife (so the story in Paris ran): 'we are still at Embrun guarding the Council of Trent. I don't know what they are doing there, but they say that 15 devils are trying to hang a saint'.⁴⁴ The anecdote typified opinion in the capital while the verdict was awaited, and when news of Soanen's punishment was received, there was a storm of pamphlets, satirical ballads, and outrageous jests against the prelates of Embrun. Barbier, a lawyer with no sympathy for the Jansenist cause and always hostile to agitations which might endanger public order, recorded in his journal how only 'the bishops and the ecclesiastics of the Court who aspired to promotion' were on the official side; 'the second order of clergy, the greater part of the bourgeoisie of Paris, of the magistrates and of the Third Estate—and what is rather amusing—women and the ordinary people, are all erupting against the Jesuits'.⁴⁵

The outcry against the verdict of Embrun was given solemnity and a supporting apparatus of erudition by the intervention of the *avocats* of the Parisian Bar. With their corporate spirit, fortified by their organization into twelve 'benches', in which the senior members educated the juniors in the procedures of the courts, they constituted a united and formidable association.⁴⁶ Men of talent had flocked into the profession—a major avenue of advancement for commoners, who could not break through the monopoly of the nobles of the robe to magisterial office, or aspire to high promotion in Church or army; some of them, young men of pious families, would have sought ordination had it not been for the obligation to accept *Unigenitus*. They were proudly aware that the whole system of justice depended on their services, and those who had not taken up advocacy as a career were often involved in outside business interests, giving them influential contacts. Their leaders, both by talent and by single-mindedness, were Jansenists—sixteen fervent devotees recorded in the necrologies of the party and others allied by family ties, friendships, and affinities of life-style.⁴⁷ This directing group was in touch with the appellant theologians of the Oratorian seminary of Saint-Magloire, who pressed for the publication of a denunciation of the Council of Embrun, putting Dr Boursier forward to help in the drafting.⁴⁸ It was all the easier for the *avocats* to lead the attack, as they had the right to publish 'consultations' on behalf of their clients without going through the censorship.⁴⁹ Whilst Tencin's prelates were still in session, the first manifesto of this collaboration between legal and theological experts appeared, a consultation on behalf of Soanen signed by twenty *avocats*. They were considerable names: two were famous orators, eight belonged to distinguished families, ten

had served as professional advisers to the queen or to the ducal and princely houses of Orléans, Condé, or Conti. Once the bishops of Embrun had pronounced their sentence, seventeen of these *avocats*, joined by thirty-three others, signed a more incisive version, the 'Consultation of the 50' of 30 October 1727. Their argument was based partly on the injustice of the procedures, including the brushing aside of Soanen's protests against the competence of his judges and the interception of his correspondence during the trial. More significantly, however, they denied the right of a provincial assembly of bishops to pronounce upon a matter which was already the subject of an appeal to a General Council. In the last resort, they said, the whole argument came down to a choice between the Gallican liberties and papal infallibility. 'If this bull [*Unigenitus*] is based upon infallible authority, the appeal is frivolous . . . If, on the contrary, it is not based upon infallible authority, the appeal is a legal method of proceeding, recognized by the whole Church and hallowed by the usage of all the centuries.'⁵⁰ This consultation ran immediately through four editions, and was popularly regarded as unanswerable. Cardinal Bissy fell ill with a fever while trying to compose a rejoinder. 'Those *bongres* [the *avocats*] are the cause of my master's illness,' said the cardinal's valet; 'it's easy for them to write as they do, they find all they say in Holy Scripture. But what Monseigneur writes, he has to invent in his own head.'⁵¹ In an open letter to the king, dated two days before the consultation but not released until March 1728, twelve bishops joined the *avocats* in denouncing Tencin's council:⁵² the proceedings had been against canonical rules and natural justice; Soanen's papers had been confiscated, his theological advisers excluded; the number of bishops had been below the canonical minimum for part of the time, and—most importantly—the accused's appeal to the overriding authority of a General Council had been ignored. Therefore, they said, the secular courts were entitled to intervene against the churchmen who had committed an injustice and exceeded their powers. The bishops of Montpellier and Bayeux, who had themselves been threatened with trial by provincial councils, were signatories, and they were joined by Noailles and the bishops of Auxerre, Montauban, Blois, Troyes, Angoulême, Castres, Rodez, Maçon, and the former bishop of Tournai. Lists of other clergy adhering to the cause of Soanen, 'the prisoner of Jesus Christ', circulated; there were, probably, as many as 2,000 signatures, mostly from the diocese of Paris, with the rest chiefly from the dioceses of Sens and of Troyes—geographically, the overall pattern showed a narrowing of the area from which the appellants had been drawn.

Fleury reacted ruthlessly. A royal declaration laid down penalties for writings attacking papal bulls which had been formally received in the kingdom; it was the first time a general law had been proclaimed to back up the Roman doctrinal authority. Two months later, on 3 July 1728, an *arrêt* of the Royal Council suppressed the consultation of *avocats*. An 'avalanche' of *lettres de cachet* descended on leading Jansenist clergy, suspending, exiling, or even imprisoning them. Dr Petitpied, the learned controversialist, was destined for the Bastille; the police caught him in bed early in the morning of 12 June; he asked to be allowed to collect his breviary from the room next door, and while the *exempt* and the *commissaire* were stroking his cat, made his escape by a hidden staircase into the rue de Montmartre behind his lodgings.⁵³ The government inspired rumours of a design to call a National Council of the Gallican Church to depose the prelates who had supported Soanen. One of them, the bishop of Castres, on 25 April 1728 wrote to Versailles in alarm to explain that he had meant no more than to give support to the Gallican liberties.⁵⁴ On 24 May, Noailles withdrew his signature to the letter of the twelve. He was old, confused, and a genuine lover of peace. Fleury had cut him off from Jansenist contacts and surrounded him with supporters of orthodoxy, while sending his agent, Chauvelin, to assure him (untruthfully) that Rome was being approached to validate the 'explanations' so much discussed a year ago. On 19 July, Noailles wrote to the Pope accepting *Unigenitus*, and on 23 October published a pastoral letter confirming this publicly; the bull, he said, had not made any amendments to doctrine, but had merely been concerned with repressing excesses, and the vast majority of bishops had concurred. Hérault, the lieutenant of police, organized the printing of this pastoral letter for wide circulation, but the day on which copies appeared on the streets of Paris, the Jansenists circulated a declaration of Noailles denouncing the Council of Embrun and disavowing in advance anything he might say containing different sentiments. Noailles did not deny the authenticity of this document, though he signed a retraction of it. On 6 March 1729 his long feud with the Jesuits ended; he restored to them their powers of preaching and hearing confessions within his diocese. It was the cardinal-archbishop's last act in the long *Unigenitus* struggle; on 4 May 1729, he died.

The appellant cause was cracking. Of the twelve bishops who had come out for Soanen, two were dead—Noailles and Armand de Lorraine of Bayeux, whose cathedral chapter boycotted his funeral, with the preacher telling the congregation that he was surely

damned. The bishop of Castres had withdrawn, and the bishop of Rodez soon followed his example, issuing a pastoral letter regretting his signature—to Colbert of Montpellier he defended his action by blaming the appellants, who had claimed him as one of their own because he had stood by Soanen, thus bringing him into disfavour with the king.⁵⁵ Fleury broke the Sorbonne by a *lettre de cachet* excluding no fewer than forty-eight doctors, and on 1 December 1729, the Faculty voted by ninety-three to thirteen to declare valid the original acceptance of *Unigenitus* in 1714 under Louis XIV. Government commissioners attended the general chapters of the Congregation of Saint-Maur, the Capuchins, the Doctrinaires, the Lazarists, and the Oratorians, excluding appellants; for the assembly of the Oratorians, Hérault kept out only the re-appellants, otherwise there would have been hardly anyone left. One incident typical of many was the pressure exercised on the general chapter of the Camaldolese, which was persuaded to dismiss the prior of the house of Saint-Gilles, in the province of Maine—in a short while, however, the new prior retracted his acceptance of *Unigenitus*, and a royal *lettre de cachet* arrived ordering him off to prison.

The great see of Paris, now vacant by the death of Noailles, was given to Vintimille, translated from the archbishopric of Aix. Venerable in his 74 years of age, and an aristocrat of the highest lineage, claiming descent from the emperors of both East and West, he was an impressive figure in his new diocese. Immediately, he set about using the same tactics of geniality and off-hand orthodoxy which had proved so successful at defusing trouble at Aix. On the evening of taking possession on 6 September 1729, he invited the chapter of Notre-Dame to dinner; the canons, already terrorized by Fleury's barrage of *lettres de cachet*, accepted *Unigenitus* the following day. Later in the month, Vintimille issued a masterly pastoral letter recommending the bull dismissively, saying it made no difference to dogma, morals, or the Gallican liberties; contrary to custom, and very wisely, he did not include directions to his curés to publish it—he wanted to present as small a target for opposition as possible, achieving peace in his diocese by assuming consent rather than enforcing it. No one was going to be victimized so far as he was concerned: out of the 1,100 applications from the clergy to preach and hear confessions, he refused only thirty. The ecclesiastical diocese of Paris, the heartland of the Jansenist movement, was being brought back to orthodoxy by Fleury's harshness and Vintimille's emollient and insinuating insistence.

On 24 March 1730, a royal declaration was issued making

Unigenitus a law of the French State. Strictly speaking, it was difficult to see how an obscure and voluminous papal document could be included in the corpus of French jurisprudence, but the practical force of the declaration was clear. The appeal to a General Council which had its effectiveness in the ecclesiastical sphere was made irrelevant to current controversies, since there was no appeal against laws prescribed by the Crown. The parlements were excluded from using the *appel comme d'abus* against those who enforced the bull and defended it, while the Jansenists were subjected to the full force of the royal censorship if they attacked it. In a peculiar sense, the declaration was also a Gallican document, for *Unigenitus* was made a law on all fours with the often proclaimed Gallican liberties—no one could suppose these liberties were in any way abrogated. Here was the sort of gesture Louis XIV might have made: the bull had been examined by the secular arm, the king was satisfied with it, so now he would enforce it. The acceptance pure and simple of the formulary was already demanded of all candidates for office or benefice in the Church; the declaration renewed this obligation. There were no loopholes left in the wall which excluded Jansenists from the ministry of the French Church.

Fleury assumed that the battle was won. In a sense, it was. The old Jansenism of predestinarian theology and protest against Rome was doomed. As an ecclesiastical statesman, he had ensured that what he regarded as a dangerous tendency in the Gallican Church would have no future: what he had not foreseen was the surge of new passions in society generally. He had resorted to the royal authority with powerful effect, forgetting how the apparent absolutism was founded on a sort of consent, which would be eroded if authority was over-used. A new, politicized mutation of Jansenism was on the way, capable of absorbing into its amorphous molecular structure the disparate revolutionary inspirations which were stirring in French society.

39 The Changing Face of Jansenism

Jansenism began with a book. The bishop of Ypres was dead before his *Augustinus* was published, but in thousands of pages Antoine Arnauld defended it and hammered its enemies, more especially the Jesuits. From then onwards Jansenism was a movement carried forward by the printed word—patristic scholars rediscovering the teaching of the early centuries, translators and commentators making the Bible available to the laity, grammarians and logicians writing textbooks, historians accumulating examples of papal fallibility, memorialists recording the lives and deaths of martyrs for the ‘truth’, controversialists pillorying propositions of relaxed morality and worldly finesse in Jesuit manuals, an adversarial investigation which rose to supreme heights of partisan irony and sophistication in Pascal's *Lettres provinciales*. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Jansenist historiographical tradition continued, perpetuating the memory of the golden days of Port-Royal, to remind men of what religion had lost when Louis XIV destroyed it. By 1730 the time had come to supplement the general histories with further documentary collections: the *Recueil des actes des religieuses de Port-Royal* in 1735; then, within the next four years, the memoirs of Fontaine, Lancelot, and Du Fossé and a life of Bishop Pavillon, with the three volumes of the correspondence of Mère Angélique being published from 1742 to 1744. After 1750, the general histories began again with Jérôme Besoigne (who in 1728 had addressed two petitions to the international congress of Soissons on the menace of the Jesuits to the states of Europe),¹ Dom Clémencet, and Guilbert. These were books for the scholarly reader, but as Fleury's grip on the Church tightened and the appellant clergy were squeezed out, it became necessary to address a wider constituency; the opponents of *Unigenitus* needed to appeal beyond the General Council (which would never meet) to public opinion generally.

Scandal makes journalism easy. The Council of Embrun of 1727 provided a rich vein to be mined and refined for propaganda use,

and in January 1728 a weekly newspaper began to appear, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques, ou mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la Bulle Unigenitus*. The first number was adorned with a handsome title-page with half a dozen oval frames around the borders depicting scenes indicative of Jansenist sufferings: there were the prelates of Embrun seated round a table, with Soanen kneeling piously at the side; there was Henriau, bishop of Boulogne, supervising the forcing of the door of a nunnery; the others were of a Jansenist bookseller in the pillory, of the police closing down the college of Sainte-Barbe, and of the two State prisons, the Bastille and Mont-Saint-Michel. This journal was to prove one of the most effective and well-organized underground propaganda sheets of all time, continuing without interruption to 1803, its editors and printing press never discovered by the police. Official disapproval helped to boost its sales; the parlement of Paris condemned it in February 1731 (the magistrates favoured Jansenism, but had reservations about clandestine publications), and the archbishop of Paris devoted a whole pastoral letter to censuring it in 1732. The continuing comedy of the official pursuit of the authors delighted Paris. On returning from searching a suspect house, Hérault, the lieutenant of police, found sheets still wet from the printing press on the seat of his carriage. Even the editor's announcement that the copy for the next edition would be carried past the Porte du quai Saint-Bernard at midday on a specific date led to no discoveries, the multitude of police paying no attention to a dog going by (a small dog and the documents sewn into the skin of a larger one).²

The *nouvellistes* enjoyed the enormous advantage of occupying the high moral ground. By definition, the persecuted Jansenist clergy were men of principle, while in the ranks of their opponents were the worldly aristocratic prelates, idle monks and curés, and time-servers generally. Had the boot been on the other foot and the Jansenists been in power, with the laity subject to their imposition of godly discipline in the parishes, they would have been hated; as it was, the readers naturally inclined to the side of the virtuous persecuted. And, as the subtitle of the newspaper emphasized, this was the contemporary history of the evil wrought by the bull *Unigenitus*, anathema to Gallicans and men of the Enlightenment. From correspondents all over France, evidently well informed and factually honest, information poured into the secret headquarters of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. The sufferings of the Jansenists were recorded, and the moral failings of the Jesuits and the orthodox clergy generally were comprehensively chronicled, as well as any

doctrinal aberrations or ultramontane sentiments in their university theses or publications. There were reports too, very fortifying for Gallicans, of the independent Jansenist Church of Utrecht, electing and consecrating its own bishops, guided in procedures by the great canonist Van Espen and with the apostolic succession guaranteed by the co-operation of Dominique-Marie Varlet, titular bishop of Babylon.

In a typical number (of 28 February 1728), the Church of Utrecht was represented by an account of a miracle at one of its services in Amsterdam, and of Van Espen being deprived of his academic rights in the University of Louvain at the instance of the ruling arch-duchess's Jesuit confessor. The contents of a cajoling letter which Fleury had sent to bishops who were restive about the Council of Embrun were revealed, and some recent controversy about the Council was summarized. When would Tencin's crime of 'confidence' about the revenues of a priory be investigated?, asked the journalist. From Boulogne came the latest details of Henriau's campaign against the Oratory, from Toul stories of the Jesuits trying to persuade appellants to recant and proposing to replace Habert's theological textbook in the seminary with a book written by one of their own Order, Simonet. The general of the Congregation of Saint-Maur was cited as denying that he had asked the government to remove priors who opposed the bull; as three monks had recently been moved around arbitrarily, who could rely on the honesty of his intentions? An old complaint against the Jesuit Laffiteau, bishop of Sisteron, was aired, and the hero of the week was Jacquet, curé of Saint-Pierre l'Entin in Orléans, who, as he was dying, kept his nephew by his side to give testimony to the world that the persuasion of the bishop's agents had not moved him to accept *Unigenitus*. All that was lacking in this particular number was a moral scandal concerning one of the orthodox clergy—some tavern brawl or encounter with a lady of easy virtue. It was a newspaper easily concealed, in three quarto pages, but in tiny print, so with a great deal of content. Such was this little magazine of ecclesiastical gossip, which Voltaire contemptuously dismissed as 'selling a weekly ration of the contemporary history of parish sacristans, altar boys, grave-diggers and churchwardens'.³ But it was gossip powerfully slanted, a weekly foray of revenge against the majority party in the Church which was victorious in everything except winning the hearts of the public.

The first number of the paper said the object was to write

for simple folk and people who are not able to give this great affair [*Unigenitus*] all their attention. Just as those who have the opportunity to do so, they also have the obligation not to be indifferent to what happens in the Church, and this is practically the only way in which they can find out.⁴

Yet the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* was far from being an elementary broadsheet for the naïve: it was a masterly vehicle for propaganda. It revealed scandals in a solemn style; pious clichés were recounted with relish; it expounded theological complexities with clarity, and had the trick of flattering the reader's intellectual self-esteem rather than talking down to him; it was full of accurate, sardonic circumstantial detail. There were no echoes of Pascal and no anticipations of Voltaire—that was not its level. In political matters it was cautious. Even so, it made a remarkable contribution to the literature of dissidence in the century, and its readership extended to many who had no interest in the writers of the Enlightenment.

This running chronicle of news of friends of the 'truth' and scandal about its opponents is our best source for the history of Jansenism in the eighteenth century. Only incidentally in its pages, however, are we able to glimpse the peculiar belief, piety, and devotion which Jansenism created. As a result of the papal condemnation of the five propositions and the Jansenist formal acceptance of their reprehensible nature (all the while refusing to admit they were in the *Augustinus*, of course), the theology of salvation of St Paul and St Augustine was purged of gloomy and unreasonable extremes. As such, it remained current, even among thinkers on the orthodox side. In this sense of accepting a predestinarian theology in which the rigours are modified and Cornelius Jansen himself is exculpated from ever having taught them, there were papal officials at Rome who were 'Jansenists'. Such were Monseigneur Bottari, the librarian of the Vatican, who approved prayers for the conversion of the erring disciples of Arnauld, provided page-references in the *Augustinus* for the five propositions could be given, and Cardinal Passionei, who had a portrait of Arnauld in his room and a copy of the *Provinciales* always to hand, and who (in 1761) died of apoplexy at having to sign a brief condemning a Jansenist catechism.⁵

Doctrinally, the question had been reduced to one of emphasis. But this was a case where the emphasis was crucial for Christian doctrine in the future. Even after the papal condemnation of the *Augustinus*, there were Jansenist pronouncements on predestination which were brutally divorced from Christian charity. The catechism

of Hippolyte de Béthune of Verdun (1685) describes God as saying ‘to those he has called without effect, that he will not hear them when they pray; they will lift up their hands to him but he will laugh at their destruction’. Similarly, in the catechism of Colbert of Montpellier: ‘Why does God act thus? For us it is an impenetrable mystery. What we know is that he shows mercy to some and justice to others.’ The continual pressure of the papal condemnation of the five propositions ‘of Jansenius’ was to rescue the Roman Church from the perpetuation of such grim attempts to magnify God's splendour as against human nothingness. Souillac, bishop of Lodève,⁶ a Jansenist sympathizer, to the anger of the Jesuits, tried to rescue as much of predestinarian doctrines as the papal condemnation of the five propositions allowed. In his *Conférences ecclésiastiques du diocèse de Lodève* he laid down three principles:

- 1 That Jesus Christ offered his sacrifice for all men.
- 2 That he offered it more particularly for the faithful, whose faith, hope, charity, good works and virtues are the benefits of his death.
- 3 That his offering was made with such a great predilection for the predestinate that the great benefit of his death, that is to say, the special gift of perseverance, and of eternal life, is applicable only to them.

This was a restatement of predestination tempered with ambiguity. To the old question: if I am not one of the elect, why then should I strive?, Souillac answers: no one stops growing crops or eating because he knows that we live or die only at the precise moment God has decreed. In strict logic, this sybilline reply must mean that no one can be sure if he has been granted the perseverance of the predestinate or not. Thus, the ringing phrases of St Paul and St Augustine are retained, and God's omnipotence is preserved; but since its operations are inscrutable, the Christian life can go on just as if salvation was to be achieved by good works.

Thus far, the papal condemnation of the five propositions ‘of Jansenius’ was effective. True, the question of ‘fact’ remained, and in the nature of the case it could never vanish, however ruthlessly candidates for office in the Gallican Church had to swear to it. All but the most extreme Jansenists took the formulary, or pretended they had, quietly saying to themselves that no one had managed to cite chapter and verse from the *Augustinus*. The orthodox, when they thought about it at all, had settled down to Fénelon's view:⁷ one proposition is there, word for word, in Jansenius's volume, but ‘the

precise combination of letters, syllables and words' of the four others is not—but the sense of them is there somewhere or other, and that was good enough.

The world had moved on since the great debates on grace of the seventeenth century, and *Unigenitus*, apparently still so much concerned with them, in fact marked the completion of the transition from doctrine to a different level of the quarrel, one concerning the right of authority as against individual decision, and of papal authority in particular as against Gallicanism. This revised ideology of dissidence made new recruits, as in Nantes, where there had been no Jansenists before 1713, but a rush of converts among friends of the Oratorians afterwards.⁸ Now it became quite usual to be an adherent of the movement without any interest in the doctrine of grace. An extreme example is Le Courayer, one of the canons regular of Sainte-Geneviève. Like the majority of his Order, he was a supporter of the appellants and a Gallican; more than this, he was a defender of the Anglican Church, the validity of whose orders he openly proclaimed. Yet, so far as grace was concerned, he was a Molinist, more liberal than many a Jesuit.⁹

Though the doctrinal divide had become less important, there was still a gulf between the ecclesiastical style and piety of the two feuding groups of churchmen. True, once again they were essentially differences of emphasis—though the emphasis could be weighty indeed. To a superficial observer, Saint-Sulpice,¹⁰ the bastion of orthodoxy among the parishes of Paris, would not have appeared very different from one of the great appellant centres like Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas—unless the observer had a chance to compare the accounts and see how Saint-Sulpice mismanaged its finances, or happened to attend at Saint-Jacques when one of the masses partly in the vernacular was being celebrated. To both parties, all Christians ought ideally to be familiar with the Bible and the liturgy of the mass. The difference was, to the supporters of *Unigenitus*, the Scriptures were to be known as expounded by the clergy, and the Latin liturgy as explained by them; to the Jansenists, the Bible in French should be read by everyone—this was the force of propositions 79–86 in Quesnel. From Saint-Cyran in the seventeenth century came a tradition of a piety specially designed for the laity,¹¹ in which the study of the Bible replaced the long meditations which were the recommendations of the mystics and of sophisticated spiritual directors. Meditative prayer should occupy ten minutes; more would be 'efforts of the human mind', intellectual exercises rather than communion with God. Indeed, simple folk could pray

effectively without seeming to do so—‘suffering is the prayer of the poor’. Sing canticles, dispose your body in a reverent attitude, pray briefly, and, above all, read and reread the Scriptures.¹² To promote this practice, one of the pious inventions of Port-Royal had been the portable lectern fixed to the saddle of a horse, enabling the rider to read the New Testament while on his journey, or fixed to the plough, enabling the labourer to follow the sacred text while he turned the furrow. It is improbable that many ploughmen had the device fitted, but there was still one well-known exponent of spiritual reading while you work in the eighteenth century, the abbé Paul Collard, who was called out of his parish by Bishop Bossuet to run the seminary for the diocese of Troyes. Promoters of scriptural piety must, logically, also be promoters of general literacy, and the Jansenists invariably founded and extended schools in the parishes they controlled. In Paris, there were the many schools under the oversight of the Jansenist curés, others kept by nuns, especially the sisters of Sainte-Agathe, and by the Frères Tabourin, lay teachers who took no vows, but wore cassock and bands, an organization founded by Charles Tabourin, an appellant. In his lifetime he set up no fewer than fifteen schools in the faubourg Saint-Antoine, and the lieutenant of police, a would-be hostile witness, admitted that the cost of policing the streets there had dramatically declined.¹³ The promotion of education as a Christian duty was common to both parties in the ecclesiastical disputes of the century; the Jansenists, however, made it a consistent policy, and interestingly, they did not attempt to give partisan teaching;¹⁴ literacy itself was assumed to be working for their cause.

Just as the Bible ought to be intelligible to all, so too should the liturgy. The Jansenists wished to supplement careful instruction with at least a partial translation. Pierre de Claris early in the century, in his parish near Nîmes, began with prayers, psalms which he had put into verse, and Bible readings with commentary, all in the vernacular; thereafter he proceeded to the Latin mass, and those of his congregation who could not understand it were free to leave. He was from a converted Protestant family in a Protestant area, and, not surprisingly, he fled to Geneva and to England in 1716.¹⁵ In the 1740s, there were more extensive innovations in the parish of Asnières near Paris, introduced by the curé Jacques Jubé.¹⁶ The altar, without cross or candlesticks, was covered only by a linen cloth; the epistle and gospel were read by lay people in Le Maître de Sacy's Jansenist translation; the celebrant, having been seated during the first half of the service, then processed to the altar preceded by a

cross-bearer in episcopal fashion; fruits and vegetables were put on the altar to be blessed alongside the sacred chalice, and the congregation throughout said or sang the Gloria, the Credo, the Sanctus, and the Agnus Dei. These deviations from established liturgical routines came from the Cistercian abbey of Orval in the Low Countries, one of the seminal points of Jansenist innovation and the depot from which their clandestine publications were distributed. Other Jansenist clergy, without making major changes, said the canon of the mass aloud for all to hear. This practice was a test used by Cardinal Fleury to identify crypto-Jansenists. To the former abbess of Chelles, the regent's daughter, who was using aristocratic rank to try to get promotion for a certain abbé Guiot, he replied with a refusal, since 'he affects to recite the canon of the mass in an intelligible voice'.¹⁷

At vespers in curé Jubé's church at Asnières, the New Testament lesson was read in French by a woman, 'une espèce de Diaconesse'. This was giving liturgical recognition to one of Jansenism's progressive principles—the acceptance of women, if not to an equality with men, at least to play a leading role in the Church. In proposition 83 Quesnel had defended their right to read and interpret the Scriptures—true, with a reference to their 'simplicity' as against the 'proud science of men', which was not unequivocally flattering. According to Bishop Languet, such studies were an affectation of women of the better-off classes: 'blue stockings (*des femmes précieuses*) who think it is impressive to reason and determine on the theology of Grace and to speak ill of the Pope, who decide their faith as they do their hair-style, that is to say by fashion'.¹⁸ A preacher in Orléans thought amateur theologizing of this kind was more characteristic of women lower in the social scale: 'Jansenist dressmakers and seam-stresses think themselves wiser than all the fathers of the Church.' The Jansenists, Massillon complained, 'put into the mouths of women and simple lay folk the most lofty and incomprehensible points of our mysteries, making them a subject for conversation and dispute'. It irked these prelates and preachers to think of nunneries, salons, and kitchens resounding with arguments justifying the ways of God to man and, what was worse, mulling over the scandals and persecutions reported by the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. More generally, women were always active in Jansenist prayer-meetings, schools, and charitable works. The Jesuit Bougeant,¹⁹ who wrote comic plays for the pupils of his Order to perform, was nearer the mark than Languet and Massillon with his picture of the bourgeois housewife taking advantage of her husband's absence abroad to make the house

a centre of propaganda for the 'truth', with hypocritical preachers and pamphleteers lodged in the attics, a printing-press in the cellar, and conventicles in the salon. When the era of miracles and convulsions began, a new role of leadership for women became available, as sacrificial victims of a strange liturgy of pain.

In the point of godly discipline, the Jansenists, as against the Jesuits, were traditionally the party of severity. Illustrations of the narrow puritanical morality of the Jansenists abound. The appellant abbé Pacori (who stayed a deacon, refusing out of humility to proceed to priestly orders) in 1700 published his *Règles chrétiennes pour faire saintement toutes ses actions*, a work which ran into many editions. It was against decency, he said, to let feet, legs, and arms be seen, let alone the displaying of a woman's figure. The Christian ought to have 'a holy detestation of his own flesh and that of others'. In accord with these precepts, the Camaldolese threw out of their church the very tomb of their founder because of the sculpture of the three Graces surmounting it, a work of 'indecent nudity'. Even in their park, the three ladies worried them, and finally they were carted off to Paris to be sold for the poor.²⁰ But similar stories of prudery can easily be found among churchmen on the Jesuit side of the divide. In the seventeenth century, the Jansenists had waged a triumphant war on the 'relaxed morality' of Jesuit handbooks of the confessional; so successful had the attack been that now, in most matters and for practical purposes, the penitent would find little difference between a Jansenist and a Jesuit confessor. One major theoretical difference between the two sides remained, however. Colbert, bishop of Montpellier, summed it up: 'Scripture and the Fathers', he said, 'recognize only two principles of all human actions: charity, the principle of all good actions: cupidity, the principle of all bad ones. The Jesuits, on the contrary, introduce a multitude of principles of human actions.' In short, the Jesuits recognized many actions as 'indifferent'. This was to be an essential principle for interpreting Christian duty in a world becoming progressively secularized.

In the actual practice of the confessional, there was a theoretical agreement on all sides that public penance would be a salutary discipline—it had been recommended by the Council of Trent. But in the parishes of eighteenth-century France, nothing could have been more unrealistic. Jansenist clergy who clung to the idea as an ideal could rarely do anything about it, except, possibly, imposing a public penance in the church porch before a wedding was allowed to lovers who had anticipated the marriage vows. Again, in theory,

since confession and absolution were a requisite for receiving the sacrament, a curé could exercise discipline in his parish by refusing communion to those whose penitence was unsatisfactory. Ever since Antoine Arnauld's *De la fréquente communion* of 1643, the Jansenists had insisted on a rigorous preparation, some going for years without approaching the sacrament, judging themselves unworthy. The Jesuits, on the other hand, while teaching the danger of unworthy reception, took the sacrament to be the 'spiritual nourishment' which fortifies those who struggle—with many a backsliding—to live the Christian life; they could cite Acts 2: 46 and 20: 7 to prove that the earliest Christians communicated every Sunday, perhaps even daily. This was an old controversy, but it could flare up; in 1739, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* accused a Jesuit preacher of Rennes, Père Boursoul, of recommending frequent communions, even in a state of unworthiness, as they would assist in progressing towards good ones: 'that is to say, the multiplication of sacrileges would be a means of achieving a state of not committing them—what horror!' But controversy between the two sides had brought them closer together over actual practice, the Jesuits having to avoid accusations of laxity, and the Jansenists having to defend themselves against charges of unreasonable austerity verging on hypocrisy. This approach to a common outlook became evident in 1745, when the Jesuit Pichon published his *L'Esprit de Jésus-Christ et de l'Église sur la fréquente communion*, a proposal to encourage more communicants to the altar rail by demanding less of them in the confessional than outright love of God. There was a storm of protest, not only from the Jansenists, but from most of the bishops, including Languet and Belsunce, the fanatical pillars of orthodoxy, and the Jesuits themselves disowned the author.

Though all parties agreed that preparation for communion must be rigorous, the step from giving advice in the confessional to actual refusal of the Sacrament was one rarely taken, except against blatant and notorious sinners. Things could hardly be otherwise, as there were usually many authorized confessors available as well as the curé, and legal proceedings for defamation might arise from a public refusal. There were, however, a few Jansenists who tried to exercise systematic discipline in their parishes by exclusions from communion. Curé Montpeyroux in Bas-Languedoc would not admit those who took part in dancing, and curé Jobel, priest of Saint-Ségoène at Metz (d. 1766), imposed long delays before absolution, even refusing the last sacraments to the dying if he was not satisfied with their contrition.²¹ This he justified because the grace of God is

for the 'elect'; the others are 'the straw which bears the good grain and nourishes it . . . then, when it has served its purpose, it is cast into the fire'. There were few who were so ruthless—the price in hostility and neglect of religious practice was too high. Jobel had no friends. On Ash Wednesday 1740, with the enthusiastic connivance of the local seigneur, Montpeyrroux's parishioners, wearing masks, carried a scarecrow dressed as their curé through the village and made a bonfire of it.

There was a paradox here. Jansenism tried to give the laity, women included, a new and leading role in the Church. But discipline exercised through the confessional and refusal of the sacraments was to elevate the power of the hierarchical priesthood over the laity. In all logic, the contradiction ought to have been reconciled by appointing elders to supervise discipline—by presbyterian church government, which the opponents of Jansenism suspected was on the way. There was a further anomaly. When the great scandal of refusing the sacraments to the dying became a national issue, with the parlement and people of Paris seething with indignation, it was the archbishop who was penalizing dying Jansenists for their beliefs. It would have happened the other way round (though for morals, rather than beliefs) if the Jansenists had gained control of the Church. Almost by accident, they had become defenders of intellectual freedom over the bull *Unigenitus*, but where an intellectual attack on the Creed was suspected—as in Rousseau's *Émile*—they were at one with the rest of the clergy in demanding suppression.²² In moral questions, they went beyond the rest of the clergy in demanding discipline. In the running battle in the Gallican Church, the Jansenists were the losers. But they were as intolerant in spirit as the victors.

Paris was the fortress of the Jansenists.²³ According to Barbier, in 1727, they were favoured by most of the bourgeoisie and the ordinary people; four years later he guessed that three-quarters of the police who were harassing them were really on their side. The curés of twenty-one parishes refused to publish Vintimille's pastoral letter of 3 May 1732 against the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. At Saint-Jacquesdu-Haut-Pas, where the archbishop had pushed in a new curé against the wishes of the parishioners, reactions were sensational. On 11 May at the time of the announcements before the sermon at mass, the new man pulled a paper from his cassock pocket; thinking it was the archiepiscopal fulmination, the whole congregation, 2,000 of them, rushed out of the church, overturning the chairs as they fled.²⁴ In this parish, together with Saint-Séverin (near to the university and

influenced by doctors of the Sorbonne) and Saint-Étienne-du-Mont (where the cult of the Jansenist Claude le Noir was observed by visitors to his tomb²⁵), masses were said in part in the vernacular, and intelligent laymen gathered round the curé to be instructed and to co-operate in the good works of the parish. At Saint-Gervais, the whole atmosphere was hostile to Fleury's policies, for the church was well attended by the families of magistrates of the parlement, the Marais being the *quartier* where so many of them had their town mansions.²⁶ Other parishes usually spoken of as affiliated to the cause were Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Saint-Roch, Saint-André-des-Arts (the university church), Saint-Médard, Saint-Leu, Saint-Jean-en-Grève, and the Madeleine-de-la-Ville-Évêque. As the strange events of the 1730s unrolled, it became clear that there was a Jansenist leaven in other parishes, too. Of the ninety-nine miraculous healings officially investigated, there were only twenty-eight in the seven best-recognized Jansenist parishes; outside that circle of commitment, there were no fewer than eleven at Saint-Eustache alone, ten at Sainte-Marguerite, and seven at Saint-Paul.²⁷ When in October 1741, thirty-seven doctors of the Sorbonne were excluded from voting in the election of the *syndic* of the Faculty of Theology because they were appellants, two were the parish priests of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet and Saint-Jean-de-la-Boucherie. About this time, when nearly all the curés of the capital had severed their connections with the convulsionist movement, there were two exceptions: Isoard of Saint-Marine and Rochebouet of Saint-Germain-le-Vieux.

Under pressure from Fleury, Archbishop Vintimille abandoned his early easygoing policies, and in 1730 struck a great blow against the appellant clergy of his diocese by interdicting 300 of them from their sacerdotal functions; this effectively got rid of the curés of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont and Saint-Médard, and wrecked the community of sixty assistant priests gravitating round Saint-Gervais. The degree of vexation which ensued in the parishes may be imagined from what we know in detail of the happenings at Saint-Médard.²⁸ The new man, Jacques Coiffrel, was sent to Coventry by the churchwardens, and the sacristan refused him the use of the parish silver for his masses. Three successive sacristans were dismissed by *lettres de cachet*, and a new one finally imposed by the same arbitrary means. The wardens paralysed his activities by demands for inventories and the deposit of caution money. In 1733, the Royal Council deprived the parish of its right to elect churchwardens, and dictatorially appointed a baker of the parish to keep the accounts

(not easy, because it turned out that he could neither read nor write). Coiffrel died in 1740, and his successor in the following year. Their successor, who managed to re-establish relations with the old churchwardens, was dismissed by Fleury. Even if a replacement curé met with less overt hostility, he could not hope to inherit the active lay support built up by his Jansenist predecessor. The abbé Duguet, asked for a moral ruling as to the obligation to attend services in the parish church (this concerned Saint-Étienne-du-Mont), said:

people ought not to absent themselves always and totally, since they need to maintain their right to a say in the parish assembly, and to avoid creating a schism. But there is no need to attend assiduously, it is enough to be there occasionally.

The policy of interdicting Jansenist clergy in office was supplemented by precautions to prevent them achieving office in the first place. Patrons of city parishes had their rights overridden if they were inclined to appoint opponents of *Unigenitus*. This happened to the chapter of Saint-Marcel (with the canon in residence appointing) over the parish of Saint-Hippolyte in 1733, and the University of Paris (the Nation of Normandy appointing) in 1743 over the parish of Saint-Germain-le-Vieux. The abbot of the canons regular of Sainte-Geneviève, who had already been forced to appoint government nominees at Saint-Médard, in 1744 was obliged to put in a replacement at Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, the curé in office having been exiled to Soissons. The aristocracy of the parish failed to intervene to protect their parish priest; the public compared this supine conduct unfavourably with the reactions of M. de Charolais, the seigneur of the parish of Écouen, near Paris. When instructions came to depose his curé, he drove out the archbishop's officials, had the tocsin rung to call the inhabitants together, got them to sign a petition, then hastened off to Versailles to complain to the king.

The Fleury–Vintimille policy of repression aroused hostility far beyond the circle of pious attenders at mass and the frequenters of religious confraternities, for in the Parisian parishes there was a remarkable homogeneity of lay opinion. For one thing, literacy was more widespread in the capital than anywhere else in France²⁹—500 ecclesiastical schools gave free education. The effects are seen in the signatures to the last will and testament. At the end of the seventeenth century, 85 per cent of the men and 60 per cent of the women signed; in 1789 the figures were 90 per cent and 80 per cent. True, only fifteen in a hundred ever made a will, but by

the standards of the day, the figures were high. Domestic servants, commonly said to be among the strongest supporters of the Jansenists, were outstanding among ordinary folk for their ability to read. Visitors to Paris were surprised to see coachmen and lackeys deep in newspapers or pamphlets while waiting in the street for their masters. Bailleul in *Moyens de former un bon domestique* (1782) was alarmed at the way literacy was encouraging servants to have aspirations above their station. Looking at the phenomenon the other way round, Mercier, seeing valets and maids so well educated, mused on the excellent political implications, 'a nation that can read carries within it . . . a happy strength which can . . . confound despotism'. Among such people, the ideas insinuated in subversive pamphlets and satirical songs—and in parliamentary remonstrances and the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*—achieved rapid circulation. More than this, although a huge gulf separated the social classes, the population of a parish was drawn together in fashions which, so far as the ideas of dissidence were concerned, transcended the divide. The vast armies of servants and dependent tradesmen locked the life of the great *bôtels* and mansions into mesh with life in the tenements, shops, and workshops, and for the middling and ordinary folk, the enforced sociability of tiered living in high buildings and jostling encounters in narrow courtyards, with the confraternity of the street on fine evenings, helped to promote a remarkable unity of popular feeling if occasions for collective complaint arose. The removal of a curé or arrests at a conventicle had repercussions greater than prelates and officials tended to expect. The rallying of parishioners to the defence of their victimized clergy was a significant factor in helping to create the sensational manifestations which began in 1727 in the cemetery of Saint-Médard.

'Molinism would be driven to despair, inconsolably so, if a Jansenist saint began to work miracles,' Racine had said. In the crisis of Fleury's persecution, the Jansenists had a saint available. François de Pâris, son of a magistrate of the parlement, entered the Oratorian seminary of Saint-Magloire in 1713 at the age of 23; he had been disfigured by smallpox the year before, an affliction for which he thanked God. Three years later, he was ordained deacon, and thenceforth chose a life of abject poverty; he lodged in a hutch of planks set up in a courtyard, wore a hair shirt, and ate one meal a day, all the while knitting woollen stockings for the poor and giving advice to those who asked for it. On 1 May 1727 he died, and was buried in the little cemetery of the church of Saint-Médard. Soon, miracles of healing took place at his tomb, and in June 1728 Cardinal

Noailles set up an official enquiry into five of them, and conferred on the deacon the title of 'bienheureux'.³⁰

These were not the first Jansenist miracles. From Port-Royal seventy years previously came the report of the cure of Pascal's niece, Marguerite Perrier, from a persistent lachrymal fistula of the eye. She was still alive, aged 81 and a disciple of deacon Pâris when he died—her years prolonged by Providence, said Colbert, bishop of Montpellier, to form a link between Port-Royal and the appellants of the eighteenth century. And as the shadow of the wrath of Louis XIV had closed in over Port-Royal in 1706, the nuns around a deathbed had heard haunting voices in the air: 'le délire commence, mais sur un ton assez doux', says Sainte-Beuve with sympathetic scepticism, though he regretted the incident as a distant prelude to the rough-and-tumble prodigies of the eighteenth century, from which his aesthetic sensibility turned aside. Two years before the healings began at the cemetery of Saint-Médard, there had been much discussion in the capital about a miracle which some had argued had a Jansenist connection.³¹ On 31 May 1725, Mme Lafosse had been cured of partial paralysis as she attended the procession of the Holy Sacrament of the parish of Sainte-Marguerite. After an investigation, Archbishop Noailles certified the event as a miracle, citing the testimony of forty witnesses, one being Voltaire, described in Noailles' report as 'un homme connu dans le monde'. The abbé Couet, who wrote the document for the archbishop, sent a copy to Voltaire, who sent a tragedy in return, declaring that the sum total of their joint efforts was bound to be a comedy (he did his best to make it a black one by recounting, in his *Siècle de Louis XIV*, the untrue story that Mme Lafosse was struck blind three months later). According to Noailles, the miracle proved the Real Presence in the sacrament of the altar, but from Montpellier Colbert announced that it was a manifestation of God on behalf of the Jansenist cause, since Dr Goy, the curé of Sainte-Marguerite, was an appellant. Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons, was quick with a reply: miracles were vouchsafed to separate truth from error in the age of the Apostles, he said; but now the Church is securely established, the logic of things is reversed, and it is the truth of the doctrine which authenticates remarkable happenings into truly miraculous occasions. In 1727, when the cemetery of Saint-Médard was just beginning to be famous, there was an instantaneous healing at a celebration of mass in a church in Amsterdam belonging to the Jansenist separatists; and at Avenay,³² in the diocese of Reims, a woman was cured of paralysis at the tomb of Gérard Rouse, an appellant canon. Pilgrimages to

Avenay began; the archbishop of Reims banned them, and called in the *maréchaussée*. A Molinist song recounted how an angry church-warden laid into a bevy of Jansenist pilgrims with a stick, which cured a pious cripple, who suddenly found he could run just like the others. Very soon, mysterious lights were to flicker around the stone which marked the last resting-place of a Jansenist canon of Amiens,³³ and healings took place in the church at Lyon where the appellant Oratorian, Père Céleron, was buried.³⁴ According to the Jansenists, Belsunce, bishop of Marseille, made a notable venture into the history of the early Church in attacking these wonders. 'Even if they are true,' he declared, 'it proves nothing, since Judas himself worked miracles.'

Cardinal Noailles died before his investigators reported, and the problem remained for Vintimille, his successor. Through 1730, while parlement and Council were locked in dispute about the six dismissed curés of Orléans, a similar case was coming to a crisis in the diocese of Paris. The appellant curé of Saint-Barthélemy, the abbé Lair, was accused of irregularities in saying the liturgical offices, and the archbishop's *official* suspended the aged curé from his duties, a precipitate severity which Vintimille regretted, but was obliged to defend after the event. The parlement received the inevitable *appel comme d'abus* and issued the usual *arrêt de défense*; the Royal Council evoked the case, and the abbé Lair was evicted, to the regret of his parishioners. One of them, Anne Lefranc, a middle-aged spinster afflicted with partial blindness and partial paralysis, decided in November 1730 to go to the tomb of deacon Pâris in Saint-Médard to ask for God's healing, not only for her own benefit and to prove the efficacy of the intercessions of the saintly deacon, but also to provide a demonstration of divine support for her victimized curé. She was cured, and her *Relation* and a powerful Jansenist pamphlet, *Dissertation sur les miracles*, were widely disseminated. The *Dissertation* took what had happened in the parish of Saint-Barthélemy as an example of what was happening all over France: pious clergy were being driven out and replaced by worldly time-servers, but by various miracles, God was warning his Church that the cause of the victims was his own, and was certifying their doctrine as true. Up to now, the Jansenist élite had been reserved about miracles—sceptical about the evaluation of evidence to prove them, and about the logic by which they could be invoked as proofs. But the Lefranc affair made a great impact, and the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, so far silent about the events at Saint-Médard, came out clearly on 4 June 1731 in support of the argument of the *Dissertation*.³⁵

On 15 July, Archbishop Vintimille published a pastoral letter, drawn up after consultation with Cardinal Fleury himself. Medical experts, he said, had read Anne Lefranc's *Relation* and other documents in the case, and had diagnosed her to be suffering from a hysterical condition deriving from menstrual change, while her brother and mother testified that her afflictions had not been as grievous as she had stated, nor were they cured now. Therefore, speaking as the sole authority canonically entitled to pronounce on the validity of miracles in the diocese, the archbishop declared her supposed cure to be a fraud, and he prohibited the faithful from reading the *Dissertation*; to avoid further disorders, he also forbade further acts of reverence at the tomb in Saint-Médard. On 13 August, twenty-three curés of Paris petitioned their archbishop to reopen the cases of miraculous healing which had been under investigation by Noailles; their application, with supporting documents, was widely circulated. On 4 October, twenty-two of the curés again petitioned, instancing further cures worked on their parishioners since their earlier letter. Vintimille's reply struck to the heart of the matter so far as the orthodox view of the Saint-Médard affair was concerned. Evidence was irrelevant: dead or alive, an appellant cannot work miracles. Could they give an assurance that François de Pâris had not died an appellant? 'If not, cease importuning me for the verification and public certification of miracles claimed to be obtained by the intercession of this deacon.'³⁶ This brusque invocation of acceptance of the hated bull *Unigenitus* as the touchstone to prove divine intervention to heal the prayerful sick was unwise. Far better to have ignored the partisan implications of the events at Saint-Médard and received the requests courteously, putting the slow machinery of investigation into operation, all the while looking for doubts about the evidence. As it was, the sharp-tempered breach of the usual formalities left the way open for the intervention of the parlement. The *avocats* acting for Anne Lefranc promptly resorted to the *appel comme d'abus*, on the ground that the ecclesiastical enquiry had ignored the basic principles of justice. No one, doctors included, had interviewed Anne Lefranc herself, and some of the most notable parishioners of Saint-Barthélemy had made solemn depositions before notaries supporting her. As for her brother, he was a zealot for *Unigenitus*, and, as a priest, was hoping for ecclesiastical preferment. Here, compared with the archbishop's pastoral letter, was a nice conflict of evidence. Barbier, the cynic on the sidelines, thought there were false witnesses on both sides: bribed for the Molinists, egged on by their confessors for the Jansenists.³⁷

Vintimille's ban of 15 July on the cult of deacon Pâris was swept away on a tide of popular feeling. From all over the capital, curés brought processions of their parishioners. The priest of Saint-Denis who denounced the agitation from his pulpit was censured by his flock for 'blackening the memory of a man whose holiness God has manifested by so many prodigies'. The inhabitants of the *quartier* of Saint-Médard who had known the deacon and his astonishing humility and self-denial were inclined from the first to honour his memory, and they were proud to have their church become famous as a pilgrimage centre. And many rejoiced to make money: hawkers sold portraits of the holy man, water from the well from which he had been accustomed to drink, and grains of soil from around his tomb; agents of booksellers were there with Jansenist pamphlets, and scribes composed prayers for those who could not formulate their own. Taverns and eating-houses provided refreshments by day and by night. The churchwardens of Saint-Médard, at feud with the archbishop since he had deprived them of their curé, co-operated enthusiastically in promoting the new cult. In their sacristy a 'bureau de vérification' was set up, where theologians, physicians, and church officials interviewed candidates for healing and their friends, so they had the facts noted as evidence if a cure was claimed. Meanwhile, the offertory boxes of their church were overflowing: what had once been a poor parish was now more than solvent. A spice of recklessness was added to the gatherings by the knowledge of the disapproval of the Church hierarchy and the government. Jansenists pointed the moral in the prayers they offered at the shrine, asking the deacon to intercede for the suffering Church and claiming that his renunciation of all worldly comfort had been the reparation he offered to God for the iniquity of the bull. Perhaps defiance of authority was a psychological help to faith-healing; certainly, there were more miracles after Vintimille's injudicious pastoral letter than there had been in the comparable period before it. Fashionable folk jostled in the throng, whether out of curiosity, like the princesse de Rohan and the duchesse de Montbazou, or like Louis de Bourbon Condé, comte de Clermont, out of sympathy, or, like the princess de Conti, afflicted with progressive blindness, to seek healing herself. The enormous tension among the crowd predisposed minds to believe in the possibility of reaching out to sources of healing power beyond human imagining, or in the sad case of the widow Delorme,³⁸ to sources of supernatural vengeance (she lay on the tomb feigning paralysis, whether for a joke or for notoriety, and was stricken with the real malady, a fact which she admitted to three

magistrates of the parlement, two canons of Notre-Dame, and her own, Molinist confessor). That some, at least, of the cures were genuine is impossible to doubt; all the circumstances for a major psychological transformation with effect on body as well as on mind were present in the electrifying atmosphere.

There were seventy attested healings in 1731, mostly in the second half of the year after the archbishop's ban. This number was adequate to establish the thaumaturgical credentials of the Jansenist saint, but far short of mass hysteria; the *bureau de vérification* had done its work conscientiously. But a miracle on the average once a week was not enough to sustain the momentum of the seekers after wonders, and crowd demonstrations abhor a vacuum. Of the dozens of pilgrims who came to lie on the tomb every day there must have been many who responded to the insistent clamour, prayers, and exhortations all around them by cries and gestures and implorations in keeping with the dramatic demands of the occasion. The first 'convulsionist' at Saint-Médard was Anne Pivert, who came from 12 July to 2 August and was racked by uncontrollable shudders—almost certainly she was an epileptic. On 3 August her troubles ceased, and she went away claiming to be cured. At the end of August the notorious abbé Bécheron de la Motte from Montpellier arrived, brought by his lackey and various ecclesiastics—a Jansenist who prayed for the restoration of his withered left leg as a demonstration of the sanctity of François de Pâris. Twice a day in the following months he returned, falling into frenzies, foaming and writhing, while some of his companions vainly tried to hold him down and the rest said prayers and psalms over him. Others followed his example, some becoming regulars, and there were days when the convulsions swept through the assembled multitude and spread to the streets and into the houses around. A whole range of folk were drawn into the vortex: genuine petitioners for relief from illness and disability, Jansenists carried away by zeal against their persecutors, sinners hoping for the light of conversion, seekers for acclaim, exhibitionists of various kinds, including no doubt the girls, 'assez jolies et bien faites', described by a pop-eyed police spy as waving their legs in the air in revealing disarray.

'Publish abroad these marvels. Proclaim to all who live in the hope of the redemption of Israel that the Lord is at hand!', wrote Colbert, bishop of Montpellier, on 3 October 1731 to a lady who had told him how she had been cured of an affliction at Saint-Médard.³⁹ But the degrading of the miracles of healing into convulsionism was a disaster for the Jansenist cause—though Colbert

never regarded the strange phenomenon as anything other than a prolongation of the same divine intervention. The Jansenists became divided. The abbés Duguet and d'Asfeld denounced the 'déformation' of the cult of the blessed deacon Pâris; Bécheron's contortions they regarded as God's punishment for his presumption. The abbé Collard, a devoted Jansenist who had known Pâris, buried him, and followed his cult, regarded the miracles worked by his intercession 'as an integral part of the whole business of the appeal [against *Unigenitus*]', but 'with regard to the convulsions', he said, 'I have not the insight to be able to come to a firm opinion on the matter. I limit myself to bewailing the division which this subject has brought about among the friends of the truth (*les amis de la vérité*).'⁴⁰ The balance of satirical observation in Paris began to turn. The absurdities of *Unigenitus* and the intolerance of its supporters were becoming less amusing than the antics of the convulsionaries.

Notice to the public. The great troupe of acrobats and contortionists of Le Sieur Pâris . . . will now give regular evening and morning entertainments for the convenience of the public. Le Sieur Bécheron the lame will continue his usual gymnastics and, by special request, will give numerous performances of his new and dangerous jump, relying on his own two feet and with only three persons to hold him up.⁴¹

Fleury and Vintimille, who had been in continual touch, judged the time ripe for repression. The vicaire and the sacristan of Saint-Médard, two priests who gave continuity of organization to the proceedings at the shrine, were banished from town; the leading convulsionaries were locked up in the Bastille; and a report of doctors and surgeons was published declaring their activities fraud and hysteria. Then, on 27 January 1732, a royal ordinance ordered the closure of the cemetery of Saint-Médard. At four in the morning of 29 January, the police moved in to cordon off the entrances; they were in great force, and the people who crowded towards the tomb were easily dispersed and sent home. As is well known, a wit scrawled on the wall the epigram:

De par le roi défense à Dieu
De faire miracles en ce lieu.

'Strangely enough', said an ironist on the opposite side of the ecclesiastical divide, 'God obeyed the order.'

The police blockade of Saint-Médard ended the frantic crowd scenes, and with their disappearance, the convulsionist movement was purged of the cruder exhibitionists, buffoons, hysterics, and

sightseers who had joined it. The religious enthusiasts hived off into private conventicles. Some found regular meeting-places in convents of Jansenist nuns nearby, the community of Sainte-Agathe, the Visitandines, the Ursulines, and the sisters of Sainte-Marthe. Others were invited to the lodgings of people of distinction. There was Carré de Montgeron, a magistrate of the parlement and son of a magistrate, once a libertine who had gained notoriety by disguising as a woman in an attempt to rescue a girl from a convent. Converted at Saint-Médard on 7 September 1731, he served the Jansenist and convulsionist cause for ever after, spending his fortune gathering documents and commissioning illustrations for a book in its defence. The chevalier de Folard,⁴² an ex-soldier in his sixties, refreshed the faithful with coffee in his salon as they waited for the convulsionist inspiration to descend on them. He had come into contact with Jansenism through the Benedictines of Saint-Maur at Saint-Germain-des-Prés (they translated Polybius to help him with a treatise on military tactics which he was writing). A sufferer from deafness, he was cured at Saint-Médard and joined the movement. 'Here', said Barbier, who was not easily impressed, 'is an intelligent man who cannot be presumed to have been won over by either of the two parties to feign convulsions.'⁴³ The police soon reported the gatherings he patronized, and he was exiled to his country house; he was last seen by Fleury's spies accompanying a pious group—a marquis, a convulsionist curé, three abbés, and several women—on a pilgrimage to the ruins of Port-Royal. More often, the convulsionists found a home in bourgeois houses, like that of Bélignon, a water-works engineer at Auteuil, the nucleus of the meetings consisting of his four daughters (one widowed, three unmarried), the serving-girl, the widow of a vineyard owner and the concierge at the local château. There were various groups of this kind in the parish of Saint-Médard, like the 'maison bourgeoise' angrily described by the harassed orthodox curé, 'where everyone, including the household cat, is a disciple of Quesnel'.⁴⁴ Some convulsionaries took a house and set themselves up as a 'community'; the police in 1736 arrested canon Buffard of Bayeux who lived in this egalitarian way with another priest, a Benedictine monk, the serving-girl, and the kitchen boy, all the while inviting others to join in conventicle meetings.

In 1734, a contemporary estimated that there were between 400 and 600 convulsionaries; these would have been the committed enthusiasts, with others on the margins of the cult.⁴⁵ Among the devotees, there were no class barriers. All who came were equal, calling each other 'brother' and 'sister', with the regulars taking

special names 'of religion' like monks and nuns, deriving them from scriptural characters, heroes of Port-Royal, or the calendar of saints, more especially choosing the saint on whose day they had been converted. Ecclesiastical rank, like worldly rank, was abandoned. Respectable clergy attended, like canon Buffard, various canons regular of Sainte-Geneviève and Frères des Écoles Chrésiennes, Benedictines like the scholars Dom Bouquet and Dom Maran from Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and Oratorians like Père Boyer who carried around relics of deacon Pâris, including his girdle, which favoured individuals were allowed to wear during the singing of the psalms. Quite often the clergy would give liturgical or procedural advice, but they had no *ex officio* presiding or directing roles. Nobles and magistrates of the parlements attended, in the earlier years as participants, later on (for the movement lasted more than thirty years) more often as spectators. Most of the men present, however, were respectable lower-middle class. Of those arrested⁴⁶ by the police and locked up in the Bastille and the Châtelet from 1732 to 1760, 9 per cent were notaries and *avocats*, and another 9 per cent were described as persons of 'quality' of similar social standing; 16 per cent were monks, 13 per cent solid merchants, 31 per cent artisans and guildsmen (cabinet-makers, stocking weavers, locksmiths, and the like), 22 per cent apprentices and domestic servants. There were no paupers or vagrants, and few who had not been born in Paris and were well established there. Men, however, were in a minority. The figures of the police arrests suggest that the proportion of women was three-fifths; a contemporary guess of 1734 put the proportion higher, at three-quarters. In the big cities, a woman without a partner or a fair income could be miserably lonely. Widows, serving-girls, lace-makers, and laundresses in cramped single rooms or attics, denied the knock-about confraternity of street, guild, and tavern enjoyed by men, found consolation in being a 'sister' and equal; more than this, the strange rituals of suffering which the convulsionaries came to adopt gave women a leading role to play, a substitute for the activities in the ceremonies of the Church which men performed. The bull *Unigenitus* had condemned propositions favouring women and lay power in the Church: the convulsionaries were making a feminist and egalitarian protest against it.

In the underground cult which arose after the public manifestations at the cemetery were prohibited, we can see what had been the inspirational core of the convulsionist chaos at Saint-Médard: a revivalist movement deriving from Jansenism but not identical with

it in either theology or discipline, a movement giving opportunities for lay leadership and the full participation of women, and affording mystical experiences to ordinary people who had never dreamed of trying to join the spiritual élite trained for the higher reaches of meditation by sophisticated spiritual directors. These folk were escaping from the grip of an ecclesiastical hierarchy which they identified with worldly splendour, and from compulsory allegiance to Roman pronouncements which overlaid simple faith with obscurities for the sake of domination in an Olympian world of power and intrigue. They were getting back to the original simplicity of the gospel, and their convulsionism had the New Testament association of the 'glossolalia', the 'speaking with tongues' (Acts 2: 4; 1 Cor. 14) by which they had the opportunity to declaim the faith that was in them or to feel that the Spirit was speaking through them as divine instruments. They were the heirs of the seventeenth-century Jansenists with the old learning and intellectual subtlety forgotten. In the last resort, their Jansenism consisted, not in the details of what they did, but in their revolt against established authority, the whole alliance of Rome, the Church hierarchy, and the government behind the bull *Unigenitus*. The truth was being manifested directly through them. 'When the truth no longer has freedom to show itself', wrote Colbert in February 1733, 'and men speak of it no more, then the truth itself must speak directly to men—this is the cause of all the marvels taking place under our very eyes.'

Miracles of healing continued in the convulsionist assemblies, though less frequently, and they spread in the provinces as earth from the cemetery of Saint-Médard and relics of deacon Pâris were carried further afield by the faithful. On the day after Christmas 1733, Bishop Caylus of Auxerre recounted in a pastoral letter, nearly a year after the event, how a girl of his diocese had been cured of paralysis and dumbness by the application of water sanctified by the sacred earth and splinters of wood from the holy man's bed.⁴⁷ In the same year on 3 October, Bishop Colbert of Montpellier was solemnly censured in Rome for his support of the miracles. He was delighted to report subsequently that on the very next day, Marie Boissonnade was 'raised from the dead' by the intercessions of the blessed Pâris—she suffered from 'a suffocating catarrh', and it had brought her to her very last gasp when the bishop's coachman forced down her throat a herbal brew containing grains of the sacred earth; in no time she was 'eating soup with appetite'.⁴⁸ But a change was coming over the revivalist manifestations, miracles of healing being

replaced by miracles of another sort, miracles one might say of suffering, at once touching and repulsive, whose spiritual significance was far from obvious to all beholders. A Jansenist pamphlet of 1734, *Pensées sur les prodiges de nos jours*, noted the transformation:

Little by little, but perceptibly, the convulsions, for the most part, are becoming symbolic and figurative. Various mysteries of Jesus Christ, above all those of his sufferings, his death and his ascension, are enacted in a most lively and touching fashion . . . A recognition is beginning to dawn that the convulsions had a different object from the cure of illnesses.⁴⁹

In an obvious sense, the purpose of the assemblies was to carry on the cult of the blessed deacon Pâris, whose sanctity had been proved by so many miracles. Relics of his earthly pilgrimage were displayed, and stories of his goodness recounted. Obviously too, the purpose was to express opposition to the bull *Unigenitus* and the great in Church and State who were enforcing it. Meetings were tense, because of fear of the police. But there was exaltation too, for persecution, as so often in Christian history, had revived millennial expectations. Christ will come and avenge his saints, and before that great coming there will be tribulation upon earth, the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear; the elect are suffering, a sign that the end is at hand. There were Jansenist authors who had drawn upon the apocalyptic chapters of the Bible to prove this hope: 'a parallel between the times of Jesus Christ and our own, to serve for instruction and consolation in the great trials in the midst of which we are living', as the abbé d'Etamare's title-page ran.⁵⁰ Perhaps Elijah, who had never died, but was caught up to heaven in a chariot of fire, was coming back to herald the second coming of Christ:

behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

So prophesied Malachi (4: 5–6), and such was the argument of Desessarts in a two-volume work in 1734–5. Yearning for this vindication, the convulsionaries were haunted by God's apparent aloofness from his elect—'le Dieu caché' of Pascal: 'verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour' (Isa 45: 15). 'My children are as sheep without a shepherd, because you have withdrawn into your silence,' lamented Sister Catin in an assembly on Ascension Day 1746.

I desire to see you, even with your rod [of vengeance] rather than not see you at all . . . It is long since you went to your paradise, and you told us it was to prepare a place for us. And yet the time passes and we die. It was good for you to say that to your disciples who were always with you. But this is not sufficient for us for every day we die. Your promises do not prevent us from dying.

She slept a while, then struck the robe of a doll-like figure of Christ with a cross which she held. 'Awake and act! . . . I know you are eternal . . . but act in time for those who with time pass away.'⁵¹

The inspirational sayings, when intelligible, were noted down by scribes for the consolation and edification of other gatherings. Some utterances were puerile, some bizarre, some deeply spiritual; some echoed biblical texts, and others invented new imagery. A modern writer has described the more original of them as resembling passages from some of the literary genres of the eighteenth century: the Voltairean *contes*, the plays of Marivaux, the pornographic novels; there were others breaking into a surrealism anticipating Kafka.⁵² From cesspits and latrines emerge the treacherous ecclesiastics who have betrayed the truth, while Christ complains: 'Ah! if only all I had to fight against were my enemies. But these are the very ones I commissioned to be shepherds of my flock.' The world is evil: 'they worship idols, they worship themselves . . . the truth is veiled in clouds, who then can be saved?' This faithless generation will come to its end, for the day of the Lord is approaching; say not, it is a day of light, it is darkness. Let Paris, the city which torments the saints, be destroyed like Babylon, Egypt, the Jebusites, and the Hittites. Let there be judgement, when all created beings are weighed in God's balance: those who are too heavy will be pressed down, melted, and refined, and the dross thrown away; only those who are accepted by the balance will be stamped with the hallmark of the Creator and retained. In that judgement, we hope to be saved: 'we have sinned, but we are your children'. 'My soul is a soiled garment, you alone can cleanse it—do not spare the soap of your grace.' 'Can the dust lift itself without the wind? It will fall into the water and become mud. Let your wind blow, O Lord!' Only thus can I be fit for the age to come, when the new Jerusalem will descend, its sun filling the whole sky, with its gold, its green crystal, dazzling whiteness, and glittering walls—but walls no higher than those of Port-Royal des Champs, which the demolition squads of Louis XIV destroyed.

These sayings were vouched for by the convulsions—the shakings, writhings, babblings, trances; they proved the speaker had been lifted beyond the plane of normality into the world of the

spirit. So far, these phenomena repeated what had been seen in revivalist meetings before, especially recently among the 'prophets' of the Cévennes in the clandestine assemblies of the persecuted Calvinists. But the convulsionist manifestations moved on, and developed into a strange liturgy of pain. The inspired souls cried out for *secours* from their brethren, for suffering to bring their prophetic ecstasy to its culmination. The procedures became stylized into the *petits secours* of blows, slaps, and kicks, rising by stages to the *grands secours*—'pressions violentes', perhaps under heavy weights, then blows with cudgels, then piercing with swords and nails, and finally crucifixion. Events of this kind were described by Bertin, the lieutenant of police, in a report of October 1758, citing a medical doctor who had witnessed them with amazement: sword wounds, he said, were immediately healed; the pain was 'borne with tranquillity'; and the proceedings were entirely decorous—'tout se passe avec la plus grande décence'. Good Friday above all was a day for solemn crucifixions, reverently performed, as the police reported in 1759 and 1760. The victims (if that is the word for those who demanded to suffer) were generally women. Some were devoted to these ceremonial agonies as a way of life, like Sister Félicité, who in 1760 in a second-floor apartment in the rue des Trois-Vertus was crucified for the twenty-first time, her hands and feet bearing permanent calloused scars where the long thin nails had been driven in again and again. The *secouristes* who accepted the invitations of the victims and inflicted the torments were generally men.

The subconscious erotic and sado-masochistic associations of these happenings is obvious. Yet for most of the participants they were a spiritual exercise. At the heart of Christian belief there is an acceptance of suffering—the suffering of Jesus as he gives himself to die for men, and of his disciples who seek to join 'the fellowship of his sufferings' (Phil. 3: 10), or even 'to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church' in another famous Pauline text (Col. 1: 24). The convulsionaries were re-enacting the gospel story in its most sombre and moving phases. Some, at least, of them believed they were suffering on behalf of others, as their master had done. 'O God, you promised me suffering,' cried one of them; 'Lord, make me suffer 10,000 times more, and save my brethren.' Some saw in the public and literal enactment of Calvary a call for self-humiliation in the depths of the soul. 'My son, says the Lord, listen to me in silence at the foot of the cross, it is there I will teach you the wisdom of the cross. Go down in spirit and in truth into the deep abyss of your heart to find there

continually new subjects for humiliation before God and before men.⁵³ The devotional books of the age still spoke of the life of the monk or the anchorite, the life of self-denial, as the highest; hooded Pénitents still processed in the streets of the southern towns, their backs wealed and bleeding from the lash; pious confraternities met in secret to administer mutual 'discipline', and seekers for perfection wore hair shirts and spiked girdles and bracelets. The convulsionaries adapted these practices, divorcing them from the search for private interior mystical experience and from the ecclesiastical context of monastery, flagellant confraternity, and confessional. They themselves formed a new community, a church within a church, engaged in a search to apprehend the truth which the official church concealed. They were 'brothers' and 'sisters', drawn into egalitarian friendship and mutual dependence by the pressures of persecution and the annealing force of deeply held convictions. After their meetings, both those who had endured pain and those who had watched them professed to have reached peace and wholeness, a catharsis of the emotions and release from guilt. Closely united, yet diversely motivated, no one explanation can account in isolation for their strange actions: each brought his or her own insights to the inspirational vortex of the collectivity.

Convulsionism had its lunatic fringe.⁵⁴ A doctrine which helped to produce the aberrations was that of predestination taken to an extreme conclusion. The 'Augustinistes' (taking their name from Brother Augustin, a young man unhinged by the cruel austerities he practised and believing himself to be the fourth person added to the Trinity) regarded the convulsionaries of their number as 'les élus du Seigneur', the elect. In them, the infallibility of the Church was vested, and being saved beyond doubt, they could commit adultery without sin. In the spring of 1734 a police spy reported on their more extreme branch, 'les Vrais Augustinistes', who drew the further inference that priests and sacraments were no longer necessary. There was also a water-carrier who called himself the pope and authorized his followers to take seven wives. Another belief encouraging eccentricities was the confident expectation of the return of Elijah. Père Pinel, a defrocked Oratorian, wandered round France preaching it, accompanied by sisters Brigitte and Angélique. The most curious and unfortunate victim of this case was the abbé Vaillant, an otherwise worthy priest of the diocese of Troyes. He spent three years in the Bastille for distributing Jansenist literature, and after his release in 1731 joined the convulsionists and became convinced he was Elijah come back to earth. In 1734 he was

back in the Bastille again, and, so the story ran, a fire in the chimney structure of the prison ignited the straw in his cell, convincing him that at last the fiery chariot had come down to take him. Disillusioned, he wrote to the lieutenant of police admitting, 'the whirlwind was not for me'; nevertheless, they kept him there for twenty-two years, then moved him to a cell in the fortress of Vincennes, where he died in 1761.

The supporters of *Unigenitus* were glad to seize on the scandals on the margins of the cult of deacon Pâris to condemn the whole movement. Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons, always the first in the field with a treatise on the orthodox side, accepted some at least of the convulsions and utterances as having an extra-terrestrial inspiration, but this came from the Devil. It was a good all-purpose argument to dismiss prodigies however well attested, but dangerous for a churchman to use as implying a possible ambiguity about all miracles. Others described the inspiration as imitation of the Protestants. 'As you know well enough,' wrote Fleury to the bishop of Lodève on 1 October 1734, 'the origins of the convulsionaries are found among the fanatics of the Cévennes—there used to be a formal school for training them at Geneva. There are only too many links between Jansenists and Protestants, and we must avoid doing anything to bring them into closer union.'⁵⁵ Independent little congregations with a liturgy of suffering and spiritually dominated by women inevitably attracted ridicule and innuendo. The clerical thinkers of Jansenism were divided. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* gave cautious support to the convulsionaries; the abbé Desessarts (the theologian proposing the Elijah thesis) said they were 'accomplishing what we failed to do: preach the Gospel to the poor'. At least, said the abbé d'Etemare, there are thousands of ordinary people who now know what the appeal to a General Council is about—it was no longer a private agitation of the clergy. By contrast, the abbé Duguet, angry because some of his early 'figurist' writings were being used by the new movement, dissociated himself, and denounced the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* for 'false zeal'; the abbé d'Asfeld, who had accepted the obligations of alphabetical priority and been a hero of the appeal, was another who wished to atone for his earlier enthusiasm about the miracles of Saint-Médard, and dismissed the convulsionaries as 'cette vile canaille sortie de la poussière'. Divisions in the Jansenist ranks were exacerbated by the activity of government spies, the chief being Mme Duguet-Mol, niece of the theologian, a double agent in touch with the police and using inside information to devise pamphlets blackening the cause of

deacon Pâris. From his exile in the Netherlands, Dr Petitpied wrote in 1732 revoking his approval of the convulsions; he was now much opposed to them, 'especially those where girls make a spectacle of themselves, accompanied by puerilities, indecencies, extravagances and false prophecies'. As for the Jansenist curés, leading processions of parishioners to Saint-Médard was one thing, allowing pious enthusiasts of their entourage to hive off into private conventicles was another.

'If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?' The Jansenist division was bound to affect the attitude of the magistrates of the parlement. They waged war against Fleury's elevation of *Unigenitus* into a law of Church and State, and against evocations which deprived them of the power to protect curés against oppressive bishops. But would they extend their protection to assemblies with bizarre rituals condemned by some of the leading Jansenist scholars? They had suppressed a decree of the Roman Inquisition condemning a hagiographical account of deacon Pâris and his miracles; but they normally took action against papal pronouncements on French affairs—besides, the brother of the deacon was one of their number. In April 1732, the king set up a special commission of the lieutenant of police and twelve *maîtres des requêtes* of the Royal Council to judge arrested convulsionaries. This was not just an evocation, but a standing one, and the parlement demanded its cancellation. A threat to the Gallican liberties or the jurisdiction of their court would provoke from the magistrates a sharp reaction—but would they go further? From somewhere on the convulsionist side came a strange appeal to them: the *Calendrier mystérieux pour l'année 1733*, proving Louis XV to be the beast of the Book of Revelation, and calling on the parlement to defy him and lead in the redemption of Zion. This hackneyed and treasonable foray into scriptural exegesis was hardly calculated to win the support of conservative lawyers whose resistance to the Crown was confined to well-established constitutional routines, more especially at a time when rumours of the scandalous doings of the Augustinistes filled the capital.

Watching the disintegration of the Jansenist defences, in December 1734 and January and February 1735, Fleury made a crafty switch of policy.⁵⁶ He restored to the parlement its full right to deal with convulsionaries, and rejoiced to see the Grand' Chambre embarking on an investigation of the Augustinistes. This was initiated because of a libel petition against the sect by Père Boyer, one of the respectable convulsionaries; some arrests were

made, and the accumulation of vast dossiers of depositions began. At the same time, Fleury lifted the censorship and encouraged Jansenist scholars to denounce the aberrations into which the cult of deacon Pâris had fallen, even though it meant that they proclaimed the veracity of the original miracles at Saint-Médard. In February 1735, a *Consultation contre les convulsions* of thirty Jansenist doctors of the Sorbonne was published; among the signatories was Nicolas Petitpied, invited back from exile by the government, the abbé d'Asfeld, and five curés of Paris. This brief document condemned the convulsionaries mercilessly, without nuances. They were described as mad or possessed by the Devil; their doings were a threat to public order and morality. It was a decisive manifesto, destroying the reputation of the convulsionaries in the eyes of public opinion, and ensuring that they had no chance of protection from the parlement.

Fleury's devious offensive against the convulsionaries, using their natural allies against them, was supplemented by a frontal assault against the miracles of Saint-Médard, thundered in a Christmas pastoral letter by Languet de Gergy, now archbishop of Sens. The familiar polemical points were made: miracles and convulsions were boxed together on the same level of credulity, and equated with the performances of the Calvinist visionaries of the Cévennes; very probably they were the work of the Devil, and in any case, the only true miracles are those worked within the fold of the united Catholic Church under the Pope. So far, this was like other pastoral letters, though more ill-tempered; not content with this, however, Languet went further and specifically accused the curés of Paris who had supported the miracles of fraud and partisan contrivance. Twenty curés, including the five who had signed the manifesto against the convulsions, promptly resorted to the *appel comme d'abus* before the parlement. The Royal Council as promptly evoked the case. The archbishop of Sens had not only libelled the curés, he had also broken the canonical conventions and the decencies between episcopal colleagues in airing his views on the affairs of another diocese. Vintimille was now on his mettle to pronounce on the miracles of Saint-Médard, if only to assert his authority. The Jansenists challenged him to do so, and their opponents, hoping for an opposite result, pressed him from the other side. Long consultations with the government and its legal officials finally produced a draft pastoral letter thought to be proof against attack by the parlement, and in December 1735 it was published.⁵⁷ There was no order for the curés to read it in church: that would have invited trouble. Doubt was cast on the miracles, whether by pointing to discreditable

details, or by the application of severe rules to qualify: the illness must have been incurable except by divine intervention, and the recovery must be total, for God does nothing imperfectly. But the crucial argument was procedural. The letter was trying yet another gambit in the unholy game of ecclesiastical one-upmanship. There was no need or, indeed, warrant for pressing to a conclusion the investigation of the miracles begun under Noailles, the argument went: first, because the cardinal-archbishop had never formally authorized the enquiry, and second, because the commissioners had not followed the canonical procedures laid down by the Church. Thus, such findings as the curés had bruited about were ‘irregular’ and had no standing. Furthermore, the curés were guilty of an illegal coalition to oppose the authority of their archbishop and to usurp the powers of his legal and theological staff. The general effect was convincing: the Sorbonne sent a deputation to congratulate Vintimille, while the parlement remained silent. One possibility of trouble, however, had been overlooked—or perhaps the arch-bishop's draughtsmen had manœuvred their devious way into a Jansenist trap. On 8 March 1736, the dossiers of the investigation under Noailles, thought to be lost, were suddenly ‘found’—an anonymous caller left them with a canon of Saint-Honoré who deposited them at once with a notary. The signature of Noailles was there; he had authorized the investigation, and it looked as though the procedures had been correct. From Montpellier and Auxerre came denunciations by the two remaining Jansenist zealots in the episcopate, and there was a storm of pamphlets in the capital.

All the while, Carré de Montgeron's researches had been proceeding, and by the end of the year he had a tome of 900 pages ready, adorned with engravings by Jean Restout, *La Vérité des miracles opérés à l'intercession de M. de Paris et autres appellans démontrée*.⁵⁸ Here was evidence enough to make everyone take the healings of Saint-Médard seriously, though by now it was too late to help the Jansenist cause, except to confirm the convictions of the limited circle of the faithful. In his robes of a magistrate, Montgeron presented himself at Versailles on 29 July 1737, watched the king dine (as all subjects were entitled to do), then handed his young sovereign a magnificently bound copy of the book, adding a few words of reproach against the ministers who were concealing the truth about the divine intervention. He went off and presented other copies to the great, the police finally catching up with him and conducting him to the Bastille. Here, they arranged for 5,000 copies of his book to be burned beneath his cell window, a sight he watched with

equanimity, since he had arranged for a new printing in Holland. The parlement made protests on technical grounds, for a magistrate had a right to be arrested by the musketeers, not the police, and to be tried in the first instance by his peers. But it was impossible to defend his 'extravagant' conduct, and Montgeron was never freed. In confinement, he managed to have volumes 2 and 3 of his great work published and distributed. Twenty-six years after his astonishing appearance at Versailles, he died in the citadel of Valence, barely remembered, even by the Jansenists.

The police surveillance of the convulsionaries tightened during Fleury's later years. In 1740, fifty were imprisoned in the Bastille. But this was the highest number sent there in any one year. Statistically, the repression was not a very dramatic affair. From 1732 to 1760, of a total of 1,344 individuals incarcerated in the Bastille for various offences, only 417 were 'Jansenists', and of this number only 199 were convulsionaries. Most were imprisoned for brief terms of one or two months. True, there were other prisons, more especially the Salpêtrière, where mad women and prostitutes were four in a bed and two on the floor alongside, under a five-foot ceiling in rooms dimly lit by tiny windows. Here, the three leading Augustiniste women had been sent, and the threat had been held over others. It was, indeed, the threat of the Bastille and Salpêtrière rather than the number of arrests which did much to detach all but the most dedicated from the convulsionist movement, and the awareness of constant police surveillance helped to confirm in the mind of the public the gossip about immoralities behind closed doors and under the camouflage of hymn-singing. Even so, for long the clandestine assemblies went on, sometimes attracting quite an audience; there were clergy and aristocrats at the Good Friday crucifixion of two 'sisters' in 1760. As late as the 1780s, stories of cruel enactments of the Passion circulated. In 1780, in the Ursuline nunnery of Charlieu (Loire), convulsions were a prelude to the nailing of one of the nuns to a board by her ears, with 276 pins stuck into her head to form a crown of thorns. In 1787, curé François Bonjour of Fareins, near Lyon, crucified Etiennette Thomassin in his church. The bishop confined him to a monastery by *lettre de cachet*, but he escaped and went to Paris. The notables of his parish testified that he had been engaged in founding a new religion, based on the abolition of private property and the expectation of the imminent coming of Christ. 'Adam left no last will and testament,' he said, so every man is free to follow his private inspiration.⁵⁹

Jansenist miracles of healing did not die out entirely. In October

1737 there was a fleeting possibility of a new outbreak of wonders, this time at the church of Saint-Gervais, for it was here, on the nineteenth of the month, that Jérôme-Nicolas de Pâris, younger brother of the deacon, was buried. Exiled away from the capital by *lettre de cachet* five years previously, he had practised cruel austerities which hastened his end, and his funeral was attended by an immense concourse. Pilgrimages to his tomb began and were long continued, but only a few miracles were reported, and these were not given wide publicity. In truth, it was not only the association with the discredited convulsionaries and the waning of Jansenism generally which discouraged the emergence of a new miracle mania; sober men had been driven to reflect on the danger to the faith created by the recital of strange wonders, however well authenticated. In July 1770, the Jansenist curé of the parish of Saint-Louis of Gien wrote to his bishop at Auxerre to inform him how good mistress Caillot had been cured of paralysis while attending his parish procession. His bishop counselled silence. 'By the respect due to the established miracles on which the certitude of our Holy Religion rests, do not multiply irresponsibly the designation of sacred happenings with respect to occurrences of a different nature.'⁶⁰

Fleury successfully rode the tide of the diversely inspired popular movement which surged up to help the Jansenists with the miracles of Saint-Médard. It was a Pyrrhic victory, for the same inspirations, Gallican, *frondeur*, and pious were to take new forms and support new enterprises against authority in Church and State. Amid all the damage to the credibility of Christianity caused by the disputes over miracles and convulsions, the orthodox party took comfort that the appellant cause now had no future in the Gallican Church. An impartial observer, Dom Chaudon, a Benedictine of Cluny, in 1766 summed up what had happened: 'the tomb of deacon Pâris was the tomb of Jansenism'.⁶¹

40 Fleury's Repression and the Interventions of the Parlement

I

At the time of the declaration of 24 March 1730, Cardinal Fleury was 77 years of age; he was to live and rule for thirteen years longer, ruthless to the very end. By the imposition of the formulary, tightly guarded against reservations, upon all candidates for ecclesiastical office, by use of the machine of ecclesiastical patronage and promotion, by the issue of *lettres de cachet*, by police interventions, especially against authors and their publishers, and by the despatch of royal commissioners to overawe the electoral assemblies of monastic Orders, he broke the power of Jansenism among the clergy of France.

The Sorbonne had already been reduced to accepting *Unigenitus*; now the whole University of Paris was taught a lesson by the imposition of a new rector, with *lettres de cachet* excluding hostile voters; it was the abbé de Rohan-Ventadour, son of the prince de Soubise and nephew of the fanatically orthodox Cardinal Rohan—at 22 years of age he had hardly had time to make his mark in the world of learning. The *collège* Saint-Barbe, a nest of Jansenists, was purged in October 1730; Hérault, the lieutenant of police, and a squad of *archers* arrived at six in the morning and turned out the ecclesiastics who ran the place, disbursing ready cash to them for the furniture they were obliged to leave behind. The angry students threw stones at a Jesuit, and to ‘appease’ them, chickens were served for dinner that evening—according to the cook, for the first time for thirty years.¹ In diocese after diocese the Oratorians were deprived of their powers to preach and hear confessions; if they ran the diocesan seminary, it would be taken from them, and their colleges were hampered by orders not to receive boarders, or even by prohibitions from teaching altogether. Their general assemblies were reduced to the mere rump of delegates who were willing to sign the formulary, so that by 1746 the entire meeting consisted of the general and only

eighteen others, though even that compliant remnant made its protest, declaring their acceptance of *Unigenitus* to be a recognition of its status as 'a rule of discipline . . . a law of Church and State', and not as a doctrinal pronouncement.² The coercion of the Benedictines of the Congregation of Saint-Vanne began in earnest at the general chapter of 1730, 'the brigandage of Toul', 'latrocinium tullense'. Specially convened to the abbey of Saint-Mansuy at Toul, with the strict new bishop of the place as royal commissioner, the signature of the formulary was imposed as the test for admission, and the assembly accepted *Unigenitus* as ordered—the rule that a two-thirds majority was required for such decisions, with a vote by a second general chapter if any house opposed, was set aside. Thereafter, visitors went round the abbeys of Champagne demanding signatures: 200 out of the 240 monks refused, and, in 1731, the province made an *appel comme d'abus* to the parlement of Paris. For the next ten years, general chapters met under the same conditions of exclusion and censorship; then in 1741, Fleury obtained a papal brief winding up the democratic constitution of the Congregation: general chapters would now be triennial, and the Crown could maintain any superior of a house in office without re-election if this was considered advisable.³ Royal commissioners exercised similar pressures on the meetings of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, the Récollets, the Jacobins, and the Cordeliers, and the elections of superiors of religious houses were managed by force or manipulation. The Camaldolese were dealt with by a reorganization of their six priories, the Jansenists being collected together in one place, where, being solitaries by profession, they could influence each other, but no one else.⁴ The Genovéfains, the canons regular of the congregation of France, held out until the death of Fleury, but in 1745, their general chapter was visited by the lieutenant of police, to exclude all dissidents.⁵ The year before, the Doctrinaires, specially convened to Beaucaire instead of Paris, had been coerced into electing Père Mazene as general: he boasted he had signed the formulary seven times himself and would now ensure that everyone else conformed.⁶

Quite apart from exclusion from advancement and from exercising voting rights, a whole range of persecutions, minor and major, afflicted suspected Jansenists. Dom Rivet of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, a historian who edited the first eight volumes of his Congregation's *Histoire littéraire*, would have wished to be stationed in Paris for the benefit of his researches, but with two others, he was excluded by *lettre de cachet* from the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés,

and kept in the provinces at Saumur and Le Mans, where he died in 1749, assuring his friends of his continued opposition to the bull, his concern at the decadence of his Order, and his confidence that the hour of renewal of the Church was near.⁷ In 1742, the abbé de Roquette, prior of Saint-Hyme in the diocese of Lisieux, was visited by the police and ordered to leave the kingdom; on his refusal, he was sent to the Bastille. He published a 'relation' of his six months behind those massive walls in the pale illumination of the tiny loophole windows.⁸ Most of the cells had copies of the New Testament and of the *Imitation of Christ* left there by previous Jansenist occupants, to the profit of himself and Père de Saint-Jean (they knocked on their doors so they could say their daily offices simultaneously) and Père Jourdan of the Oratory, incarcerated for ascribing miracles to the deposed bishop of Senes. No doubt the New Testament was also read by the Huguenot gentleman who had threatened to burn down the convent where his nieces were imprisoned, though almost certainly not by the bandit, a companion of Cartouche, who had escaped breaking on the wheel by betraying his leader, and had been there for twenty-one years. It has long been a trick of totalitarian régimes to assimilate idealistic dissidents to common criminals. Even so, six months in the Bastille was a lenient sentence. When the new bishop of Amiens made his first pastoral visitation of his diocese in 1734, he found the Jansenist dean of the chapter of Saint-Vulfran of Abbeville a prisoner in the Premonstratensian house of Damartin, where he had been for six years. He was moved to a more comfortable place, but he was not released, and never saw his deanery again.⁹

Nuns were peculiarly vulnerable to persecution. Unlike so many of the monks, they could not make forays from the cloister to preach, conduct missions, or pursue research, and their opportunities for visits to other monastic houses were fewer. Public opinion knew little of the injustices which intolerance could impose within the closed and silent world of the convent. There was, too, a certain brusqueness in the attitude of ecclesiastical authority derived from the assumption that women, by definition, knew little of theology, and were not entitled to make conscientious protests on matters beyond their understanding. In his four-volume compilation, *La Constitution Unigenitus déferée à l'Église universelle* (1757), the abbé Nivelle published a vast list of the names of Jansenist martyrs—however, he said, in the case of the nuns he had included only those who were dead, for women in the monasteries were victimized more severely than men, and he did not wish to put them at risk.

The standard procedure to discipline a convent of Jansenist nuns was to despatch a *lettre de cachet* forbidding the receiving of novices, thus ensuring its decline into a group of tired old ladies with no one to look after them and then, finally, extinction. There would also be the interdiction of the confessor and the substitution of an orthodox one, and a series of harassments by visitations and enquiries. The abbey of Notre-Dame du Val de Gif, where the Jansenist bishop of Saint-Papoul had taken refuge after his resignation, was to some extent protected by the aristocratic family ties of Mme de Ségur, the abbess, but in 1736 Fleury sent Archbishop Vintimille with orders banning the reception of novices. The archbishop stayed there two days, and found the place a model of the religious life, except that the abbess refused to remove Quesnel's *Réflexions morales* from the library and would not reveal the name of the confessor. With his usual courtesy, Vintimille apologized for bringing the bad news of the prohibition of recruitment, which he blamed entirely on Fleury: 'I feel for you, I am sorry about it; the decision has been made, it is settled, and both you and I have to obey.'¹⁰ Convents of nuns lacking influential connections were dealt with more ruthlessly: the Visitandines of Castellane in the diocese of Senes, loyal to Soanen after his fall, were deprived of the sacraments, and their superior was sent into exile; the nuns of the Benedictine observance of La Fidélité at Saumur were dispersed, and their house closed.

There was one Order of women which was solidly Jansenist, and here we see the full weight of the government's ruthlessness operating. The Filles du Calvaire (the Calvairiennes), a seventeenth-century offshoot of the Benedictine family, were supervised at the highest level by three episcopal directors, appointed with their consent; in 1734, these were the bishops of Montpellier, Auxerre, and Troyes—Colbert, Caylus, and Bossuet—which in itself was enough to bring down Fleury's vengeance. On the death of Colbert, the king forbade the other two bishops to exercise their right to name a successor, and got the Pope to authorize individual bishops to take over the role of visitor of the houses of the Order in their dioceses. Mme de Coëlquen, the superior-general, was arrested by *lettre de cachet*, and died in prison six years later; a successor was arbitrarily imposed. In March 1741, a commission of three bishops and two monks, all strictly orthodox, was appointed to supervise the Order, and visitations by Dom Boucher, one of its members, were followed by a hail of *lettres de cachet* against individual houses.

What happened is illustrated by the disciplining of the convent in the Marais *quartier* of Paris: the nuns here argued that the diocesan

archbishop could not proceed to a visitation of their house until the royal letters patent validating the papal brief had been registered by parlement: their superior was immediately removed. More drastic still was the fate of the Calvaire de Saint-Cyr at Rennes; the nuns were forbidden to take novices, then deprived of the sacraments; in 1745, the intendant of the province came in person with locksmiths to force the doors and install a new superior; two years later *lettres de cachet* arrived for the arrest of the fourteen remaining nuns and their separation into two parties, one sent to Tours, the other to Loudon. Typically of the operation of arbitrary government in eighteenth-century France, the outcome at Rennes was a long dispute about who was responsible for paying for the carriages that wheeled the Calvairiennes off to exile—the king did not perform his arbitrary interventions at his own expense.¹¹

‘The appellants are not immortal’: the bishops hostile to *Unigenitus* died off, and in accordance with the consistent policy of the government since the rule of Dubois, Fleury appointed orthodox successors. The diocese of Grenoble had been lost to the Jansenist cause in this way in 1721, and now Boulogne and Châlons followed in 1724, Bayeux in 1728, Metz and Dax in 1732. Before the end of his life, Bernard d’Abbadie d’Arboucave of Dax had abandoned the appellants, according to the Jansenists because of senile weakness (he was over 80) and to serve the ambitions of his nephew; just as likely, he may have succumbed to the pressure of his parish priests, who were solidly orthodox—or, more simply, have decided that Noailles’ departure from the fray marked the point when honour was satisfied and the battle could be abandoned. (Certainly, this was the view of one of his Jansenistically minded colleagues, Jean-Armand de la Vove de Tourouvre of Rodez, who conceded defeat in 1729 in quick succession to the archbishop of Paris.) The chapter of Dax, up to now a bastion of Jansenism, decided to follow the new diocesan policy and accept the bull, though only by one vote, a decision which the bishop reinforced by depriving a few canons and Benedictine monks of their powers of preaching and hearing confessions, and having one old canon locked up for three months in the Récollet house of Saint-Jean-de-Luc.¹² Older even than Bishop d’Arboucave was Verthamon of Pamiers, and for long his demise had been expected, but he lasted to the phenomenal age of 90, and, finally, gently faded out in 1735.

In the same year, the see of Saint-Papoul fell sensationally vacant. Jean-Charles de Ségur, who had begun his career as an officer in the Musketeers and the Gardes Françaises then turned to ordination, had

been appointed to the bishopric at the age of 28, twelve years ago. Now he resigned, issuing a farewell pastoral letter declaring he had accepted *Unigenitus* to qualify for episcopal office, a sin for which he asked the pardon of God and his people. He took refuge with the Jansenist nuns of the abbey of Gif where his sister was abbess (she had had them continuously praying for his 'conversion'), then went to Paris, where he ended his days as a simple parishioner of Saint-Gervais.¹³ A year after the bishop of Saint-Papoul's heroic gesture, Honoré de Quinquan de Beaujeu, bishop of Castres, vanished from the scene at the age of 81. He had retracted his original acceptance of *Unigenitus*, and told the world he went along with it only conditionally; he had banned the Jesuits from preaching and hearing confessions in his diocese, and had written to Soanen denouncing the prelates of Embrun who 'have crowned you with glory and covered themselves with eternal shame'. Death overtook him outside his diocese at Arles, where he had gone to visit relatives. The archbishop there, Forbin-Janson, tried (unsuccessfully) to prevent him receiving the last sacraments. In protest against this harshness, the whole city turned out at the funeral procession; the great bell of the cathedral, formally reserved for the obsequies of the king or the diocesan archbishop, was tolled for this occasion. 'Don't worry, Monseigneur', a canon reassured Forbin-Janson, 'when your funeral comes all the bells of the town will ring.'¹⁴ Two years later, the end came for the proud leader of the appellants, Joachim Colbert de Croissy. He had ruled in Montpellier for forty-two years, during the last fourteen deprived of his revenues, which were made over to the Jesuits of his episcopal city, who used them to adorn their church and give lavish receptions. Only the Oratorians and forty other ecclesiastics of his diocese had joined their bishop in rejecting *Unigenitus*, but those who did so were assured of his protection. In rejecting a royal *lettre de cachet* ordering him to act against a certain ecclesiastic under his jurisdiction, he declared it to represent an arrogation 'of the quality of head of the Church of the kingdom such as the Protestant schismatics have bestowed on the kings of England'—besides, he took all the blame on his own shoulders: 'the crime of being a re-appellant is my crime'. On his deathbed, he protested his submission to the Church of Rome, 'the centre of Catholic unity and truth', but all the same reaffirming the justice of the protests he had made and renewing yet again his appeal against *Unigenitus*. This he had already recorded in his last will and testament: 'I rank among the happiest of my life the day when I had the fortunate opportunity to make such a necessary act of witness to the truth.'¹⁵

In the winter of 1740, still confined in the abbey of Chaise-Dieu in the mountains of Clermont, Soanen died, the last but one of the patriarchs of the Jansenist resistance, 93 years of age. His end was pious, but it could be that he retracted his appeal and re-appeal, for a circumstantial account circulated of his reconciliation in the presence of the curé of the village and several witnesses, while the monks sadly stayed away, unwilling to be harrowed by this sad spectacle of weariness and weakness. It is impossible to be sure. The Jansenists did not make propaganda out of his passing, which helps to confirm the story, but the orthodox did not glory in his recantation, which helps to make it improbable. Truth was, Soanen had been a hero, had suffered, outlived his fame, and was now almost forgotten.¹⁶ The same year saw the death of Charles Fontaine des Montées, bishop of Nevers. He had issued a breviary with a Jansenist bias, had supported objections of his curés to the orthodox controversial writings of Languet de Gergy, bishop of Soissons, and had interdicted the Récollets of his diocese because of their denunciations of preachers on the appellant side. In the vacancy of the diocese, however, it became evident that the old cause was doomed without episcopal backing, for the cathedral chapter, even before a new bishop was named, decided to receive *Unigenitus*.¹⁷ Two years later, the dioceses of Vannes and Troyes fell vacant—the first by the death of Antoine Fagon, one of the last of the old-fashioned Jansenists, the second when Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, nephew of the great Bossuet, who for so long had promoted his uncle's middle-of-the-road Gallicanism and anti-Jesuitism, was persuaded by his nephews that he was too old to continue, and resigned.

By now, the only bishop of the heady days of the appeal to a General Council who was left was Caylus of Auxerre. After the scandal of Embrun, it was impossible to bring him to trial before a provincial council; Fleury issued orders confining him within the boundaries of his diocese, but could not prevent him exercising his episcopal powers in accordance with canonical procedures. Thus the curé of Neuvy, who rang the bells to call his flock to a ceremony of expiation and reconsecration after his bishop had conducted a confirmation service in his church, was interdicted from his functions, and resumed his ministry in the parish only twenty years later, after Caylus had died. However, the government could intervene in a diocese by police action, and two learned Jansenists to whom the bishop had given parochial cures were arrested on the suspicion of publishing Jansenist propaganda, and locked up in the fortress of Vincennes. One, Père Terrasson of the Oratory, renounced his

appeal after nine years and was released, a sick man who died insane; the other, the abbé Fleurs de Rouvray, remained constant and endured twenty-three years in prison. The protests of Caylus were ignored. But he beat Fleury at his own game of outliving rivals, and continued to rule in Auxerre, a defiant appellant, for a dozen years after the cardinal-minister went to his grave.¹⁸

The Jansenists accused Fleury of appointing fanatical supporters of *Unigenitus* to the vacant bishoprics. True, he took care to find prelates who would break the Jansenist cause in dioceses where it had become strong. There were two ways of doing this, of course, illustrated by two contrasting appointments made in 1724 during the Bourbon–Fleury era. Nicolas de Saulx came to the bishopric of Châlons, where Jansenist clergy had flourished under the two Noailles brothers. Young (34 years of age) and affable, he won the parish priests by kind words, entertaining them and sending them away with gifts of snuff-boxes. ‘What could I do?’, asked a curé; ‘Monseigneur asks me to retract (my appeal) with so much politeness that it is impossible for me to refuse him.’¹⁹ A very different character was Jean-Marie Henriau, a ruthless disciplinarian who swept away Jansenism in the diocese of Boulogne by force. The story of the two bishops who ruled there during the forty years since 1698 is a sad one.²⁰ Pierre de Langle was an expert ecclesiastical administrator, having been *grand vicaire* of Evreux for twenty years before becoming bishop at the age of 54. During his twenty-six years of rule in Boulogne, he was continually resident, except when attending Assemblies of the Clergy in Paris and from 1718 to 1720 when he was in the capital helping to organize the opposition to *Unigenitus*. He lived simply, gave lavish alms, and devoted himself to tours of visitation and all the other duties incumbent on a reforming bishop, as the Council of Trent had prescribed. But in the affair of Jansenism, he was a partisan, causing bitter divisions among his people. He deprived the mendicant Orders of their powers of preaching and hearing confessions, placing all his trust in the Oratorians and the Lazarists who ran his seminary—where Quesnel's book was a prescribed text and (so the story went) on festive occasions the Pope was hanged in effigy. He refused ordination to non-appellants, and pushed Jansenist candidates for the best parochial cures. They were welcomed in the city of Boulogne, where all the cathedral canons were appellants, and in the countryside around Calais, where contacts with English Protestants and the numerous Jansenists in the neighbouring dioceses of Ypres and Saint-Omer influenced lay opinion; but in Artois they were sent to Coventry or

driven out by their parishioners, as happened at Saint-Pol, Renty, Dohem, and Quernes. In Quernes, after the new curé had fled from a riot of women, his cassock in tatters, the bishop came down in person with an escort of soldiers to demand a solemn apology from the inhabitants; this was given—even so, the curé never dared return. In the town of Calais, Jansenist clergy were ridiculed by officers of the garrison who turned out in hunting gear, cracking whips and blowing horns. When the bishop, accompanied by Lazarists, came to preach a mission there, the magistrates refused to render him the official honours—yet, complained the Jansenist prelate, they had welcomed a theatrical troupe, ‘missionaries of Satan’, in their town hall and had invited the instrumentalists (‘who by their effeminate tunes seduce the hearts of young women’) to play Christmas carols in the city church.

These divisions, damaging to religion, were brought to an end by Henriau, by a reign of terror which was equally harmful to the Catholic cause. Like his predecessor, he was an experienced administrator coming to his episcopal charge at the age of 63; before this he had been a *grand vicaire* at Lisieux, and had been employed by Le Tellier, Louis XIV's confessor, as a commissioner to deal with troubles in monastic houses. According to Saint-Simon, he was ‘from the dregs of the people, notorious for his morals and his knavery’, but there is nothing in the chronicle of his episcopate to confirm this: he was as zealous as his predecessor in fulfilling all the Tridentine pastoral obligations, and even stricter about residence. He began with a pastoral letter declaring all clergy who had not received *Unigenitus* to be excommunicated; mission work was taken from the Lazarists and confided to the Récollets, and the Lazarists of the seminary were brought to heel by having two of their number taken off to Paris, where they were imprisoned and finally expelled from their Order. The Oratorians were forbidden to teach theology; one of them was arrested by *lettre de cachet* and exiled to Troyes; the rest fled. Two canons of the cathedral were removed from their lodgings by *lettre de cachet* and taken away to imprisonment in austere monastic houses; thereafter, all except one of the others capitulated. Of the fifty-three Jansenist curés of 1725, some were sent for the standard three months of discipline to the seminary, some were interdicted from priestly functions, four were exiled, and two deprived of their benefices definitively—the Royal Council cancelling the rulings of the secular courts which tried to reinstate them. By 1729, only twenty were left who refused to sign the formulary, and the number decreased rapidly thereafter. The solidly Jansenist

nuns of the convent of the *Annonciades* were banned from accepting novices or boarders, and in 1727 the bishop's legal registrar with an escort of eighteen *archers* arrived to arrest the superior and two other nuns—all three were sent to confinement in other religious houses; even so, at the end of Henriau's episcopate, twelve nuns were still holding out, harassed by the rule of an imposed and alien superior. After Henriau, the story of Jansenism in the diocese of Boulogne is reduced to one of the successive deaths of the remaining appellant clergy, pursued even to the end by the censures of official religion, some deprived of the last sacraments and almost all buried without the usual funeral rites—'sine luce, sine cruce, sine prece', according to the formula of Monseigneur Partz de Pressy, a bishop of notable apostolic zeal and relentless intolerance. It could be that Pierre de Langle and Jean-Marie Henriau, in their different ways, had done more harm to religion than a worldly aristocrat like Phélypeaux at Lodève, unbelieving, yet neither a partisan nor a persecutor.

The bishopric of Bayeux,²¹ which fell vacant in 1728, was a special case, not scheduled for a reign of terror such as hit Boulogne, since Armand de Lorraine had had the whole diocese against him, and an active orthodox successor, whether acting by sternness or suavity, was not needed. Besides, it was a wealthy see, worth at least 90,000 livres a year, and as such went to a scion of a great family, the abbé de Luynes, son of the duc de Chevreuse Montfort. He was only 25 years of age on appointment and, by definition, had no pastoral or administrative experience—during his twenty-four years of rule he rarely troubled the diocese by his presence. Metz, where Coislin had made nonsense of *Unigenitus* by his pastoral letters praising its ambiguity, was brought to discipline by the appointment of Claude de Rouvray de Saint-Simon, a fanatic who was later to accept the astonishing view, not only that the 101 propositions were justly condemned, but that in each case the opposite represented the doctrine of the Church. So too in the diocese of Dax in the following year, when Bernard d'Abbadie d'Arboucave was succeeded by François d'Andigné, who took measures, albeit mild ones, against Jansenist clergy (a monk was suspended from preaching and two curés prohibited from exercising spiritual functions outside their own parishes). His rule lasted for only three years; then, in 1737, Louis-Marie de Suarez d'Autun was appointed, a hard man who in 1741 began excluding Jansenists from the sacraments. It went without saying that Colbert would be succeeded by a bishop who would undo his work—Berger de Charency²² who had been vicar-general of

Cardinal Bissy at Meaux and had then spent three years at Saint-Papoul winding up the legacy of Jean-Charles de Ségur, was translated to Montpellier, heralding his arrival with a thunderous pastoral letter against Jansenism. Some curés refused to read it in their churches; three of them were excluded from the diocesan synod, and went to the parlement of Toulouse with an *appel comme d'abus* against their new bishop. But the Jansenist influence in the diocese, always in the minority, rapidly waned; the refugees from the diocese of Senes who had found shelter with Colbert fled again, and the others were reduced to silence.

After the death of Fontaine des Montées, the see of Nevers²³ was vacant for eighteen months, February 1740 to June 1741, and in this interval the Jesuits went round pressing for signatures of the formulary and denouncing appellants to their parishioners, propaganda which bore fruit in the vote of the cathedral chapter to accept *Unigenitus*. Everyone expected that a ruthless new bishop would be appointed, and so it was. Guillaume d'Hugues, who had been vicar-general of Tencin at Embrun, received his reward by promotion to Nevers. Once in office, he threatened interdiction against the remaining appellants; as for their leader, the aged curé Rabuteau, he was exiled thirty leagues away from his parish by a royal *lettre de cachet*. He had once enjoyed a benefice of 2,000 livres per annum, and had given it up for a parish worth 184; thanks to his convictions, he now had no office in the Church at all. The diocese of Troyes had been another haven for Jansenists, since Bossuet had reigned there for twenty-six years (he had been appointed late in life, at the age of 55, his promotion delayed by the Jesuits). In 1742, the uncompromising Poncet de la Rivière succeeded him—to the chagrin of the old ex-bishop who lived long enough after his resignation to see the stern new order inaugurated. This same year 1742 saw the virtual annihilation of Jansenism in the diocese of Saint-Malo²⁴ with the holding of a synod at Dinan by Monseigneur de la Bastie, the new bishop. All parish priests and monks were summoned to attend, and there, no fewer than 113 appellants signed retractions; only one of them, a parish priest, stood firm amidst the collapse. Fleury, who was to die in the following year, could now look back on a dozen years since the declaration of 1730 in which, by a series of episcopal appointments, he had ensured the appellant cause had no future among the clergy of the Gallican Church.

Yet the great cardinal-minister was too crafty, and too concerned for the good of the Church in the wider sense, to push in steely anti-Jansenists everywhere. He was well aware of the value of a

conciliatory temper in a bishop, and he did not wish to have inquisitions and unnecessary trouble in dioceses where Jansenism was nonexistent or only marginally influential.²⁵ Thus, in 1726, Claude-Louis de la Châtre was sent to the see of Agde; he was to reveal his position in the *Unigenitus* affair later, when he gave refuge in his diocese to Jansenist clergy who fled from Montpellier after the death of Colbert. Austere and charitable, Armand Bazin de Bezons deservedly became a bishop in 1730, proceeding to the see of Carcassonne; as a former pupil of the Oratorians, he might have been suspect, and as a bishop, he was to demonstrate hostility to the Jesuits, but the diocese had been under orthodox control for long before, and there was no possibility of Jansenist infiltration.

An even clearer case of the appointment of a *Tiers Parti* bishop—indeed, of a crypto-Jansenist—was the elevation of Jean-Georges de Souillac to the see of Lodève two years later.²⁶ He was 48 years of age, and his entire life since his ordination to the priesthood had been spent as vicar-general of his native diocese of Périgueux; in spite of the local distinction of his family, he had been compelled to resign in 1731 when a new bishop arrived (a former member of the staff of Languet de Gergy, the chief apologist for *Unigenitus*), who accused him of Jansenist leanings. Fleury forthwith appointed Souillac to Lodève—after receiving assurances from him that he accepted *Unigenitus* as a law of Church and State; it was a neglected diocese, much in need of a ruler of exemplary piety. Souillac embarked on the moral reform of his people with the severity which was one of the hallmarks of the Jansenist prelate—banning dancing and the banquets of confraternities, excommunicating absentees from mass for three consecutive Sundays, and—the old harsh prescription (was it enforced, and what parochial comedies ensued when it was?)—ordering lovers who had anticipated their marriage vows to kneel in the church porch while their banns were being called. His tours of visitation were numerous, his charities lavish, his sermons prodigiously long, and when he died, all he possessed was left to the poor. Yet it must be confessed that this highly moral bishop's compliance with the rules of government and papacy for the suppression of Jansenism was disingenuous. He urged his clergy to sign the formulary, but did not exact it, and at a pinch he would certify someone as having signed who had not, or put them down as about to sign which they never did. The Doctrinaires who ran the *collège* of Lodève were Jansenistically inclined, teaching an Augustinian theology, and he gave them charge of his new seminary and of diocesan missions, while an appellant sister was made superior

of the hospital. These subterfuges came to national notice when Jean Martin of the Doctrinaires of the town of Lodève paid an ostentatious visit to Soanen in the abbey of the Chaise-Dieu; when his superior-general investigated, it turned out that he did not accept *Unigenitus*, and would only sign the formulary 'in conformity with the peace of Clement IX and not otherwise'. In 1738, royal orders arrived sending Martin into exile—all the same, Souillac kept him working in his diocese, and after the death of Fleury came out even more openly as a protector of Jansenists. Needless to say, when the bishop died in 1750, his successor, Jean-Felix Henri de Fumel, was of a different school of churchmanship: the French crown did not allow the revival of dissidence in Lodève to continue.

Four later episcopal appointments of Fleury illustrate the rule that *Tiers Parti* candidates could be promoted, provided it was to dioceses which were already ruthlessly weeded gardens of orthodoxy. Choiseul-Beaupré went to Châlons (succeeding Nicolas de Saulx who had become archbishop of Rouen) in 1734; C.-J. Quigneron de Beaujeu, nephew of the bishop of Castres, whose funeral at Arles had been such a sensation, went to Mirepoix two years later, and Verthaman de Chavagnac to Luçon in the following year. When in 1759 Joseph Languet de Gergy, the great apologist for *Unigenitus*, received his reward with translation to the archbishopric of Sens, the richest see in France, his solidly conformist diocese of Soissons went to Fitz-James, an acceptant of the bull, but a foe of the Jesuits. He was one of those lofty aristocrats—grandson of James II, king of England—for whom major ecclesiastical promotion had to be found. His uncle, the Stuart Pretender, twice nominated him to the Pope for a cardinal's hat, but he was too suspect at Rome to be allowed the award; even so, at the very least, the French government had to make him a bishop, and as a bishop, from his palace at Soissons, he was to pursue a Gallican campaign which kept alive the memories of the battle of *Unigenitus*.

On 14 February 1741, Fleury reported to Pope Benedict XIV on the bishops of France and their attitude to Rome and the bull—it was, as it were, a survey of the success of his policy in making episcopal appointments. According to his analysis, there were over thirty bishops 'worthy of the early centuries of the Church by their zeal, their attachment to the Holy See and by their most edifying piety'. But even those who could not be put in this lofty category were all subject to the bull, except Caylus of Auxerre and two others whose status was doubtful—Bossuet of Troyes and the bishop of Carcassonne; but both enforced the formulary. There were others

who were 'tolérants', and some who 'would not resist unto blood to support the bull *Unigenitus*', but in general, 'the clergy of France are very attached to it'.²⁷

It was true *Unigenitus* had its fanatical supporters, but that the French episcopate generally was 'attached to it' must have sounded as hollow to the writer in Versailles as to the reader in Rome. It would have been more correct to say that the bull was accepted without any sort of enthusiasm or conviction. The views of two bishops who had lived through the crisis and were shortly to depart from the scene—one an apostolic character celebrated for his preaching, the other a genial worldly aristocrat—offer illustration. Massillon, bishop of Clermont, had played the game according to the official rules.²⁸ He exacted the formulary and had gone so far as to write a pseudo-friendly letter to Soanen in his imprisonment which some might think cruel: 'the pleasure you find in your sufferings does not justify the motive; you know that error has always had its martyrs just as truth has . . . It is terrible to be all alone in your opinion, and to have against you all that bears the name of authority in the Church.' Even so, Massillon made no secret of the fact that he regarded the formulary as a verbal submission from which the heart could be absent. He was a determined Gallican, unwilling to allow the enforcement of official measures against Jansenism to be associated with gestures of respect to papal authority; the infallibility of popes and their superiority to councils, he said, were 'new paradoxes born in the ignorance and superstition of recent centuries'. In his diocese, theological quarrels were outlawed; 'see what I have reduced them to,' he said, pointing to a Jesuit and an Oratorian playing boules together. A preacher coming to his cathedral who asked to be given the formulary to sign before beginning his Lenten course was interdicted and confined for three months in the seminary for his self-important gesture of factious allegiance. To be allowed to pursue a career of well-doing, Massillon bowed to circumstance: his allegiance to *Unigenitus* like his co-operation in the consecration of Dubois to episcopal orders, was a yielding to expediency.

Vintimille, archbishop of Paris, conformed and did more, persuading appellants to recant and doing Fleury's bidding in using severe measures to break the Jansenist strongholds in the capital—dispersing the large community of priests which had gathered at Saint-Gervais around the re-appellant curé François Feu II and removing curé Pommert from Saint-Médard, imposing a successor and depriving the parish of its right to elect churchwardens by decree of the Royal Council.²⁹ Yet he had his Jansenist sympathies,

using scholars of that party to produce a new breviary and missal (by contrast, the illustrations were by Boucher, which caused scandal of a different kind). *Unigenitus* he held in contempt. In 1732 he wrote to Fleury suggesting the calling of a National Council: in it, he said, let us declare what we mean by each of the propositions, and if Rome will not agree, send the bull back. Seven years later he confided to Massillon: 'I have been compelled to do a lot of harm to these poor Jansenists. I never found anyone among their number who was not a perfectly good person. It's these wretched Jesuits who are the cause of all our troubles. So long as these firebrands are around, there will be no peace in either Church or State.'³⁰

Fleury's analysis in his report to Benedict XIV may be faulted in another respect: not only were there bishops who enforced *Unigenitus* without respecting it, there were others vociferous in its support for reasons of ambition rather than religion. Cardinal Bissy, bishop of Meaux, who died in 1737, had seen nothing wrong with Quesnel, it was said, until the abbatial revenues of Saint-Germain-des-Prés came up for reallocation, worth fully seven times as much as his bishopric. And then, there was Tencin, undoubtedly 'greatly attached to the bull', but certainly not one of the thirty 'worthy of the early centuries of the Church'.³¹ His zeal was zeal for the official religious policy of the government. For thirteen years after the Council of Embrun he continued to thunder against the Jansenists, and Fleury gave him his reward in 1740 with translation to the arch-bishopric of Lyon. It was also a compensation for the manœuvres by which he had been edged out of the position of heir apparent to the post of first minister, and a recognition of his newly acquired position of influence in Rome—for Tencin had become a cardinal in February 1739, and then attended the conclave at which one of his personal friends, Cardinal Lambertini, was elected pope as Benedict XIV. Meanwhile his sister, 'la religieuse', banned by Fleury from dabbling in politics, was founding a literary salon whose habitués dined well every Tuesday and were annually presented with a length of velvet to have prestigious breeches made as a sort of uniform. Her contacts included Fontenelle, Duclos, the abbé Trublet, and Marivaux; she became the mistress of Astruc, the medical writer whose hobby of making analyses of the Pentateuch turned out to be the beginning of modern criticism of the Old Testament, corresponded with Montesquieu over the correction of errata in the *Esprit des Lois*, and wrote to Pope Benedict XIV every New Year sending the latest Parisian almanacs. Anonymously, she wrote novels, in which star-crossed lovers retired to the austerities of the

cloister to find spiritual consolations in place of the romantic attachments which were denied to them (she had lived her own life the other way round). In letters to his sister, Tencin confided his growing weariness with the world and disillusionment with its prizes, and after her death he retired to his diocese where, from 1751 to 1758, he solemnly fulfilled the duties of his episcopal office and prepared for death. In his will, he asked for the simplest possible funeral, but the canons of Lyon buried him with all the splendid ceremonies appropriate to his rank. His end was a sort of parable of the fate of the vocationless aristocratic churchmen of the *ancien régime*: in spite of their better instincts, they were trapped in the vortex of ambition which was their inheritance from their ancestry.

II

Fleury's repression of Jansenism, symbolized in the declaration of 24 March 1730 making *Unigenitus* a law of Church and State, was a towering example of the misuse of political power in the service of religious intolerance. The repression was successful—at the cost of bringing the royal authority into question. To Frenchmen, this authority was absolute, but not arbitrary; they did not live under a 'despotisme à la Turquie', but under a king who was the guardian of the hierarchical order and of the privileges of every class of his subjects, who ruled by traditional formalities, accorded to all men due process of law, and who recognized himself to be under the judgement of God. In the last resort, however, the monarch's will must prevail, if only because he was the shield of his people against anarchy—men still remembered the civil wars which had racked the country in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Even so, there was a distinction to be made: it was not the will of the king as a private individual which ought to go unchallenged, but the will of the sovereign, well informed and formally counselled—as the phrase went, 'inaccessible aux surprises', guaranteed not to be 'surprised' into a decision by passing whim or partial, self-interested advice.

Most affairs in eighteenth-century France were run by labyrinthine traditional procedures, but there were ways of exception by which the king could cut through them. One was to use the power of 'évocation', by which lawsuits pending before the ordinary courts could be withdrawn and taken to the judicial branch of the Royal Council. Certain individuals and institutions had a right to demand such action if it suited them; otherwise the initiative came from the

ministers of the Crown, with the assumption that some great issue of policy was involved or that there was reason to fear a miscarriage of justice. To Fleury, evocation was the means by which he could defend bishops from lawsuits raised against them by the Jansenist clergy they disciplined or deprived.

Much more significant, however—and widely and recklessly resorted to by the cardinal-minister—was intervention by *lettre de cachet*; by such a letter from the king, an individual could be ordered to prison, sent to reside in a monastery, or exiled away from his place of habitual residence; there was no trial, no need to cite reasons, and the procedures of ordinary justice were overridden. One use of this device was in high matters of state, like confining an intriguing nobleman or dismissed minister to his provincial château away from the milieu of power, or banishing the magistrates of the parlement of Paris to some uncomfortable country town to punish them for publishing remonstrances or refusing to register a law. The other use was social. The king, having had his attention drawn to some scandal, would intervene to end it or hush it up without delay. The issue of a *lettre de cachet* for such social reasons was normally on the application of a family asking for the imprisonment of an erring son or daughter or other relative—to prevent an unsuitable marriage, end a career of debauchery, or forestall the reckless spending of a dowry or a heritage. If an ecclesiastic was removed from ordinary life by such a royal order, it would be because of blatant immoral conduct or madness, conditions which could not be dealt with by ordinary ecclesiastical discipline. Early in the century, these arbitrary procedures were accepted by public opinion as necessary devices to enable the king to fulfil his role of keeper of the peace and defender of the social and family decencies. But by the eve of the Revolution, they had become a symbol of tyranny. The fault was Fleury's, using the exceptional reserve powers of the monarchy in the interests of ecclesiastical orthodoxy. 'This avalanche of *lettres de cachet* against the Jansenists had incalculable repercussions', writes Antoine, the historian of the Royal Council in the eighteenth century.³² In 1779, Mirabeau (himself more than once locked up on his father's application to save the family honour) said that Fleury, like Richelieu before him, by using *lettres de cachet* to excess, had made them universally hated. 'Think of it! the affair of Jansenism alone has led to the issue of 80,000 of them,' he added, no doubt with some exaggeration.

There was a similar reserve power vested in the king to ensure the validity of the legislation he proposed. Royal edicts needed

registration by the parlements (the parlement of Paris, the eleven provincial ones, and the three 'sovereign courts' which had a similar status). These great law courts could withhold their assent and could publish remonstrances. But in the last resort they could be obliged to yield. In Paris, the king would come down in person and hold a *lit de justice*, a plenary session of the magistrates attended by the dukes and peers; in the provinces, royal *lettres de jussion* were sent down and read out ceremoniously by the king's accredited representative. Thus, eventually the magistrates had to bow before the royal insistence; even so, a *lit de justice* was a sensational affair, likely to lead to popular tumult and a storm of pamphleteering. The king prevailed, but at the cost of incurring ridicule and unpopularity.

By breaking the unwritten understandings which were supposed to govern the king's unusual interventions—and that to enforce respect for the bull *Unigenitus* which Gallican France hated and Enlightenment France held in contempt—Fleury automatically incurred the hostility of the parlements, more especially of the parlement of Paris. The magistrates considered themselves to be guardians of the legal process, which evocation undermined, and of individual liberty, which the *lettres de cachet* set at nought. They were, too, the censors and interpreters of the law, until a *lit de justice* intervened to override their complaints and warnings. They were proud. Being nobles of the robe, for the most part very wealthy, they regarded themselves as in no way inferior to the nobles of the sword; in their view, the fact that they held office by purchase did not dim their distinction, but rather enhanced it. The parlement of Paris in particular was characterized by a corporate pride nourished by meeting daily from mid-November to midsummer as the highest tribunal of the land, amid splendid surroundings and decorous ceremonies, which, said Daguesseau in 1706, 'seemed to lift them above the level of ordinary men'. In black gowns and broad-brimmed black hats, they soberly administered justice in the senior Grand' Chambre, in the five chambers of the *Enquêtes* and the two of the *Requêtes* and the criminal department of the *Tournelle*, but when they donned their scarlet, fur-trimmed cloaks (purple for the ecclesiastics of their number) and surged into the Grand' Chambre for a plenary session, theirs was a mood of corporate exaltation. After all, now that the Estates General no longer met, who else was there to speak for the nation?

The parlement of Paris was not Jansenist: it was Gallican, always opposed to any interference of the Roman Curia in French affairs, and often enough suspecting a danger of such interference in comparatively innocent circumstances. In this, the magistrates were in

tune with French opinion, especially in the capital. The monarchy, traditionally Gallican, by a series of accidents stemming from Louis XIV's irascible preoccupation with his absolute authority and his eternal salvation, had allied itself incongruously with the Roman cause—so much more reason for the parlement to seize the opportunity for affirming its own right to a say in government, defying the king loyally in defence of the true interests of his crown. The bull *Unigenitus*, with its in-built confusions, provided an ideal battleground for skirmishes against ultramontane pretensions, and its condemnation of one particular proposition (91) was taken to be a direct threat to the whole Gallican cause. ‘This parlement is not as easy to bring to heel as a troop of unimportant little priests,’ wrote Barbier in April 1730,

and in any case, it is not concerned with the essence of [*Unigenitus*]³³—to know how many carats the gold of the love of God ranks, nor how many kinds of grace God has devised for those who live in this present world; these things do not concern them—they are theology. But what angers them in the bull is the condemnation of proposition 91, which says that ‘the fear of an unjust excommunication ought never to prevent us doing our duty’. The court of Rome claims it can excommunicate kings and release peoples from their oath of allegiance.

According to some, this was the only proposition Rome really cared about, said Barbier, and he was inclined to agree with them.³³

At the end of March and the beginning of April 1730, the declaration of 24 March came to the crunch before the parlement of Paris. The circumstances were not propitious. The previous year had heard a cry of Gallican outrage against the latest invention of the liturgiologists in Rome, a breviary office for the feast of Gregory, pope and saint: this was Hildebrand, Gregory VII, who had excommunicated and deposed the Emperor Henry IV and kept him waiting in the snow at Canossa, begging forgiveness. All this was 650 years ago, but the parlements of Paris and of Brittany denounced the new office, and the Jansenist bishops of Auxerre and Montpellier girded on their armour for a renewed onslaught on ultramontane conspiracy. The time had come, Colbert announced, for all the parlements of the land to join in a vast national *appel comme d'abus* against papal threats to the temporal power—a sort of secular version of the appeal to a General Council among the clergy. At the same time a major ecclesiastical lawsuit, full of implications for the Jansenist cause, came up before the parlement. Six curés of Orléans had refused to publish their bishop's pastoral letter on the Council of Embrun, and the

diocesan legal registrar had declared them deprived of their benefices—an act of more than doubtful legality. They promptly resorted to an *appel comme d'abus*. Fleury had tried to settle the matter quietly through the Gens du Roi (that is, the *procureur-général* and the three *avocats généraux* who represented the royal interest in the parlement). The proposal was: the curés would beg for reinstatement, and the bishop would graciously grant it, and the magistrates would hold aloof while this reconciliation was effected. But the *premier président* would not co-operate: as he saw it, the machinery of the law, once invoked, must grind the matter out: that is, it was an opportunity too good to be missed to strike at a bishop on the papal side.³⁴ As the magistrates came to consider the declaration of 24 March, they must have reflected that the deprivation of the six curés of Orléans was a foreshadowing of what was to be expected generally if the new law came into force.

As everyone knew, the parlement would never willingly accept *Unigenitus* as a law of Church and State, so the inevitable *lit de justice* was held promptly, on 3 April. The proceedings were sensational. There were cries that Frenchmen would not be 'vassals' of the Pope, and sinister mutterings against Fleury. The 80-year-old *président* de Lesseville threw himself at the king's feet in protest. For the abbé Pucelle, one of the *conseillers-clerics* (ecclesiastics sitting in the parlement), this was his finest hour, the culmination of a career of defiance of the Court of Versailles which had earned him the title of 'the last of the Romans'—the republican senators who had defied the tyranny of the Caesars.³⁵ White hair bristling and florid countenance even more highly coloured than usual, he thundered against *chancelier* Daguesseau, the traitor to the lawyers' cause: like Pontius Pilate, let him send for water to wash his hands. Even in the presence of the king, only 40 of the 250 magistrates voted for registration. On 4, 19, and 24 April, the angry magistrates gathered again to reopen discussion in defiance of the Crown; each time the *premier président* fled from the chair to avoid being implicated in dangerous proceedings. On 28 April and 1 May he was summoned, together with other leading officials of the parlement, to Versailles, to receive a solemn rebuke from the king in person. Nevertheless, on 3 May there was yet another general assembly in the Grand' Chambre to join Pucelle in a protest against the *lit de justice*—a protest which the Royal Council denounced and suppressed.

Soon news arrived from Rennes and Rouen of the defiance of the parlements of Brittany and Normandy.³⁶ Of the Breton magistrates, the *premier président*, his son, and one other were for registration;

eighteen were for registration with modifications; and twenty-one for rejection and remonstrances, and on 14 May these remonstrances were published. Their theme, as of those coming from Normandy, was the menace of the doctrine of infallibility, which was being given a gratuitous boost by Fleury's edict. 'Your declaration, Sire', said the parlement of Rouen, 'qualifies the Constitution [*Unigenitus*] as a law of the universal Church in the matter of doctrine. If your peoples ever come to regard it as such, they will think that there are certain circumstances in which they can abandon their allegiance to their kings.' This was a clear reference to the condemnation of proposition 91. The parlement of Rennes went further. Even if infallibility is regarded as resting in 'the great number of bishops united to the pope', there is danger. Churchmen are capable of making a doctrine out of anything, and since the bishops of the world outnumber those of France, they can vote down the Gallican liberties. In Rennes and Rouen, as in Paris, the will of the Court of Versailles prevailed. A few magistrates were exiled by *lettre de cachet*, and registration was enforced. Further letters of protest by the parlement of Brittany were sent back unopened by Fleury.

The Assembly General of the Clergy of France of 1730 met with Fleury himself as president, and on 11 September sent two letters to the king complaining of the tumults raised by the parlements. The bull *Unigenitus* was innocuous, it was said, since it contained no new doctrine; the furore about proposition 91 was unjustified, for it was universally accepted that excommunication could not affect the duties of subjects to their prince; the new lessons for the feast of Gregory VII in the Roman breviary were irrelevant, not having been accepted by any diocese in France. All the aggression in the recent crises was blamed on the magistrates, who had set themselves up as judges of doctrine and were backing curés against their bishop, their legitimate superior. This reference to the six curés of Orléans was Fleury's prelude to an evocation; the Royal Council now took away their case from the jurisdiction of the parlement of Paris. To use the exceptional power of the Crown in such a well-publicized lawsuit, in which general opinion was solidly on the side of the parish priests, was folly. Around the parlement revolved a whole satellite world of legal business—comprising the *avocats* (barristers), *procureurs* (solicitors), rumbustious clerks of the so-called Basoche, notaries, servers of writs, ushers, doorkeepers, and the like—a dependent constituency always ready to rally to the defence of the magistrates and excite popular manifestations on their behalf. From the *avocats* came a devastating attack on the intervention of the

Royal Council; forty of them joined in a 'consultation' which began to circulate in Paris on 3 October. Two broad principles of constitutional law were proclaimed. First, the Church is subject to the State, 'ecclesiastical discipline being an integral part of the structure of public order (*la police générale*) of each Christian nation'. In itself, the Church has power only to persuade: if it has tribunals, this is only because the temporal authorities have delegated jurisdiction. Second, the temporal power does not reside solely in the king: 'the parlements are the senate of the nation . . . depositaries of public authority, exercising a sovereign jurisdiction over all members of the State, be they laymen or ecclesiastics'. As far as ecclesiastics are concerned, the *appel comme d'abus* is the machinery by which this control is exercised, defending the Second Order clergy against the injustice of bishops, just as bishops may be defended against the injustice of popes. Coming down to the case of the six curés: their deprivation by the inferior ecclesiastical court has been cancelled by an *arrêt de défense* issued by the parlement on receipt of their *appel comme d'abus*. Therefore, they can take up their duties again, the Royal Council notwithstanding.³⁷

The beginning of 1731 saw the parlement issuing remonstrances against evocation and raising the issue of the deposition of kings once more, alleging some dioceses had indeed accepted the office of Gregory VII. There was, too, a question about the bishop of Nîmes, who had said the king's reign 'was founded on Catholicity' (so presumably a heretical monarch could be overthrown). Scouring the provinces for causes of complaint, the magistrates instanced the bishop of Laon citing the proceedings of a Roman Council which had not been received in France, and ominously prescribing the saying of the collect against persecutors at every parish mass in his diocese.³⁸ Then, on 11 March came the counterblast of the Royal Council: an *arrêt* against the consultation of the forty *avocats*. It defined the standing of ecclesiastical courts: their power was indeed a delegation from the king, but from him alone, and was given in perpetuity. Cases on the borderline between the spiritual and the temporal jurisdictions were the affair of the monarch, not of his lay judges, and he would continue to exclude the parlements by the use of evocation. This definition of spheres of authority was final; henceforth all parties would keep silent on the matter. Yet, as early as July, the archbishop of Paris was allowed to publish a pastoral letter bringing theology to reinforce the Council's argument. As a result, the *avocats* declared an indefinite strike from 23 August, bringing the whole administration of justice to a halt. The clerks of the

Basoche picketed the steps of the Palais to scare away potential strike-breakers.

Meanwhile, news was coming in from Orléans of new excesses of the bishop, who was now excluding opponents of *Unigenitus* from the sacraments. The parlement forbade this; the Council suppressed the parliamentary prohibition; the magistrates made three separate sets of remonstrances through July and August, and finally, on 7 September, drew up four articles defining the disciplinary powers which churchmen could exercise. First, they could not use exterior compulsion, a right which belongs to the temporal sovereign alone. Secondly, in whatever jurisdiction the king had ceded to them, they are accountable to the secular courts of the land. Thirdly and fourthly, in the exercise of any powers which they claim as coming to them directly from God, they are responsible to the lay magistrates if anything they do threatens to disturb the public peace or endangers the Gallican maxims. (Refusing the sacraments over the issue of *Unigenitus* did both these things.) Louis XV ordered the articles to be struck off the registers, conveying his royal pleasure by a *lettre de cachet*, thus giving the magistrates double cause for rage, since an order addressed to them collectively ought to have come by letters patent. On 29 November, after a furious debate led by the abbé Pucelle, a deputation of fifty left in fourteen carriages for Marly to protest to the king—who refused to see them.

The *avocats* abandoned their strike on 25 November, but the magistrates carried on their war, joining with twenty-one curés of Paris in making technical objections to a pastoral letter of the archbishop (he had described *Unigenitus* as ‘received by the whole Church’, and had referred to his ecclesiastical legal officials as constituting a ‘court’, a word reserved for the parlements). On 14 May a deputation of twenty waited on the king to insist on their right to discuss ecclesiastical affairs. Louis told the *premier président* to shut up (“Taisez-vous!”), and tore up a manuscript of protest proffered to him by the abbé Pucelle—a ‘unique occurrence in our history’, said the parlement. Pucelle was arrested by *lettre de cachet* and exiled to his abbey at Corbigny, and another *conseiller*, Titon, was locked up in the fortress of Vincennes. (A debauchee converted to Jansenism, Titon was adding defiance of the king to his penance of visiting the prisoners on Wednesdays and the sick on Saturdays; he later changed his mind, and went back to his mistress.) On 16 May all but the more senior magistrates went on strike. There were more arrests, and on 20 June a vast concourse—all but a few—poured into the Grand' Chambre to give the *premier président* their collective

resignation. 'In all our history you will not find an example of courage and firmness like this', wrote Barbier:

There are, maybe, sixty in the Parlement who are obstinate adherents of Jansenism, but all the rest are moderates, who ridicule Jansenism and Molinism alike; however, they have resorted to this violent action by a sense of honour, pride and vexation at the ill treatment they are receiving.³⁹

On 6 July, the strike ended, perhaps because of rumours that the resignations were going to be accepted. On 18 August a royal declaration limiting the powers of the parlement was issued. Remonstrances were not to delay the execution of laws, and reiterated remonstrances and strikes were forbidden. Questions concerning the refusal of sacraments or the Gallican maxims would be dealt with by the Grand' Chambre alone, to the exclusion of the young agitators of the *enquêtes* and the *requêtes*. A *lit de justice* was held on 3 September at the palace of Versailles, but even amidst these intimidating splendours the magistrates refused to register the declaration. Four days later, 139 of them were exiled by *lettre de cachet*.

The crescendo of political confrontation from the edict of 24 March 1730 to the *lit de justice* of 3 September 1732 did not continue into 1733. Both sides had been swept into extreme attitudes of unprecedented antagonism and recoiled from further adventures. Then, on 12 September 1733, the Diet of Poland elected Stanislas Leczynski, Louis XV's father-in-law, as king, and by the standards of the day, France was obliged to support him, even though it meant war with Austria and Russia. The magistrates were glad to seize this patriotic opportunity for compromise, and Fleury wanted peace at home while he concentrated on waging a cautious war with labyrinthine craft. Louis XV had already agreed to leave his declaration of 18 August 1732 'en surséance'—not withdrawn, but its operation suspended. On 11 November he allowed the exiles to return to Paris. Fleury and his chief ministers entertained forty deputies of the parlement to dinner at Versailles on 3 December, and three days later the *messe rouge* (the official mass for the parlement when the magistrates wore their scarlet) was seen as a ceremony of reconciliation. A crowd of sightseers vehemently applauded the abbé Pucelle as he went in to the service.⁴⁰ Fleury reduced occasions for conflict by silencing the most aggressive propagandists of orthodoxy—the bishops of Meaux, Laon, Sisteron, and Marseille, and the archbishop of Sens. A *lettre de cachet* exiled Forbin-Janson away from his episcopal town for declaring the infallibility of the Pope to be an article of doctrine; Jean de Caulet, bishop of Grenoble, sent to

Versailles a sixty-one page diatribe against Jansenism, only to be told that the cardinal-minister had no time to read it. Yet on one central principle Fleury stood firm: the rules for the administration of the sacraments were a purely spiritual affair, and he continued to use the weapon of evocation to exclude the lay magistrates from interfering. All the while, the censorship was used ruthlessly against Jansenist publications. The parlement of Paris, formidable when some scandalous case of orthodox oppression had aroused public ire, could do little against Fleury's slow and merciless grinding down of the Jansenist opposition. Barbier conceded that the magistrates were defeated: 'le roi est seul le maître'.

The war went well: in 1738 Stanislas was compensated with the duchy of Lorraine, which would revert to France on his death. As in everything, Fleury succeeded in accumulating prestige as surely as his years rolled on, long after the age when his contemporaries had vanished from the scene. But he left behind a legacy of potential strife. The magistrates of the parlement of Paris were determined to cling to their right to act against ecclesiastics who encroached on the rights of the laity by the use of the *appel comme d'abus*; by challenging their jurisdiction, Fleury had allowed a small clique of Jansenists (perhaps twenty *avocats* and fourteen *conseillers*) to assume leadership in parliamentary affairs and foment resistance. From 1730 to 1743, writes Campbell, 'all the most extreme courses of action were proposed by probable Jansenists'.⁴¹ The parlement had hammered out theories of its role in the State and of its right to intervene in matters ecclesiastical; it had essayed the effectiveness of its weapons—the remonstrance, the refusal to register, the strike, the collective resignation. It had won popularity among the people of Paris and acquired a taste for popular acclaim. The *avocats*, not necessarily the natural allies of nobles of the robe, had thrown in their lot with their cause. And the magistrates had learned the lesson of the importance of solidarity in confronting the royal machinery of *lit de justice* and *lettre de cachet*: they sent to Coventry one of their number who had stayed away during the tumults of 1731–2. When M. Aubry, dean of the first *chambre des requêtes*, came back in December 1732, his colleagues stalked out and went to the buffet; 'he followed them to ask what was going on and they seized their hats and departed altogether'.⁴²

41 The Mid-Century Crisis

I

In Paris, 1746 was the year of the three archbishops. Vintimille, 90 years of age and weary, died on 13 March. According to a Jansenist story, he said goodbye to his confessor with exquisite courtesy, but without uttering a Christian sentiment—not everyone would think worse of him for that. The appointment of a successor was the responsibility of Boyer, ex-bishop of Mirepoix, who had been given the *feuille des bénéfices* after the death of Fleury. *Unigenitus* had no more zealous supporter: during his twelve years' responsibility for the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown, not a single *Tiers Parti* candidate was elevated to the episcopate. This partisan policy, said Bernis, alienated impartial onlookers and inclined them to the Jansenist side; 'the bishop of Mirepoix', he wrote, 'through his zeal and harshness, contrived to blow a spark into the dead ashes of Jansenism . . . Would it not have been wiser and more effective to leave it to expire slowly?'¹ On Boyer's recommendation, the king filled the archiepiscopal see of Paris by appointing Gigault de Bellefont, archbishop of Arles, regarded by the Jansenists as a 'fanatic'. On 20 July, forty days after his solemn installation, the new prelate was struck down in his cathedral of Notre-Dame, during the singing of a *Te Deum*, by the *petite vérole pourprée*. When he died a week later, everyone had fled from the contagion except Brother Stanislas of the Frères de la Charité,² who remained to say the prayers of the dying over the suppurating corpse. Frédéric-Jerôme de Roye de La Rochefoucauld, who had been archbishop of Bourges for seventeen years (the last two of which had been spent as ambassador in Rome) was favoured by the king as the next candidate;³ but in the end Louis decided he could not be spared from his ambassadorial duties at the papal Curia. It was a tragic mistake. A moderate civilized prelate, with all the authority of his great lineage, La Rochefoucauld could have brought appeasement to the troubled diocese of Paris.

Boyer was now free to look down his list of super-orthodox provincial bishops, and his choice fell upon Christophe de

Beaumont, the recently appointed archbishop of Vienne. He was unwilling to move, but the king wrote to him in person insisting, and on 5 August he was appointed. 'He had no other merits', said the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 'than his good looks and his devotion to the Jesuits.' He was the third son of a noble family of Périgord: the eldest inherited the estates, the second made a career in the army, and the Church remained for Christophe—a standard pattern of family vocation among the aristocracy. After holding a canonry in the exclusively noble chapter of Lyon, at the age of 38, Beaumont became bishop of Bayonne. His degree of pastoral commitment may be inferred from chronology. He was consecrated to the episcopate on Christmas Eve 1741, and did not turn up in his diocese until 11 April 1743. Perhaps, as his nineteenth-century clerical biographer observes, he was 'exercising his solicitude from afar'.⁴ He made more haste when translated to the see of Vienne—ceremonially inducted in March 1745 and arriving at his new episcopal town just in time for Christmas. Taking over the diocese of Paris, at the centre of the political scene, was, of course, more urgent.

If an intelligent ecclesiastical statesman had been available at the Court of Versailles—even Fleury—the policy of repression of Jansenism might have been modified. The Jansenists were defeated and divided; the orthodox could have afforded to be conciliatory, and the times were propitious for reconciliation. For six years a tolerant Pope had ruled in Rome—Lambertini, Benedict XIV—one of the most discerning and far-sighted of the occupants of Peter's Chair. His racy correspondence with Tencin and his thanks to Voltaire for *Mahomet* were not the actions of a churchman who compromised with the world; he was aware of Tencin's duplicity in forwarding his letters to the court of France, and used the opportunity to slip in unofficial hints and complaints, while he had no illusions about Voltaire: 'it would be useful to flatter him', he said, keeping him nominally attached to the Church, so that he would 'do less harm than [he] would otherwise'. Though Benedict spoke out with an apparent recklessness and with a sense of humour unusual in a holder of his great office, his personal life was blameless, and his administration honest. On *Unigenitus* he made no overt concessions; he wished to maintain the exclusion of appellants from the Church, and supported the stern policies in the diocese of Montpellier which were liquidating the heritage of Colbert. Even so, he conceded that it had been unjust to refuse to allow Quesnel to defend himself, and he tried to reduce the status of the sensational bull to an incident in a pattern of doctrinal adjustment. He looked back to the time before

the bull to seek out and commend what was good in Port-Royal and its heritage. He approved the reprinting of the works of Arnauld, and he canonized Mme de Chantal even though she had been a friend of Saint-Cyran, the founder of Jansenism in France. Jansenists also took comfort when in 1752 he cancelled the rule of the Index insisting on special permission before the Bible could be read in translation.

In doctrine, Benedict XIV was a Thomist, solemnly declaring the works of St Thomas to be free from all error; but he did not regard the school of Aquinas as having a monopoly of truth. As far as it was possible for a Pope to go, he authorized the modified Jansenist position on grace and predestination—that is, the acceptance of the Augustinian position within the limits posed by the papal condemnation of the five propositions ‘of Jansenius’. In 1748 he sent a letter of reproof to the Grand Inquisitor of Spain, whose tribunal had condemned two books of Augustinian theology printed half a century ago. In it he laid down two principles; had they been observed in the past, they would have saved the Church from some disastrous pronouncements. First, the papacy does not condemn any of the three methods—Thomist, Augustinian, and Molinist—by which theologians have sought ‘to reconcile the liberty of man with the omnipotence of God’; the Pope simply holds a watching brief, ready to correct excesses, while the discussions of the schools continue. Secondly, if a book is from a respectable source and has been well received in the Church, it ought not to be proscribed—to break this rule is to run the risk of causing schism. A demonstration of how far Benedict was prepared to go in extending tolerance to predestinarian doctrines was given by his refusal to censure the eight volumes (1739–45) of the Italian theologian Gian-Lorenzo Berti, who described God as giving efficacious grace to some, saving them infallibly, and denying grace to others. Berti guarded against accusations of Jansenism by recommending the acceptance of the formulary and *Unigenitus*—to refuse them would show ‘excessive zeal’. From France came the approval of old bishop Caylus of Auxerre, and an angry protest from Languet, archbishop of Sens. In 1749, Berti replied to his critics in two additional volumes, and the Pope continued to refuse to condemn him.⁵

For Jansenists who wished to exercise the ministry of the Church, there was no question of refusing *Unigenitus* (short of a subterfuge with the help of a conniving bishop); all they could do was to look for honourable excuses for accepting it. For more than thirty years, the will-o'-the-wisp of an ‘accommodation’ had flickered over the

barren marshlands of theological controversy. Benedict XIV's dual policy of firmness in defence of past papal pronouncements allied to the encouragement of freedom of speculation around their margins made the offering of explanations of the bull a respectable manoeuvre. How this could be done, though with difficulty, was seen in the proceedings of the general chapter of the Oratory in 1746. Of the thirty-eight deputies, only seventeen were present; seven had not come because they knew they would be excluded, and Marville, the lieutenant of police, acting as royal commissioner, turned away fourteen others.⁶ The seventeen accepted *Unigenitus*, though with reservations Benedict XIV found unsatisfactory. The general of the Oratory therefore informed the Pope that he had reduced the reservations to three. One was the insistence on the rules of St Charles (Borromeo) concerning penitence; the other two concerned the doctrinal concepts of predestination before prevision of merits and of efficacious grace—these were deemed not to be contradicted by the bull. Given Benedict XIV's quiet enforcement of a truce on the high doctrinal matters of God's grace and human free will, they were saying enough to cover their consciences, but not enough to risk condemnation. Indeed, Jansenists were becoming as willing as the Pope to leave the old insoluble problems in limbo. 'Eh! what need have I to know how to argue about grace,' cried the Jansenist abbé Clément from the pulpit; 'what matters to me, what I do need to know, is the supreme art of corresponding to it.'⁷ But this still left problems concerning the status of the bull *Unigenitus*. In the following year the general of the Oratory wrote to the French ambassador in Rome making a fourth and more general reservation, in protest against a statement by the bishop of Amiens describing *Unigenitus* as a 'rule of faith'. The Oratory (ostensibly for technical reasons in the wording) did not accept it as such, but, as Fleury had decreed, as 'a law of Church and State'. Therefore, there was no obligation to include the bull in teaching: it was enough not to argue publicly for the 101 propositions of Quesnel.⁸ In short, accept the bull in the sense of keeping quiet about it.

Silence about *Unigenitus* had become the guide of conduct of many of the clergy of France, both compromising Jansenists and others. In 1750, the abbé d'Etamare was to define the policy (which he said had been invented by the doctors of the University of Louvain and the Augustinian theologians in Rome) as 'receiving the Constitution (*Unigenitus*) as if the truth did not exist, and teaching the truth as if there was no Constitution'. This was the line agreed on by four prelates of the *Tiers Parti* meeting in 1748 at the spa of

Plombières—Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, archbishop of Bourges; Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons; Bazin de Bezons of Carcassonne and Choiseul-Beaupré of Mende. Here, said the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* sardonically, was ‘the council of Plombières’, taking the view that they might have done more for the good cause than they proposed.⁹ Evidence of their promotion of Jansenist objectives in a sphere where this was legitimate was soon to be seen in the revised liturgical books—breviary, *Rituel*, and missal—issued for the dioceses of Bourges and Soissons: legends and superstitious phrases were excluded, and scriptural passages added. Bishop Souillac of Lodève, another *Tiers Parti* bishop, left behind him a spiritual last will and testament, in which he accepted *Unigenitus*, but without prejudice to the doctrines of St Augustine, believing that God is unfettered in his distribution of grace and can turn the hearts of men without infringing their free will, convinced that faith, hope, and fear are insufficient virtues without the actual love of God—all these being ‘Jansenist’ points. Finally, he said, he took the unity of the Church as an indispensable principle of conduct—this, presumably, a gloss on his reluctant acceptance of the Bull. When, in 1750, Souillac's declaration was posthumously published, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* poured scorn on his manœuvres. What was the natural sense of the condemnation of the 101 propositions? Did it not run contrary to all his laborious doctrinal affirmations? Would a Christian have to resort to such intellectual contortions to justify his allegiance to the Council of Trent? ‘In accepting a judgement of the Church . . . must precautions be taken?’ As the journalist had angrily declared the year before, compromise played the game of the papal Curia.

In vain the Accommodants make the Bull say what it does not say. They constitute a centre party which intervenes between the two sides as if to help and to support the party which is oppressed, but in reality, they find themselves at one with the oppressors, since by accepting the Bull they give it the apparent authority of the majority—which, in fact, is the only argument in its favour, one which, used by the Jesuits, is a powerful instrument of seduction.¹⁰

Compromising on doctrine, divided by the convulsionist issue and deprived of advancement in the Church, the Jansenists—all but a minority—might have been won over to become a puritanical group within the fold rather than a potentially schismatic opposition. But the response to Benedict XIV's intelligent initiatives was in the hands of Boyer of the *feuille* and a group of super-orthodox prelates.

To them, the decline of Jansenism was an invitation not to reconciliation, but to intensified repression—one last push to end it all, the ‘il faut finir’ mentality. To be fair to Christophe de Beaumont, he was slow to identify himself with the extremists. True, he was a fanatical supporter of *Unigenitus*; while bishop of Bayonne, he had gone in person to the deathbed of the Jansenist *avocat* Dailenc to forbid the last sacraments—this was the uncharitable policy of harassing the dying with which his episcopal rule in Paris was to be associated. But for more than a year after his translation, he was cautious, avoiding controversy. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* did not complain about his doings until 9 July 1748, and then it was to say that he had begun in a conciliatory fashion, demanding only the formulary of his clergy, not the acceptance of *Unigenitus*. However, said the journalist, he had changed, under pressure from the one side by Boyer, and on the other from the fanatical Bouettin, curé of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, who devised provocative incidents against Jansenists to implicate his archbishop. Even six months later, in December, Ségur, the ex-bishop of Papoul, who had resigned his see because of his opposition to the bull, was given the viaticum by the curé of Saint-Gervais without episcopal intervention or complaint. It was only at the beginning of 1749 that the refusal of the sacraments to dying Jansenists became Beaumont's settled policy, and since his diocese abounded in priests who would be delighted to give absolution without asking questions about *Unigenitus*, he ruled that the penitent must produce a *billet de confession* signed by a confessor authorized by his diocesan office.

These *billets* were not Beaumont's invention; their use went back to the great pastoral saint, Charles Borromeo, in the sixteenth century. The statutes of a Jansenistically inclined archbishop of Sens in 1658 made provision for their use,¹¹ and there were instances of Protestants ‘converted’ under Louis XIV being obliged to produce them as a guarantee against their resort to tolerant priests who would be lax about belief in the Pope or the Real Presence. Cardinal Noailles himself had resorted to *billets de confession* to ensure the effectiveness of his ban on the Jesuits from preaching and hearing confessions in his diocese. According to Beaumont's own explanation for their use, given to the king in a letter of 1755,¹² his diocese was plagued with footloose priests coming in from outside and dubious characters pretending to be in holy orders, so measures to exclude them from setting up to hear confessions were inevitable. He also said, unconvincingly, that he had not been especially concerned to penalize Jansenist penitents; even so, his defence of *billets*

de confession had its validity. What was wrong was using them to compel acceptance of *Unigenitus* at the hour of death.

Nor was Christophe de Beaumont the inventor of the policy of withholding the sacraments from dying Jansenists. In 1721, the curé of Saint-Louis in Paris attempted to use his right to refuse the viaticum to Père Lelong, librarian of the Oratory and an appellant; Cardinal Noailles had overruled him.¹³ Six years later, the curé of Avenay in the diocese of Reims refused the ministrations of his office to Canon Gérard Rousse, but since the archbishop of Reims ruled that the desire to die in the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion was enough to warrant doctrinal soundness, a canon was able to take over the curé's role.¹⁴ As these two incidents showed, the policy of withholding the sacraments from the dying could succeed only when a rigorous curé was seconded by a rigorous bishop—rigorous enough to stifle the promptings of Christian charity. Orléans was noted for its intolerant bishops,¹⁵ and the city provided the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* with its first major case of the harassment of the dying. Barbot, a canon of Saint-Pierre en Pont, declining towards his end, on 10 August 1730 confessed and was absolved by a canonical colleague, Carbut, who was in charge of their local parish since the curé had been exiled. The canon spread the news that his penitent had accepted *Unigenitus*, which the penitent denied. This being so, when the abbé Carbut brought the viaticum to the bedside, he asked questions about the bull. He got no answer. A nephew of the dying man, an Oratorian, pointed out that his uncle was not an appellant, so therefore the administration ought to proceed. 'It is the Pope and the bishops who govern the Church', said Carbut, 'not the fathers of the Oratory', and he departed, bearing the Sacrament with him, without so much as a benediction. Since a consultation of Parisian *avocats* confirmed there were grounds for alleging 'a public injustice', the sick man instituted legal proceedings. In the meantime, he had himself carried to the collegiate church, since they would not dare turn him away at the altar rail. The canon due to celebrate refused to do so, but another took his place, and the abbé Barbot received communion at last. October 1730 to January 1731 saw the gradual development of the legal proceedings of Barbot versus Carbut, until the Royal Council evoked the case. On 8 February, Barbot, at his last gasp, gave up and accepted the bull, asking pardon of God for doing so. He was given communion and extreme unction, and on the first Sunday in Lent he died.¹⁶

There were more of these macabre and pathetic dramas in the

years that followed. The most sensational of all was at Rennes in 1738.¹⁷ Mlle Gabrielle Cassard, daughter of a magistrate of the parlement of Brittany, was one of those female Jansenist theologians abhorred by orthodox controversialists. She was dying slowly of pulmonary tuberculosis, spitting blood. An old Carmelite (a supporter of *Unigenitus*, but tolerant) gave her absolution, but the recteur of her parish of Toussaint would not give her communion without a public submission to the bull. Her father replied with a legal citation asserting his daughter's right to the ministrations of the Church, together with a medical certificate to say she was dying. The bishop sent two canons to interview her: she quoted Fleury's ecclesiastical history to remind them that the Arian heresy once had a majority in the Church: to be outnumbered is not to be mistaken. Gerbier, the most eloquent of *avocats* of the bar of Rennes, made a speech to the recteur (and published it) giving Mlle Cassard's dying confession of faith—it included belief in grace 'gratuite, efficace par elle même et toute puissante'. The lady's brother sent legal petitions to the bishop and the parlement. Attempts by the *premier président* of the parlement and the royal commandant in the province to bring about a settlement failed. After dragging on for ten weeks, the legal proceedings were halted by royal *lettres de cachet* exiling Gerbier and the other lawyers of the Cassard family away from town. (Gerbier was never to live at Rennes again, but went on to Paris to become an advocate of the cause of the parlement of Paris against the Crown.) On Christmas Day, another emissary of the bishop visited the deathbed, and on 28 December, Holy Innocents' Day, Gabrielle Cassard died. The body was taken to the cemetery by a grave-digger and two vicaires in simple surplices—no higher clergy, no stoles, no holy water, candles, cross, no pall over the coffin, no prayers. A crowd of 10,000 watched as the Church in silence consigned her to damnation.

Eighteenth-century France was a litigious society: families did not forgo their right to the ceremonies of religion without sominations, taking evidence from witnesses, *procès-verbaux*, depositions on oath before notaries, consultations of *avocats*, the publication of *ex parte* legal memoranda, petitions, *appels comme d'abus*, demands for fines, damages, and gestures of reparation. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, recording the details of refusals of sacraments, made known to all the various legal devices available, and stirred up cries of sacrilege and scandal. There were shocking incidents when the sacraments were refused, and others when the funeral decencies were abrogated (there was a case in Dax in 1741 of the body of a Jansenist canon

kept in the house a whole month by his niece while the courts argued to see if he could be allowed the sound of the bell or the lighting of a candle—he got neither).¹⁸ There were angry demonstrations—all fifty *procureurs* of the town of Nantes marching to the church of Saint-Nicolas in August 1736 to draw up a memorandum about the death of one of their colleagues as evidence against the curé, crowds at the funerals of Mlle Cassard at Rennes and Mlle Lemaire at Saumur in 1738, and all the citizens of Arles attending the obsequies of the bishop of Castres in 1736, in protest against the attempt of their archbishop to deny his aged episcopal colleague the last consolations of religion.¹⁹

By the time Christophe de Beaumont ascended the archiepiscopal throne of Paris, the refusal of the sacraments to Jansenists, whether in the heyday of life or at the hour of death, had become a common occurrence in France. In that year, 1746 in January, a farmer's wife at Joigny in the diocese of Sens died without the ministrations of the Church (yet in June in the same place, reported the scandalized *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, a woman tightrope walker of a troupe of travelling players was allowed extreme unction).²⁰ In February, at Reims, a blind octogenarian appellant curé was questioned for an hour by his vicaire on his beliefs, but as acceptance of the bull was not among them, he was refused the last sacraments—a neighbouring curé took pity on him.²¹ In May, at Vitry-le-François, two Jansenist *avocats* who presented themselves at the communion rail were passed over by their curé.²² Later in the year, the curé of Saint-Michel of Amiens was being pursued by the secular courts for having left an *avocat* to die without his ministrations. His bishop obtained a royal evocation to protect him, and in December issued rules to his clergy to help them to avoid court actions: they could refuse the viaticum because, being a refusal in private, they might be able to evade a charge of defamation, but they were not to use anything learned in the confessional to refuse public communion, and they should never refuse religious burial—for who knows, the last sigh of the dying might be an act of perfect contrition. The parlement of Paris ordered the suppression of these instructions, but the Royal Council validated them for publication.²³ Beaumont took possession of the see of Paris on 7 November; two months before this, in August, a middle-aged spinster of the parish of Sainte-Opportune in his episcopal city had died with her curé refusing so much as to hear her confession, because she did not accept *Unigenitus*.²⁴

Archbishop Beaumont, then, was adopting an uncharitable policy along with many others. His case was different only in the fact that

he was to institute a systematic policy of refusals in a capital city where the devout in the parishes had been alienated by the harassment and removal of their clergy, and the legal establishment and public opinion were solidly on the Jansenist side.

II

By any standards, the withholding of the sacraments from a dying Christian was a defiance of charity, but by the theological assumptions of the age, it was worse: it was an act of sinister coercion. The theologians put terrifying weight on the last moments of life. Salvation depended on the dispositions of the soul at the end—a depraved man could win salvation and a saintly man could incur damnation. This was the theory; in practice, according to the writers on pastoral theology, it was psychologically almost impossible for the hardened sinner to end in true repentance, while God, in his goodness and through the infinity of means at his disposal, would preserve the just from the final stumble into the abyss. Even so, the moment of death was crucial, and a Christian's chief duty was to prepare for it.²⁵ To push questions about the bull *Unigenitus* into these final hours was a cruel intrusion. Indeed, such a challenge to a dying man ran contrary to the spirit of the handbooks of the confessional. They recommended severity for the hale and hearty, with the withholding of the sacraments from habitual sinners. But as the hour of death drew near, all this changed. There was to be no hectoring, no threatening; for while the fear of death is salutary during life, it is dangerous at the end, since despair prevents the soul from surrendering to God: confidence in the love of Christ must take over. Ask no inquisitorial questions, the confessor is told; a brief confession in general terms covering the whole of life is enough. The confessor should be co-operating with the dying man, not standing in judgement over him—‘praying for him and with him’. In an emergency, any priest could hear the last confession, and there were no *cas réservés*. Absolution should be given generously. Even if there was no sign of contrition, anyone who had lived a respectable life should be absolved; indeed, there were some casuists who proposed to give the assurance of God's forgiveness to anyone nominally in the Roman religion, provided he was not struck down in an act of mortal sin. The confessor, then, bringing hope to the dying man, ‘praying for him and with him’, would also, if the archbishop of Paris was to be obeyed, be enquiring if the 101 propositions of Quesnel had been

justly condemned: if the answer was no, the fellowship of the saints and the grace of God would be withdrawn.

True, jurisdiction over the sacraments, in general terms, belonged to the clergy. But was it *exclusive* jurisdiction? When it came to the crunch, the clerical case needed careful definition. An attempt to provide this was made, belatedly, in 1753 by Le Franc de Pompignan in his *Le Véritable Usage de l'autorité séculaire dans les matières qui concernent la Religion*. The Church is like a ship, he said, and since the time of Constantine there has been a captain on board to see to the defence; but the pilot was already there, and he retains his independent authority. Protection is given by the captain only when asked for—'it ought always to be posterior to the judgement of the Church'. On the question of the sacraments, no such invitation to the captain has been made. A Christian who is deprived of them by the clergy can appeal to the bishop, then to the metropolitan; if this does not avail him, he must reflect 'that it is not humanly possible to have a remedy for everything', and accept suffering. If he does so in humility, 'he will lose no grace'; if he has been wronged, God will punish the unfaithful minister.²⁶ There were dangerous loose ends here; given the privileged monopoly position of the Church in France, secular as well as spiritual disadvantages were being incurred—were these also to be accepted in humility? This was the very point at which the contrasting argument of the secular lawyers began: the necessity to protect the rights of citizens.²⁷ In refusing to admit a parishioner to the sacraments, a priest might be exceeding his due powers or neglecting to perform his bounden duty; or, this being a matter where the honour of families was concerned, he might be creating a threat to public order. On these grounds, the *appel comme d'abus* could be invoked. Further, the refusal might constitute defamation of character, and as such be actionable in the usual way. If, by either of these procedures, a case came before the temporal courts, the magistrates would have to decide if the refusal of the sacraments was justified, and for this they would need evidence. This had to be information which was publicly available: an earlier conviction at law for some recognized crime or an excommunication. An *ipso facto* excommunication—one which the clergy said arose automatically from a certain kind of conduct—would not do; there had to be a formal ecclesiastical sentence against named persons. But what if the applicant for communion had not received priestly absolution for his sins? The lawyers denied the pastor any right to make enquiries on this point, since a citizen could have no obligation to answer questions about his confessor or his confession.

These rules applied, *mutatis mutandis*, if the case at law concerned the refusal of the ceremonies of the Church at the funeral. The Gallican Church was the church of all Frenchmen, and they were entitled to its ministrations; only by a formal excommunication could the clergy sever a Christian from his place in the community. The parlement of Rennes had been trying to establish these principles of jurisprudence against the clergy; without doubt, the parlement of Paris would do the same.

When the crisis came, the royal power would have to take sides. Louis XIV and Fleury after him had locked the monarchy into the obligation to support the bull *Unigenitus* in defiance of the Gallican tradition of France. As a churchman, Fleury was determined to ensure doctrinal orthodoxy, but his exercise of compulsion was essentially against the clergy; as a statesman, he would not have ventured into the dangerous new design of coercing the laity in defiance of the legal establishment, and at the point of death when, by definition, their attitude could have no political significance. Under his rule, in 1741, the bishop of Laon received a peremptory note from one of the ministers transmitting the king's order: 'the rules established in his kingdom do not permit the refusal of communion at the Holy Table to those who are not individually excommunicated'. But Fleury died two years later, and the writer of the letter to the bishop of Laon, the comte de Maurepas, was dismissed from the government on 24 April 1749, at the very time Beaumont's policy was going into effect. This was a tragedy for the monarchy. Ironical, learned in the law, conciliatory, with many friends in the parlement of Paris, Maurepas would have continually reminded Louis XV of the danger of committing himself too completely to the clerical cause. The king himself was a peculiar character, consistently going along with the advice of the majority of his ministers, though sometimes intriguing secretly against their declared policies, a drifter who very occasionally took drastic action when he became exasperated. There are conflicting testimonies about whether he approved of refusals of the sacraments or not. Perhaps, continually worried about the divine judgement hanging over his immoralities, he felt obliged to go along with the clergy; but wanting a quiet life, he must have cursed their zeal.

In February 1749 Beaumont's policy registered its first failure, and in June its first major success. In February, the curé of Saint-Nicolasdu-Chardonnet buried Dr Boursier with full ceremonies²⁸—no one had told him of Boursier's expulsion from the Sorbonne as an appellant twenty years previously. A crowd of prosperous Jansenists

attended in their carriages, blocking the streets all around. The seminarists of Saint-Nicolas were there in force; only when mass had begun did their superior realize that he had led them into a Jansenist commemoration.²⁹ Archbishop Beaumont got the curé exiled to Senlis by a *lettre de cachet*. Then, on the night of June, Charles Coffin, the former rector of the University of Paris, died, aged 73. He said he had made his confession to an approved priest, but would not name him. On Beaumont's orders, Bouettin, curé of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont, withheld the last sacraments.³⁰ But it was impossible to prevent the University paying its last honours to its former head, and there was a splendid funeral. Coffin's Latin hymns, written for the breviary of Paris on Vintimille's invitation, were full of yearning for release from 'earthly bonds' and for the heavenly vision:

O Love, O Truth, O Endless Light,
When shall we see Thy Sabbath bright
With all our labours done.

He had entered the brightness of the eternal sabbath alone, deprived of the support of the Church. The nephew of Coffin, a magistrate of the court of the Châtelet, obtained a consultation of forty *avocats*, and initiated proceedings before the parlement of Paris against the curé. The king and the Royal Council evoked the case, though treading warily and diplomatically after consultations between *premier président* Maupeou and the royal minister D'Argenson, brother of the writer of the memoirs. At first, the Council had decided to declare that the king was 'reserving' the matter to himself, but subsequently took further advice and changed to 'suspending' the case—a comfortable formula lacking the finality of 'reservation'. Seeing it was not to be definitively excluded, the parlement agreed to this. The magistrates were not desperadoes spoiling for a fight, but moderate men hoping to win the government to share their concern. Up to March 1750 another six cases of refusals of sacraments came before them, and in every instance they suspended action and invited the king to intervene.³¹

Death struck more frequently in the eighteenth century than we can easily imagine, and in December 1750 Coffin's nephew himself lay dying, the sacraments refused by the same curé of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont. The parlement imprisoned curé Bouettin for two days and issued a *sommation* against the archbishop, a legal proceeding which collapsed when the dying man's resistance failed and he capitulated to the clergy. The Coffins, uncle and nephew, were persons of distinction, and their treatment by churchmen was a

matter of public concern. As Barbier had said when Carré de Montgeron was refused Easter communion in 1738, to exclude some 'scruffy Jansenist (*quelque janséniste crotté*)' from his rights in the Church was one thing, but excluding a high and mighty magistrate was another.³² The parlement issued an uncompromising remonstrance. The faithful who are deprived of the sacraments, it said, 'are entitled to resort to the secular authorities, whose responsibility it is to make them available, and to put an end to the scandal and public defamation'.

This remonstrance did not lead to the confrontation between parlement and Crown which might have been expected. The surge of popular indignation suddenly changed course, and for a while rushed down a different channel. There were riots in Paris, at least thirty between 10 December 1749 and 22 December 1750, a result of over-zealous activity by the police.³³ Patrols of the various and incompetent law enforcement officers began by rounding up beggars and vagrants, and in the following March and April extended their efforts to arresting troublesome teenagers, even those from respectable families. According to rumour, they were being deported to colonize Louisiana or Tobago, or butchered to provide baths of human blood to cure a great courtier of leprosy. *Quartier* after *quartier* rose in support of the families demanding their children back. It was a warning to the government of the danger of offending the people of the capital; but the immediate effect was temporarily to deprive the parlement of the popular support it could normally count on when it defended persecuted Jansenists. The magistrates, alarmed as ever by threats to public order and property, conducted a criminal enquiry and hanged three rioters. 'Now we see the parlement totally deserted by the people', wrote D'Argenson; 'it won't get their support when in future it needs it.'

In 1751, Christophe de Beaumont contrived to offend everyone.³⁴ It was a year of jubilee, and the people complained of the rigour of the conditions he laid down for qualifying for its benefits: the prescription of five processions to Notre-Dame and three to other churches led to chaotic crowds and injuries in the crush. The court of Versailles was offended by an archiepiscopal pastoral letter describing monarchs as more glorious by descent from St Louis than from worldly conquerors. In November, the parlement and *avocats* went on strike against Beaumont's designs to eradicate Jansenism among the sisters who served in the *hôpital général* (the vast complex of misery constituted by the Bicêtre, the Salpêtrière, the Pitié, and six other institutions). First of all, he had deprived the sisters of their

right to choose their own confessors; since they had not taken permanent vows, some of them departed. Then he overturned their election of a Jansenist as their new superior, a choice which the controlling council of the *hôpital général* had ratified, and forced in his own nominee. According to the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, she was formerly the owner of a tavern where Beaumont had run up heavy bills during his student days. On the issue of principle, not because of this improbable story, twelve of the council of twenty resigned. The parlement intervened, and negotiations with the Court ensued, in which Maupeou, the *premier président*, was insultingly treated, more especially after Lamoignon became chancellor, a terse difficult man who had a grudge against the magistrates, to whose company he had once belonged. In the end, the king, exasperated, forbade the parlement to debate the *hôpital général* affair further. On 24 November, when the *premier président* reported to an assembly of all the chambers, he was greeted with a revolt led by the *enquêtes*. In whatever other ways the royal will had to prevail, they did not accept the suppression of their freedom of internal discussion. Since 'the ban on deliberation is an interdiction of all our activities', they said, they would render justice no more. On 1 December, royal letters patent ordered the magistrates to resume normal duties. They did so, with bitter resentment.³⁵ The story went that the government, tired of all these troubles in the diocese of Paris, was offering Beaumont a cardinal's hat and the vast revenues of the abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés if only he would resign.

In the spring of 1752, warfare between the parlement and the clergy reached crisis point over two cases of the refusal of the last sacraments concerning the great Orléans dynasty.³⁶ In February, Louis, duc d'Orléans, son of the regent, who lived in pious retirement in the abbey of Sainte-Geneviève, fell mortally ill. He would not accept *Unigenitus*, though he thought the appeal against it had been a mistake. The archbishop visited him in person and refused the sacraments. The duke then got his servants to carry him into church and dragged himself to the altar, where they dared not refuse him. On 4 February, he died. In March, the aged abbé Lemerre, a friend and familiar of the Orléans family and sharing the Jansenist views of some of its members, applied to curé Bouettin of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont for the last rites, and was refused. On 23 March, the parlement fined Bouettin, and issued a summons to the archbishop inviting him to make good the failure of one of his parish priests to do his duty by a parishioner. The king evoked the matter, and called the *premier président* to Versailles to censure him and his

colleagues. But there were signs that Versailles was weary of the continuing scandals, for Louis XV promised that he himself would order provision for the dying man. He was slow to act, however, and a Capuchin sent to the bedside arrived too late. The parlement ordered Bouettin's arrest, and he fled, never to return (he was compensated with monastic revenues and ended up comfortably in Dijon). The government continued to waver, quashing the arrest, but not enforcing the order by the issue of letters patent, while the king himself validated, as it were, parlement's actions by declaring that he himself was removing Bouettin from his parish.

As one intolerant curé fled from the scene, another came forward to cause a new sensation, Levaré of Saint-Médard announcing from his pulpit, to the rage of his parishioners, that he would allow Easter communion only to those bringing *billets de confession*.³⁷ On 18 April, the parlement made its position ruthlessly clear in an *arrêt de règlement* which was printed, circulated to all the inferior courts in its jurisdiction, and posted up in the streets of Paris.

The Court, at an assembly of all the chambers, forbids all ecclesiastics to perform acts which lead to schism, notably to make any public refusal of the sacraments, under pretext of failure to present a *billet de confession*, or to give the name of the confessor, or to accept the bull *Unigenitus* . . . the penalty of contravening this order to be prosecution for disturbance of the peace.

Ten thousand copies of this *arrêt* were sold, people buying them for framing as pictures on their walls. There was a storm of pamphlets—forged proposals of the tax farmers to charge stamp duty on *billets de confession*, ironical suggestions for the establishment of a French branch of the Inquisition, serious arguments showing confession was unnecessary for true religion.³⁸ D'Argenson had been mistaken in supposing that the magistrates would have difficulty in regaining popular support after the suppression of the riots of 1750. 'There now reigns in Paris a fermentation almost unparalleled since the civil wars,' he wrote, 'our amiable prince—once so well loved—is hated, and the government scorned: all this presages baleful happenings to come.'³⁹

III

The prosecutions for disturbance of the peace brought by the parlement in accordance with the *arrêt de règlement* were usually held up by orders from the Royal Council to suspend proceedings. On 5

May, the magistrates, using the occasion of the government blocking their action against the curé of Saint-Jean-en-Grève (who was circulating a petition among the parish priests in defence of the *billets de confession*), issued a protest. The decisions of the highest court in the land, they said, were being annulled by interventions from outside the judicial process, a blow to the constitution of the State and an encouragement to the archbishop of Paris in his policy of 'schism'. They darkly threatened to 'remain assembled'—that is, all the chambers gathered for debate—this in practice meaning a suspension of the administration of justice. The king would probably have welcomed a quiet arrangement behind the scenes; on 14 May he told the *premier président* Maupeou, 'allez de votre chemin, je paraîtrai fâché, et j'en serai bien aise'.⁴⁰ But the bishops were demanding measures in defence of the Church. On 29 April, the government had tried to placate them by declaring the administration of the sacraments to be a purely spiritual matter, but as nothing was said in contradiction to the parlement's protest, the pious sentiment was not likely to affect the conduct of the law courts. On 14 May, the agents-general of the clergy summoned a meeting of prelates available in Paris, and they unanimously called for the quashing of the *arrêt de règlement*. On 20 June, the archbishop of Aix took two letters to Versailles, one in defence of Archbishop Christophe de Beaumont, the other a denunciation of the *arrêt de règlement*, the latter signed by eighteen diocesan and three other bishops—after circulation in the provinces, it was to finish up with seventy episcopal signatures.⁴¹ Meanwhile, at the end of May the king had set up a commission to work on the text of a declaration to settle the dispute between magistrates and clergy—at least, it would provide an excuse for delay and give the warring parties time for reflection. The members were Guillaume-François Joly de Fleury of the great legal dynasty, three lawyers of the Royal Council, and four bishops, two being the leaders of the *Tiers Parti*, tolerant and moderate: Cardinal la Rochefoucauld, archbishop of Bourges, and Saulx-Tavannes, archbishop of Rouen. Agreement proved impossible. The meetings of prelates in Paris in May and June had reinforced their spirit of corporate solidarity. Aristocrats to a man, proud and independent, and angered by the recent machinations of the government to break down the Church's right to vote its own taxation, the bishops were determined to defend the rights of their order, and they would not disavow Christophe de Beaumont. No doubt some of them regarded his vendetta against dying Jansenists as folly or worse, but they stood by the right of a bishop to control the administration of

the sacraments in his own diocese, and they did not wish to see a member of their exclusive club humiliated. Even the civilized archbishops of Bourges and Rouen would not yield ground. 'No one could be more agreeable than these two prelates,' wrote Joly de Fleury; 'they want to do the right thing, they see all the implications of the present division, they are afraid of schism, they are aware of all the consequences, but they are bishops, they have colleagues.'⁴²

On 21 November, another *arrêt* of the Council was issued, settling nothing and further exasperating the clergy. The *arrêt de règlement* and the censures against the archbishop of Paris of 5 May were not quashed, and ambiguous phraseology left intact the magistrates' power to act against priests withholding the sacraments. Perhaps the king was prepared to put up with their peculiar type of defiance half compounded with deference. This was evident in the case of the curé of Saint-Jean-en-Grève: the parlement had taken the preliminary steps towards punishing him, but suspended all action once the Royal Council had intervened. (True, the early procedures were not without effect, for once they reached the stage of *décret d'ajournement personnel*, the ecclesiastic under investigation was suspended from his functions until the court declared its verdict.) Two cases, however, both in the provinces, were pressed to a severe conclusion. Orders were given for the arrest of two curés, one in the diocese of Tours, the other in that of Sens. Their bishops supported them. Rosset de Fleury, the newly appointed archbishop of Tours, 'burning to distinguish himself in the ultramontane cause', smuggled his man to Paris in his carriage and concealed him there. Curé Le Beau of Sens was not so lucky. Archbishop Languet protected him and would not allow him to resign his parish, which he wished to do to escape. 'Placed between the parlement and the bishop', complained Le Beau, 'one threatening me with temporal penalties, the other with the penalties of sin, what can I do?'⁴³ All was well until Archbishop Languet suddenly died—the wretched curé then had his revenues confiscated and was barred from the exercise of his ministry. Finally, the crunch came on 12 December 1752, when a new case of refusal of the sacraments was reported to the parlement in Paris for all to see, and involving the old enemy, Christophe de Beaumont. Curé Levaré of Saint-Médard had refused communion to a dying parishioner, Sister Perpétue of the convent of Sainte-Agathe, and to escape the wrath of magistrates, had fled. The parlement summoned the archbishop to 'end the scandal' and nominate a priest to administer. Nothing was done, so the magistrates in a general assembly of all the chambers took drastic action. Rejecting

the emollient course of calling on the king to intervene, they gave the archbishop twenty-four hours to act under penalty of the seizure of his temporalities ('as for his spiritualities,' wrote D'Alembert to Mme du Deffand, 'you'd be hard put to find them'). To reinforce their threat, they also summoned the peers to join them, as it were constituting a court to put Beaumont on trial. Twenty-seven bishops rushed to Versailles to make a protest, causing an embarrassing scene.⁴⁴ The king had to rescue the archbishop of Paris.

At this point, Louis XV took action outside the accepted rules of procedure. The *premier président* was given a sealed packet with orders to open it in the presence of the magistrates and read out its contents: they were an *arrêt* of the Royal Council restoring the archbishop to his temporalities and a *lettre de cachet* ordering the parlement to comply without demur. This was an absolutist gesture. The royal will ought to have been signified by letters patent requiring registration by the parlement, a process involving deliberation. The *premier président's* reading of the documents was drowned in uproar as everyone made for the doors, refusing to listen. On 20 December a deputation went to the king at the Trianon to protest against orders conveyed in such an unconstitutional fashion and against a further royal command forbidding the peers to join their assembly. The Royal Council resorted to a malicious stroke to discourage what it saw as Jansenist designs to trap the clergy into public refusals of the sacraments in circumstances of well-contrived pathos: the community of Sainte-Agathe was disbanded, and the 79-year-old Sister Perpétue was moved to another convent; she proved the genuineness of her application for the last rites by dying the following day.⁴⁵ On 2 February 1753, the parlement took action against the bishop of Orléans concerning a denial of the sacraments in his diocese, ignoring the evocation of the case to the Royal Council. On 22 February, letters patent arrived at the parlement ordering the suspension of judicial proceedings in all such cases—letters patent to be registered forthwith 'under pain of disobedience'. Instead of registering them, the magistrates proceeded to draw up a comprehensive set of remonstrances against arbitrary power and the pretensions of the clergy.⁴⁶ Generally, even in times of tumult, protests to the king were phrased with moderation, since the system of drafting and voting left power in the hands of the *premier président* and the gerontocracy of the Grand' Chambre. But on this occasion, with passions running high, time running short, and the official draughtsmen incapable of producing a convincing proposal, a group of five *zélés* took over, three being Jansenists—Lambert, Clément de Feuillet, and Robert

de Saint-Vincent. They called on outside help from Jansenist writers, the abbé Mey, one of the clandestine editors of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, and Adrien Le Paige, the canonist, who was busy constructing a major historical argument to establish the parlements as the successors of the assemblies of warriors of ancient days, among whom the king had been but *primus inter pares*—as D'Argenson observed, the Jansenists were well qualified to devise an ideology of nation above king, since their argument was already directed to demonstrating the Church was above the Pope.

The *grandes remontrances* were ready on 9 April—adorned with flights of vivid prose and packed with learning. They accused the clergy of revolt against the king's authority, overturning the peace of his realm, and defying his courts of justice. In this way of putting things, 'authority' was defined to exclude arbitrary power. 'The kingdom belongs to the king and the king to the kingdom': there are reciprocal duties. The parlement has the oversight of the laws, to see they are obeyed by the subjects and observed by the king himself. 'It is in your name that your parlement watches over the safety of the State, its authority is none other than your own, but it is your authority made proof against accidental circumstances (*votre autorité devenue inaccessible aux surprises*).' Thus evocations of lawsuits to the Council ought not to be issued to serve the ends of government policy; they should 'be dictated by motives of general equity' and 'verified by the parlements'—that is, they are remedies for gaps in the structure of law, not devices to stop the existing laws from operating. The basis of the State is a contract between sovereign and people, and 'the laws are the sacred knot and, as it were, the seal set on this indissoluble engagement. The king, the State and the law form an inseparable whole.'

Louis XV refused to receive the remonstrances—another arbitrary gesture flouting the constitutional decencies; instead, on 4 May, he ordered the parlement to register his letters patent of 22 February, as if the protests of the magistrates had never been made. On the following day, the parlement refused to register them, and declared the intention 'to remain assembled', that is, to suspend the administration of justice. The government acted ruthlessly, arresting four leaders and sending the members of the chambers of *enquêtes* and *requêtes* into exile in seven different towns. Only the Grand' Chambre was left. Its magistrates remained on strike, and on 11 May they too were exiled—to Pontoise. A third of France now had no appellate jurisdiction. The king set up the Chambre royale du Louvre to take over; but though 65 per cent of the lower courts

recognized it, the barristers would not plead before it, and litigants withheld their cases.⁴⁷ Some of the provincial parlements took up the fight against the clergy.⁴⁸ As a result of various cases of the refusal of the sacraments, the bishops of Nantes and Vannes were fined by the parlement of Rennes; so too the bishop of Evreux facing the magistrates of Rouen, and the bishop of Sisteron facing those of Aix. In February 1754, the parlement of Toulouse hit upon another legal device to defend the rights of citizens, using its power of 'public policing' to allow priests from outside a parish to come in to administer the last rites, as was permissible in time of plague. The criminal court of Paris, the Châtelet, took up cases of denial of the sacraments in the capital, and the government was driven to the extreme course of imprisoning one of its judges in the Bastille.

Four years ago, D'Argenson⁴⁹ had spoken of the magistrates of the parlement of Paris as 'fools', 'sheep', 'sycophants'; but they could be formidable, he conceded, when they spoke for the people: 'the public, its hatreds and encouragements, its lampoons, its insolence, its pious agitators and its political ones (*ses dévots et ses frondeurs*), there lies the danger'. There could be no doubt now where the loyalty of the people lay: 20,000 copies of the remonstrances were sold in a few days. The royal policy met with disapproval even in court and army circles: when on 2 August 1753 the marquis de Fougères came with a military escort to strike out the decisions of the magistrates of Rouen from the registers, he was the eighth choice of the Crown, seven other officers of the royal bodyguard having refused the distasteful commission. D'Argenson, noting the way the wind was blowing, and seeing 'the little national liberty we have left' vanishing, looked for salvation to the parlement as a 'national senate' fit to take over power. He also noted the politicization of the Jansenist quarrel. 'It is no longer a question of calling the one side "Jansenist" and the other "Molinist": for these names substitute "nationaux" and "sacerdotaux" —a national party with constitutional demands set against an absolutist party tied to the churchmen and their bull *Unigenitus*.

By dispersing the magistrates to various provincial towns, the king had made it difficult to negotiate with them. Their defiance had been collective, and without an assembly of the chambers, the *premier président* could not offer concessions (the exiles noted how the provincial parlements were dealing with refusals of the sacraments in general assemblies, a tactic ensuring a common commitment in defiance). The government needed a settlement, to restart the judicial process and restore the machinery by which new taxes were authenticated.⁵⁰

There was nothing for it but to recall the parlement: it was, very nearly, a royal capitulation, except that the king still did not receive or recognize the remonstrances. Newly re-established in Paris, on 2 September the magistrates registered with satisfaction a royal declaration ordering absolute silence on *Unigenitus*, with the parlement itself invited to deal with any breaches of the order. It was an astonishing concession to the magistrates: as Bernis said, tantamount to silencing the supporters of the bull and leaving free its critics.⁵¹ In December the king went further in admitting defeat, exiling Beaumont, the archbishop of Arles, and the bishops of Orléans and Troyes away from their episcopal cities (the bishop of Troyes was going to be uncomfortable anyway, since a legal judgement had already put his furniture under the auctioneer's hammer). The aim was to discourage them from breaking the law of silence and—at least in Beaumont's case—to preserve them from prosecution. Two cases of Jansenists dying without sacraments in the diocese of Orléans led to prompt parliamentary vengeance: the revenues of the cathedral chapter were sequestered and the furniture of three canons sold,⁵² while Segretier, the curé of Saint-Pierre de Meung-sur-Loire, had to flee the country (he went to Malines for refuge and finally came back to France as an army chaplain serving a great nobleman). In Paris, in January 1755, the refusal of the last rites to Milady Drummond, wife of the duke of Perth, an aristocratic convulsionist, led to the magistrates of Paris adopting the emergency rule already sanctioned by their colleagues in Toulouse, waiving the monopoly rights of curés in their parishes.⁵³ On 1 February, the abbé Feu, the octogenarian Jansenist curé of Saint-Gervais, took advantage of the permission, and administered communion to an applicant from outside his boundaries. Pamphleteers multiplied attacks on the bishops, not only for their intolerance, but also for their pride, their unfair treatment of their parish priests, and their plundering of monastic revenues. On 20 March, D'Argenson declared that priests no longer dared to walk the streets in clerical dress, while 'in decent company today it is no longer possible to speak in favour of [*Unigenitus*] or the clergy; to do so is to be spurned by all and regarded as a familiar of the Inquisition'.⁵⁴ It was the peak year of discontent against the Crown and of anticlerical agitation.

On 13 August 1755, Boyer died, and the king transferred the *fenille des bénéfices* to the moderate cardinal-archbishop of Bourges, La Rochefoucauld. His first episcopal appointment was to send to Alès Buisson de Beauteville, a prelate noted for his generosity to the poor and his 'determination to make the road to heaven narrow and

difficult'; he had also signed a statement, to be released after his death, repudiating *Unigenitus*; he was a crypto-Jansenist who would never have been considered for promotion under the previous minister of the *feuille*. The Assembly of the Clergy of France of this year,⁵⁵ after voting subsidies to the Crown, discussed ecclesiastical policy, and was hopelessly divided. The die-hards stood by Boyer's policies—hence they were called 'Théatins', after the monastic Order to which the ex-bishop of Mirepoix had originally belonged. To them, rejection of the bull was mortal sin, and refusal of the sacraments inevitably followed. Against them were the bishops of the *Tiers Parti* led by La Rochefoucauld—with him he had Dominique de la Rochefoucauld, archbishop of Albi, his nephew, Caulet (Grenoble), Le Franc de Pompignan (Puy), Tinseau (Nevers), Montazet (Autun), Belloy (Marseille), and Busson de Beauteville (future bishop of Alès). To these, the whimsical name of another monastic Order was given, the 'Feuillants'—adherents of the minister of the *feuille*. They considered the rejection of *Unigenitus* to be sin, 'grave' but not 'mortal'; the sacraments therefore should be withheld only from notorious refractories. Unable to reach agreement, on 21 October the two parties agreed to write to the Pope asking for his 'advice and paternal instructions'. It was a testimony to Benedict XIV's greatness that a Gallican assembly could unanimously agree to consult him. The Crown lawyers looked carefully at the bishops' letter in the light of the Gallican liberties before the king actually sent it to Rome. On 1 March Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons, had made a very different sort of approach to the Pope, not asking his mediation so much as telling him what needed to be done. He made a canonical point: the anathemas of the Church, properly thundered against those who reject a doctrine, are inappropriate when directed against those rejecting a discursive papal decree. But his main argument was practical. The *Unigenitus* battle had been fought to reduce the clergy to submission, and thus far it had succeeded; the trouble was, there was now a revolt of the laity—'si aujourd'hui les ecclésiastiques de France sont soumis, les laïcs sont révoltés'. These laymen are too numerous to be coerced, and too intelligent to be satisfied with the answers about the authority of the Church which our ill-educated clergy offer them. Hence, Fitz-James implored Benedict to give an assurance that *Unigenitus* did no more than condemn errors already condemned by the Council of Trent and the bulls against Jansenius, being an interim pronouncement meant to encourage theological discussion on the way to some future clarifying decision. It was the old idea of 'explanations'

again—explanations which Rome would not give because giving them could cast doubts on papal infallibility, and which Jansenists demanded, hoping for this outcome.

How should the Pope reply to the request of the French bishops? A formal bull would have to be registered by the parlements before it could be accepted in France. With his unfailing diplomatic instinct, Benedict XIV offered the French king an alternative: a letter, not containing ‘judgements’ but offering ‘counsels’, a form dating back to the early days of the Church. Louis XV accepted his method of proceeding, provided the document came to him in the first place for forwarding to the bishops, and on 16 October 1756, the encyclical *Ex omnibus* was issued.⁵⁶ It was at once an uncompromising statement of papal and ecclesiastical rights and an implicit disavowal of those who had asserted them with untimely aggressiveness. Benedict stood by *Unigenitus* and the right of the clergy to refuse the sacraments, but he declared that only public opponents of the bull were liable to deprivation, and he abrogated the use of *billets de confession*.

Ex omnibus pleased nobody. On 1 September, Archbishop Beaumont pre-empted its publication by pronouncing a decree of excommunication upon secular judges who gave orders about the administration of the sacraments and on those who appealed to them. This he read in the parish church of Conflans, where his country house was situated and where he was confined by royal *lettre de cachet*. Some extremist bishops adhered to this anathema—those of Troyes, Metz, Amiens, Tours, Chartres, Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux, and Auxerre, the latter with sufficient vehemence to incur an order from the government exiling him away from his cathedral city. The parlement ordered the suppression of the Pope's encyclical, the king suppressing the suppression. The Jansenists described it as just another attempt, like *Pastoralis Officii*, to bolster up *Unigenitus* in the interests of infallibility: ‘no mention of acceptance by the universal Church, nor of the concurrence of the bishops; it is the infallibility of the Pope pure and simple.’⁵⁷ The *Tiers Parti* prelates (reinforced by Saulx-Tavannes of Rouen and Choiseul-Beaupré of Besançon) pressed for Rome to go further and issue an exposition of doctrine on which all could agree—the same old hopeless longing for a way round the back of the bull to a rallying point of unanimity, on which the theologians had wasted reams of paper ever since the time of Dubois. However, as the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* was to concede many years later, Benedict XIV had initiated a pacification. Once the insistence on a *billet de confession* was lifted, a family seeking a

compliant confessor for a dying relative would almost certainly find one.

IV

1756 was a year of renewed conflict between Crown and parlement, over issues of finance and issues of religion. To pay for the European war, the government in January and July created new taxes. The parlement of Paris insisted on limiting their duration, and other protests came from the sovereign courts of Rennes, Rouen, Dauphiné, and Franche Comté. The religious dispute arose over the royal declaration of 10 October 1755 transferring the jurisdiction of the parlement of Paris in ecclesiastical affairs to the Grand Conseil, an institution unlikely to resist government pressure. In the ensuing dispute the magistrates invoked outside help, as it were both vertically and horizontally. Vertically, they called for the princes and peers of France to join them in a great forum of the nation: such an assembly had last met 146 years before, during the minority of Louis XIII. The first prince of the blood, the duc d'Orléans, took a petition of the peers to Versailles. Louis XV burned it before his eyes.⁵⁸ Horizontally, the parlement appealed to all the other parlements of the kingdom in a remonstrance of 22 August. 'The metropolitan court and all its offshoots', it said, 'are the diverse classes of a single, unique parlement, the diverse members of a single, unique corporation, animated with the same spirit, nourished by the same principles, striving for the same objective.'⁵⁹ The idea came from the Jansenist lawyer Adrien Le Paige, who traced all the parlements back to a common ancestor in the assemblies of free warriors of the Germans and the Franks. From this common origin, they collectively inherited the right to consent to legislation, and they could refuse to register any innovation which conflicted with the fundamental laws or the true interests of the monarchy. Contemporaries did not doubt that it was the religious issue which was bringing the sovereign courts into a federation, rather than grievances about finance and taxation. As Barbier said:

the different parlements are united to that of Paris when it has been a question of the spiritual, of the clergy and the Constitution *Unigenitus*, because quarrels of religions stir up minds everywhere; but with regard to the temporal, each parlement wishes to exercise the right it claims in its own territory, without following the dispositions of the parlement of Paris.⁶⁰

This was also D'Argenson's view: 'observons que les parlements sont beaucoup plus vifs sur les affaires de l'Église que sur celles des finances'.⁶¹ The concept of the 'union des classes' served as a formula to describe what was happening, as well as a rallying cry. 'Here', said a contemporary observer, 'is a union contrary to the authority of the king declared by all the parlements of the kingdom.' He was exaggerating. The magistrates of Rennes, Rouen, Aix, Bordeaux, and, to a lesser extent, Grenoble threw in their lot with their Parisian colleagues, but those of Dijon, Pau, and Douai still held aloof. There was more deference in the provinces, more fear of disturbance, a recognition that it is 'plus à propos de s'entre-soutenir que de s'entre-détruire'.⁶²

The royal counter-attack was comprehensive.⁶³ In a *lit de justice* of 13 December 1756, the registration of an 'Edict of Discipline' and of two declarations was enforced. One declaration concerned religion. *Unigenitus* was reaffirmed to be 'a law of Church and State'. In principle, churchmen could refuse the sacraments, and the secular courts were forbidden to order them to do otherwise; civil lawsuits arising from such refusals were to go to the ecclesiastical courts. In the parlement, cases involving religion would be dealt with only by the Grand' Chambre. But there were counter-balancing conciliatory points, including Benedict XIV's prescriptions for restraint. *Unigenitus* was not described as 'a rule of faith', and ecclesiastics were forbidden to ask questions about it; they could refuse the sacraments only to those whose opposition to the bull was notorious. And while the parlement could not order the administration of the sacraments, it could punish ecclesiastics who acted unreasonably. The other declaration suppressed two of the chambers of the *enquêtes*, not really a contentious step, as the magistrates had wanted a reduction in their total numbers, though spread over all five chambers. But the edict of discipline was a serious blow to their political aspirations. The submission of remonstrances was not to hold up a royal edict from coming into immediate operation. The great general assemblies in which the parlement generated its corporate force for resistance were forbidden, except when all the *présidents à mortier* joined in granting authorization, and only those magistrates who had served at least ten years in office would be allowed to attend.

On the evening after the *lit de justice*, all the members of the *enquêtes* and the *requêtes* handed in their resignations, and on the following day, fifteen of the Grand' Chambre followed suit. Only ten *présidents à mortier* and twelve other magistrates of the Grand' Chambre remained to administer justice, which could not be done

anyway, as the *avocats* went on strike. It could have been the beginning of the ‘revolution’ in religion and government which D'Argenson had prophesied. But the course of history was diverted by an obsessive nonentity from the underworld of lackeys and servants—Damien—who on 5 January 1757 emerged from the throng at Versailles and drove a dagger into the king's side. Louis was only slightly wounded, but the incident, a revelation of the dark surges of hatred among the anonymous multitude ignored by the great as they manoeuvred for power in the world of privilege, was a salutary warning to both the court of Versailles and the parlement. There was also a growing realization of the external danger to the country from foreign war, and the feuding upper classes of France were patriotic. Both sides made concessions, and there was an uneasy reconciliation. Machault, the minister of intransigence, was dismissed, and the supple Bernis⁶⁴ took over; the Edict of Discipline was suspended; the parlement returned to duty under a new *premier président*, Molé, and Christophe de Beaumont was allowed to return from exile to his cathedral city. Business as usual meant the resumption of the ordinary processes of the law. In spite of the royal regulations of December 1756, criminal cases concerning the refusal of the sacraments still came before the parlement and the court of the Châtelet. Involved in one of these affairs, in April 1758, the curé of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs got advance warning of the approaching vengeance of the magistrates and loaded his furniture on to a cart and fled from Paris, his three vicaires following. In the next five years at least fourteen more complaints of refusal of the sacraments were dealt with. A truce generally means that one side has won: in this case, it was the parlement.

Pacification in France and Benedict XIV still ruling at Rome: there was a last chance for ending the dispute over *Unigenitus*. A group of influential statesmen wanted to seize the opportunity—the controller-general, Laverdy, Gilbert de Voisins of the Council, the *premier président* Molé, the archbishops of Rouen and Besançon, and the bishops of Lyon and Soissons. They were in touch with Adrien Le Paige; in his view, the Jansenists would be satisfied if Rome was to draw up a declaration of doctrine and to order an ‘eternal silence’ about the past. One of those high-minded adventurers whom the troubles had produced was chosen to do the negotiations—the abbé Augustin-Clément du Tremblay, of a rich legal family, a canon of Auxerre ordained by Caylus without signature of the formulary. He went off to Rome to work through his friend Bottari, librarian of the Vatican.⁶⁵ Time was running out. On 8 May 1758, Benedict XIV

died. On 6 July, Cardinal Rezzonico, a zealous pastor, but in weak health, indecisive, and self-distrustful, succeeded, taking the name of Clement XIII. Cardinal Archinto, the Secretary of State, soon followed Benedict XIV to the grave, and his successor, Torregiani, had the general of the Jesuits as his confessor. A theological settlement was impossible. Even at this late stage, it would have been a worthwhile achievement, setting troubled consciences at rest and freeing the Church from the bitterness of useless controversy. But it could have done nothing to avert the political storm which had gathered force during the *billets de confession* scandal, and which was to blow on to the suppression of the Jesuit Order and further on still to the unimagined shoals and rocks of revolution.

42 The Jesuits of France

I

At the eye of the hurricane of political and ecclesiastical strife which had blown up over France were the Jesuits, for the most part quietly proceeding with their teaching, preaching, and writing, little concerned with the tumult raging around them. No doubt they were all committed to the war against Jansenism, though beyond the occasional denunciation in a sermon or declamation in conversation, most of them had better things to do than to conduct the intrigues of the ecclesiastical faction-fight; like most causes, good or bad, this was run by an activist minority. With papacy and Crown on their side, they had triumphed over the Jansenists, in the sense of excluding them from the ministry of the Church and outlawing the extreme version of their doctrinal emphasis. The price in terms of scandal and political uproar, and for the Jesuits themselves—public odium—had been high. Yet how few of them there were to have caused such a furore! In the whole world there were 26,000 of them; in the five provinces of France, 3,300. This, roughly, was the number of clergy who had appealed to a General Council against the bull *Unigenitus* under the Regency. In the debate which bedevilled French society and politics in the first half of the eighteenth century—‘les affaires du temps’ in the evasive language of those who despaired of finding a formula to cover all its convolutions—the central fortress of each side was manned by a mere 3,000 ecclesiastics. True, but an undisciplined recruitment of skirmishers, *franc tireurs*, and camp-followers had gathered around them.

In 1761, the Jesuits of France¹ had 9 noviciates, 25 residences, 21 seminaries, and 111 *collèges* (that is, institutions of secondary education for boys). Clearly, education was the activity to which most of their resources were devoted. Theirs was a remarkable success story. By 1717 they had 74 *collèges*, and to these they added 37 more in the next forty-four years. The number of pupils in most of these institutions had been steadily rising. The vast *collège* of Rennes² had been 600 strong in 1604, 3,000 by 1700, and 4,000 by 1761. This final total

was fully equal to the whole student population of the thirty-six collegiate foundations allied to the University of Paris, five times the size of their own *collège* at Lyon, and 1,000 more than Louis-le-Grand in Paris, the most prestigious of all the Jesuit schools. They were not afraid of numbers: they did, however, try to avoid the disproportionate trouble which boarders bring, preferring to have boys who lived at home or in lodgings (often with local clergy) or in *pédagogies* run by others. In 1761, only sixteen of their schools had a *pensionnat*, and most of these had been founded because of pressure from influential families or orders from the king. None of their houses was rich: Louis-le-Grand, the wealthiest, had an income of only 46,000 livres a year. The fees paid on behalf of pupils and subventions from the municipal authorities of their local town kept most of their schools going.

A typical example was at Vannes,³ where, by the eighteenth century, 600–700 pupils were being taught. In 1629, the town, while retaining the ownership of its old *collège*, handed the buildings over to the Jesuits, with 18,000 livres for an extension, and with a promise of 500 livres a year to be levied on the *octroi* (the dues on foodstuffs entering the city). Thereafter, from time to time the municipality made grants for repairs. Some towns were hostile to the Jesuits, and preferred to have the Oratorians or some other Order or secular priests giving secondary education to their children; even so, the Jesuits were adept at insinuating themselves. At Nantes,⁴ they were kept out until 1661, when Louis XIV insisted they be admitted; this was done, though with the proviso that they lived in the suburbs. However, they soon moved into town, and enlarged their influence beyond the walls of their *collège* by drawing young artisans into one of their confraternities and rich bourgeois and nobles into another. In 1672, came their master-stroke, when they added a course on hydrography to their curriculum of study; henceforward, all the sea-faring families of the port had their sons on the waiting-list. In Grenoble,⁵ where the Jesuits arrived in 1652 with the consent of the municipality, the problem had been to overcome the hostility of the bishop; but in 1684 he admitted defeat, and sold the lands of his seminary to them for a sum of 28,500 livres, which the king paid. This enabled an extension of buildings and the acceptance of more pupils; even so, the vast institution was run on a shoe-string—in 1728 the endowment income was only 7,000 livres.

Behind changing local circumstances and the pressure of royal favour there was a simple underlying reason for the success of the Jesuits in founding their *collèges*. The bourgeois families of France,

like the middle classes today, wanted the best available education for their children irrespective of their own personal principles and prejudices. In 1729, Barbier recorded how Louis-le-Grand had a queue of applicants; the Jesuits were unpopular, he said, but the 'honnêtes gens de la cour et de la ville', the respectable folk of the court and of the capital, did not care—it is enough for them to know that the Jesuits give a perfectly good education to youth in general'.⁶

The Jesuit system was founded on their vow of total obedience, and a spirit of austere discipline prevailed throughout the organization of the Order. The recteur⁷ of a *collège* was a great personage locally, but his term of office was only three years, and he had no personal privileges: his dress had no distinguishing marks, and he ate in the refectory with everyone else. He was watched over by a *moniteur* and a council of four, which reported twice a year to the provincial and once a year to the general in Rome; if these authorities were not satisfied, he could be dismissed. In his turn, the recteur appointed the *professeurs* who were in charge of the teaching, and he had the exclusive power of absolution if any of the administrative or teaching staff committed a grave sin. Yet the system was not deadened by centralization. The *syndic* and the *procurateur* who ran the material affairs of the house, the *préfet des études* who was in charge of the day-boys and the *principal* in charge of the boarders, as well as the *professeurs* supervising lay assistants doing routine chores, enjoyed a measure of initiative which promoted the efficiency of the institution.

The avowed purpose of the Jesuits was to win the world to Christianity: a not too unfriendly critic might have put it 'to Christianize society', which is not quite the same thing. Their educational philosophy would have been evidence for this amended version. Their programme of studies, the *Ratio Studiorum*, devised between 1586 and 1599, was drawn from eclectic sources, not always Catholic, indeed not always Christian—classical antiquity, Quintilian, the Renaissance humanists, the Brethren of the Common Life, the Protestants. It broke entirely with the idea of education as training for clergy to which lay aspirants to literacy were admitted as a concession. 'Their plan of studies', writes Dainville, 'does not accord to religious instruction any space beyond that which is strictly necessary, it even refuses to found the teaching of the humanities on the Christian classics'.⁸ Most pupils, it was assumed, would follow a lay vocation, and they were prepared for it by a no-nonsense system of ruthless competition. The public 'exercises',

when the *collège* was on show to proud parents and respectable society generally, put the boys on their mettle. The most able were nominated to deliver Latin verses of their own composition (perhaps not without assistance) on royal marriages, canonizations, or other events of the day.⁹ Others prepared theses and defended them before a jury; others were called on to solve riddles and charades. An addition to this programme in the eighteenth century was the *plaidoyer*, an invention of the famous Père Porée—a sort of moot where, before a judge, advocates pleaded the cause of different academic subjects, like ‘history’ or ‘poetry’, or defended the invention of the compass, printing or gunpowder.¹⁰ In the classroom, the same public striving for excellence against organized opposition was the essence of the Jesuit method. ‘When a pupil reads out an exercise’, said Père Jouvancy’s handbook of educational practice, ‘do not leave him to do so alone: give him a competitor (*un émule*) with the duty of correcting his errors, checking his facts, attacking him and defeating him as often as possible.’¹¹ Every month the most meritorious scholars were awarded offices of command in their class (which would be large, up to 100 strong)—‘consul’, ‘emperor’, or ‘senator’ in one of the two camps into which the class was divided, or *censeur général* to impose discipline, or *décursion* in charge of a group of ten, hearing them recite their lessons and collecting their exercises.¹² So, while emulation was the spur, the result was not so much to encourage individualism as to promote an aristocratic striving for places of honour, accepting a hierarchy of society, but one which was based on merit.¹³ The concept may have had its effect on the revolutionary feeling among the generation of 1789.

In some places, specialist courses were offered. There was the hydrography instruction to train ship’s officers at Toulon and Brest and at Nantes; at Louis-le-Grand there was a group of a dozen or so boys, quaintly arrayed in oriental dress, who were taught Turkish, Arabic, and Persian to become interpreters in the Levant.¹⁴ Theology was not a subject generally available, but in the two or three most important schools in each province there was a four-year course in the Scriptures, canon law, Greek, and Hebrew, taken by older boys who also acted as supervisors in the *pensionnats* or *répétiteurs* in the classrooms.¹⁵ But the main drive of the educational system was to offer generalized instruction of a literary kind, designed to form citizens who would be at home in the salon, the law court, the council chamber, and the provincial debating society—or, if they became statesmen or soldiers, would have a fund of moralizing reflections and literary commonplaces to dignify the exercise of their

profession. Business, commerce, and manufacturing were not catered for: these bourgeois subjects were left to the Frères des Écoles Chrésiennes.

The education of the *collèges* was based on Latin grammar, hammered into the pupils in their first three years in classes 5, 4, and 3, and the Latin classics, with Cicero as the stand-by for stylistic imitation. All talking in class was supposed to be in Latin, and even the textbooks of grammar were entirely in the ancient language. Greek was studied in some places, though always with a Latin translation alongside the text. The crown of the educational process came in the final two years, known as 'Humanities' and 'Rhetoric', with a wider range of classical authors and technical training in rhetoric. Père Colonia's *De Arte rhetorica* (1710) systematized the devices of eloquence handed down in a series of old text-books, and the classes were introduced to trope, metaphor, enumeration, balance, and amplification, and the eight stages of *la chrie*: exposition, panegyric, analysis of causal factors, contrast, comparison, the proffering of examples, the citing of the testimony of the ancients, and the epilogue.¹⁶ In spite of its framework of technicalities, the subject was far from formalistic, let alone dry. The literary examples cited, chosen by each *professeur* to suit his bias of mind and display his own erudition, were in themselves a wider education. And this was a point at which the study of pagan antiquity was decisively Christianized. St Augustine had faced the problem of how pagan eloquence could be annexed to the faith, and had proposed rules for the effective utilization of Cicero. The Jesuits brought the process to its culmination, binding together classical antiquity and Tridentine morality, to Cicero adding the rhetoric of St Charles Borromeo, who spoke from the heart and used 'paintings' to move in preference to logic to convince. All this was to be done without eschewing baroque ornament, yet using it judiciously with decorum, the key words being 'mesure' and 'd cence'.

In the eighteenth century, the rebarbative system of teaching Latin in Latin collapsed. Not for the first time, the Jesuits learned from the Jansenists, who had produced a Latin grammar in French for their schools at Port-Royal. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, similar grammars are found at Louis-le-Grand and in the *coll ge* at Amiens, and with the appearance of P re Fleuriau's new textbook of 1744, all the Jesuit schools switched to the use of the French language to teach the Latin one.¹⁷ The *professeurs* who dictated the courses in rhetoric took heart from this change, and began cautiously to add extracts from Voltaire and Cr billon to their

examples from classical antiquity. But the linguistic breakthrough came in the Jesuit theatre, possibly as much by demand of the parents as of the pupils. At La Flèche in 1679 the tragedy *David, roy des Bergers* was put on, and in 1689 *Alexandre-le-Grand*. The solemn French plays of Pères Brunoy, La Rue, Colonia, Follard, Geoffroy, Marion, and Dupleix followed, and were passed round from house to house; as for comedies, pastorals, and ballets, these had always come more naturally in the native tongue. Some thought the dubious effect of theatrical performances on the passions was alleviated by the obscurity of a learned language, and it was true also that the Latin tragedies written by the Jesuit schoolmasters were more polished performances, language for language, than the French dramas which succeeded them. But Père Bouhours' *Remarques nouvelles sur la langue française* (1693) had an answer: French was more important than Latin for the defence of the Church.¹⁸

Since the Jesuits regarded history as 'a school of morals', their concentration on classical antiquity was defended by Père Croisset on the ground that 'Roman history, in a sense, contains the history of all nations'. But one of the moral lessons from ancient Rome was the necessity of patriotism, so he could not deny the right of Frenchmen to familiarize themselves with the affairs of their own land. 'To be ignorant of the history of one's own country', he admitted, 'is to be as it were, a foreigner in it.'¹⁹ In this epoch of the literary warfare between Ancients and Moderns, with the Moderns gradually prevailing, it was impossible to stop the argument at that point; since the days of the Roman Empire, the known world had become vastly enlarged, so why should it not be studied in its global totality? 'Which is best', asked Père Buffier of Louis-le-Grand in 1705, 'to know a little extra Latin, or to know how the world is constituted, what are the most important events that have happened in it, and what things in it ought to arouse our interest now?'²⁰ To promote universal history and geography, he published his *Pratique de la mémoire artificielle* in 1705, with a sequel in 1711, a chronology of political and intellectual affairs since 1600 and a *Géographie universelle* (both in 1715) and a *Traité de la Société civile* (1726) with vague utopian proposals for an egalitarian society. Voltaire claimed to have left Louis-le-Grand (this was in 1711) ignorant of French history, not knowing Francis I had been taken prisoner at Pavia, nor where Pavia could be found. If so, he had been lazy and had not read Buffier, who recounted the historical incident in his *Pratique* of 1705 and precisely located Pavia in the supplement of 1711. True, what passed for geography in Buffier was simple stuff:

Q What do you note touching the ecclesiastical and political order of the town of Avignon, an archbishopric and the seat of a Vice Legate?

A (a) The canons there dress in red and the chaplains in purple;

(b) The gates of the town are shut every day at sunset.

No doubt the pupils in the classroom sometimes enlivened the dull standard answers

Q How is France divided?

A Into 30 provinces.

Q Would it not be more convenient to divide it into 12 administrative areas?

A It would be more convenient still not to divide it at all, so there would be nothing we had to learn.²¹

The apparently desiccated factual, grammatical, and rhetorical education of the schools of the *ancien régime* was, in truth, more lively in practice than might appear from its textbooks.

The personal equation and the continual comic incidents arising from life in crowded institutions made a difference. The geography teaching of the Jesuits so often moved out anecdotally to the heroic exploits of their missionaries in Canada, the Antilles, South America, the Levant, and China—stories of the adventurers penetrating into the swamps of the Gran Chaco, crossing the roof of the world from Tibet to Peking, moving the frontier forwards ahead of the soldiers from the Great Lakes southwards and northwards from Mexico to California. Voltaire was not touched by the Christian revelation which inspired his Jesuit schoolmasters, but he absorbed their catholicity—their universal outlook, with the whole world as their parish.

The Jesuits were dedicated schoolmasters. An old pupil described their life-style at Louis-le-Grand as 'laborious, frugal and disciplined. All their time was divided between seeing to our welfare and the duties of their austere profession. Of the thousands of men who, like me, were educated there, I swear that not a single one would deny the truth of what I say.'²² This was Voltaire, in the days before he fell out with his old preceptors. Dedication was not all; the system produced some teachers of wide and curious erudition and some inspiring and memorably eccentric characters. At Louis-le-Grand there were Claude Buffier, the enthusiastic geographer; Père Daniel, who craftily whipped up an advertising campaign for the publication of his history of France in 1713;²³ Père Castel, who set Paris talking in

1725 with his ‘clavecin oculaire’, a soundless harpsichord which entertained with a rippling display of 144 moving colours;²⁴ Père Gilles-Xavier de la Santé, an amiable conversationalist and a prolific playwright. More sensationally well known was Père Le Jay, who taught rhetoric from 1692 to 1711, then stayed on as a confessor—a writer of Ciceronian prose and a popular dramatist who put on the school's first play in French, and whose collected theatrical works were bedside reading for Cardinal Polignac at Utrecht during the peace negotiations. Of noble birth and with all the irascibility of his military ancestors, he figures in two of the best pedagogical anecdotes of the century—wrathfully shaking the young Voltaire and crying ‘Miserable boy! one day you will be the standard-bearer of deism in France’, and having the little duc de Boufflers whacked for hitting him on the nose with a shot from a pea-shooter. The *maréchal* complained to the king about the treatment of his son; the boy was withdrawn from the school, and Père Le Jay had to give up the rhetoric class. The Boufflers story is better authenticated than the Voltairean one, though Saint-Simon's embellishments are not to be relied on: how the young D'Argenson was another of the pea-shooter battery, but escaped punishment because his father was lieutenant of police of Paris, and how the Boufflers boy died of chagrin.²⁵

The most famous schoolmaster of the century was, however, Père Charles Porée, who finished his theology at Louis-le-Grand in 1696 at the age of 20, and stayed there for the rest of his life, teaching for forty years and dying five years after retirement. ‘He taught his disciples a love of letters and of virtue,’ said Voltaire—he taught a good deal more than that, for by 1762 there were no fewer than sixteen of his former pupils in the Academy and twenty in the Académie des Inscriptions. Loyal old members of the school paid visits to him in his cell, but they could never tempt him into their salons; they enjoyed his conversation, and had to pay for it by subscriptions to his charities. Every Saturday he discoursed to his class in polished Latin on moral themes: true glory and false glory, the folly of unselective friendships, the dangers of dipping into dubious books. At the beginning of the academic year, the school gathered to hear his Latin orations rehearsing historical and literary allusions to decide questions like: ‘Are the French frivolous?’ or ‘Does a republic produce better soldiers than a monarchy?’ And above all, he was famous for his plays: sombre tragedies where splendid, selfless young men stand fatally alone against tyrants and hypocrites; comedies in which gamblers, libertines, and show-offs are humiliated in reasonably laughable circumstances.

Though Louis-le-Grand was the most prestigious, every Jesuit *collège* had its notable schoolmasters, even if many of them had only a local fame. After Paris, Lyon²⁶ was outstanding, and, indeed, had the most prolifically learned Jesuit of them all: Claude Menestrier, who died in 1705, had published 144 books, including a history of Lyon, treatises on mathematics and navigation, and essays on philosophy and aesthetics. Later in the century, Père Croisset, writer of handbooks of educational practice, organized astronomy demonstrations and built an observatory, which became famous when directed by Père Laurent Béraud (the teacher of Lalande). At the time, however, Père Tolomans, the librarian and *professeur* in charge of the rhetoric class, was probably better known—for sheer omniscience. His publications included studies on Epictetus, memory training, aesthetic values in painting, the use of fireworks among the ancients, the advantages and disadvantages of coffee drinking (with emphasis on the advantages), and the history of the hyena.²⁷ These men impressed their pupils, and they and their more ordinary brethren often won their affection as well. Marmontel had nothing but praise for his teachers at the undistinguished *collège* of Mauriac—there was Père Malosse, who bent the rules to admit him to the fourth class (otherwise his father would not have allowed him to attend at all); old Père Bourges, who was struggling to finish his dictionary of poetical Latin before death came, but who put it aside in vacations to give him special tuition; and good Père Balme, praised for his zeal, not least because he threatened an impertinent boy with a floor-board.²⁸

The beating of Boufflers was a demonstration of the ethos of a closed society in which merit conferred the only distinctions. But it was impossible for an institution of the hierarchical *ancien régime* to make practice conform to egalitarian theory. Louis-le-Grand was frequented by generations of the D'Argenson, Coetloquon, Cossé-Brissac, Colbert, Lafayette, La Luzerne, Lamoignon, and La Rochefoucauld families,²⁹ and for them and their like, equality in the classroom could not be extended to the details of living. In the *pensionnat* the ordinary pupils lived fifteen to twenty to a room under a *praefectus cubiculi*, while the sons of the great were *chambristes* with private apartments under their own *praefectus* and with their personal valets and tutors. Poor students sometimes earned their keep by acting as their fags. To maintain a son as a *chambriste* was an expensive proposition. Young d'Ourville cost his father 17,543 livres, 6 sous, during his six years at the *collège*: in 1755 his board cost 450 livres, his room 132, tutor 500, valet 72, the services of a writing master for a month 9, a new wig 6, a cab fare 1 livre, 13 sous, a new chamber-pot

11 sous, and 12 livres for a consultation with the most famous physician of the day, Astruc (a writer on gynaecology who boasted that he had never had to descend to delivering a baby himself). Special arrangements for the rich prevailed at other *pensionnats*: at La Flèche in the 1730s the chevalier Antoine le Gouz was paying 1,560 livres a year for his three sons who slept together in one room with their tutor and valet.³⁰ Unfortunately, we know little about the details of the relations between *chambristes* and ordinary boarders, or about the rivalries in class between sons of the aristocracy and sons of the bourgeoisie. Certainly, there was a difference in treatment when it came to staging ballets and pastorals, for only wealthy families could afford to provide the magnificent costumes required, while for comedies and tragedies, the richer youths tended to fancy themselves as actors and to have the leisure to gratify their ambitions—with the proviso, made by some families, that they were not given roles requiring buffoonery or humble dress.³¹ Otherwise, in the day-to-day educational routines and in the public ‘exercises’, the principle of honour to merit seems to have prevailed—unlike the world outside, where aristocratic privilege determined the award of the higher offices of the State, the Church, the Law, and the armed forces. Danton (who studied at a *collège*, not a Jesuit one, but run on the same lines) is reputed to have drawn out the revolutionary implications of the contrast between life at school and life in society. ‘I studied with great nobles who lived with me on equal terms. My studies once finished, I had nothing . . . my former comrades turned their backs on me. The Revolution came: I and all those like me—we threw ourselves into it.’

The time was approaching when the Jesuits would be fighting for the survival of their schools and of their Order. France was full of their ex-pupils in influential positions: soldiers like the maréchal de Richelieu, ministers and politicians like Malesherbes, the older D'Argenson, Maupeou, Choiseul, Trudaine, men of letters like Voltaire, Marmontel, Helvétius, Le Franc de Pompignan, Diderot; there were great aristocrats, courtiers, bishops, canons, magistrates of provincial parlements, financiers, shipowners, lawyers of all kinds, tax collectors, municipal officers. From the available evidence, it seems likely that most of them respected their schoolmasters; but would they defend them? The trouble was, what the Jesuits taught in the classroom and what they stood for in the French political arena were very different things.

II

Almost a third of the Jesuits of France were in the province of Paris—there were also 180 or so overseas missionaries who were nominally attached there. The provincial was responsible for the groups of specialists in the capital who were charged with the propaganda and public relations exercises of the Order. In the annexe to Louis-le-Grand in the rue Saint-Jacques were housed the *scriptores librorum*,³² ten or fifteen of them. Among their number was the small team which had worked on Quesnel's papers and contributed to the preparation of the bull *Unigenitus*. After the bull was published, the group carried on, helping Le Tellier and the orthodox bishops to defend it—the organization came to be called, cryptically, 'la bonne intention'. However, the 'bonne intention' by no means represented the views of the rank and file of the Jesuits; nor did it include their best intellects. The ablest minds of the Order were gathered into a different circle among the *scriptores*, engaged from 1701 in editing the journal the *Mémoires de Trévoux*.³³ Originally, it was intended to be a propaganda sheet against the Protestants, but orders from Rome and the inclination of the editors made it into a sophisticated and relatively impartial digest of scientific and scholarly progress. When it began, there was some inclination to satirical combat in the literary field on the part of the authors, but the odium they incurred in 1703 as a result of their accusation of plagiarism against Boileau-Despréaux (a Jansenist sympathizer) decided them to tone down their asperities. Père Tournemine was called in to be editor-in-chief. An aristocrat with a mind of his own and wide intellectual interests, he was so far out of sympathy with the 'bonne intention' that he supported Cardinal Noailles in his designs to reconcile the Jansenists. All the Jesuits of France barring Le Tellier and three or four others, he assured Noailles in December 1712, want an understanding. But he foresaw the danger of a Jansenist resistance to extreme courses, and warned Louis XIV of the disasters which were likely to flow from a bull against Quesnel.

Under the Regency, the 'bonne intention' came to grief. From Rome in 1718 arrived orders from the general promoting Lallemand, its most prominent member, to recteur of the *collège*; the regent, enraged at this flaunting defiance of public opinion in Paris, insisted that he be replaced, and the rest of his group dispersed from the rue Saint-Jacques. From then to the early 1730s, apart from Louis Patouillet's four-volume *Supplément aux Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, Jesuit polemic dried up, and the *scriptores* concentrated on church history

and translations of the classics. Under Pères Brumoy, Castel, and Bougeant, the *Mémoires de Trévoux* carried on in its tradition of decent tolerance. The editors gave cautious praise to selected dramatic authors, Molière included, and when, in 1722, the Jansenist Louis Racine published a poem on the dangerous subject of ‘grace’, it was courteously reviewed; the worst Brumoy had to say was that grace was not a suitable subject for poetry, lacking the necessary ‘clarity’. Fontenelle's *De l'origine des fables* (1724), which alarmed many churchmen, was passed over in silence. The editors were encouraged in their reticence and impartiality by Père Tournemine, who had been transferred across to the Maison Professe as librarian; here, he turned his activities to genial controversy with unbelievers. ‘His room,’ said Bernis, ‘was full of free-thinkers (*esprits forts*), deists and materialists: he converted none of them, but he had the pleasure of passing his leisure in discussions with intelligent people.’³⁴ He continued to hope for better relations with the Jansenists, and when Fréron was imprisoned on suspicion of belonging to their cause, he wrote to the lieutenant of police interceding for him. But opinions were hardening as the threat from unbelief became more dangerous. A hint of the change to come was evident in Tournemine himself when he delivered an attack on Pierre Bayle and his influence in a sermon at Saint-Sulpice early in 1731.³⁵ His choice of subject was significant: it was over the issue of Bayle's scepticism that the rift was finally to come between the Jesuits of Trévoux and the writers of the Enlightenment.

Publications about the foreign missions of the Jesuits were not produced in the writing office of the rue Saint-Jacques, but at the missionary headquarters in the Maison Professe in the rue Saint-Antoine. Here, in the long gallery which contained the library, the ceiling was resplendent with the allegorical paintings of Melchior Ghérordine depicting the sons of Loyola evangelizing the whole world. In this centre, each of the four main mission fields—the Orient, the West Indies, South America, and Canada—had a *procureur* and an assistant to look after the interests of the various mission stations in their area.³⁶ The provincial of Paris was, in a general way, in charge of these eight representatives and their affairs, without the other provinces of France being involved and without any control of mission policy: an arrangement which was finally to prove disastrous to the Society. The main work of the French Jesuits overseas was in the national territories in the West Indies and Canada. In San Domingo, Martinique, and Guadaloupe, the white settlers were given to libertinage and hostile to religion; the secular

priests in charge of the parishes had, often enough, been under a cloud when they left their home dioceses for the mission field; the conversion of the slaves and concern for their welfare was the affair of the religious Orders, more especially the Jesuits. They were the *curés des nègres*,³⁷ learning enough of the languages of the African coast to teach the slaves the pidgin French in which they heard their confessions, defending them from cruel punishments and not infrequently ministering to runaways. In December 1762, the white planters of San Domingo issued an order curtailing these activities. 'It is notorious', they said, 'that the negroes have a marked attachment to the so-called Jesuits. These religious reciprocate, and no one can deny that the negroes are their cherished flock. This mutual affection is so strong and so public that more than once it has caused alarm among us.'³⁸ The black workers in sugar plantations were little regarded in France. As the thinkers of the Enlightenment turned their minds to the injustice of slavery, they were little inclined to give credit to obscure members of religious Orders who had been striving to alleviate its miseries in practice.

In Canada, the Jesuits pushed into the forests and along the vast waterways in advance of the soldiers and settlers, enduring relentless hardship and often perishing under unspeakable tortures inflicted by their would-be converts. The stories of their heroism were recounted in *Relations*, published in France. Louis XIV refused to listen to proposals that they should be discontinued; in 1673 his confessor wrote to Rome: 'the *Relations* . . . are sought out insistently by all those who are keenly desirous to see the progress of our colonies and the propagation of the faith.'³⁹ In the eighteenth century, these accounts were supplemented by the remarkable geographical and anthropological publications of Père Charlevoix; he had taught originally at Louis-le-Grand (where Voltaire was one of his pupils), then gone off adventuring to Canada, and ended up back in France from 1733 to 1761 as one of the editors of the *Mémoires de Trévoux*. In 1744, all Paris was reading his *Histoire et description de la Nouvelle France*, more especially the third volume, which printed his journal of his expedition to try to reach the Pacific coast. His writings and the *Relations*⁴⁰ were widely read in France and accorded an attention which was not given to the work among the slaves in the Antilles. The philosophes were fertile in gibes against missionary endeavour, but in face of the heroism of the Jesuits in the North American wilderness, the critics were reduced to silence.

Oddly enough, the missionaries who suffered so appallingly at the hands of the Red Indians were largely responsible for the myth of the

'noble savage' in the thought of the Enlightenment. Their praise had something to do with the Jesuit rejection of the Jansenist insistence on human depravity since the Fall; also, to win support for their missions, they had to present a picture of Indians with sufficient redeeming features to inspire enthusiasm for their conversion. Yet in truth, theirs was a limited praise, touches of illumination against a grim, dark background. These savages could at least reason about religion, was Père Le Jeune's point (1634)—'Your ancestors had a pow-wow to decide on your God and your ceremonies: so did ours.' Père Lafitau, 100 years later, was principally concerned to use his experiences among the Iroquois as an argument for a universal primitive revelation, while Charlevoix was conceding to 'wild beasts' only courage and the egalitarian eloquence which characterizes a warrior caste; if, in this context he spoke of the Areopagus of Athens and the Senate of Rome, it was recognizing the ancient world as a primitive, heroic society—an insight not entirely congruous with the teaching of his colleagues in the *colleges*. Since the nomadic warlike tribes could not be settled down to agriculture, it was never possible for the *Relations* to have the satisfaction of proclaiming a triumph for the Jesuit converting and civilizing mission in Canada; but in the end, they could boast of the Guarani Indians of South America organized into orderly communities around churches, under 'a more perfect government than that of the chimerical republic of Plato'. 'There is no better proof', said the journalists of the *Mémoires de Trévoux* in November 1744, 'that a government founded entirely on the maxims of the gospels and true reason is exempt from all defects.'⁴¹

This boast was a refutation of Bayle's notorious declaration that a truly Christian society would never be viable, just as the attempt to give evidence for the existence of a primitive revelation to all men affirmed the argument of universal consent to prove the existence of God, against Bayle's detection of examples of innate atheism. In the promotion of universal consent, the Jesuits' praise of the ancient civilization of China and its religious heritage was significant. It was a remarkable anticipation of the modern attitude of Christianity to other religions, and for a moment, before the papacy issued its condemnation, put the Jesuits on the verge of exerting a powerful influence on the development of religious ideas in China. But in fact, the romantic story of their mission in Peking turned to their disadvantage. Père Lecomte was censured by the Sorbonne⁴² for claiming to find the true faith hidden away in Confucian texts, while Tournemine (in 1706) and Du Halde (in 1735) were not approved

by traditionalists for abandoning the chronology of the Vulgate to fit the Chinese annals. The Jansenists, meanwhile, were bitterly opposed to the policy of the Peking mission of accepting certain aspects of Chinese religion as compatible with Christianity, and for once, the Jansenist view was identical with that of the papacy. It was unfortunate for the Jesuits that their tolerance and intelligence in their work overseas were used against them, even to the point of dimming the memories of their heroism.

In addition to accommodation for the missionary headquarters, the Maison Professe also provided an apartment for the royal confessor. The Jesuits monopolized the direction of the conscience of the kings of France from 1604 to 1764,⁴³ with the exception of six years under the Regency, when the aged historian, the abbé Claude Fleury, was in charge of the boy-king. In 1722, 82 years of age and stricken with apoplexy, Fleury asked to be relieved of his duties. The Jesuits repossessed the vacant office by one of those high-level political intrigues for which they were notorious. Père Daubenton, one of the contrivers of *Unigenitus*, was living in Madrid as confessor to the melancholic and superstitious Philip V, and was useful to Dubois in manipulating Spanish policy to suit French interests. At Daubenton's prompting, Philip V let it be known that he would welcome seeing a Jesuit succeeding to the post which Fleury had vacated, and in the interests of his foreign policy, Dubois looked round for a suitable candidate. He found the man he wanted directing the conscience of Madame, the regent's mother—Père Bertrand Claude de Lignières, 62 years of age, simple and honest. Even Saint-Simon found him harmless: 'bon homme, vieux et rien de plus'. Uncontroversial as the appointment was, thanks to the Jansenist quarrel, the court was thrown into turmoil. Archbishop Noailles would not authorize a Jesuit as a confessor, so Lignières had to be nominally transferred from the registers of the Maison Professe at Paris to those of the house at Pontoise, which brought him under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Rouen. On 29 June 1722, to make his pre-confirmation confession to Lignières, Louis XV had to go to Saint-Cyr (in the diocese of Chartres, and therefore with the permission of the bishop of Chartres); then on 14 August back to Saint-Cyr again for the confession before First Communion. With the king, of course, went a whole procession of courtiers, guards, and servants: all this to escape the jurisdiction of Noailles and his ban on the Jesuits. Since the time of Richelieu, it was clearly understood that the confessor was not entitled to advise on political matters. In his

Direction pour la conscience d'un roi, written for the duc de Bourgogne, Fénelon tried to turn the clock back; in his view, the director of conscience would insist on the king forswearing luxury and splendour and wars of pride and conquest; he would take the part of the people against the demands of the Court, and protest against excessive taxation. But the duc de Bourgogne died in 1712, and these hopes with him. Under Louis XIV the confessor had held the *feuille des bénéfices*, but this role of supervision of ecclesiastical patronage was taken away at the Regency and never restored. From 1715 onwards, the confessor was concerned only with the king's personal conduct as an individual, and under an inheritor of the Bourbon temperament, this inevitably meant a concentration on sexual conduct. It was a common opinion in France that the king, being obliged to marry for reasons of state, ought to be accommodated in his liaisons, as Louis XIV had been; Père de la Chaize had succumbed to a diplomatic illness every Eastertide to leave his royal master free to seek out a compliant confessor. But having been censured for this laxity, and smarting from Jansenist attacks on their casuistry, the French Jesuits were no longer disposed to overlook royal adulteries. 'On this point', said Bernis, 'they were Molinists before, but in our days they are Jansenists.' The change in Jesuit policy can be seen at the court of Lunéville in Lorraine, as well as at Versailles: duc Léopold had benefited from the absurd fiction of his relation with Madame de Craon being an innocent friendship; Stanislas Leczynski, father of the queen of France, succeeding in 1738, found Père Menoux adamant about Mme de Boufflers, hence his continuing unedifying comedy of alternations between the pleasures of the alcove and penitential retreats.⁴⁴ Père Lignières faced the problem when Louis XV was in his early twenties: the old Jesuit may have been the pious nonentity which was generally supposed, but he did his duty. This became obvious at Easter 1739 when the king did not receive communion, a fact which was common knowledge because he was thereby precluded from 'touching' for the 'King's evil', so the pleas of the scrofulous went unheeded. Lignières would not give absolution unless the mistresses departed, and Louis was honest enough not to resort to subterfuge. The two succeeding confessors, Sylvan Peyrusseau (1743–53) and Philippe Onuptire Desmaretz (1753–64), were equally inflexible. Louis received communion when desperately ill at Metz in 1744, but only after he had sent away the duchesse de Châteauroux and called the queen to his bedside.

Mme de Pompadour was treated as strictly as her royal lover.

When she ceased to have sexual relations with Louis, she hoped to be admitted to the sacraments again. From September 1755 to January 1756 she had long sessions with Père Sacy—she chose a Jesuit deliberately, since she did not wish to be absolved by ‘an obscure confessor’. She conformed to the rules of conduct he imposed, but he remained unyielding—only her departure from court would have satisfied him. She wrote a plaintive account of her disillusionment to be sent to the Pope.⁴⁵ Sacy's unwillingness to satisfy Pompadour's yearning for respectability won him respect among the *dévo*t party at court and in the queen's circle, but lost him friends in the king's entourage. ‘The destruction of his order in France’, said Bernis, ‘came about chiefly because of his refusal.’⁴⁶ Bernis was a churchman intriguing in politics, an intelligent trifler, a poetaster turned diplomat; but he was in the confidence of Mme de Pompadour, and able to estimate the force of her influence on Louis XV, and in the last resort a decision—desperate and dangerous, it is true—by the king might have saved the Jesuits.

The Maison Professe was also the home of other priests of the Society who fulfilled the duties of spiritual directors to the great—to the queen (who had Polish Jesuits to remind her of the language of home), other members of the royal family, and great nobles—and, more especially, their wives. Canon Le Gendre of Notre-Dame describes these confessors of the Maison Professe as ‘having little parishes composed of ladies of the higher ranks of society, who give them presents and to whose houses they repair after dinner (one night here, another night there) to make conversation and take tea, coffee or chocolate’. There was here a web of uncharted influence, with confessors acting as intermediaries for family alliances, promotions, and the bestowal of favours. A rich young man who wanted a post of farmer-general of the taxes which had just fallen vacant applied to one minister of state and was passed on to another, who sent him to a courtier who had the entrée to the queen's circle and who gave him an introduction to her Jesuit confessor; the confessor wrote to say that the queen would be pleased to interview him at half-past noon the following day, and with that royal audience, his quest for office was successfully concluded.⁴⁷

In the pastoral techniques of the eighteenth century, the confessional and pulpit were regarded as complementary. The fashionable style of preaching relied heavily on the ‘moral portrait’ with its undertones of pathos, satire, or indignation: the rich man, the choleric man, the fool, the lover of luxury, and the like were described in imaginary but typical adventures of moral success and

failure on their way to their eternal destiny. To furnish such a portrait gallery, the psychological insight deriving from the confessional was invaluable. There was, too, an assumption of a twofold ministry in which the preacher aroused the crude emotions of fear and despair, contrition and yearning, while the spiritual director refined these raw motivations into rules of conduct and precepts for the interior life. Thus, the confessors of the *Maison Professe* were also, often enough, preachers too, though there were exclusive specialists of either kind as well. From 1716 to 1729 the Jesuit preachers of Paris were silenced by Noailles' ban. When Vintimille lifted it, the 'stations' for Advent in the churches of the capital had already been allocated, but the seven or eight most distinguished ones for the coming Lent were given to Jesuits, and the Order retained them from henceforward.⁴⁸ The most prestigious sermon courses of all were the Advent and Lent series before the king. For most religious Orders—Oratorians, Theatines, Carmelites—the honour came round rarely, but of the hundred possible opportunities available in the years 1700–17 and 1729–62, the Jesuits were allotted fifty-four.⁴⁹ Over the same two periods of years, it has been calculated that there were eighty-two funerals of major *grands* of the court, and at sixty-four of these the oration was given by a Jesuit. By contrast with the evident favour at court, the Society was clearly unpopular among the intelligentsia of Paris. The annual panegyric of St Louis before the Académie Française in the chapel of the Louvre fell to them only four times between the death of Louis XIV and the suppression of their Order.

In towns where the Jesuits had a *collège*, seminary, or residence, their chapel would offer sermons to the public, and preachers would be available for the Advent and Lent courses of parish churches which chose to invite them. In the provinces, however, these preachers had a particular speciality, evangelizing missions targeted towards particular social groups, in contrast to the generalized missions to parishes offered by other religious Orders. Such specialized missions⁵⁰ might be to beggars and vagrants, with a distribution of bread after the sermon, or to domestic servants (at Aix in 1696 the prosperous classes were dismayed because the missionary urged coachmen and carriers of sedan chairs to refuse to carry their masters and mistresses to dubious places—'lieux suspects'). The Jesuits sought out the most difficult assignments; most of their missions were to the galley-slaves in the Mediterranean ports, and to the soldiers in garrisons on the frontiers at Lille, Embrun, Dole, and Gray, generally starting just before Easter, with the great

communion of the year in mind, and at a time when the campaigning season was just beginning, and those who bore muskets or toiled at oars were constrained to think of mortality. The most important target of all was the Protestants. The Jesuit seminary at Strasbourg⁵¹ was more a cover for a conversion drive against the heretics than a teaching establishment: only half the staff worked in the training of clergy; the others were evangelists and controversialists. For their use, Père Lambrussels wrote his treatise on ‘the reunion of the Protestants of Strasbourg with the Roman Church, equally necessary for their salvation as it is easy in accordance with [the Church's] principles’. At Nîmes in 1740, a mission to the Calvinists began with a procession in which the bishop's sister carried the cross accompanied by girls of noble families, and ended with six weeks of sessions by Père Rousselot answering questions of inter-church controversy; it was finally reported that a hundred Protestants had been converted.⁵²

The system of highly selective evangelism of the Jesuit missions to soldiers, galley-slaves, and Protestants was evident also in their organizations of ‘congrégations’—fraternities—centring on their chapels.⁵³ Père Jean Croisset, who was the director of the six *congrégations* dedicated to the Virgin Mary at the Maison Professe at Paris in the second half of the seventeenth century, wrote their history; they were, respectively, for ‘ecclesiastics, nobles of the robe, nobles of the sword, for merchants, for artisans and for servants’, so as to ‘instruct them all more conveniently according to their capacity and profession, and lead them in the devotional practices most suitable for their station in life’. In the eighteenth century, these fraternities were reduced to two in number, one for the upper classes, the ‘Messieurs’, and one for ‘Artisans’. This was the common practice elsewhere. At the *collège* of La Flèche were the ‘Bourgeois’ and the ‘Artisans’. At Grenoble⁵⁴ the social dividing line was placed rather differently: the ‘Messieurs’ (proper name: the ‘Congrégation de la Purification’) was for magistrates of the parlement and the *cour des comptes* and nobles, while the ‘Grands Artisans’ (properly named after the Assumption of Our Lady) included canons and other ecclesiastics, notaries and bourgeois generally, and was closed to ‘those exercising low professions’, such as police, bailiffs, butchers, tripe sellers, porters, servants, and anyone too poor to be liable to the capitation tax. In 1707, a ‘Congrégation des jeunes Artisans’ was formed to cater especially for unmarried apprentices, notaries' clerks, and younger men generally. The membership was numerous; in mid-century the Grands Artisans totalled 650. One might assume

that the Jesuits were more concerned about their ministry to the more influential classes, yet the example of their *collège* of La Trinité at Lyon⁵⁵ suggests otherwise. Here, they formed two fraternities to catechize and reform two of the most deprived and difficult trades of the city. There were the crude and muscular *crocheteurs* (porters) who every Sunday were encouraged to stand up in public and confess their misdoings of swearing, drinking, and ‘not cherishing their wives’, which they did with some relish; also, there were the *âniers*, decrepit old men employed by the market gardeners of the suburbs to follow donkeys and horses through the streets to catch the fertilizer at source. The obligations undertaken by members of a confraternity were specific and onerous. The Messieurs of the Maison Professe confessed and communicated on great feasts and monthly, they met on Sundays (September and November excepted) for sessions of two and a half hours of devotion and exhortation, with the third Sunday of the month devoted to preparation for death. The Artisans of La Flèche had to undergo three months’ instruction before admission, and have the permission of their employer and their parish priest; they were to try to attend mass daily, communicate fortnightly (though doing so at their parish church at Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and Ascension, and attending normal offices there every Sunday); they had to give alms to the poor, and promise to have separate beds for boys and girls in their family.⁵⁶

The principles of the exclusive group for specialized training applied to the life of the pupils in the *collèges*. In each *collège*, there was always a special ‘Congrégation de la Vierge’ for selected pupils called in by invitation; they had their own chapel, and attended private services on Saturday evenings and feast-days, with their *père directeur* and senior members supervising the mutual correction of faults. From thence, the way was open—perhaps to an ecclesiastical career, perhaps to join the Jesuit Order, or, even if the lay life was chosen, to move on into the local *congrégation* of the Messieurs. A prosperous curé looking back after the suppression of the Jesuits, on his time at their *collège* of Vannes, remembered with gratitude the day when he was invited to join the Congrégation de la Vierge. Only those who had been educated by the Jesuits, he reflected, can appreciate ‘how irreparable is the loss to religion and society’ caused by their departure.⁵⁷ Life in the tightly knit Jesuit communities inspired many who had experienced it to such lifelong loyalty. The poet Gresset⁵⁸ was a Jesuit to the age of 26, teaching at Louis-le-Grand and Rouen (and sent off to La Flèche because of his comic

poem 'Ver Ver'—the story of the parrot of the nuns who was taught to swear by bargees on a river trip). In 1735, as the taking of final vows became due, he asked to leave, and departed by mutual consent. He was sad at the parting:

J'ai vu des esprits vrais, des cœurs incorruptibles,
Voués à leur patrie, à leur roi, à leur Dieu,
A leurs propres maux insensibles
Prodiges de leurs jours, tendres, parfaits amis.

43 The Fall of the Jesuits

I

The Jesuit house at Rome was in a wind-swept square; the Jansenists knew the reason, confided to them by a Venetian ambassador. The wind and the Devil had been walking the streets together, and outside the Jesuit establishment the Devil stopped short. ‘Wait for me here,’ he said; ‘I have a word to say to those inside.’ He went in and never came out, so the wind for ever waits, gusting and circling, at the door where he disappeared.¹ The Jesuits never passed unheeded: they inspired affection or hatred, rarely indifference, and some of those who hated them saw in their designs the infiltration of the powers of evil into the higher councils of the Church.

Every institution has its élite and its rank and file, and in an anti-clerical age and in the midst of an ecclesiastical faction-fight, there were many hostile critics who ignored the great preachers, schoolmasters, and spiritual directors to censure mediocrity and narrow-mindedness when they could find them. The abbé Millot, leaving the Society three years before its dissolution in France, described his disillusionment. He had joined in the hope of leading a scholarly existence in the company of sophisticated intellects, and found himself in an organization where ‘everything seemed to tend to create pious enthusiasts. I saw desperadoes (*cerveaux brûlés*) and fanatics, intriguing and superstitious monks in great numbers mixed with the wise and educated.’² Perhaps the quality of recruitment had been declining since the time of Gresset: Bernis thought so, and said that the public no longer forgave the pride of the Jesuits ‘since it had become separated from talents and merit’. All the houses of the Order were in towns, so there were no rustic refuges in which to hide the lazy and incompetent, and urban living left everyone under the notice of an articulate opposition. And for the most part, the Jesuits were rootless. Except for the distinguished preachers, schoolmasters, and *scriptores*, members of the Order were frequently moved around. While the various establishments were in a network all over France, recruitment was predominantly from certain areas (in 1753–61 no less than 38 per cent came from Brittany and

Normandy).³ So the chances of the average Jesuit having local connections or building them up for himself were small. The French liked to deal with people they knew, however unsatisfactory: they liked curés to be succeeded in office by their nephews or vicaires, and to see the sons of local families taking their ease in the neighbouring collegiate church or Benedictine monastery. But most Jesuits lived at arm's length from the lay society which, in their way, they served faithfully.

Not everyone looks back with affection at his old schoolmasters. Voltaire did, but after Porée died, he changed his mind and let the tactics of the war against the Church take over. But he had also come to have a different view of education. The system which had produced a master of style and irony like himself was not what was generally required: he wanted geography, the national history, mathematics, and local affairs studied, instead of 'Latin and trivialities'. When the attack on the Jesuits was launched by the parlement, critics of the education given in the *collèges* joined in. The municipality of Lyon complained of the 'dry, arid and difficult study of two dead languages', and of philosophy, a subject 'combining obstinacy and pig-headedness with minutiae and subtleties';⁴ the parlement of Pau described its local *collège* as, of all things, neglecting religious instruction, confining it to learning by heart a few lines of Canisius, 'a miserable Latin catechism that most of them don't understand'.⁵ Some old pupils had memories of classes devoted to anti-Jansenist polemics instead of the curriculum, and of wasting time copying out Père Daniel's feeble reply to Pascal.⁶ The use of the pressures of emulation did not leave friendly memories with those who were unsuccessful, and there were accusations of favouritism, teachers having their 'mignons' and their 'court of admirers'.⁷

Municipal officers and the upper-class families of towns were ambivalent in their attitude to their local *collège*. On the one hand, they wanted a good education for their sons, and were glad to see an influx of temporary residents to boost consumer spending. On the other hand, schools, valuable like military barracks to promote the retail trades, were equally a nuisance if their inmates misbehaved. This happened at Vannes, where, in 1730, the pupils of the *collège* rioted on the main square with sabres, pistols, axes, and sticks, 'and the smaller boys having their pockets full of stones'. In 1740 a soldier was mugged, and lost his hat and sword—'I knew they were students because they spoke in Latin before beating me up'. Three years after there was a murder, for which a pupil of the school was executed.⁸ Jesuit devices for raising money aroused feuds against them. At

Montpellier and elsewhere, the inhabitants were watchful for tax evasion.⁹ At Lyon and Paris, the apothecaries faced ruin from the competition of Jesuit pharmacies.¹⁰ At Brest there was litigation over the ownership of the church of Saint-Louis, until in 1742 it was handed over to the town because the repair bill had become too high.¹¹ The *collèges* were always on the look-out to get permission to annex ecclesiastical benefices to their endowments; those they gained were often neighbouring ‘chapels’ or other sinecures which would otherwise have gone to the sons of local families—disappointed applicants were sometimes embittered for the rest of their lives.¹²

After two centuries of Jesuit plans for intellectual domination, the universities were leagued together against their ambitions. Sometimes there were attempts to obtain affiliation to an existing university and to expand influence within it; sometimes there were applications to obtain degree-giving status for a *collège*, creating, as it were, a new and exclusively Ignatian university. In 1622, the Jesuits, with their *collèges* already safely incorporated in the universities of Bourges, Reims, Caen, Bordeaux, and Poitiers, obtained royal letters patent according the privilege of conferring degrees to their *collège* of Tournon, which the parlement of Toulouse incautiously confirmed. The universities of Toulouse, Valence, and Cahors protested, and called in the University of Paris, which in turn sent circulars to all the other universities of the kingdom. Impressed by this display of opposition, the parlement prohibited the recteur of Tournon from issuing certificates of studies.¹³ In 1643, Paris itself was under siege, the *collège* de Clermont (later to be called Louis-le-Grand) petitioning for either admission to the university or the grant of independent degree-giving status.¹⁴ There was a similar crisis at Reims twenty years later.¹⁵ These applications failed, but in the declining university of Aix, the Jesuits took over the Faculty of Arts, though on condition they did not ask similar concessions at Marseille or Arles.¹⁶ In 1722, moves were afoot at Dijon and Pau to petition for the foundation of local universities, and at Dôle, to ask for the transfer there of the faculties of Besançon. Paris again convoked all the universities of the kingdom to join in protest—having discovered that the whole agitation was orchestrated by Jesuit sympathizers. But at Pau, the move succeeded, and the newly established Faculty of Arts met in the Jesuit *collège*.¹⁷ The Jansenists, of course, fanned the embers of academic apprehension. Soanen, bishop of Senez, wrote to the recteur of Paris in 1717, describing the Jesuits as the foes of the institution over which he presided, ‘enemies always

concealing themselves for political motives, yet obviously so because of the hatred they show'.¹⁸

In the Church itself, the Society of Jesus had its traditional enemies. The Dominicans cherished a long-running feud, commemorated in the Jacobin house at Paris in the mural of Aquinas dispensing water from the fountain of truth to his disciples, with a grim-faced Jesuit turning his back on them. Sometimes, the rift showed in local incidents, as at Rodez, where the Dominicans, teaching since the early fourteenth century, resented competition, and did not always restrain their pupils from showing it. In the debates on grace which wracked the seventeenth century, they gave comfort to the Jansenists, passing on to Antoine Arnauld information from their archives for use in his polemics.¹⁹ But above all, the opposition was evident in the Far East, where their missionaries sent warnings to Rome about the syncretistic dangers of compromising with the Chinese rites. In 1724, the Jesuits in Peking wrote to their general comparing the Dominicans to the woman before Solomon who was willing to sacrifice the life of the child to satisfy her envy, preferring China not to be converted to having it converted by their rivals.²⁰

The curés, and not only those persecuted as Jansenists, were another group in the Church who were suspicious and critical. They were disappointed to see some of their most distinguished penitents going off to rival confessors, and numbers of dedicated parishioners resorting to the religious fraternities established in the chapels of the *collèges* or preferring to attend the intellectual sermons there rather than the home-spun homilies in the parish church. The Jesuits accumulated wealthy benefactors, and rejoiced to use their munificence to adorn their chapels with fashionable splendour, outvying the parishes. The curés of Paris looked with envy on the well-dressed crowds resorting to the church of Saint-Louis at the Maison Professe: huge donations from the Crown and from Richelieu had built it, dome and columns on the lines of the Gesu at Rome, and royal favour was evident in the ornate decorations marking the presence of the embalmed hearts of two kings, Louis XIII's in a silver and bronze casket and Louis XIV's in the monument by Coustou. Here could be heard the best music in the capital, and a new singer at the Opéra did not consider himself properly installed until he had been summoned to entertain the congregation under the great octagonal dome in the rue Saint-Antoine.²¹

II

These were routine rivalries and envies of the kind any thrusting organization was bound to encounter in the multi-layered hierarchical society of the *ancien régime*. It was not a simple accumulation of such elements of opposition which eventually brought down the Jesuits; it was, rather, the combining of hatreds, fears, and envies into a stereotype, unjust to a degree, but easily recognized and believable, which brought against them a wave of hostile public opinion. Recent work²² on the coming of the French Revolution concentrates on the way in which 'public opinion' came to be a recognized force, dominant and regarded as justly dominant, in the latter years of the *ancien régime*. To Mme d'Epinay in 1771 and Necker in 1778, here was the driving force of action toward change and the source of the verdicts of praise or blame which constrained individuals to conform to liberal ideas and the duties of citizenship. Echeverria's study of the impassioned public debates of 1770–4, when Louis XV took his final gamble in abolishing the parlements, the so-called Maupeou revolution, suggests this is the crucial period when the sway of public opinion began. Probably, however, the change should be dated a decade earlier, when the storm of public reprobation swept down upon the Society of Jesus in France.

The Jesuits were masters of controversy, but in the propaganda warfare of the century, they were routed. They had nothing to match the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*. Sanctimoniously and sardonically it rehearsed the evils and persecutions flowing from *Unigenitus*, listed the dubious passages in Jesuit sermons, theses, publications, and conversations, and did not hesitate to combine disquisitions on divinity and canon law with anecdotes of local misdemeanours—a Jesuit father who had a fist-fight with a notary, a superior who spent his spare time serving in a wine bar. There was always, in the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, an assumption of a design against the 'truth', and this was proclaimed in 1761 in the masterpiece of Jansenist polemic, Coudrette and Le Paige's four-volume *Histoire générale de la naissance et des progrès de la C^e de Jésus en France*.²³ Behind all the learning of the two authors was a simple, deadly warning: the Jesuits, slaves of their general and obeying orders with military precision, were enlisted in a conspiracy to take over the Church and rule the world.

Up to the 1730s the *Mémoires de Trévoux*²⁴ had been a bridge providing easy communication in a friendly way with the writers of the Enlightenment. But one by one the interesting and tolerant contributors vanished from the scene. Buffier died in 1737, Tournemine

in 1739, Porée in 1741; Bougeant was exiled from Paris for publishing a comic piece on ‘animal souls’, and Brunoy for an attack on the memory of the regent. By 1745 the journal had become boring and disproportionately biased towards theological comment. It also declined in influence in a relative sense: in 1700 it had been one among fifteen similar publications in France; in 1750 it was one of seventy. Relations between the memorialists of Trévoux and the writers of the Enlightenment deteriorated. The mannered suavity and the calculated agreement to differ were replaced by routine confrontation. Bayle, whose arguments proved the necessity of toleration and disproved the conventional reasons for making religion the indispensable basis of moral conduct, had become a sort of touch-stone of allegiance to the Enlightenment. The *Mémoires de Trévoux* came out decisively against him in 1737. Even so, in 1745, the prospectus of the *Encyclopédie* was welcomed, for at that time the Jesuits hoped to be commissioned to write the articles on religion and ethics. Five years later, disappointed in this ambition, they moved into opposition, accusing the contributors of plagiarism, and when, in 1752, the *Encyclopédie* was suppressed, the disaster was ascribed to their envious machinations—so too with the second suppression in 1758. D’Alembert was converted to the idea that the Jesuits were conspiring to dominate the intellectual life of civilized Europe. By control of the *collèges* and egalitarian recruitment, they were monopolizing the best talents; their late age for final vows gave time to check on ability and dedication, then came the selection of an élite, while the less able were sent off to evangelize the countryside and find martyrdom in foreign fields. But with their war against the *Encyclopédie*, he said, they had made themselves new enemies, ‘less powerful in appearance, but more to be feared than might be thought, the *gens de lettres*’.

One of these new enemies was Voltaire.²⁵ The reasons for his break with his old schoolmasters are complex. He had an almost pathological hatred of Jansenist gloom, as represented by his brother Armand and his cousin Archembault, and of the theology of predestination—‘Je crois l’homme très libre’. As the Jansenists went down in defeat, he felt free to strike against their victorious enemies. When Porée died, his affectionate links with Louis-le-Grand were broken. The censorship of the *Encyclopédie* and hostile reviews of his own writings in the *Mémoires de Trévoux* completed his disillusionment. The editor who had published these criticisms, Père Berthier, was victimized in 1760 in an outrageous squib purporting to be a relation of his death on a coach journey; the fatal illness was caused

by evil emanations from copies of his own journal, and the Jansenist priest who hears his confession can get no sort of answer to the question ‘Do you love God?’ All is well, however, since Berthier does admit his publication is a nonsensical rag, which makes him a sort of saint, ‘the first author who has ever admitted his works are boring’. This was not just a rumbustious comic piece. In the same year Voltaire was engaged in a bitter personal attack on the Jesuits of Ornex near his château of Ferney—‘stinking animals’, he calls them. ‘The poet’, says one of his biographers, ‘had broken for ever with the Society.’²⁶

In addition to the writings of Jansenists and philosophes, a third source of insidious accumulating criticism was the mass of publications emerging from the milieu of the parlements—the remonstrances, administrative edicts, consultations of *avocats*, memoranda concerning *appels comme d’abus* and lawsuits. Eventually, litigation over debts incurred in the Antilles was to bring the Society to its final crisis, amid a barrage of adverse publicity from the opposition lawyers. As the crisis deepened, from the parlement of Brittany came the decisive manifesto which pulled together all the accusations of the age, the *compte rendu* of the *procureur général* La Chalotais. There was, said his son-in-law, ‘a competition of talent among all the *procureurs généraux* of the kingdom’, and La Chalotais shut himself up for six weeks in his study to write the definitive indictment which would win the crown of universal acclaim. Twelve thousand copies were sold immediately all over the kingdom. The complaints of the writers of the Enlightenment against monasticism, celibacy, and education to serve the Church, instead of the nation, were combined with the accusations of Coudrette, Le Paige, and the Jansenists. The Jesuits were portrayed as devoted to the search for power, in the interests of Rome and their Society, and against the interests of the monarchy, the nation, and true Christianity.

III

In the stereotype emerging from the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, the publications of the lawyers and of the writers of the Enlightenment, the Jesuits were condemned for their virtues as well as for their vices. They were selfless and dedicated, hence, it was said, their will to power was more menacing. This is the burden of the famous passage in Saint-Simon:

The Jesuits, masters of courts as confessors of all Catholic rulers, and of nearly all the public by their education of youth, by their talents and their skill; necessary to Rome to insinuate its pretensions over the temporal power of sovereigns, . . . redoubtable by their power and their riches, all employed on their designs, . . . pre-eminent by their learning of every kind and by their wide influence, well liked because of their easygoing attitude in the confessional, yet praiseworthy for the austerity of their own lives, entirely devoted to study and to defence of the Church against heretics, . . . and finally terrible by their deep and ultra-subtle designs, indifferent to all other considerations but their domination.²⁷

This alliance in the Society of Jesus between unselfish dedication and the will to power was a commonplace of the eighteenth century. A novelist in 1754 tells of their deviousness, their craft in insinuating themselves in society and in worming out secrets, yet 'they have none of the self-interest that churchmen normally show'.²⁸ So too Voltaire: 'by laborious toil and austerity of life they merited as many friends as their thirst for domination and their pride had raised up enemies against them'. 'They govern kingdoms,' he said, 'yet live in cells without a fireplace.' This was a contrast the Jesuits seem to have relished themselves. When Marmontel was their pupil, they attempted to persuade him to join their Society. He was offered nothing for himself, only the power to help his family and friends. 'All the avenues of fortune and ambition are shut against us as individuals, but they are open to all in whom we are interested.'²⁹

'Let other religious Orders surpass us in fasting . . . and physical austerities, but for those who serve the Lord in his company, it is my earnest desire that they will not yield pride of place to any in the entire renunciation of the will and of their personal judgement.' This instruction of Ignatius Loyola was embodied in the fourth vow of his Society, one added to the three of other religious, and all taken at the late age of 30 as a mature, long-pondered decision; it was a vow of absolute obedience to the Pope and, under the Pope, to the general of the Order. The Jesuits then, 'the militia of the Holy See', were automatically suspect to Gallican France. Their publications and theses were monitored by their enemies to see if they were slipping in arguments for Roman infallibility. Thus the parlement of Paris discovered that Père Hardouin's twelve-volume edition of the Councils of the Church had omitted the passages contradicting papal pretensions, and ordered the publication of a thirteenth volume including them.³⁰ (In 1725, the Royal Council countermanded this ruling.) The French Jesuits protested their patriotism. They ordered

the Gallican articles of 1682 to be taught in their seminaries, and defined their obedience as the willingness to go anywhere to fulfil any task, not as an abdication of either independence of mind or loyalty to their country. As controversy became more bitter, accusations that they served a foreign interest became more specific. In a pamphlet of 1758, for the first time in French, came the allegation that they served under the 'despotism' of their general, and he lived in Rome and was never a Frenchman. Coudrette and Le Paige, in their massive indictment of 1761, said they were all 'slaves' under their Roman master. Père Claude de Neuville, provincial of Paris, tried to reply: the general was elected, and could be deposed by the Society; he could not determine what doctrine subordinate colleagues taught, for in this they simply followed the Pope as all good Catholics had to do; and he appealed to be judged, not by extreme statements from a few reckless members, but by the decent and patriotic conduct of the vast majority of the Society.³¹

The accusation of slavery went hand in hand with the allegations of the dark will to power, as if psychological compensation for self-abnegation came from membership in an organization which would ultimately triumph over the unco-ordinated mass of free individuals. Le Paige in 1761 and the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* the year before talked of the Jesuit aim as being universal domination. The question 'Did anyone believe this?' is not one to be usefully asked; like 'the hidden hand of the CIA' today, it is an idea that a few on the left assert, more on the left do not contradict, and in which middle-of-the-road people concede there may be a grain of truth. D'Argenson certainly believed there was something in the world domination idea, and in 1755 prophesied how the Society would achieve it.³² Already in Paraguay it had private armies 60,000 strong (these were the Guarani militias formed to repulse Portuguese slave raiders); the population of the missionary villages was growing, and one day the Jesuits would control the whole of South America and its silver mines—they would then be on their way to a 'universal monarchy', as the Turks were in the seventeenth century. The broad Enlightenment stereotype of the will to power among the disciples of Loyola was, however, less concrete and therefore less refutable, something to cause a vague unease. Its essence was that the Society was engaged in a conspiracy to water down Christian doctrine to facilitate a vast missionary expansion overseas and the infiltration of the governing classes at home. This alarmed both pious Christians and militant unbelievers, who thus slipped into an unrecognized subconscious alliance, the ones concerned about the purity of the faith and the

others anxious to deny to Christians an escape route from their more irrational and rebarbative doctrines.

In the Far East, the glittering prize dominating the horizon of the Jesuit adventurers was the hope of the conversion of the ancient civilization of China.³³ Cultural differences hindered communication between them and their would-be converts, and their attempt to insinuate Christianity into the patterns of thought accepted by the Chinese intelligentsia would probably have failed; yet nothing can detract from their imaginative attempt to come to terms with another higher religion—a precursor of modern Christian tolerance. (Their attempts to work within the caste system in India involved a greater risk to Christian principles, and is harder to defend.) What chances of success they had (and given more time, their ideas would have developed and adjusted to Chinese concepts) were destroyed by the insensitive papal condemnation of the ‘Chinese rites’. Western Europe was fascinated by this strange doctrinal wrangle on which relations with a far-off ancient civilization depended. The missionaries, understandably, were reluctant to obey orders transmitted by Roman emissaries who did not know the language, but presumed to correct the Chinese emperor's personal definition of the meaning of his own country's religious ceremonies. The papacy finally brought the Jesuits to book in the brief of Innocent XIII of 1723, in which compliance with the Roman rulings was to be enforced by the banning of the taking of novices and the ending of recruitment to the Far Eastern mission field. ‘It was the forerunner’, says Pastor, ‘of the decree of suppression of the year 1773.’³⁴ It also contained orders to free the Lazarist Pedrini from prison—a picturesque detail which illustrated the scandal, for Pedrini, who had delated to Rome the continuing accord between the emperor and the Jesuit mission, was imprisoned, by orders of the Chinese court, in the Jesuit mission house. The penalties of this brief were lifted, verbally, by Benedict XIII in 1725, after assurances had been given by the general of the Society.³⁵ But the Jansenists, who had discovered the existence of the papal condemnation and published it everywhere, kept the memory of the ‘Chinese rites’ alive by issuing seven volumes of documents from 1733 to 1742, *Anecdotes sur l'état de la religion dans la Chine*. The troubles would never end, said volume 3, until the Society of Jesus was abolished. While the Jesuits were insisting on the enforcement of the bull *Unigenitus*, said the Jansenists, a bull at best marginal to the purity of Christian doctrine and at worst subversive of it, in the Far East they were refusing to obey the simplest possible direct orders of the papacy on matters in

which the uniqueness of Christianity was at stake. They had used the Roman magisterium to evict the Jansenists from the Church, but they did not accept it when its findings ran contrary to their ambition of world domination. The wits asked what compromise would next be devised: ‘The Koran for general acceptance, subject to the Pope's consent. Printed at Rome by the Jesuit Fathers’, ran a comic book-title.³⁶

To win the upper classes at home, the Jesuits were supposed to resort to alleviations of the strictness of Christian moral precepts in the confessional. The accusations, long current and brilliantly formulated by Pascal, persisted, in spite of all the Society could do to repudiate propositions of ‘relaxed morality’ which hostile propagandists found, or claimed to find, in the writings of some of their casuists, and in spite of the manifest strictness of the confessors of Louis XV. Under the Regency, Dr Dagoumet of the University of Paris lumped together the concessions to the Chinese rites with the concessions in the confessional. The Jesuits, he said, are ‘the grave apologists of pagan virtue and Chinese ceremonies, the casuists of relaxed morality, the politic theologians, the preachers of the fifth gospel which dispenses us from the great precept of the love of God, the inventors and defenders of “philosophic sin”’.³⁷ The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* kept the pot boiling with such splinters of fuel as it could find, like Père Le Moine of Auxerre in 1725 condoning the right to ‘act as a man, not as a Christian, in actions which are not properly those of the Christian man’, and the great scandal around the relations between Père Girard of Toulon and his penitent Catherine Cadière (accusations which were never proved, the magistrates of the parlement of Aix dividing equally on the issue). By definition, we cannot know what goes on in the confessional, but the indicators in the eighteenth century are that the Jesuits were no easier confessors than any others, only better informed and capable of making distinctions (as in favour of theatre-going or loans at interest) which were judiciously realistic. Even so, the popular prejudice against their casuistry remained. Like the military reformers who were lengthening the bayonet and shortening the musket, said the abbé Galiani, they lengthened the Creed and shortened the Decalogue.

‘Lengthening the Creed’ was a snide reference to *Unigenitus*. But more often the Jesuits were under censure not for tacking extras on to Christian doctrine, but for weakening its force to make it more easily acceptable. The long-continuing saga of Père Berruyer's *Histoire du peuple de Dieu* was the theological scandal of the century,

telling the sacred story as if it was a novel, and emphasizing the essential humanity of Jesus: as such, it was taken as undermining the doctrine of the Trinity. It began appearing in 1728, and was put on the Index six years later. Yet in 1753, the eight volumes of a second part appeared. The provincial of Paris declared that it was published in defiance of orders, which few believed. Seven archbishops and fifteen bishops met at the archbishop of Paris's country house at Conflans to censure the work. The Jesuits disavowed it. Even so, new editions came out, and a third part in five volumes as well. Benedict XIV, dying, condemned Berruyer's work, and Clement XIII ordered the preface of the Trinity to be said henceforward at every Sunday mass to atone for the blasphemy. In 1756, the *Lettres théologiques . . . contre le système impie et socinien des Pères Berruyer et Hardouin* of the Jansenist abbé Gaultier was posthumously published, a summary of the conspiracy theory of Jesuit theological innovation. Berruyer's superiors, said Gaultier, were secretly behind him all the time, hoping he would get away with it. They have thrown out the doctrines of predestination and grace because they are difficult, they have weakened the discipline of the confessional to win adherents; and now they wish to abolish the central mystery of Christianity 'to conciliate what the world calls "les beaux esprits", the intellectuals'. 'Deism is a fashionable religion,' he pictures the Jesuits as saying; 'the philosophes do not wish to subject their intellects to the yoke of the faith: let us therefore subject Religion to the yoke of the philosophes. We have removed the barriers which restrain the passions: let us remove those which restrain the mind.'³⁸ Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons, joined the hue and cry with a pastoral letter in two volumes in quarto, each over 500 pages in length. The Jesuits say the book needs 'corrections', he thunders: 'No! the work of Fr Berruyer sins in its totality, in its essence, in its form and by all its context.'³⁹

Gaultier's censure was, in a way, a testimonial to the perceptiveness of Jesuit apologetics: rejecting the idea of man as totally fallen and retaining the possibility of natural religion, hence making the dominant deism of the century respectable and a jumping-off point for the Christian argument. Yet, as apologists, the Jesuits had an aura of unreliability about them, giving the impression—seen also in other aspects of their thought—that they were willing to indulge in brinkmanship with basic Christian principles for partisan reasons. In the last resort, they stood for the total authority of the Pope, and in controversy with Protestants seemed willing to overthrow the pillars of Christian proofs to force their opponents back on the

rulings of Rome as the only hope of certainty. Hence, the Protestant reliance on the Scriptures and the Fathers was subjected to sceptical review—Père Hardouin's eccentric erudition was an astonishing example, for, to his own satisfaction, he proved the existing texts of the Fathers to be thirteenth-century forgeries by atheistical monks (true, he had most of the works of classical antiquity coming from the same fraudulent sources). When asked what he believed himself, he would reply that his was 'la foi du charbonnier'.⁴⁰ He took it all from the authority of the Church. Even the judicious Tournemine seems to have slipped over the boundaries of reckless scepticism. According to the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, in a mission sermon at Caen in 1730, he declared that to believe St Matthew wrote the gospel, he would have to see the original Hebrew and check his handwriting, and even then, the only assurance we have that the gospels give the actual words of Christ is the authentication given to them by Rome. In all-or-nothing arguments, the void is likely to prevail. The Jesuit policy, said an angry Protestant in 1757, was *Le Pyrrhonisme de l'Église romaine*.

IV

On 5 January 1757, a brooding enigmatic character, Damiens, emerged from the throng at Versailles and stabbed the king.⁴¹ The day was freezing, and Louis wore thick clothing. This saved his life, the knife penetrating only three inches into his side. A vast judicial enquiry began. The would-be assassin had a considerable sum of money on him, a year's wages for an artisan. It was immediately supposed that this must have been the price of his hire (it later transpired it was derived from theft). The criminal law of eighteenth-century France had a basic principle of a 'calculus of deterrence', which rose to a crescendo of complex cruelties for an attempt on the life of the king; it supposed criminals, however depraved, ignorant, or fanatical, to be rational. The thought of the Enlightenment before the Marquis de Sade lacked the concept of the gratuitous act of evil performed solely for pathological self-affirmation. So it was not easy to see Damiens as an isolated, unbalanced individual responding to deviant impulses: the search was on for the conspirators behind him.

Since the magistrates of the parlement of Paris had for long been locked in a dispute with the Crown, it was easy for their enemies to blame them, just possibly as actual conspirators, but more likely as the creators of an atmosphere of tension in which dark designs could

flourish. Only twenty-four days before the assassination attempt, the vast majority of the magistrates had resigned in protest against the royal *lit de justice* of 10 December 1756. From the judicial enquiries and Damiens' avowals before and after torture, awkward details emerged. There was a brother in Saint-Omer who was a pious Jansenist; Damiens himself had served as a lackey in the households of various magistrates, and he confessed to having heard subversive talk in the corridors of the parlement; he professed indignation at the refusal of the sacraments to the dying, for which he blamed the archbishop of Paris principally and the king in second place for not intervening.⁴² Barbier, from what he could glean of the way things were going, was inclined to think the 'parti janséniste' was in danger.

Both in self-defence and by partisanship, the Jansenist and parliamentary interest reacted with counter-insinuations. For two years Damiens had been a servant in Louis-le-Grand, time enough for the Jesuits to have indoctrinated him, perhaps even extending to conditioning him to follow a path of sinister heroism, committing a crime on behalf of his masters, then making confessions calculated to incriminate their enemies. Even so, why assassinate a monarch who had risked unpopularity and a battle with the parlements to sustain the anti-Jansenist cause and uphold *Unigenitus*? In 1741, at the time of Fleury going to war with Austria, rumour had put the Jesuits on the Habsburg side.⁴³ But however suspect they might be as an international organization, there was no reason now for them to plot a reversal of French foreign policy. So only one motive was left. The dauphin was a *dévo*t, blindly devoted to the cause of orthodoxy and the Society of Jesus: his succession to the throne would be a long-term guarantee for the future. This was the force of a story circulating about a Jesuit of Orléans saying, in the previous November, 'the king will not live long, and his successor will change a lot of things'.

The argument was thin, but it was bolstered by a revival of old accusations concerning the Jesuit belief in the legitimacy of tyrannicide. These dated back to sermons and tracts from the bitter years of the Wars of Religion, and memories of the attempt on the life of Henri IV in 1594 by Jean Chastel and his final assassination by Ravaillac in 1610. Chastel was a pupil of the Jesuits, and his crime led to the hanging of his confessor, Père Guingand, and to edicts of the parlements of Paris, Rouen, and Dijon banishing the Jesuits from the areas of their jurisdiction. After the murder of Henri IV, a storm of pamphlets blamed the Jesuits: Ravaillac had been their pawn to checkmate a king. All this was a century and a half ago, but the

stories were worth retelling as propaganda, together with rehearsing the arguments of Bellarmine, Suarez, and—above all—Mariana justifying the striking down of ungodly kings in the way Old Testament prophets had so often recommended. It was claimed that the Society of Jesus still stood by these subversive opinions of its great writers. They were all there, summarized in black and white, in the *Medulla theologiae* (1665) of the German Jesuit Hermann Bussenbaum, a text presumed to be approved by the Society as a whole, since there had been fifty editions in the fifty-five years before 1750, and a commentary on the book published by Père Lacroix in 1719 had been reprinted at Lyon in 1729. In fact, all the ‘evidence’ (finally gathered together in a great compilation for the use of the parlement of Paris in 1762) proved nothing against the Jesuits. The arguments for tyrannicide, duly hedged by an array of qualifications, were, like those for a just war, commonplaces of Christian moral theology. If exponents of the idea were to be censured, the list must include St Augustine, Aquinas, and the leading Protestant divines. The Sorbonne, too, was identified with the doctrine, having released Frenchmen from their allegiance to the mad and treacherous Henri III, which led to a Dominican friar assassinating him. Mariana, who had sensationally devoted a whole treatise to the subject, had laid down strict conditions for action against a ruler; his injustices and cruelties must be manifest; the nobles and estates of his country must give due warning before renouncing allegiance; a solemn sentence of deposition must be published; and, finally, only if all other expedients of resistance failed, could resort be made to assassination. The linking of the crimes of Chastel and Ravallac to the Society of Jesus came from pamphleteering and prejudice; the actual judicial proceedings had provided no tangible evidence. Bellarmine was an Italian, Suarez and Mariana Spaniards; a comprehensive search for French Jesuits who had defended tyrannicide yielded only two obscure names, one who lived and wrote in Rome, and neither having readership nor influence. As for contemporary Jesuits in France, they universally repudiated all writings allowing attacks on the person of the king.⁴⁴ Voltaire believed them: whatever views they had held in the past, they were not ‘parricides’ now, he declared; but the Jansenist propaganda machine was turning: the accusation was made, and was widely believed.

One of the immediate results of Damiens' attempt was a wave of undifferentiated anticlerical feeling in Paris, an expression of disgust at the long history of ecclesiastical quarrels, vaguely supposed to be a background to the crime. In February, a visiting canon of Dijon

complained: 'everyone talks of assassinations and priests and monks are those who are blamed. In the evening it is important for ecclesiastics to get indoors early, otherwise they are likely to succumb to a hail of knifings and dagger thrusts!'⁴⁵ Then suspicion began to focus more narrowly on the Jesuits. There was gossip about members of the Society overheard predicting some 'blow' would be struck, some 'new Ravallac' would arise, the dauphin would 'change things'. On 30 March, the Grand' Chambre of the parlement ordered three Jansenist pamphlets to be burned, so virulent were their accusations concerning Jesuit complicity in the assassination attempt. As it happened, a new edition (or rather, a reprint with a new frontispiece) of Bussenbaum was published in Toulouse just after Damiens struck the knife blow; the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* declared it had been part of the conspiracy, a manifesto specially printed to be released immediately after the crime was committed. The parlement of Toulouse made haste to ban Bussenbaum's treatise. In September, the provincial of Paris, the superiors of the Maison Professe, the noviciate, and Louis-le-Grand came to the parlement to make a solemn disavowal of the doctrines of regicide, asking for their statement to be published. The superior of the Jesuit house at Nantes, Père Dessus le Pont, conducting a mission at Maisdon, incautiously left his copy of Bussenbaum on the dining-room mantelpiece of his host; he was delated to the law courts, the local *présidial* put him on trial and expelled him from the area of its jurisdiction.⁴⁶ Two hundred parents withdrew their children from the *pensionnat* of Louis-le-Grand.⁴⁷ Archbishop Beaumont's pastoral letter attempting to lay the blame for 'the spirit of rebellion' on 'the anti-Christian philosophy of our age' fell on deaf ears, except that it was taken as just another example of the self-exculpatory smokescreen of the Jesuits.⁴⁸ The Jansenists had won the propaganda battle to make capital out of the assassination attempt. They had 'emerged from the storm of the Damiens affair sparkling clean', writes Dale Van Kley, 'the Bourbon-white defenders of the Crown against the dark and Jesuitically-inspired conspiracy'.⁴⁹

In December 1758, news came of an attempt on the life of the king of Portugal in the previous month. The blow was struck to avenge the honour of a family against a philandering ruler, but Carvalho, the chief minister (soon to be marquis of Pombal) used the affair as an excuse to get rid of his enemies. A cruel and reforming dictator, who as ambassador abroad had studied the writings of the Enlightenment, he remembered their anticlericalism and forgot their liberalism. Already, he had sent the Jesuit confessors away from the

royal court; now he took his opportunity to destroy the Society by accusing them of plotting the murder of the king. By the end of 1759, all its members were either in prison (in terrible conditions) or deported to the Papal States. Carvalho announced his triumph to the world in a series of pamphlets, which in December 1759 were fully reported in France by the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, which did not fail to cite the circumstantial and dishonest evidence about the assassination attempt. A year earlier, a canon of Auxerre had brought a message to Le Paige from Cardinal Bottari, a Jansenist sympathizer, in Rome: 'attack the Jesuits in any area except in that which concerns the bull *Unigenitus*', for this was an issue on which both pope and king were too deeply committed ever to change course. The news from Portugal provided just such an opportunity. It was cited again in the first number of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* for 1760, with a call for the abolition of the Society of Jesus. Coudrette and Le Paige's *Histoire générale de la naissance et des progrès de la Cie de Jésus en France* in the following year took up the cry: the Portuguese had shown the Jesuits to be regicides, and had demonstrated that uprooting them was not as difficult as people imagined: it could be done in France.

On 30 January 1760, the *juges consulaires* of the commercial court of Paris delivered a verdict in a lawsuit which involved the French Jesuits in huge financial penalties. It concerned the trading activities of Père Antoine Lavalette, who, for the benefit of the missionary effort, had built up a commercial empire based on Martinique.⁵⁰ Using Negro labour, he produced coffee, cocoa, sugar, and vinegar for the European market, and became a sort of banker for the French settlers, using their funds to buy primary products for sale in Europe and transferring the profits back to the Antilles in Portuguese gold coins, which were bought for 41 livres each in France and were exchanged at 66 livres in Martinique. Questions were raised about his activities, and he was recalled for investigation; but in 1755, he was back again in the West Indies, where he added the manufacture of *tafia* (eau-de-vie made from sugar-cane) to his other enterprises. In the same year, the collapse came: an epidemic killed many of his workers, and English privateers captured the ships on which a great consignment of his cargoes had been embarked. His agents, the firm of Gouffre and the brothers Lioncy of Marseille, went spectacularly bankrupt. Their creditors clamoured for payment. Official calculations made after the fall of the Jesuits show the vast extent of Lavalette's indebtedness: 1.62 million livres was owed in the colonies, 1.73 million to the Marseille firm, 1 million to thirty

French merchants, 0.5 million to eight Paris bankers, and smaller sums to lesser investors, including Jacques Cazotte (who later wrote *Le Diable amoureux*) and the widow Grou of Nantes. The grand total was 6.2 million.⁵¹

From the spring of 1756, lawsuits were in progress, bringing Lavalette under court orders to find the money—which he could not do. Père Sacy, the *procureur* at Paris of the Antilles mission, was proposing to try to find ways and means, but Père Claude de Neuville, the provincial of Paris, refused to allow this. Lavalette had been acting outside the strict rules of his Order; the Antilles mission would have to bear the responsibility of his debts alone. So the creditors would get nothing. But widow Grou, following up her case before the *juges consulaires* of Paris, made a breakthrough, for the court ruled that the Jesuits everywhere in the French dominions were ‘solidaires’ with Lavalette; they had to pay collectively. On 29 March, the *juges consulaires* of Marseille, with the great Gerbier, ally of the Jansenists, pleading before them as the advocate of the Lioncy brothers, made a similar ruling, declaring that the whole Order, from the general downwards, was responsible. Père de Neuville took the province of Paris, with the other Jesuit provinces following in his wake, to an appeal against these verdicts before the parlement of Paris. This was folly. The Jesuits had the right to go to appeal before the Grand Conseil, a conservative and fossilized court not likely to show rancour against them—it was a standing privilege of obtaining evocation, as it were. To go voluntarily before the hereditary enemy, the parlement, on a matter in which the argument would turn on the structure of command and responsibility in the Society, was to court disaster. Why did he do it? Bernis thought the Jesuits were ‘la dupe de leur finesse’; they thought to disarm the magistrates and demonstrate to the world the justice of their case by the brinkmanship of unworldly candour.⁵² Also, he suspected they had received promises from some of the royal ministers to mount a rescue operation if the parlement proved menacing; if so, this was ‘a fatal counsel’. Long ago, in 1716, when a similar problem (though on a financially trivial scale) had arisen, the general in Rome had ordered a French house to pay a debt incurred without permission by one of its members. A Jesuit of Lyon stranded in Rome had borrowed 500 livres from a Roman banker to get back home, and the general, Tamburini, declared that the money must be paid at once plus 12 livres expenses, ‘to conserve public confidence, without which the Company is dishonoured’.⁵³ Similar advice now came from Rome, though given without a real understanding of the

problem and without knowing the immense size of the debt. Oddly, the Jesuits were accused of being a despotically run organization (which was why the courts found they had collective responsibility for the debt of individuals), yet Lavalette had run a vast commercial venture by private initiative, and when the general wanted his French subordinates to settle the account, they did not obey him. In truth, the Jesuits never were the infantry of the Church marching into battle under Draconian orders; they were, rather, commandos and sharpshooters, dedicated to the cause and allowed to serve it by private initiative, running the risks of being disavowed. The system had worked well in the intellectual disputes of the century: commercial debts incurred to laymen were another matter.

The verdicts in favour of the creditors before the commercial jurisdictions of Paris and Marseille were based on the Jansenist allegations of the despotic chain of command in the Society of Jesus, and the evidence for the argument came from Le Paige's researches, communicated to the litigants by his friend, the Jansenist lawyer Charlemagne Lalourcé. Lalourcé now drew up an immense *Mémoire à consulter* on behalf of Lioncy, Gouffre, and their creditors, Le Paige passing on to him the pages of his great study of the rise of the Jesuits immediately they came off the printing-press, for adaptation and inclusion. The lawsuit came before the Grand' Chambre on 3 March 1761, and Lalourcé's *Mémoire*, 500 pages long, was published at the end of April.⁵⁴ The galleries of the court were packed with spectators booing the Jesuits and cheering their opponents. The lawyers of the Society, objecting to these interruptions and alleging the complexity of the case, wanted a trial in private by the presentation of written submissions; Gerbier's eloquence defeated them, making deadly use of an observation in the Jesuit *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* declaring the way of procedure *in camera* to be one favoured by biased judges. The verdict, given on 8 May, condemned the Society to pay 1.5 million to Gouffre and Lioncy, but it exempted the property of *collèges* and other residences from liability; thus, the only way the creditors could collect their money was from the vast capital sums which the Society was supposed to hold in secret, and which, in fact, did not exist. Even so, the verdict was greeted with enthusiasm in Paris; strangers embraced in the streets as if the country had won some great victory, said the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*.

V

Lalourcé's 500 pages had been a comprehensive attack on the existence of the Society of Jesus in France, rather than an exposition of the law on the privileges of religious orders and commercial debts; some of his points, like the demonstration that the Order had never been officially recognized in France, went some way to undermining his clients' right to claim for their debts, and others concerning dubious ethical teaching and political intrigue were not relevant. He wanted the Jesuits made the subject of a judicial enquiry more than to win a financial award against them. On 17 April, while the lawsuit before the Grand' Chambre was still in progress, at an assembly of all the chambers of the parlement for routine business, the abbé Chauvelin rose in the Jansenist interest, reading from a long manuscript in which his own brand of aggressive eloquence was nicely blended with learned arguments drafted for him by Coudrette and Le Paige. The Society of Jesus, he declared, was run by a foreign general who had absolute power over all its members. The French Crown and the Gallican bishops had no control, and even the Pope appeared to be powerless to restrain the institution which was nominally at his service. The general could send his people on secret missions, put them in lay dress, and disavow them if he wished to do so. There was evidence that a conspiracy was afoot to infiltrate and control lay society, and no one could be sure whether the man he was talking to, whether cleric or magistrate, was not a covert Jesuit agent. With a catch in his voice, the orator referred to Damiens' attempt, not exactly calling the Jesuits regicides, but implying that circumstances had been suspicious and their loyalty was suspect. So, at the very least, he argued, the parlement ought to make the Society hand over its constitutional regulations, up to now kept secret, for inspection. In a surge of indignation and almost unanimously, the assembled chambers voted to do so. On the very next day, the provincial of Paris sent the *Constitutions* (in their 1757 Prague edition) to the registry of the parlement.

Now was the time for the king to come to the rescue. But the court of Versailles, hesitating before a brutal confrontation, resorted to an ingenious trick which momentarily scored off the magistrates, but finally failed to hinder their investigation. On 30 May a *lettre de cachet* ordered the parlement to hand over the *Constitutions*, since the enquiry was to be taken over by the Royal Council. The magistrates, dismayed, spent the day debating what to do about this reasonable order which, nevertheless, was tantamount to an

evocation. Then, in the evening, the Jansenist Clément de Feuillet produced an identical copy of the Jesuit rule-book which had turned up mysteriously on his desk. Adrien Le Paige had not spent a lifetime of research in the Jansenist cause to be short of basic documentation in a crisis. The king was given the copy he had demanded, and the parliamentary investigation carried on as planned.

Procedure now required a report to the assembled chamber by the *gens du roi*, the king's representatives in the parlement, who traditionally tried to play a mediating role between Versailles and their colleagues. Their report, drafted by the *avocat général* Omer Joly de Fleury and delivered by him on 8 July, was a masterpiece of statesmanship and tolerance which broke through the frightening stereotype of conspiracy presented in the allegations of Coudrette, Le Paige, and Chauvelin. It used their facts, but drew different inferences. Here was a Society which had served the Church well in theological controversy, had given many examples of edifying conduct, and had enriched French literature with its writings. But there were papal bulls giving it independence of royal and episcopal control and erecting a structure of absolute authority which some future general might use against the interests of civil society and the French monarchy. So Joly de Fleury proposed a reform on Gallican lines. Like other religious Orders, the Jesuits would be subjected to the jurisdiction of the bishops and the Crown; they would be rendered independent of their general in Rome, each province electing its own superior and each house exercising control over its own property. Had this moderate report been accepted, the great Jansenist design would have foundered. But Chauvelin, once more fortified by a manuscript prepared by Le Paige and others, saved the day. In another powerful speech, he switched the line of attack: the Jesuits were watering down Christian doctrine, relaxing Christian moral values, and teaching the legitimacy of regicide. Not only were they conspiring to control lay society, as his earlier speech had declared, they were also corrupting Christianity itself. The parlement, instead of acting on Joly de Fleury's proposals, referred them, together with Chauvelin's denunciations, to a powerful committee containing representatives of various shades of opinion.

So far, the Jesuits had received no help from Versailles. The dauphin and the *dévots*, their supporters, were counterbalanced by Choiseul—sceptical and anticlerical, an ally of Pompadour and the philosophes, preoccupied with foreign policy and conscious that action against the Society of Jesus would further good relations with Spain, he had been in conspiratorial liaison with Jansenists, giving

devious encouragement to their designs.⁵⁵ However, Louis XV now decided to try to mount a rescue operation, calling together eight of his advisers for the purpose; there were three drawn from the parliamentary milieu, Molé and Maupeou, *premiers présidents*, and the abbé Terray, a *conseiller-clerc*; the episcopate had a single representative, the bishop of Orléans; there were two legal experts of the Council, Omer Joly de Fleury and his brother, and two ministers of the Crown, Saint-Florentin, sycophantically co-operative, and Choiseul, saturnine and aloof. They devised a plan for a royal declaration recognizing the Jesuits as a religious and educational Order; parlement would be asked to register this and, if necessary, be forced to do so by a *lit de justice*. As a lawyer, Joly de Fleury was aware of the technical validity of the Jansenist demonstration that the usual procedures for authorizing the existence of a religious and teaching Order in France had never been completed, and he proposed to get rid of this objection before feeling ran any higher. This could plausibly be put forward as the correction of an ancient oversight, and once registration was safely completed, the correction could be interpreted as having involved a measure of approval. This crafty proposal was lost when Louis XV precipitately gave way to one of his fits of absolutist brusqueness. He had sent for the Jesuit constitutional regulations to be examined by his Council, and this was what was going to be done, and nothing else. Without reference to the *gens du roi* and his cautious advisers, he produced the edict of 2 August: the Jesuits were to send full documentation concerning their houses in France to the clerks of the Royal Council, and the parlement was banned from making any ruling on the Society for a year.

On 5 August the key Jansenists among the magistrates—Chauvelin, Clément de Feuillet, Lambert, Robert de Saint-Vincent, and Laverdy—met in secret, and planned their riposte to the king's order. On the following day, Laverdy delivered a tremendous oration to the assembled chambers. The Society of Jesus had never been accepted in France with true legal formalities. It was a 'vicious' organization which taught 'parricidal doctrines'. It could not possibly be reformed. Therefore, let the parlement pursue an *appel comme d'abus* against the papal bulls which gave the Society its exemptions, against its constitutional regulations and the vows which conferred despotic power on the general. Let there be no more accepting of novices, no more taking of vows, and let all the *collèges* and other residences be closed. The proposal in its main lines was passed enthusiastically by 130 to 13 votes. Dates were fixed for the closures: *collèges* in towns where there were alternative schools

would be shut on 1 October 1761, and the others on 1 April 1762. This news was greeted with popular enthusiasm in Paris, and copies of the parlement's decision were bought up immediately they came off the printing-press.

When an *appel comme d'abus* was lodged, the immediate action prescribed by the parlement was provisional, holding the ring until the case was fully heard. So the action of the magistrates on 6 August, drastic though it was, still constituted indirect, rather than confrontational, disobedience to the Crown. On 29 August, Louis ordered this provisional action to be delayed for a year. The parlement registered the king's letters patent with reservations: the closures would be withheld only until 1 April 1762, no longer, and the suspension of the acceptance of novices would still take immediate effect.

April 1762 was only seven months away: now or never, the friends of the Jesuits had to intervene. The Assembly of Clergy,⁵⁶ meeting in November, gave them a testimonial, forty-five bishops signing a commendation of their piety, industry, and austerity. Six bishops made a minority report saying they ought to be brought under episcopal authority, and one of the six, Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons, declared in favour of outright suppression. The Jansenists in parlement set about a reply to the Assembly of Clergy's commendations, putting together a substantial collection of Jesuit writings concerning regicide, relaxed morality, and Molinist theology; this *Extraits des assertions* was published in the following spring. At Court, the dauphin and Chancellor Lamoignon, pious and orthodox, were in continual secret communication to find a way to steel Louis XV to resistance. But the king did not dare to resort to authoritarian measures. Four years of disastrous war had made him unpopular. France was abandoned by her Russian ally, her fleet defeated, her colonies lost. The parlements were denouncing the demands for extraordinary war taxation. Such was popular feeling that they might have been able to transform their right of remonstrance against royal edicts into one of necessary consent to taxation. Any attempt to assert royal absolutism now might lead to its permanent limitation. On 10 May 1760, the parlement of Normandy had lamented the contempt into which the liberties of Frenchmen had fallen, now that the Estates General had ceased to exist. "The ancient and venerable formalities which conserve the well-being of the State and the legitimate liberty of its members have been evaded and scorned. Sire, give us back our precious liberty . . . It is of the essence of a law that it is accepted . . . and the right to accept is the right of the nation . . .

This right remains.⁵⁷ Here was a confrontation the Crown could not win. Louis had exiled the leading magistrates of Besançon because of their opposition to his fiscal policies; in the autumn of 1761 he had to capitulate ingloriously and recall them. Another mass resignation or strike by the parlement of Paris, as in 1751, 1753, or 1756, might endanger the very throne. There was only one way to try to influence events. The royal ministers had to organize a reform of the Society of Jesus sufficiently radical to detach the more moderate of the magistrates from their Jansenist leaders.

To get such a reform under way, three proposals were put to Ricci, the general of the Jesuits.⁵⁸ First, he was asked to authorize the acceptance of the Gallican maxims of 1682. Although the French seminaries of the Society had, nominally at least, been teaching these for a long while, and though the Parisian houses signed an enthusiastic declaration of their acceptance, on 19 December 1761, Ricci refused. Rome had condemned the maxims long ago, so how could he be seen to do otherwise? Second, a form of words was proposed by which the general could lead the way in rejecting the doctrines of regicide. To the despair of the royal negotiators, Ricci rejected it. It was not that he approved of the assassination of kings: he was not prepared to be pushed into defining moral theology on the run, accepting simplistic and tendacious phrases put together by others. Having failed thus far, the Council at Versailles, by thirteen votes against the dauphin and two others, now tried to get agreement in Rome to the appointment of a French vicar-general for the five provinces of France. Other states would obviously demand similar concessions, so the proposal really involved decentralizing the Society into national groups. 'Sint ut sunt aut non sint,' said the Pope, though the words have also been ascribed to Ricci, whose letter of rejection was despatched on 28 January 1762. It was one thing for Rome to keep silent when the French Jesuits made clear their patriotism and loyalty to the Crown: it was another to approve of their actions explicitly. Now, disastrously, explicit questions had been asked, and explicit refusals given. There was no place for the Society of Jesus in France if the Gallican liberties were to be taken literally.

On 8 March 1762, a royal edict was published to reform, regulate, and preserve the Jesuit houses in France. They were put under the authority of the bishops, and forbidden to contravene the rights of universities, chapters, and curés. Each of their establishments was to have independent control of its own property. The Gallican articles of 1682 were to be defended publicly by the members of the Society

annually in every area in the presence of leading citizens. As for the power of the general, he was required, within six months, to devolve his authority upon the five provincial superiors of France, and the taking of novices was suspended until he did so. Two years previously, the edict might have served as a basis for pacification, provided no theoretical questions of principle were asked; but now, Rome had turned down the main provisions beforehand, and the parlement of Paris refused to register. What effect the edict had was counter-productive. Once it was communicated to the provincial parlements, they were pushed willy-nilly into the great debate; whether they wanted to or not, they now had to make up their minds which side they were on.

VI

If some provincial parlements needed an excuse to take up the war against the Society of Jesus, others were already moving to the attack; indeed, the decisive blow which brought down the whole Order in France had already been struck by the parlement of Normandy on 12 February. Long ago, in 1594, the magistrates of Rouen had hastened to join those of Paris in expelling the Jesuits from their area of jurisdiction, and this tradition of hostility carried on. They were conscious of obligations of solidarity with other sovereign courts, for the *union des classes*, much talked of by theorists, had become so much more necessary since the threat of 1756 to replace the parlement of Paris with the Grand' Chambre. Rouen had already taken the lead in citing the liberties of Frenchmen against the government's war taxation.⁵⁹ Now, a small group of Jansenist and Gallican lawyers led by Thomas du Fossé was determined to thwart the efforts for religious peace being made by their *premier président* Miromesnil; to this end, they kept in touch with Le Paige in Paris, and received his advice on tactics and technicalities. Miromesnil had persuaded the government to withhold from his parlement the declaration of 2 August 1761 reserving the affair of the Jesuit *Constitutions* to the Royal Council. He had judged, probably rightly, that this reservation would be taken as a provocation. As it turned out, the absence of a restraint which applied elsewhere and which might be suddenly imposed turned out to be an encouragement to strike quickly. With the authority of the Crown manifestly crumbling, the idea of pushing ahead, for once beating Paris in the advancement of the cause of liberty, was attractive. On 12 February

1762, an *arrêt* ordered the closure of all the Jesuit houses in Normandy by 1 July; the vows of their inmates were declared null, and those who wished to undertake any ecclesiastical office would have to swear an oath to the king and the Gallican maxims, and repudiate their old allegiance.

The parlement of Brittany,⁶⁰ spurred on by a Jansenist enthusiast, Charette de la Gâcherie, had been on the move since August 1761, and by December, La Chalotais, the *procureur général*, was reading a vast *compte rendu* to a general assembly—a task which lasted three weeks. This document was the masterpiece of denigration which was to become famous all over the country. Action on the lines of Rouen, only more gradual, followed. In April, Jesuit property was sequestered. On 27 May, after hearing La Chalotais read another report, this time on the setting up of a new system of national education, the parlement fixed 2 August as the date for the closure of schools and reserved to itself the decisions about new teachers and a new curriculum. When this decisive *arrêt* was passed, only thirty-three of the hundred magistrates were present. Similarly, only a quarter of the whole number had attended the December assembly to hear La Chalotais read his indictment. The limited numbers are significant. The movement of opinion and of circumstances had made the doom of the Jesuits seem inevitable, so the majority went along with those who were leading the attack against them. The same phenomenon was seen when the estates of the province met at Rennes in the autumn. The Society was more popular in Brittany than in the rest of France, and practically all the Breton nobility had been educated in the *collèges* of Rennes, Vannes, and Quimper, yet only half of them were sympathetic to their old schoolmasters; the other half were with the solidly hostile Tiers État.

Despite the royal edict of 26 March, the action prescribed by the parlement of Paris rolled on. Jesuit residences within its vast area were closed in April, and on 6 August a further *arrêt*, on the lines of Rouen, ended all activities of the Society. Canon Le Gouz of Dijon, still in Paris, attended the last service at the church of the noviciate. There was a crowd of courtiers wearing the cordon bleu ‘and dukes and duchesses without end’. They burst into tears and groans when the preacher announced that henceforward his pulpit would be silent and the altars deserted.⁶¹ Bordeaux followed the lead of Rouen and Paris on 26 May, though it was evident, as in Brittany, that the magistrates were following the trend of the times and aggressive leadership, rather than proceeding with great conviction. In the town, there were the Collège de la Madeleine (where most of the

sons of parliamentary families were educated), a Maison Professe, and a noviciate, all enjoying popular esteem. The vote of 26 May was put through by only twenty-three to eighteen.⁶² At Metz, there was action stronger in words than in immediate practical effect, for some *collèges* were allowed to carry on teaching. The *conseil souverain* of Perpignan closed down the Society in Roussillon on 12 June, but only after the Jansenist party had got a majority by procedural manœuvres excluding known supporters of the Jesuits from voting.

At Aix, the mid-century quarrel over the refusal of the sacraments had left a legacy of bitterness. Even before it, high society was sharply divided by the education of the sons of nobles and magistrates in different schools according to the religious allegiance of their families: some in the Jesuit *collège* and some in the *collège* of the Doctrinaires. There was also a feud between the parlement and the *cour des comptes* of Aix. In 1762, two of the activists of the financial court intervened on the Jesuit side, publishing an attack on the sovereign court's 'republican maxims'.⁶³ As usual in the parliamentary discussions which were taking place all over France, the Jansenist cause had a committed leader, Ripert de Moncler. But for once, the Jesuits had a charismatic figure to set against him. The président d'Eguilles,⁶⁴ a marquis of an old noble family, had served in the navy, then ruined himself financially by trying to build a theatre at Marseille. He then turned soldier and fought with the Jacobites in the 1745 rebellion, being taken prisoner at Culloden. On his return to France, his father bought him the office of *président à mortier* in the parlement, and he settled down by marrying a girl he had met in England, Catherine Wannop of Stanhope. In the assemblies of magistrates he declaimed against following the lead of Paris as being a betrayal of allegiance to the Crown. 'There is no king! There are only rebels. Nothing is left but to burn one's magisterial robes!' (A voice urged him not to do so until he had paid for them.) By forceful leadership he created a strong party: at one time he had twenty-six out of fifty-five voting. The majority at Aix fought against him by procedures which were a travesty of justice. The mass of evidence which was in circulation was hardly considered; the local Jesuits were not allowed to make representations; and three magistrates with Jesuit connections were excluded from voting. On 7 October, d'Eguilles and a deputation of twelve of his colleagues went to Versailles to petition the king. In vain. On 18 January 1763, the provisional closure of the Jesuit houses by *appel comme d'abus* was made permanent by a definitive *arrêt*.

Louis XV had not listened to the complaints of d'Eguilles' delegation;

indeed, on 23 December, he had gone so far as to send a message to Aix saying he was satisfied with the conduct of his parlement. This, said Le Paige in a letter of early April 1763, was ‘a bolt of lightning for the Jesuits, who finally perceived that the government desired their destruction’.⁶⁵ Louis was acting against his will, ‘for the peace of my realm’, as he said later. Nine months earlier he had not realized that he had lost control of events, for on 4 April 1762 he was trying to reserve to himself the arrangements to replace the Jesuits in the schools from which they would be expelled. Perhaps he hoped the Society would manage to survive in certain provinces because of the good will or inaction of a few of the parlements. But whatever he thought of what was happening, the king had to take some action to be fair to those who were suffering from the crumbling away of the Society: creditors, anxious parents of schoolboys, and Jesuits ousted from their refuges into an unwelcoming world. So royal regulations of February 1763 set up committees in the various towns to organize education in the empty *collèges*; procedures were laid down for the sale of property to meet debts; and small pensions were awarded to ex-Jesuits who had taken their vows and were over the age of 33.

At the time of these rulings, the Society of Jesus was ended in the jurisdictional areas of Paris, Normandy, Brittany, Bordeaux, Perpignan, Metz, and Aix—three-quarters of France. In the course of 1763, suppressions were ordered in four more jurisdictions: Toulouse (February), Pau (April), Dijon (July), Dauphiné (August). In all cases, there was opposition and signs of reluctance. In the parlement of Toulouse, the octogenarian *conseiller* Bojât and the *président* Daquin (‘correspondent general of all the parlements of the kingdom’) led the attack against the delaying tactics of *premier président* François de Bastard. At Pau, a young barrister, Faget, nephew of a Jesuit, rallied support for his uncle's cause. At Dijon, the magistrates went along with the tide by thirty-eight to ten votes; the majority would have been less, had they not been in dispute with their provincial estates and needed the help of the parlement of Paris. In Dauphiné,⁶⁶ *président* Bérulle, a collateral descendant of the founder of the Oratory, belatedly succeeded in his campaign for suppression, but the final *arrêt* was noteworthy for its encouragement to ex-Jesuits to seek ecclesiastical office by imposing on them an anodyne oath which was known to be acceptable.

Three parlements took no action: Besançon, Douai, and the *conseil souverain* of Colmar. Their jurisdiction was in the frontier provinces of Franche Comté, Flanders, and Alsace, already recognized as more

religiously devout than metropolitan France, and long to remain so. At Besançon, where feeling ran high against the Crown because of the *lettres de cachet* which had exiled the leaders of the resistance to war taxation, *conseiller* Petitcuénot led the Jansenist–Gallican attack. He was in touch with other parlements, and proposed to use the device which had worked elsewhere, the exclusion from voting of those with Jesuit connections. He was outwitted by the leaders of the opposing party, who heartily endorsed his scheme; an investigation proved that forty-four magistrates were disqualified, so the necessary quorum of eight to deliver a verdict was lacking, and the business lapsed. At Douai, only one magistrate wanted action, at Colmar none at all—the affair was never raised. Meanwhile, some of the bellicose parlements, ungenerous in their triumph, made regulations banning ex-Jesuits from their area unless they took severely Gallican oaths (Aix in January 1764, Paris and Rouen in March, Toulouse and Pau in April). In the interest of order, uniformity, and fairness towards individuals, the king intervened in an edict of November 1764. The Society of Jesus was proscribed in France, but its former members could live where they liked without taking oaths, though they were to be under the spiritual authority of the diocesan bishops.

VII

By contrast with the imprisonment and forcible expatriation which was the fate of the Jesuits of Portugal and, after the suppression of 1767, of Spain, those of France were treated, if not with generosity, at least with decency. Protected by Louis XV and, later, by Louis XVI against new oppressive measures proposed by the parlements, and guaranteed small subsistence pensions, many of them stayed in the country. In 1790, 515 were still on the official pension list. Most had a frugal existence, though the confessors of the royal family were sent off with generous annual allowances thirty times the standard rate, and others belonged to wealthy families which saw to their comfort. Glimpses of how they found a new niche in society are seen in the chronicles of the succeeding years. Some older men went straight into retirement: a noble to the family château in Brittany, the recteur of the *collège* of Aix to Lyon, where he published works on spirituality. Schoolmasters tended to stay in the place where they had taught: one became *professeur* of rhetoric in the new *collège* at Dijon, and finished up a bishop in the Constitutional Church of the

Revolution; a mathematician of Toulouse kept up his subject, and published a work on logarithms there. Younger men found a vocation in the secular priesthood—a vicar-general in the diocese of Lyon and another at Angoulême, a curé in a parish near the family home at Saint-Malo, a vicaire in his native Lorraine. Two became famous preachers, one of them, the abbé Beauregard, brilliantly delivering the last Lenten course before Louis XVI at Versailles in 1789. A few went to Paris and lived by their pens: the dictionaries and encyclopaedias compiled by ‘the abbé Fontenoy’ were, in fact, by Père Bonfous; Cerutti, who was publishing prize essays and a defence of the Society in the early 1760s, became a journalist and, finally, a revolutionary enthusiast in Mirabeau's circle; Barruel, after ten years' exile in Bohemia, came back, and during the Revolution, was the leading propagandist in defence of the Church. The librarian of Louis-le-Grand carried on his learned studies, and was elected to the Académie des Inscriptions in 1783. A few enjoyed the favour of the great. Louis Philpon de la Madeleine became the director of the financial affairs of the comte d'Artois, and Berthier, editor of the *Mémoires de Trévoux*, was invited to Court as an assistant tutor to the future Louis XVI. Old Père Adam, formerly *professeur* of rhetoric at Dijon, went to Ferney as Voltaire's research assistant (‘ce n'est pas le premier homme du monde’, laughed the great author, though he could rarely defeat him at chess, all the same). These, and many others, form a gallery of remarkable talents. No wonder that, in the end, élitist as he was, Voltaire wanted to keep the Society on in France, though under Gallican control: ‘il faut les soutenir et les contenir’.

Other Jesuits went abroad, perhaps called by the Society to missionary work overseas, or responding to some special invitation, as Charles le Chapelain went to Vienna to be a court preacher to the empress Maria Theresa. From the province of Lyon, large numbers went to the nearby papal enclave of Avignon; others are later found in Rome, Turin, Milan, Fribourg, Poland, Malta, Greece, Syria, Persia, and South America. When, in 1773, the Society of Jesus was suppressed altogether, some of the exiles had to move yet further afield.

Committees composed of representatives of the bishop, magistrates, and municipal officers in the various towns met to devise new educational arrangements in the now empty *collèges*.⁶⁷ (The future novelist, Sébastien Mercier, earned quite a large salary for a young man as a fill-in teacher at Bordeaux in the interregnum.) Clergy of various kinds were the teachers of the new order; the Pères de la

Doctrine Chrétienne at Bordeaux, the Oratorians at Lyon, secular priests at Vannes. La Chalotais' dream of a lay and patriotic education emancipated from the grip of celibate churchmen could not yet be realized. The parlement of Grenoble represented conservative opinion generally when it imposed strict religious teaching at the newly organized *collège* in the city. A union of creditors was set up to lobby for the payment of debts. In addition to the victims of Lavalette's bankruptcy, there were the local butchers, bakers, and other tradesmen (owed 350,000 livres), those who had loaned money by purchasing annuities (2.5 million) and holders of promissory notes (0.25 million). They were not allowed to sell up property devoted to educational purposes, but they got the proceeds from the rest—a complex liquidation which, surprisingly, was fairly and efficiently, though slowly, carried through.⁶⁸ The whole business of pensioning off ecclesiastics, selling ecclesiastical property, sorting out benefices attached to various institutions, arranging for the custody of church furnishings and relics, providing for the care of funereal monuments, collecting the books of libraries, settling the future of funds allocated to paying for foundation masses or charitable works, and all the multitude of accompanying technical and legal formalities was a sort of rehearsal for the action soon to be taken by a royal commission looking into all the religious houses of the kingdom, which in its turn was a rehearsal for the massive suppressions and confiscations of the Revolution.

In 1766, D'Alembert published a long essay *Sur la destruction des Jésuites en France*, ascribing the ending of the Society to the beneficent influence of 'philosophy'—the thought of the Enlightenment—and hailing it as the first step towards the abolition of monasticism everywhere. The Jansenists he relegated to a lower category of civilization than their polished, but dangerous, opponents; he describes them as intolerant, supporters of the superstition and pious uselessness which characterizes all religions, and enemies of the Jesuits solely because of an obscure and fanatical quarrel over theology. The *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* bristled with indignation at this attempt to denigrate the cause of sound religion and to steal the credit for steering the parlements to their signal victory. Opinions may differ as to which side in this quarrel did most to overturn the Society of Jesus in France, but there can be no doubt about which side stood to gain most from it. D'Alembert was fond of likening the Jansenists to the 'pandours' and 'cossacks', the guerrilla horsemen of East European wars; and if the irregular cavalry of the Church turned to charge the disciplined ranks of the ecclesiastical infantry,

the philosophes could rejoice. Soon, he said in 1761, there will only be the 'pandours' left to challenge the writers of the Enlightenment.⁶⁹ And once the Jansenists got rid of the Jesuits, they lost their own importance, their very relevance even, on the political and religious scene. 'By expelling the Jesuits from France,' writes Dale Van Kley, 'they defined themselves out of existence.' As for the propaganda and caballing by which the victory had been won, like the propaganda and caballing which produced the bull *Unigenitus* and enforced it, they brought little gain, but great dishonour, to the cause of religion.

This page intentionally left blank

VI The Religious Minorities and the Issue of Toleration

This page intentionally left blank

44 The Huguenots: The Great Persecution

I

There was a tendency in the later seventeenth century to exaggerate the number of Protestants in France, both by the clergy and officials on the one side and by the dissenters themselves on the other. The over-assessment was maintained retrospectively, whether to justify the cruelties or to inflate the number of sufferers. A government 'census' of 1679 (in fact, a collection of estimates, mainly from the clergy) came up with a figure of 1,700,000 of communion age, corresponding with the archbishop of Paris's figure in 1690 of 2,000,000 souls; the same figure was given by the Protestant publicist Jurieu in 1682, while the reckoning of the pastors in 1685 was even higher. Boasting of his deeds to Rome in 1686, Louis XIV, with some reason to exaggerate, nevertheless put the number of those 'infected' at only 900,000 or so. The best modern estimates concur with this—perhaps a million, just short of 5 per cent of the total population, a number too big to be ignored but not enough to carry consequence in the councils of an overbearing ruler.¹

The Reformed religion was strong in Dauphiné and the Cévennes in the south-east and in Saintonge and Poitou in the west, in some villages constituting a majority. Montauban was a remarkable example of a Huguenot city, about 10,000 Calvinists in a total population of 16,000. This was a contrast with the much more populous Lyon, where there were only 1,650 Protestants and these mostly not natives, but coming from Switzerland, Scotland, and Germany.² In the north and centre of France, the dissidents were thinly spread: at Amiens and Tours they were 1,000 strong, at Rouen 3,000, at Paris only 900. There was a cluster of Calvinists in upper Normandy in the Pays de Caux and towns on its fringes, Havre, Dieppe, and Bolbec.³ Article VII of the edict of Nantes allowed Protestant seigneurs to build chapels on their lands for their co-religionaries; thus a rural island of dissent might form, as in the diocese of Autun, where fifty households were established on the

lands of the Gravier family, forming a tenth of the population of the estate.⁴ Even in provinces in which the dissidents were supposed to be rampant, the statistics are comparatively modest. The diocese of La Rochelle was said to be 'infested' with them: in fact, they totalled 22,000–25,000, only 9 per cent of the population; since they dominated the maritime commerce of the area, they appeared disproportionately important.⁵ In the diocese of Grenoble, the 4,000 Protestants were concentrated in nine parishes, leagued together, and in the episcopal city, where, although they were only 700 out of 20,000 citizens, they included seven nobles, six magistrates, 24 *avocats*, four notaries, nine doctors and apothecaries, they were not numerous, but very much in evidence.⁶ There were little places in Dauphiné with a Calvinist majority such as Combovin, Loriol, and, especially, Dieulefit, where four out of five belonged to the Reform. Here, under the protection of the local seigneur, they prospered in the trades of clothing, dyeing, and leather working. They aroused envy, being described as 'more insolent and more seditious than in any other place in the province'.⁷ A minority is safer if spread evenly and anonymously, with no focal points of dominance to set the tone for general hostility.

As with any religious group, most Protestants were ordinary people, though as a rule more industrious and better off than their Catholic neighbours. In the past, their leaders had been aristocrats, great or small, acting as patrons and protectors. But the world had changed; the royal intendants ruled in the provinces, and the king was the fountain of office in Church and State by which noble families survived and prospered. They conformed to receive the bounty of Versailles and to join the mainstream of national life, though some minor nobles, especially in Burgundy, remained true to their old religious allegiance. The seventeenth century saw the leadership of the Reform fall to the bourgeoisie of business and commerce.⁸ These were officials concerned with tax gathering, owners of the silk factories of Languedoc and the cloth mills of Sedan, Alençon, and other places, the merchants and shipowners dominating the trade of La Rochelle and Bordeaux. Lower in the scale of wealth there was a disproportionate number of lower-rank army officers and, more especially, of *avocats* and other legal practitioners. (Of the 200 *avocats* in Montauban, only 50 were Catholics.) Here, taking into account the fact that the Catholics were outnumbered, it is clear that Protestants generally were better off than their neighbours. The taxation figures at Montauban show that the Catholics, who constituted three-eighths of the population,

paid only a sixth of the levies of the government and the municipality. Though it is tempting to suppose that dissident families of commerce and finance are evidence of the affinity of Calvinism and capitalism, there is a more obvious explanation: a minority, especially a principled one, works hard to justify itself in the sphere where there is no restriction on the use of its talents, and, as the history of the Jews and other enterprising minorities shows, prosperity breeds envy.

With masochistic scriptural literalism, some Calvinist pastors, looking back on the abjuration of so many under the yoke of persecution, asked if their faith had been lukewarm, and what back-slidings had there been to bring down the wrath of God. In a sophisticated form, this self-condemnation has been adopted by one of the great modern historians of the French Protestants—their religious life had become bourgeois, centralized, clerical, over-intellectual, formalized.⁹ Apart from the reference to bourgeois leadership (should this be regretted?), the indictment is untenable. Far from being centralized, the churches had no rallying point,¹⁰ the last national synod being held in 1659. Laymen—the elders—dominated the consistories and provided half the delegates to synods: the bishop of Viviers in 1698 referred to them as ‘les hommes gâtés par le plaisir de gouverner’. The schoolmasters, who were generally on the consistory, read the Scriptures at services and took the catechism classes. Laymen ruled and taught; the clergy provided the intellectual and spiritual stimulus. That the pastors were over-intellectual is an echo of a complaint by the hard-line contemporary lawyer, Brousson, who regretted that they accepted the theories of Copernicus, read Descartes, and knew Greek and Hebrew. No doubt they did not preach uncompromisingly enough for him, but they normally won their theological debates with the Catholic clergy. Religious observances had settled into a strict routine.¹¹ There were the obligatory services on Sundays and on one other day of the week—in some churches the weekday session was for catechism, in others a duplication of the Sunday pattern, including a long sermon. The *Cène* was celebrated four times a year, two being fixed at Christmas and Easter. Preparation for receiving the Sacrament was serious, using manuals like Drelincourt's *La Vanité du monde et la solide espérance des enfants de Dieu*, or the *Molette de David* (‘molette’, the bag in which the slinger keeps his stones, ammunition against the Devil and, as required, against the Catholics).¹² The children were taught the catechisms of Calvin and Beza, most families had their Bibles or, at least, the Psalms, perhaps bound up

with the New Testament or the prayers of the *Cène*. The psalms were sung at home, at work, and, if the police did not intervene, in the street. A bishop complained that Calvinist artisans sang them in their workshops and the labourers in the fields, 'while the Catholics are either mute or sing dubious ditties'.¹³ No doubt strictness and routine degenerate into formalism; even so, they still play the role of holding together a minority community in the midst of a hostile population. And the Reformed churches kept up their membership: the collapse of numbers at La Rochelle was a phenomenon not repeated elsewhere.¹⁴ If the Huguenots are to be censured as infirm in their vocation, it was an infirmity that descended on them like a lightning stroke. There were no conversions in Montauban, then suddenly 9,600—practically the entire community—adhered to Catholicism between 20 and 28 August 1685. In the diocese of Rieux there were 20 conversions from 1630 to 1676, 72 in the next seven years, and 3,302 in the single year beginning in October 1685. Let no one deny that cruelty is efficacious.

Should a beleaguered minority try to avert danger by demonstrations of pacific intent, or by bristling hints of resistance? If in any way the Huguenots contributed to their tragedy, it was because they too obviously chose the first, the conciliatory option. Since 1629, they had made no recourse to arms. They stood aside from the Fronde, and denounced the execution of Charles I of England. 'Kings in this world are, in a fashion, in the place of God, and are his true and living portrait here on earth,' said the last national synod. Gilbert Burnet, criticizing the 'gross and fulsome strain of flattery which has so corrupted the style in France', declared that 'even the poor suffering Protestants are infected with it'.¹⁵ Under grievous persecution, they clung to the myth of divinely given royal authority. Jurieu condemned resistance until, in defence of the English revolution of 1688, he was constrained to affirm his underlying belief in the sovereignty of the people.¹⁶ Even in theological controversy, normally remaining a well of bitterness when ways of life are being reconciled, the Reformed were conciliatory. They no longer held the Pope to be the Antichrist, and they conceded that Luther and Calvin were not to be idolized.¹⁷ When they debated with asperity, it was about liturgical practice, not dogma—the communion cup ought not to be denied to the laity, and the saints should not be invoked in prayer—subjects agreed by moderate men on both sides to be marginal. Differences in dogma were put into the context of an appeal, not only to Scripture and Reason, but to Tradition, a methodology conducive to competition in learning

rather than assertion and denunciation. Claude and Jurieu based their apologetic on the original uncorrupted Church from which Protestants are descended, facing honestly the possibility that other Christians might find their own justification in the historical investigation of the early centuries.¹⁸ Aubert de Versé, in *L'Avocat des Protestants* (1686), proffered the challenge: show us that the Roman Church has always been the same from the beginning, and we will join it. If transubstantiation was accepted from the apostles, said Jurieu, it will be our doctrine too. This was why Bossuet wrote his *Histoire des variations des églises Protestantes* (1688), easily proving the variations of the Reformation churches, though failing to prove the non-variation of Catholicism. It was, of course, impossible to agree on the nature of authority in the Church, but there was a way to understanding in Jurieu's distinction—which scandalized the old Calvinists—between the ‘body’ of the Church and its ‘soul’—all who have Christ and the gospels belong to the soul and are at one with each other in spite of the alienation within the body. From both the Catholic and the Protestant side unofficial proposals for the union of the churches were being made, from Catholics in Germany, and in France from the Protestant pastors Isaac d'Huisseau (1670) and Abraham d'Ize (1677).¹⁹ On the eve of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, the Assembly of the Clergy of France was discussing the idea of a conciliatory profession of faith allowing communion in both kinds, and making images, indulgences, and the Ave Maria optional: the papal nuncio feared they would add papal infallibility to the list of inessentials.²⁰

Pacifism and moderation work only on those who practise the same virtues. Louis XIV could assume his Huguenot subjects would cling to their policy of non-resistance while he trampled on them. Conciliation in theology edged the Catholic clergy into a paradoxical state of mind: a touch of exasperation at not succeeding in the apologetical debate allied to a willingness to be tolerant on the knife edge of collusion with brutality; if the secular power applied a push, perhaps many of the Reformed would slip from talking of compromise to coming right over, with concessions from the Catholic side to welcome them. Finally, and disastrously, in 1683, after a campaign of harassment had been waged against them intermittently for twenty years, and seven years after it had become evident that the central government had joined in and was forcing the pace, the French Protestants made a gesture of proud resistance. Their deputies from Dauphiné, Languedoc, the Cévennes, Guyenne, and Saintonge met at Toulouse, called together by the

avocat Brousson. They had lost many chapels, but they would go on meeting in houses, gardens, and woods, and ‘these assemblies will not take place so secretly that they cannot be observed’, so the people and the Court ‘will know our zeal for the glory of God’. Brousson,²¹ who had once declared that Bathsheba was not sinning by committing adultery with David because she was obliged to obey him as king, now published an *Apologie du projet des réformés de France* to proclaim that the royal power had one limitation: it could not order them to suspend their worship, in which they were obeying the divine commandments.²² It was a bad time to make the point. All assemblies were suspect to the government, and the king was proposing to demonstrate his own brand of ‘zeal for the glory of God’ as against any version of it his subjects might propose.

II

‘Tout le siècle gravite vers la révocation,’ said Michelet. The revocation of the edict of Nantes and the cruelties accompanying Louis XIV’s absolutist gesture exemplify a law governing the progress of intolerance: an accumulation of small injustices creates the climate in which great injustices become routinely accepted, as if a ratchet effect operates to bar the way back to the decencies of compromise. Richelieu had ended the Huguenot state within the State, levelled its fortifications, and disbanded its private militias, but he had reaffirmed the edict, so that a toleration almost unknown in the rest of Europe remained part of the royal heritage in France. Mazarin deprived the Protestants of their right to name their own representative to the *Députation générale* through which their petitions went directly to the king, and instead appointed the marquis de Rouvigny; married to the daughter of a Protestant banker, he was sympathetic, but aloof.²³ Mazarin also began the system of commissions of enquiry to seek out Protestant contraventions of the edict of Nantes taken in its most restrictive interpretation.²⁴ The secret society of the Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement led the way in many towns, patrolling the streets to ensure dissenters took off their hats when the Sacrament was carried by and decorated their houses for Catholic processions. The Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi set up houses to receive converts who had to leave their families. In La Rochelle, the initiative for proselytizing came from a group of notables nicknamed the ‘Propagateurs’, allied with the Jesuits and Capuchins; the lawyers who were members used their expertise to

enforce whatever laws and regulations could be found to annoy dissidents. One of these lawyers, Pierre Bossier, from 1656 to 1679 contrived to have 2,200 Huguenots expelled from the city, on the ground their forebears had come in since 1628 without authorization.²⁵ The sort of harassment which could be conjured up out of municipal regulations was evident in the little town of Pont-de-Veyle in Burgundy. The Protestants were not allowed sermons in their chapel; they were deprived of their old right to have a turn in the nomination of the recteur of the hospital; they were forbidden to sing psalms in the street, or even in their shops; a garden wall belonging to one of their members had to be demolished because it constricted a Catholic procession; and another family owning a pigsty within five feet of the church had to enclose it with a high wall.²⁶ Any overt manifestation of Huguenot religious success was a target. In Montauban they had a flourishing academy; in 1659, on the pretext of a student riot, 4,000 soldiers were drafted into town; there were a few executions, and the academy had to be moved out to Puylaurens.²⁷ From 1662, the campaign of harassment was organized on a national basis by the publications of the Jesuit Bernard Meynier and the lawyer Pierre Bernard, listing devices to hamper Protestant worship, education, and communications between churches. The most effective move recommended was to check the title-deeds of dissenting chapels; those built after the edict of Nantes were deemed to be illegal, and were confiscated or pulled down.²⁸ The Pays de Gex, more recently annexed to France, had twenty-five chapels, and twenty-three of them were seized. Sedan, another frontier principality, annexed in 1642, managed to avoid this particular injustice for forty years, perhaps because there was a dissenting majority of 66.4 per cent. As this declined (finally falling to 37 per cent), owing to Catholic immigration, harassment began. In 1663 a Catholic *collège* was founded, with all inhabitants having to contribute. Ten years later, the sale of meat in Lent ended, and the pastors were forbidden to wear their gowns in the street or to ring their chapel bells. The huge *temple* on the main square, dwarfing the Roman church, remained open until 1685, when it was confiscated in the great persecution.²⁹

The directing role of the central government became evident from 1676, when the *Caisse des conversions* was set up to ease the transition of a change of religious allegiance by financial subsidies. The apostate Pellison, the director of the fund, reckoned that in four years 10,000 converts had been sponsored; some of these were dubious characters, converted several times over under different

names. In 1679, new regulations facilitated the ending of heretical worship: if a convert to Rome ever attended a Protestant service, the consistory would be suppressed, the pastor banned, and the chapel destroyed.³⁰ This provided a charter for *agents provocateurs* and spies for whom a small royal pension might be available. Reports to Rome showed twenty-eight chapels closed in 1681, forty-eight in 1682, forty-five in 1683, sixty-five in 1684.³¹ From 1680–1 came a rush of penal legislation. The professions of law, medicine, printing, and bookselling were closed to non-Catholics; chapels in episcopal cities were to be closed, as also any in which a mixed marriage was celebrated; children could defy their parents and declare themselves converted at the age of 7. From 1669, dissenters had not been allowed to escape persecution by emigrating, and in 1682 this law was reinforced. The Protestants, says Léonard, were being ‘hunted down’; their religious, professional, family, and personal life was being ruined.

Local initiatives in intolerance continued: the archbishop of Reims closed the academy of Sedan; the bishop of Limoges ordered a house to house search to seize Genevan Bibles from the 100 Calvinists of Treignac-sur-Vézière;³² schools were closed in La Rochelle and Rouen (where the *maîtres-écrivains* claimed that their monopoly was being infringed).³³ Schemes to confiscate legacies to consistories were devised, though as late as 1682 the Royal Council had confirmed the right to make them, as guaranteed by the edict of Nantes. But in January 1683, the last vestiges of a tolerant jurisprudence collapsed, and legacies to the dissenting poor were declared forfeit to the hospitals—those for other purposes were diverted soon after.³⁴ Meanwhile, in 1681, the most sinister initiative of all came from Marillac, the brutal intendant of Poitou, who used the billeting of soldiers to ruin families adhering to the Reform. There was an outcry in Europe, and for the moment, the government yielded and recalled him. But it was a pointer to a terrible future.

III

The ill will of fanatical Catholics, especially the lawyers, the complaints of a clergy jealous of its standing as the exclusive national establishment, and government pressure exercised with ready resort to chicanery, in the long run, would have taken their toll of Huguenot constancy. What such methods could achieve, even

against an entrenched Protestant majority, became evident in the case of the Lutherans of Strasbourg, a German city annexed by Louis XIV in 1681, under a capitulation stipulating 'the free exercise of religion as it has been since the year 1624 up to the present'. Marginally dishonest pressures and incentives (especially selective immigration regulations) within less than a century transformed a city with 1,000 Catholics and 23,000 Lutherans into one where the balance favoured the Catholics: 29,000 as against 19,000.³⁵

But this creeping triumph stretching over three generations was not to be Louis XIV's way with the Calvinists, even with those of Sedan, an annexed principality which, in legal decency, ought to have been treated no worse than Strasbourg. It seems there were reasons why the French king was determined to have quick results, a demonstrable triumph against heresy. Marillac had shown the way by using billeting. Troops were again brought in to deal with the open-air assemblies demonstrating 'zeal for the glory of God', the provocative initiative of the representatives of the Reformed churches meeting at Toulouse in May 1683, on the disastrous prompting of Brousson. In Dauphiné at the 'Camp de l'Eternel' a military raid led to fifty of the worshippers being killed; five were arrested, four being hanged and one broken on the wheel. Louvois, the Minister for War, fearing the assemblies in the Vivarais would become violent, ordered their suppression by a policy of 'desolation'. The aged pastor Homel was broken on the wheel, and the troops moved on south to Languedoc and the Cévennes.

The use of the army to disperse suspicious assemblies was an act of gratuitous severity when applied to conventicles chanting psalms, but it was in the legitimate orbit of the king's absolute authority. The next step, the use of the billeting of soldiers as a device of collective torture, was a betrayal of the ideal of royal power and duty—what was an emergency measure in the interest of national security became the instrument of a forcible conversion. Any billeting operation left a trail of damage behind it, but now, the orders from on high were to behave outrageously. Louvois gave the instructions:³⁶ the dragoons were to 'live very licentiously', exact ten times the normal contributions; their officers were 'to permit them such disorder as needed to force these folk out of the present ways'; concerning billeting on a country gentleman in Normandy on 17 November 1695, he said 'qu'on leur laisse faire le plus de désordre qu'il se pourra'. In specific terms, rape the wives and daughters, use the furniture for firewood, and demand hearty meals and drink until the family is penniless. Foucault, an intendant of the stamp of

Marillac, began the system in Béarn in the spring of 1685; the soldiers did their work, including inventing the torture of keeping victims permanently awake, and he reported on 1 July that only 1,000 Huguenots were left of the original 22,000. The turn came for Montauban in August—an almost total conversion of the Protestant majority within a week. So it went on in September and October: 6,000 abjurations *en masse* in Montpellier, 4,000 led by two pastors in one day at Nîmes, abjurations witnessed by notaries while the soldiers looked on in the villages of the Vivarais. So too in Poitou; here Moncoulant was an exception, for the troops arrived to find an empty village; they scoured the woods and dragged 167 out to be evangelized.³⁷ A battalion of infantry arrived in La Rochelle in September and effected only 200–300 conversions, but these were the better-behaved troops; the dragoons came on 12 October, and in five days there were no Huguenots to lodge them.³⁸ People who had remained steadfast over a decade of persecution cracked when their families faced outrage and total ruin. The grim story is revealed in the incidence of ‘conversions’, as in Lourmarin (a village with a Calvinist majority), 30 going over to Rome between January 1680 and October 1685, and all 1,000 on 21 October 1685, except for 33 families which had fled.³⁹ In Lyon⁴⁰ in October and in Paris⁴¹ in December, the Huguenot leaders arranged a transfer to Rome before the troops were called in. By January 1686, only 200 out of the 900 in Paris had not signed; a lawyer and his wife holding out rushed to abjure when they heard the dragoons had occupied their country house—‘never have such groanings been heard as those the woman uttered when she had to sign’. There was a great collapse at Rouen in a few days, and by 12 October only forty-five families were unconverted; by 4 December only forty, by 18 December only twenty-five, by 9 January eight. By then, the wives and daughters of resisters had been locked away in convents, and the heads of the eight families, having nothing left to feed the soldiers, were put in gaol.⁴² Stories come, from Catholic sources, of their heroism—refusing to complain, being courteous to the oppressors who were ruining them: ‘my goods and my life are the king's, my conscience is my own’; ‘you must now sell my furniture . . . at my age [75] it is not fitting to leave the religion I believe in’. The Huguenots themselves gave terrible accounts of the treatment of their recalcitrant members held in prisons in Poitou in the spring of 1686—the strappado, starving in chains with bread just out of reach, thrown in dungeons with the carcasses of dead animals.⁴³

On 8 October 1685, when the great persecution was at its height,

the Royal Council met at Fontainebleau to consider the total revocation of the dishonoured edict of Nantes.⁴⁴ There was a delay, as the dauphin produced a memorandum on the possible economic damage and the archbishop of Paris wanted more time to discuss doctrinal accommodations with Protestant theologians. But Louvois and the Le Tellier faction carried the day, convincing Louis XIV that Protestantism was virtually extinct anyway. On 22 October the edict of Fontainebleau was registered by the parlement. All Calvinist worship, public and private, was proscribed, the chapels were to close, all pastors were to go into exile, having to leave behind them children over the age of 7. Laymen were not allowed to emigrate. Astonishingly, the last article of the edict said liberty of conscience was allowed; whatever relaxation was implied was flatly rejected by Louvois. Bâville, the intendant of Languedoc, wrote to him to complain that the recalcitrant thought this clause implied they would not now be coerced to declare themselves Catholics provided they did not attempt to worship as Protestants. On 5 November Louvois replied: 'I have no doubt but that some forceful billeting . . . will undeceive them concerning their misinterpretation of the edict . . . His Majesty wishes you to proceed harshly against those who are trying to be the last to profess a religion which displeases him and whose exercise he has forbidden in his kingdom.'

It is easy to understand why Louis XIV revoked the edict of Nantes. The Protestants had lulled themselves into a false sense of security by regarding it as 'perpetual', and because Louis had confirmed it on attaining his majority. But to the lawyers,⁴⁵ 'perpetual' merely meant not falling into abeyance through lapse of time; a king could not be bound by his predecessors. Nor was the edict a proclamation of a lofty principle of toleration: it was just a grant of privileges to the Reformed churches of France—like the privileges of all other subjects, held at the will of the king. Besides, Louis believed, as the preamble to his edict of Fontainebleau declared, that his predecessors, including even Henri IV, had intended, in due course, to bring the dissidents back into the Catholic fold. Now reports from all over showed the lost sheep (not without the dogs on their trail) rushing back into the fold; why not exercise the royal prerogative and abrogate their right to wander in the wilderness? What Louis must answer for, however, even judged by the standards of the age, is the wave of cruelty unleashed in every corner of the kingdom. It is beyond belief that he was ignorant of what was happening: no ruler of France could be unaware of the nature of the recruits to the armed forces and the universal detestation of everyone

for the imposition of billeting. Under Louis' exacting oversight, no minister like Louvois could be a loose cannon acting independently.⁴⁶ Perhaps the king lacked the imagination to picture the sheer criminality of the dragonnades, or refused to consider it, willing the end and not the means. The figures of conversions produced by the *Caisse* of Pelisson may have inclined him to expect that Protestants lacked resolution, and few would incur the extreme penalty for disobedience. Or was this a persecution that got out of control? Even Louvois was capable of afterthoughts. On 8 September 1685 he wrote to Arnould, the intendant of La Rochelle, who had sent in the dragoons and was shaken by what he saw: only use the troops, he said, to the point of reducing Huguenot numbers to a third or a quarter of the total of Catholics—too late, the violence had gone through already to the bitter end.⁴⁷ On 10 November he wrote about the billeting in Sedan, the city of cloth and watch manufacture: 'go carefully with the owners of factories as far as possible without, nevertheless, telling anyone that you have received orders to do so'—again too late, 2,917 Protestants had converted and 794 had fled, including important employers of labour.⁴⁸

Louis knew he was authorizing cruelties. To a degree they were designed to forward his majestic absolutist designs. Like his Catholic subjects, he could not forget the Huguenot 'separate State in France, a State which had governed itself like a sort of republic, and which had its fortresses, its troops, its commanders and its laws'.⁴⁹ The Protestants were now servilely submissive, but he suspected them of harbouring a nostalgia for 'republicanism', if only because their affairs were run by committees of laymen electing their own ministers. 'It is important to humiliate the Consistory,' said a Court memorandum of 1680, 'a dangerous form of government which creates republicans.'⁵⁰ Appointing the bishops of the Gallican Church and refusing to allow them to take orders from Rome, the king was offended by a congeries of little churches running their own affairs: he wished to demonstrate a 'pontifical authority' over his subjects.⁵¹ As he looked out on the European scene, he saw a chance to magnify his greatness by posing as a champion of Catholicism.⁵² Since the Treaty of Westphalia had made him a German prince, he had been buying the votes of the Electors—one day he might be a candidate for the imperial crown. The emperor, in a strong position since he had saved Central Europe from the Turks, was vaguely interested in an accommodation with the Protestants; why not take the opposite tack to impress the Catholic princes? The established enemy of Louis XIV and all that he stood for was the United

Provinces, together with Geneva, a spiritual and intellectual external focus for the Huguenots. Under Charles II, England was no bastion for the Protestant cause, and in February 1685 his brother James, an avowed and fanatical Catholic, ascended the throne. Now if ever was the time to crush dissent in France, while the Calvinist cause had no hope of outside help. Paradoxically for a crusader for Catholicism, Louis was at feud with the Pope, but this was all the more reason to demonstrate his pious zeal and show the papal court where its true interests lay: 'quand les princes sont mal avec Rome, c'est alors qu'ils témoignent plus de zèle pour la religion'.⁵³ This analysis of internal and external political factors is a schematic presentation of how the French king's mind was moving. Since his policy was one of personal pride and not genuine national interest, everything was more episodic, uncertain, and predatory than the logical motivation which must be inferred from the retrospect of history.

If the brutalities of 1685–6 were meant to impress Rome and Europe, they were counter-productive: intelligent statesmanship would have realized that a demonstration of a broad inclination to the Catholic cause would have been enough. When we come to explain the final, ultimate turning of the screw of cruelty, there is, along with the overweening royal pride, a driving 'religious' motivation. Protestant and anticlerical historians of the late nineteenth century put the argument with partisan crudity: the blame lies on the Gallican Church: 'the king was merely the boastful accomplice of the clergy'; the revocation was 'an affair of the sacristy and the confessional'.⁵⁴ Put this way, the accusation is untenable. Though the Assembly of Clergy was continually asking for action against heresy, it was not the policies of Louvois they were proposing. Louis was not pushed into action by his spiritual advisers. The official keeper of the royal conscience was the confessor, Père de la Chaize, and there were two unofficial ones, the archbishop of Paris, Harlay, and Mme de Maintenon. The archbishop was cynical and irreligious, more concerned to engineer a triumph of negotiation with the Protestant leaders than to encourage the government to measures of fanaticism. Mme de Maintenon detested Louvois and his brutal methods, realizing they would produce, not converts, but 'hypocrites'; but her Protestant origins inhibited her from risking her credit with Louis by protesting.⁵⁵ La Chaize was a mild and colourless ecclesiastic, but Saint-Simon, Spanheim, the Brandenburg envoy, and the Calvinist pamphleteers all blame him for the persecution. Spanheim, more sophisticated in his verdict than the others, blames him for omission

rather than commission: not inspiring cruelty, but condoning it. The limited evidence supports this view.⁵⁶ On 28 March 1684, la Chaize described the measures against the Calvinists as coming from 'l'autorité et les libéralités du roi', euphemisms for the dragonnades and bribery. On 25 October 1685, Mme de Maintenon wrote: 'the king is very pleased to have put the finishing touches to the great work of the reconciliation of the Protestant heretics to the Church. Père de la Chaize has promised it will not cost a drop of blood, and M. de Louvois says the same.' On 25 November, the Jesuit confessor was naïvely rejoicing in 600,000 to 700,000 conversions in the space of three months, without comment on the methods used. In February 1686 he was trying to ensure that the Jesuit missionaries to the new converts were kindly, accommodating characters—a belated switch to benevolence—Louvois was making the same recommendation. La Chaize was too feeble a character to direct Louis' actions (in the heyday of the royal adulteries he had suffered an annual illness just before Easter to avoid having to forbid communion). But while the king's ruthless policies went ahead, he seems not to have drawn his penitent's attention to their cost in human suffering, nor tried to restrain him, and to have gone along with the sycophantic pretence that the conversions were real. There is a burning passage in the memoirs of Saint-Simon branding the keepers of the king's conscience: 'they insinuated to a bigot the agreeableness of doing a facile penance at the expense of other people, they persuaded him he was a certainty for the other world, they enlisted his pride as a king in showing him an action that was beyond the power of all his predecessors, they fixed his mind—even though he was full of self-importance about deciding for himself—on a masterpiece of both politics and religion'. Saint-Simon is mistaken in blaming the spiritual advisers: they were accomplices, not inspirers. But with sombre psychological insight he had seized on the frightening, morbid simplicities of Louis' motivation: overweening pride and fear of Judgement Day.

On 3 September 1685 the Great Monarch wrote to a churchman: 'I cannot doubt that it is the divine will which wishes to use me to bring back into its ways all those subject to my orders.'⁵⁷ From 21 September to 11 November he wrote fifteen letters to the archbishop of Paris declaring his zeal to destroy heresy. Sixteen days after the edict of Fontainebleau, he sent to Languedoc exhorting the 'enforcement of my declaration'—'provided the bishops second me, I am persuaded God will—for his glory—consummate the work he has inspired in me'.⁵⁸ Saint-Simon, Spanheim, and, above all,

Fénelon, spoke of the religion of Louis XIV with contempt; 'it is hell, not God you fear,' said Fénelon, 'your religion consists only in superstitions, in little superficial practices'. At the time of the revocation, this was probably true; his convictions may have deepened later. Though the problem is of interest to psychologists and students of spirituality, the historian may perhaps remain content to know that Louis, for whatever reasons, had convinced himself he was doing God's will. To savour the exercise of absolute power, to swell with pride at standing high above all other rulers, and to be qualifying at the same time for God's favour was a heady and dangerous exaltation.

IV

If the Catholic prelates represented the will of God, some sharp measures against heresy were legitimate, for at every meeting the Assembly of Clergy asked for royal action. They reported to the government every Protestant encroachment: in 1675 it was a new preaching house and a bell set up, not, it is true, on a chapel but on a tower nearby; there was also the suspicious death by drowning of a new convert to Catholicism. 'The destruction of heresy is our unique concern,' said a bishop at the session of 1685. What action did they desire? In 1682, the Assembly issued a pastoral letter to the Protestants; the provincial intendants and leading clergy were to go in person to every consistory to read it aloud.⁵⁹ It was addressed to 'brothers'. 'The great Prince, having conquered abroad,' the letter ran, 'now covets the final palm (of triumph) that he esteems more than all the others. If you refuse . . . God will no longer ask us to give account of your souls. And because this final error will be more criminal than all the others, you must expect misfortunes incomparably more terrible and more ruinous than all those which you have already drawn upon yourselves by your revolt and your schism.' What does this imply? The prelates will allow the proud king to wreak his rage: they are at once dissociating themselves from the coming cruelties and justifying them. Perhaps they were making the approaching vengeance sound more savage than they really expected it to be. Even so, their appeal to the blackmail of force associates the Assembly of Clergy with Louis in the guilt of the dragonnades.

The pastoral letter refers to the Huguenots as 'schismatics', not as 'heretics':⁶⁰ that is, they are deemed to be separated from the

Catholic Church by differences in discipline, not dogma—as such, they can be treated as resisting authority through prejudiced conviction, not true conscience. They came under St Augustine's condemnation of the Donatists: force could be used against them to compel them to reconsider their position. Among the Catholic theologians, those who took conversion to begin with God's initiative in the soul were pushed into the background by those who saw it as originating in an act of human decision: a man must put himself within the tradition as a prelude to receiving the divine grace.⁶¹ Bossuet, whose views were better thought out than those of most of his episcopal colleagues, knew from the start that force cannot make a true conversion, but it could oblige the schismatics to attend Catholic worship, to send their children for Catholic instruction, and to have their marriage celebrated before a priest; they could also be subjected to fines and other disadvantages to ensure their outward conformity. 'The rest', said Bossuet, 'must be the effect of time and of the grace of God.'⁶² As Mme de Maintenon said, force would make the fathers hypocrites, but the children might believe. This was the religious argument for the use of coercion. But churchmen also pressed the idea that the king had reasons of state for his actions, more especially after the dragonnades had taken place, when it was important for the secular power to carry the blame. Denys de Sainte-Marthe in 1688 rehearsed the subversive doings of Protestants from the Anabaptists in Germany to the Huguenot state within a state in France, concluding, 'we had to forestall their evil designs', for 'it is practically impossible for them not to believe themselves obliged to exterminate us'.⁶³ An edge to Catholic exasperation had come with the news from Ireland and England. Catholic priests fleeing from Ireland took refuge in the monasteries of western France,⁶⁴ and the executions in London resulting from the 'Popish Plot' scare aroused sympathy and anger. In July 1682 the coadjutor archbishop of Arles in the Assembly of Clergy contrasted Louis XIV's 'zeal for the house of God' with the English 'Fury of Babylon'—this was before Louvois had far exceeded any Protestant government in the infliction of mass cruelties. There were also two factors operating, perhaps subconsciously rather than more recognizably, to dispose the clergy to rigour. In the intellectual disputations which were proceeding, the Protestant pastors were proving too learned for the curés, and the Protestant laity were formidable in their sphere, fortified by little books like Charles Drelincourt's *L'Abrégé des controverses*, a pocket edition simple enough to be grasped by children and servants.⁶⁵ The other factor was the relationship of the Assemblies of

Clergy with Rome. In the feuds the king was pursuing against the papal Curia, the prelates had taken the side of Louis and the Gallican liberties; it would be satisfying to be able to demonstrate to the Pope the zeal of their monarch, a ruler aspiring to the title of 'the new Constantine'.

Though the bishops had connived at the resort to coercion, few positively encouraged it. The bishop of Luçon, confident in God's guidance (he regarded the destruction of a Protestant chapel as the work of 'the particular protection of God'), had asked for the dragoons as early as 1682.⁶⁶ Henri de Laval of La Rochelle, his judgement clouded by illness, had initial doubts about the use of force, but came over to it in 1685, sending to the king a list of parishes where the Huguenots were still holding out.⁶⁷ In this grim year, the bishop of Viviers⁶⁸ rejoiced at what he saw: 'we have had the consolation of seeing the *temples* razed, the false pastors driven out, and heresy reduced to its last extremity. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that rewarded thee as thou hast served us'—a quotation oddly applied to refer to injuries received a century ago, a harshness coming ill from a prelate of 81 years. (Psalm 137, indeed, was to become the melancholy consolation of the Huguenots.) In extreme contrast, there were a few bishops who objected to having the dragoons in their dioceses, if not when they first arrived, at least when Louvois continued the billeting on Protestants who had nominally abjured but who refused to attend Catholic worship. In the summer of 1686 Le Camus of Grenoble, Percin de Montgaillard of Saint-Pons, and Foucquet of Agde insisted the troops must depart.⁶⁹ The bishop of Orléans was also of their number, being of the opinion of his nephew, the Jansenist nobleman Sébastien Joseph du Cambout de Pontchâteau, who in December 1685 wrote a diatribe against 'the missionaries in jackboots'. He agreed with banning Protestant worship, 'but there has to be charity, kindness, then instruction . . . I can't understand how anyone can take as being Catholics people who came over only to escape the billeting'.⁷⁰ The bishop of Tarbes asked the intendant Foucault to send the dragoons to Pontacq, where half the population belonged to the Reform; he went in person to see, was horrified, and insisted the troops must leave.⁷¹

Out of decency, tolerance, or indifference, numbers of bishops made it easy—to the point of ambiguity—for Protestants to declare their allegiance to Catholicism; out of sound theological sense, too, for if force can create only nominal outward conformity, why pretend it can do more? If the established rules had been observed,

'conversion' would have been an awesome, demanding affair. The *Rituel* of Reims gave the ceremonies.⁷² The Calvinist (or Lutheran) candidate came to the entrance to the chancel as a penitent, candle in hand. The *Veni Creator* was sung and prayers recited. He then had to listen to an exhortation by the curé and undergo an interrogation on the articles of the faith, following this with a formal profession of adherence to the Catholic, apostolic, and Roman religion, taking an oath on the gospels. The priest then put a hand on his head and pronounced an exorcism before leading him to the altar for prayers, the recitation of the *Miserere*, and the pronouncement of a Latin formula of absolution. In lieu of this baroque elaboration, Le Camus of Grenoble asked only for adherence to the anodyne formula: 'I believe all the articles of faith based on God's word', allowing the 'convert' to add statements that he would have wished to receive communion in both kinds, and that he was demonstrating his submission to the king. One of the army officers in town declared: 'most of these newly converted say that, on this formula, they believe they have not changed their religion at all'.⁷³ At Lyon, the consistory met, and all, pastors included, wanted to register a mass conversion before the dragoons arrived, if it could decently be done. The archbishop arrived and made it easy with the formula: 'To obey the king's orders, I embrace the Catholic religion in conformity with the Word of God.'⁷⁴ The archbishop of Rouen told the Huguenots, 'You have to obey the king, though each of you personally can then do as you please', and 'Sign . . . and believe what you can'. Genially, he asked them to sing their French psalms before him.⁷⁵ The bishop of Rennes went round with two ecclesiastics as his only escort, going into Protestant houses individually and allowing them to abjure in strict privacy.⁷⁶ The bishop of Oloron promised he would allow the mass in French and authorize Bible reading; he gave assurances that belief in purgatory, the saints, or images was optional, and as for the Real Presence, it was 'incomprehensible' and not to be discussed.⁷⁷ All over the country, away from official notice, curés were arranging things. One asked for a piece of paper stating adherence to the Catholic faith signed in the presence of three witnesses;⁷⁸ another offered a choice of two statements: one was, 'I admit my errors [unspecified] and believe in Jesus Christ'; the other was 'I promise to live in the Catholic, apostolic and Roman religion according to Saint Paul'.⁷⁹

Though the benevolence of the bishops was genuine, it fitted into a slightly sinister psychological pattern: they have the king inaugurating a reign of terror, then step in as protectors—at a price,

but keeping the price modest. Le Camus, excluding the dragoons and offering a generous formula for conversion, is generally cited as a model of humane tolerance, but even he, in the last resort, could be harsh and devious.⁸⁰ On 4 September 1685 he wrote a circular letter to his parish priests. 'I profited by the opportunity of the dragoons being in the neighbourhood to engage my diocesans to return to the bosom of the Church by the way of kindness and persuasion; *cela m'a réussi*.' In a postscript he tells the curés to have witnesses ready to give evidence if a Protestant henceforward breaks the laws. His way of persuasion that year had included having recalcitrant Huguenots excluded from employment and fined on the one hand, and offered bribes on the other. Sixty-seven Protestant women and children (some as young as 6 taken from their parents) were locked up in the Maison de la Propagation de la Foi, and the bishop made strict rules for them: no communication with their families, the children not allowed to play games and subjected to intensive instruction every day of the week. The army officer in charge at Grenoble was moved to pity; the Protestants, he said, can be recognized 'by their pale leaden complexions and their eyes red with weeping'. In July 1685, the Huguenot *temple* pulled down. It was a new one, replacing the old building destroyed because it was within the walls: the argument was that the psalm singing disturbed some nearby monks, and this was proved to the intendant by having a crowd of Catholics singing in the place with the windows open. The curés of the diocese received episcopal orders not to marry Protestants unless they gave proof of their real adherence to Catholicism, including willingness to receive the Eucharist. Le Camus objected to the clause of the edict of revocation saying that Protestants were not to be troubled further so long as they did not hold assemblies: 'this afflicts those who have been converted and strengthens those who were not . . . things were going well until now'.

Given the theological position adopted by both the Catholic and the main Protestant churches concerning established religion and the duty of the State to discourage dissent, the Pope inevitably approved the French king's declared intention of bringing the Huguenots back into the fold. Early in 1677 he recorded his gratitude, though by January of the next year he suspected the royal zeal was a diversion to cover the filching of Church revenues—the *régale* affair: 'what is the good of demolishing Protestant *temples* if the bishops are schismatics?' In May 1685, when the great persecution was under way, Innocent XI commended Louis for 'gaining some by kindness, others by refusing them employment in his household, in

government, in army and navy, in justice and the finances, striking with fear those who cannot be reduced by other means, and going to great expense to provide subsistence allowances for the greater part of the converts'. He could not have known that the dragonnades were now the official policy, and surely 'striking with fear' was not meant to invite massive cruelties on every dissenting family. Innocent hailed the edict of revocation: 'this single action would suffice to immortalize a prince'. Queen Christina of Sweden claims she told him on the day of the revocation that Louis XIV was employing cruelty. The French ambassador asked Rome to reward his master by ending the feud with France and filling the bishoprics which were being kept open; he received a dusty answer: 'the divine goodness will reward the king'. In the Consistory of 18 March 1686, Louis was again praised for 'abrogating the edicts that heretic traitors had exhorted from his ancestors'. On 29 April there was a papal Te Deum for the extirpation of heresy in France; unusually, there was a salvo of cannon fire and a gold medal distributed (paid for by France). The Pope was officially ill and could not be present. Relationships between Rome and France had become bitter by accumulated feuds, and with the realization that Louis' extreme policies were outraging Protestant England and endangering the Catholic James II's tenure of the English throne. On 19 July 1688 the Pope condemned the dragonnades: 'we do not approve in any manner of these sort of forced conversions which, usually, are not sincere'. It was three years too late for the suffering Huguenots. Rome had not inspired Louis XIV to cruelty, but cruelty had remained uncondemned until its work was done.

In the first half of 1686 edicts were promulgated to ensure the submission of the *nouveaux catholiques*, the 'converted', to the Church.⁸¹ From the age of 5 to 16 their children were to be brought up as Catholics; if they were not sent for official instruction, they could be taken from their families, the parents having to pay the boarding fees, and if they could not pay, the wretched young people would vanish into the anonymous misery of the orphans in an *hôpital général*. The refusal of the last sacraments (in practice almost certainly limited to insistence on confession and extreme unction) could be punished by the confiscation of all property, with the living death of the galleys for a man who recovered. All men attending a Calvinist conventicle were to be sent to the galleys and the women to perpetual imprisonment (in 1687, the variant of deportation to the colonies was tried); if a pastor was there, he would be executed. The bishops, not as quickly as they ought to have done, stood firm

against compulsion to receive the Sacrament, a blasphemy dragging down those who compelled and those who complied. But enough was in the legislation from January to July 1686 to give a legal warrant for the terrible punishments continuing to be inflicted through the first half of the eighteenth century.⁸²

Meanwhile, a chorus of praise vaunted Louis XIV's achievement. He was Constantine, Theodosius, Charlemagne, said Bossuet. Other bishops like Massillon and Fénelon, the Jansenist Arnauld, the Sorbonne, the Jesuits of Louis-le-Grand, together with the parlements, the Academy, and sceptics like Fontenelle joined in. The revocation, said Mme de Sévigné, was 'la plus belle chose du monde'. The estates of Languedoc voted a subsidy in thanksgiving: 'more than we can afford', said the episcopal spokesman, 'but there are occasions when we must consult only our hearts'.⁸³ Bayle asked a dark question: 'has a single Catholic been found, whether of the nobility, magistracy or the secular or regular clergy, to testify disapproval of this barbarous manner of converting?'—the conclusion he drew was that France was the king's accomplice.⁸⁴ If this was true in 1686, it was not so two or three years later. There must have been many like Vauban⁸⁵ to see the cruelty and economic folly of the persecution, and like the country curé who wrote verses in his register deploring 'the dragging of victims to the altar'.⁸⁶ Even Foucault, the grim intendant of Poitiers, reflected: 'it was to have been wished . . . it had pleased God to use the voice of the curés and missionaries to recall the Protestants to the Roman Church, and . . . we had not been obliged to use the temporal arm'.⁸⁷ In 1686, Basville, the intendant of Languedoc, asked if the severities could be discontinued, and was refused. 'I had thought that after extreme rigour it was necessary to act in a conciliatory fashion and not go on treating innocent and guilty alike,' he wrote to his brother; 'but I see there are reasons in politics which are above my intellectual grasp'.⁸⁸ The praise heaped on Louis XIV was sincere only within the sycophantic parameters of monarchical absolutism; it was praise of the end achieved, not of the means, which the country consigned to the conscience of its sovereign. But the adulation had its effect at face value on the ruler who received it, ensuring he continued his heartless policies and left them as a legacy to his successor, policies Basville could not understand. 'The king thought himself an apostle', wrote Saint-Simon; 'he imagined he was bringing back the apostolic age when baptism was given to thousands at a time, and this intoxication, sustained by endless eulogies in prose and verse, in speeches and every sort of eloquence, kept his eyes hermetically sealed to the Gospel and to the

total difference between this manner of preaching and converting and that of Jesus Christ and his apostles.⁸⁹

The newly converted Huguenots were forbidden to leave the realm, a prohibition renewed from time to time to the end of the reign.⁹⁰ The only exceptions were the pastors. A fifth of them abjured; seeing they would have to go into exile leaving their children over the age of 7 behind, this was not surprising. Equally unsurprisingly, many of them from henceforward maintained they were Catholics by conviction—what else could they say to retain their dignity? The punishments for being caught emigrating were grim. The parlement of Metz sentenced forty-five men from Sedan to the galleys and their women to be shorn and immured in convents, their children vanishing into separate institutions. The magistrates of Grenoble in 1686–7 executed 8 men and sent 57 to the galleys; 182, mostly women, were sent to prison, many for life, and 262 others were fined. Significantly, the intendant and the senior officer of the garrison were pushing refugees over the frontier to outwit the processes of this merciless justice.⁹¹ By all sorts of subterfuges and disguises Protestants fled from France—travelling separately to meet up later, journeying with Catholic friends, carrying forged certificates of catholicity, joining the army, then deserting from frontier garrisons,⁹² travelling armed (with the women disguised as men) to fight their way past frontier patrols, meeting up with masked adventurers from Geneva, following secret mountain paths, and being picked up by mysterious boats on lonely lakesides. Those with property made crafty arrangements; families adopted a common policy, with some, probably the young and unattached, emigrating, the others holding the amassed family funds and converting—‘a separation of consciences, or a division of duties?’ The Calvinists of the frontier areas had the best chance of escape; nearly 31 per cent left the Pays de Gex and 28 per cent left Sedan. In Dauphiné, however, in villages where the dissidents were a majority or where the mountains isolated them from government supervision, they tended to stay—‘résistance sur place’.⁹³ How many emigrated? There was an early torrent, then a slower flow afterwards up to 1720. The Protestants themselves spoke of very high figures—Basnage had 250,000 to 300,000 by 1700. On the Catholic side, Vauban, who was judicious and had no reason to minimize, in 1689 gave the figure as 80,000 to 100,000. Writers of the Enlightenment, looking back in censure of intolerance, chose high figures—Voltaire spoke of 500,000, though he admitted it might have been only half as many. Lists of confiscated property, estimates from the French

embassy in Holland, the registers of refugees passing through Frankfurt and Lausanne suggest a high total, without being conclusive.⁹⁴ On the other hand, modern estimates limiting the number of Huguenots before the revocation to a million, make the higher totals suggested unlikely. Perhaps one should take Vauban for a guide and settle for 100,000 emigrating between 1685 and 1689, and another 100,000 between then and 1720. The loss of population to France was greater, for it was the young who most easily escaped to found their families elsewhere, and the birthrate among the Protestants who remained collapsed under the strain of persecution and fearfulness of the future.

Bureaucrats of the school of Colbert in the royal administration were well aware of the losses France suffered by the defection of so many industrious and enterprising citizens. There was the manifest ruin of the woollen manufacture of Sedan and the paper making of Normandy and the Auvergne. More insidious losses in the long run were caused by the transfer of industrial secrets to foreign rivals—concerning the making of silk, velvet, satin, lace, linen, paper, tapestry, glass. The very cardinals at Rome now had to send to the English manufactory at Wandswoth for their felt hats (the former ‘chapeaux de Caudebec’).⁹⁵ Louis' policies had ‘narrowed everywhere the economic and technological gap separating France from other countries . . . directly or indirectly . . . causing many French manufacturers to lose part of their foreign markets’.⁹⁶ Since the end of the reign of the Sun King was a period of misery, contemporaries exaggerated the damage caused by the Huguenot emigration (in fact, the chief causes were war, taxation, the sale of office, the debasement of the currency, tariffs, and crop failures). Through Cantillon and Montesquieu the idea passed to the thinkers of the Enlightenment that religion, through the gloomy piety of a king and the fanaticism of the clergy, had done lasting harm to the fabric of the nation.

‘The children at least will be Catholics even if the fathers are hypocrites.’ Anne Maret died in 1737 aged 89, in the convent where she had been imprisoned for half a century, refusing to recognize Catholic observances to the last; by then, one of her grandsons was of her Protestant faith, and the other was a Catholic priest on his way to comfortable promotion as a canon regular of the rule of St Augustine.⁹⁷ Every generation makes its own decisions from the point where it finds itself, but what Catholicism may have gained, religion lost. The fastidious way in which the clergy made use of the opportunity persecution offered without incurring responsibility for

the violence was ignored by the public opinion of the eighteenth century, as if the churchmen had sent in the dragoons themselves. Here was a classic modern example of the evil Christianity wreaks upon mankind. Your actions, Bayle told the clergy, 'are a triumph for those who say that the only religion God has revealed to us is the light of nature'.⁹⁸ The intendants and military commanders reported the Protestants as giving only the barest possible recognition to Catholicism: 'in their hearts, they are practically all of the same religion they were before'.⁹⁹ Worse still, as Le Camus found at Grenoble, they were now of no religion at all,¹⁰⁰ their children on the way to becoming Catholics, but non-practising ones, sceptical and anticlerical—a growing phenomenon among the middle classes of the age of the Enlightenment. From the first, Fénelon had known the uselessness of force in matters of religion; yet, when he was directing missions to the 'new Catholics' of the La Rochelle area, he was deviously urging the intendant to take away Protestant leaders and forge 'letters from Holland' to shake the morale of the conscripted congregations.¹⁰¹ In March 1686 he wrote to Bossuet with the admission that force and subterfuge had alike failed: 'the remainder of this sect are little by little going to fall into an indifference to religion and all its outward observances that is frightening. If you wanted to make them renounce Christianity and embrace the Koran, you'd only have to show them the dragoons. It is a fearful leaven to have fermenting in a nation.'¹⁰²

45 Cruelty and Compromise, 1700–1774

I

Three years after the revocation of the edict of Nantes, among the cruelly persecuted Protestants prophets arose, ‘speaking with tongues’ like the early Christians. The phenomenon began in Dauphiné and the Vivarais, and by 1700 had moved to the Cévennes.¹ Only a few of the visionaries—half a dozen of the hundred about whom records remain—were mentally unbalanced. If voices from heaven once persuaded a Calvinist assembly to claim the immunity of ‘angels’ and walk slowly against the soldiers who brought them down with musket-shots,² mysterious promptings also directed Jean Cavalier, the guerrilla leader, to choose the strategic times and places for ambushes. Some of the charismatic utterances bore the mark of genuine inspiration and touched depths of spirituality, and there was always a sombre undertone of scriptural calls to repentance for the sin of yielding before the dragoons and abjuring the true faith. There were apocalyptic dreams³ of a future when God would avenge his elect; there were exhortations, evoked by a burning hatred of Rome and the persecutors, to take the vengeance directly, now. In his memoirs Abraham Mazel⁴ describes how he was vouchsafed a sign giving him the vocation of ‘driving out the big black oxen from the cabbage patch’; after civil war had broken out, he was guided on two occasions to murder a curé and on another to refrain from destroying a church; at times he was led to fight, at others to turn from the battle and pray. Protestant assemblies, meeting clandestinely in desolate places, swept by emotions of remorse and devotion, fear and hatred, could be taken over by the voices of prophetism; an incredulous army officer who led a descent upon one of these meetings in the autumn of 1701 described the cries, groans, and exaltations as constituting ‘une espèce de sabbat’.⁵ From abroad at the time and in retrospect through the eighteenth century, the pastors deplored the ‘fanaticism’ of the prophets ‘profaning the sanctuary’,⁶ but since Louis XIV had separated them from

their flocks into silence or exile, they were unable to restrain the excesses and the lapses into mass hysteria. Making the Calvinists leaderless to subject them to the curés had been a miscalculation, ignoring the parable of the ‘house swept and garnished’ taken over by more dangerous and irrational forces.

Disastrously, this exaltation reinforced a growing conviction, shared by reasonable men and, indeed, proclaimed from the Refuge by Jurieu and Claude, that salvation would be found in the defeat of the armies of Louis XIV by the Protestant powers, leading to a peace settlement in which England and Holland would insist on guarantees of fair treatment for the Huguenots of France. The hope was illusory. The compassion of Reformation Europe was profound, but the peasants and artisans of the Cévennes could never be more than pawns in the great game of the balance of power. And what would the word of Louis XIV, extorted by defeat, be worth? As it was, the bureaucrats and soldiers of the royal establishment came to suspect the propagandists of the Refuge and the prophets in the mountains of belonging to an unpatriotic conspiracy to foment a rising to draw troops away from the frontiers. Questions about this supposed design figured in interrogations by the intendant of Languedoc as early as November 1698, and it was the theme of a work published at Montpellier in 1709, the *Histoire du Fanatisme de notre temps*.⁷

The representatives of authority in Languedoc were implacable. The replies of the bishops to a questionnaire in 1698 showed that those of the South (in contrast to those of the North and centre) wanted persecution to continue: ‘it is not reasonable to abandon the secular methods Providence places in the hands of the holders of power’—let there be ‘a salutary vexation’. True, they could not defend the continued use of force to drive the newly converted to receive the Sacrament, and a royal declaration of 1699 forbade the blasphemous practice. As for the secular arm, the machinery of coercion was under the direction of the intendant of Languedoc, Basville.⁸ He knew the Protestants of his *généralité* better than anyone and, in his way, admired them. In his memoir of 1698 he said they numbered 198,480, including the members of 400 poor noble families; they worked harder than their Catholic neighbours, and ran all the commerce of the area. ‘Practically all of them are loyal in their hearts to their first religion . . . and they are persuaded they have been done an injustice, inasmuch as, against the promises of edicts, they have been deprived of what men hold most dear.’ He conceded they had a theological case, and studied the Fathers to be able to argue with them. Only persuasion could convert—‘il faut attaquer

les cœurs, c'est là la religion réside'. Yet, having granted that coercion could do no more than control outward conduct, he was prepared to use it as 'evangelical violence' to stop the practice of the Reformed religion, in the hope the next generation would lose touch with it. His period of rule is a catalogue of penal measures, extending even to a renewal of billeting, and if brutality brought revolt, he was ready to suppress it, having raised auxiliary regiments paid by the province and enlisted a Catholic militia. He was the faithful servant of a persecuting, absolutist king, knowingly running the risk of damnation in his service. 'One must agree, *Monsieur*,' he said when hanging two pastors at Montpellier in 1690, 'that if the God these people worship is the same as the one we worship, we run the risk of being one day very unhappy.'

One of Basville's agents for the repression of Protestantism was the abbé du Chaila,⁹ his itinerant 'inspector of missions', a task he combined with 'inspector of roads'. By 1702, on his journeys through the Cévennes over a period of twelve years, du Chaila had instigated arrests leading to eleven death sentences and sixty-one of life imprisonment (for men, in the galleys), as well as taking away children from their parents for non-attendance at church. In July of that year he intercepted a group of Huguenots fleeing to Switzerland, and held them in his mansion at Pont-de-Montvert awaiting transfer to the official prison. Inner voices told the prophet Abraham Mazel to rescue them. On the night of 24 July the operation was conducted by a band of masked men, who murdered du Chaila. It was the signal for a desperate rising and a grim repression. On 15 May, England, the United Provinces, and Austria had declared war on France. The insurgents campaigned with the hope of rescue coming from the armies of international Protestantism, while the forces of order retaliated with the savagery of men who were repelling traitors to the national cause.

For twenty months, the Camisards (so called from the white shirts constituting their uniform) waged successful guerrilla warfare, but in April 1704 they met with defeat and, what made their situation untenable, lost their concealed store of weapons and ammunition. Louis XIV's army commander, the maréchal de Villars, offered them generous terms: a general amnesty, the rank of colonel in the royal service to their leader Jean Cavalier,¹⁰ with command of a regiment composed of those of his Camisard fighters who were disposed to join him. It was the magnanimity of an aristocrat and the realism of the professional soldier, the sort of gesture unthinkable to the bishops and bureaucrats. The resulting pacification did not last. Only

40 out of about 2,000 Camisards agreed to enlist and though Cavalier had a secret interview with Louis XIV, by the end of the year he had fled from France, becoming a major-general in British service and ending up as lieutenant-governor of Jersey. Sporadic fighting continued in the Cévennes for six years, culminating in a rising started by Abraham Mazel in the Vivarais. In July 1710 a token English landing took place on the Mediterranean coast, but by then a peace of desolation reigned in the southern mountains.

An agent concerned in fanning the embers of the Camisard revolt in 1709 was Cortiez, who had fought alongside Cavalier and then taken refuge in Switzerland, one of a small group of exiles on the payroll of England. After a renewed flight to Geneva, he was back in France early in 1715, when he had a momentous meeting with an earnest Calvinist fifteen years his junior, Antoine Court.¹¹ At the age of 13, Court had been recruited to the charismatic movement, in 1708 being assigned as a guard to a prophetess, 'Claire', who dangerously wandered in the Cévennes. Having become progressively disillusioned, when Claire prophesied a miracle in his own life for Christmas 1713 and nothing happened, he departed to take up a career in commerce in Marseille. Not for long, since Cortiez arrived to upbraid him for faint-heartedness, sending him off to preach and distribute catechisms at Nîmes in February 1715. Young as he was, Court was a genius at organization, and made it his vocation to restore the discipline which from 1559 to 1685 had regulated French Protestantism. He foresaw a federation of churches intelligently controlled by pastors and elders, worshipping God in defiance of authority but repudiating armed resistance, which could only lead to atrocities and perpetuate the idea of the Huguenots as disloyal subjects. The strict organization would quell the prophets, those 'dupes of zeal and credulity'.¹² In August 1715 and in the following January, two synods were held in the 'Desert' near Nîmes, small affairs consisting of the preachers of the region and a few laymen. With Court as moderator, the framework of a formal discipline was adopted. Every church was to have elders who would arrange services and call the faithful to attend, hide and guide the visiting pastor, supervise morals, and collect for the poor. The ministers were to form a 'corps', and the elders were to check on their conduct, in particular ensuring they did not finance their tours by dipping into the charitable fund. At the end of each *colloque* (the meeting of the communities served by a single pastor) and the wider synods, the 'censure aimable et fraternelle' would take place, the ministers and laymen present holding a communal examination of each other's

conduct. Court also got special precautions against illuminism included. In accordance with St Paul's ruling, women were banned from preaching, though they could pray with the sick and teach—and, indeed, be given a wage for doing so. There was a severe, but slightly ambiguous, formula against prophesying: 'we must listen to the Word of God as the sole rule of our faith and . . . refuse all so-called revelations in which we have nothing which can sustain our faith'. These solemn regulations were composed by fugitives on the knife-edge of danger. Of the seven preachers present in January 1716, one was hanged two years later, and two others five years after that. One of these was Jean Vesson, a prophet prone to ecstatic seizures; the other was Jean Huc, a former Camisard, who regarded such manifestations as the work of the Devil.

The reorganization in Bas-Languedoc was followed by similar returns to the old discipline in other areas—in a few places very easy to do since the local churches had contrived to maintain their rule by elders throughout the persecution. The prevailing structure¹³ by 1740 had a weekly meeting of the elders and three times a year a formal session in consistory—that is, with the minister present, though far from dominant, for the consistory could censure him or suspend him. By 1725, some of the churches were so well organized that they had their own seals:¹⁴ a ship on an angry sea with the inscription 'Save Lord we perish', a feminine figure of Religion holding a cross with 'Beneath the Cross we triumph'. Twice a year, the churches collectively served by a single pastor sent two delegates each to a *colloque*, where the pastor presided. When a provincial synod was called, it consisted of the pastor and two lay representatives from each *colloque*. This meeting would elect a moderator, have Bible readings and prayers, followed by deliberations and ending with communion, the *Sainte Cène*. Cases of misconduct would be brought before the synod, where they were judged without appeal.

Having initiated this strengthening of the structure of churches and provinces, Court's role henceforward was to build up a nationwide connection linking all the provinces together. In 1726, he held a national synod, the first for seventy years. In the following year he set up a seminary in Lausanne to train pastors—not in Geneva, for here the French embassy had its spies. Court also had Benjamin Duplan appointed as 'deputy general of the churches of Languedoc', commissioned to tour Germany, Switzerland, the United Provinces, and England, soliciting subsidies from governments and creating fund-raising committees.¹⁵ With a price on his head and government agents on his trail, Court finally withdrew to Lausanne in 1729,

whence he conducted a clandestine correspondence with the churches of the various provinces.¹⁶ The extent of his achievement is seen in the attendance at the sixth national synod in 1756, the thirty-three deputies representing every area, the Cévennes, Saintonge, the Aunis, Velay, the Forez, Languedoc, Guyenne, the Bordelais, Foix, Provence, Dauphiné, Orange, Normandy, the Angoumois, Périgord, and the Agenais. His promptings had transformed cowed and isolated communities into a national network of churches capable of negotiating with the persecuting government—indeed, the purpose of the meeting of 1756 was to discuss taking the prince de Conti as the recognized ‘protector’ of the Reformed religion.¹⁷ Though capable of action as a unity, it was a decentralized Church run by laymen, and therefore capable of survival in individual units under the attacks of persecution. It was also a ‘popular’ Church, for with so much to lose, the notables had abandoned leadership. In 1744, Paul Rabaut, the leading pastor in France, wrote to Antoine Court reflecting sadly on the cowardice of the bourgeoisie: ‘the slightest squall strikes alarm into their hearts and renders my efforts almost useless. Only the *petit peuple* stand firm, however violent the tempest.’¹⁸

The Lausanne seminary, said Michelet, was ‘l’étrange école de la mort’—the shadow of the scaffold lay darkly across its graduates. There was a price of 3,000 livres on the head of every pastor, ten years’ income for an artisan. In 1752 the reward offered for bringing in Paul Rabaut was increased to 20,000.¹⁹ Simon Lombard, a ‘proposant’ for the ministry, describes how he got a friend in Montpellier to take him round the sites of martyrdom, the Esplanade where the scaffold was erected, the citadel where the condemned awaited the end; his guide nodded his head to indicate the window of the cell, ‘a cell which one day could become mine’.²⁰ The hanging of pastors continued long after enlightened public opinion had repudiated it. An adversary of Protestantism admitted that eight were executed between 1745 and 1761.²¹ In the Nîmes area, it took a parade of military force to ward off rescue attempts. At the end of 1745, Roux, pastor and physician, was sent to the galleys with an escort of 100 soldiers, and in the following January, Désubas was taken from Nîmes to Montpellier to die, chained in a cart, with 800 soldiers marching alongside and others picketing the woods and fields along the route.²² A force of 300 was needed to arrest Bénézet in Vignon in 1752; when he was hanged two years later, an unknown hand struck down the widow Villaret who had betrayed him.²³ In Dauphiné, where the Huguenots were fewer and more submissive, the

parlement of Grenoble could hang Louis Ranc in 1745 with every circumstance of ignominy, dragging the corpse through the streets on a hurdle and displaying the head on a spike in a triumphal gesture.²⁴ The last pastor to be hanged was Rochette, arrested near Caussade on 14 September 1761. Calvinist gentry turned out with fowling pieces, but the mayor had the tocsin rung and Catholics with muskets, pitchforks, and ferocious dogs and wearing pious badges in their hats gathered to ensure there was no rescue. Rochette was paraded 'lié et garotté' through Caussade and taken to Cahors. His co-religionaries petitioned Choiseul for the abrogation of the death sentence—'in this age of enlightenment . . . a million voices cry for mercy'.²⁵ Rochette was executed on 19 February 1762, the year of the terrible miscarriage of justice in the Calas case, the year which was to stand as marking the moral bankruptcy of the persecution policy of the *ancien régime*.

Pastors came to their dangerous office by various inspirations. A son would follow his father in vocation, as did Paul Rabaut's eldest, brought up in Switzerland by Antoine Court.²⁶ Boys of devout families would be sent as guides to ministers who were being smuggled round the countryside, and would thus serve an apprenticeship. Paul Rabaut, son of a merchant draper, was going on such missions in the Cévennes from the age of 16, and in his turn, Jean Guizot, of a prosperous silk-stocking manufacturing family, was guide to Rabaut.²⁷ Both of these moved on to be accepted as proposants in a synod and to study in the Lausanne seminary before receiving the laying-on of hands from their future colleagues. By contrast, Pierre Morin²⁸ was called by the four churches of the Norman *bocage* in 1743 without ordination, refusing Court's invitations to come to Lausanne for study and commissioning (after six years he departed for Jersey, where he became an Anglican clergyman). Usually, pastors were full-time, salaried by the churches, with pensions for their widows. A remarkable exception was Paul Bosc,²⁹ who studied medicine at Montpellier and in Holland, and after a government mission to England, became a physician to the Court at Versailles. Yet, from 1751, the year of his ordination, he was leading a double life, going out on evangelizing campaigns in the countryside. Few guessed that the preacher going under the names of 'Paul Forès' and 'Philarète' was a royal medical consultant. Inevitably, most ministers remain shadowy figures, concealing their real names to save their wives from victimization, adopting disguises, confiding in few. In their clandestine life-style there was opportunity for moral slackness, but there were hardly any scandals. Any breach of morals

by an established pastor was taken very seriously. To judge such a case in 1743, Paul Rabaut had three colleagues join him in the Desert near Nîmes, coming there at great personal risk—one from Dauphiné, one from the Vivarais, and Antoine Court himself venturing out of his haven across the frontier.³⁰

It was impossible to maintain the tradition of a learned ministry in the eighteenth century. The bitterness of the struggle against Catholicism distorted the teaching at Lausanne:³¹ there was little exegesis or history, but much controversy about transubstantiation, purgatory, and the papacy. The positive emphasis was on Christian duty and practice, not dogma. Predestination no longer dominated the theological horizon: the standard textbook, Roches' *Défense du Christianisme*, steered a middle course between faith and works. Once back in France on the preaching circuit, pastors had little opportunity for study. Outlaws had only a limited access to books, those available being sent from the faithful in Switzerland and Holland—New Testaments and Psalters, the catechisms of Osterwald and Drelin-court, and works suited to maintain belief in times of tribulation, Pictet's *Manne mystique du Désert* and Osterwald's *Préservation contre la corruption*.³² Under the stress of persecution, Judaistic reflections arose: the revocation had been caused by the idolatry and backsliding of the chosen people; the exiles by the waters of Babylon dreamt of return and the fall of their enemies. The millenarian hopes evident in the now decried prophets lived on among the pastors in a more decorous fashion—even Paul Rabaut tried to foretell the future, proclaiming the end of the Babylonish captivity after forty years, in 1755. Looking further ahead, he predicted eerily the rise of a man of destiny from Corsica or Sardinia to re-establish religion in 1802.³³ In reaction against the theological wrangling of the past and as a result of lack of opportunity to study, the preaching was limited to simpler themes. By a different route, the pastors were drawing towards the deists of the Enlightenment. Paul Rabaut avoided dogma, keeping away from predestination and the Trinity, concentrating on moral conduct and Christian loyalty, to the point of proclaiming something near to salvation by good works, using the parable of the talents to illustrate the bigger rewards reserved for those who worked hardest for the faith. 'In this age, more than any other', he said in 1768, 'it is necessary to simplify religion, to remove from it everything accessory. Then it will be appreciated by philosophers and be within the grasp of the people.'³⁴ Yet this was not cold moralistic preaching; it could be tender and moving, and even when moralizing without passion, it was sincere. Except in one respect. Among the sermons published at

the time a favourite theme was loyalty to the Crown, to the king and his family, and to the national cause in foreign wars.³⁵ This was the line laid down by Antoine Court, conscious that the only hope of extracting even a limited toleration was by demonstrating complete pacifism. This was all the flourishes of loyal rhetoric could ever mean—non-resistance: genuine affection for the monarchy was dead in Protestant hearts.

II

Persecution distorts not only consciences, but statistics. Estimates of the numbers of Protestants in France were made at various times in the eighteenth century and offer a conspectus of irreconcilable figures.³⁶ An official document of the intendency of Languedoc in 1700 gave the precise total of 597,829; a rabid Catholic polemicist in mid-century said 1,000,000, increasing this to 2,000,000 in another publication to increase his readers' sense of alarm. In 1755 a former chaplain to the Swedish embassy, a Lutheran, hoping to inspire shame rather than alarm, improved the figure to 3,000,000, with 60,000 in Paris alone. An official estimate of 1811 said that there were at least 1,200,000. If a figure has to be hazarded, 1,000,000, half-way between the official overviews of 1700 and 1811, might be taken. But the discussion slips into unreality, for the question is: what criteria had been used to define a 'Protestant'? A few years after the revocation, in the diocese of Alais³⁷ there were 17,902 'old Catholics', and of the Reformed, 1,503 had emigrated, and 41,736 had abjured, becoming 'new Catholics'. Of these, 20,854 did not make their communion in 1688—presumably these were officially counted as still being Calvinists. Perhaps there were more, for we need to know what coercion was being applied to ensure the fulfilment of the Easter duty, the royal edict forbidding this blasphemous use of force coming ten years later. In any case, the logic of the calculation would be eroded as the years passed: the true sentiments of some who had communicated would be revealed by their absence, and some who had stayed away at Easter would drift on as non-practising Catholics without returning to their old allegiance. Looking at long-term changes in particular localities, the effect of Louis XIV's cruelty and the continued pressure under Louis XV is evident. In the Calais–Boulogne area, of 3,000 Huguenots, about 1,000 emigrated; most of those who stayed were confounded with the general population by 1725, receiving the Catholic last

sacraments on their deathbeds; an estimate of 1760 said that only sixty remained unshaken.³⁸ A similar story can be told of Pontivy, once a dissident enclave under the protection of the Rohan family, and of Alençon, where there had been 6,000 Protestants in the seventeenth century, with none of their family names surviving on to the twentieth-century registers of the Reformed Church.³⁹ This collapse of dissent could happen, even in the Cévennes: in 1685 Vans had equal numbers of both confessions, but in 1802 there were 246 Protestants and 1,325 Catholics.⁴⁰ Yet in the South, most of the 'new Catholics' remained fiercely anti-Roman and loyal to their old convictions; the bishop of Apt in 1716, of Castres in 1726, and of Rodez in 1731 complained that the so-called converts never came near their churches.⁴¹

The ultimate achievement of Louis XIV was to have increased unbelief and anticlericalism. Those who were denied the practice of their old religion had no respect for the new. 'You cannot say they are Huguenots', said the intendant of Agen in 1700; 'without instruction in any religion they know only that their fathers were, and that they must not become Catholics.'⁴² Twenty-five years later, Saurin, one of the oracles of Calvinism, in a critique published in Holland, declared that 'hatred of the Roman religion allied to ignorance of ours will soon produce the rejection of both'.⁴³ It is far from true, of course, that persecution always fails. There are examples of girls taken from their families and confined in convents who accepted the life and stayed there as nuns (eight of the thirty-five recruits to the Ursulines of La Rochelle between 1688 and 1735⁴⁴); there are examples of the second and third generation of the 'new Catholics' producing priestly and monastic vocations. The Gallican Church offered spirituality, worthwhile careers, refuges, and sinecures; in the nature of the case there would be takers for all these benefits. But on the whole, the Church, to the rank and file of the new converts, was an institution to be cynically used to serve ambition and family interests. For the rich, to add status to wealth would require a display of Catholicity to get on to the higher rungs of office and influence. A successful tanner of Guines saved his fortune by converting in 1700, while his two sons emigrated. In 1743, he fled to England to die in his old faith, while one son came back to join Rome and inherit, later marrying with *éclat* at a ceremony attended by the bishop and numerous clergy.⁴⁵ A draper with landed property in Dauphiné abjured, while his wife fled abroad; by the 1770s their three sons are found as Catholics prominent in the Company of the Indies.⁴⁶ A Parisian family growing prosperous in

the wine trade remained dissidents until one member had the opportunity to become a farmer general; this was the signal for a rush to the Roman faith, and a brother was able to marry his daughter to a *maréchal de France*. 'When we were just tavern keepers we were honest folk,' said the one remaining Huguenot. 'Brother,' was the reply, 'if I am putting my daughter in Babylon there are comfortable lodgings there.' 'Oui, mon frère, il y en a de tels dans ce monde.'⁴⁷ Perhaps it was not so much unbelievers that persecution created, but unenthusiastic nominal Catholics increasing the growing number of anticlericals among the Catholic laity. If the definition of a Protestant had been one who censured the intolerance of the Gallican Church and believed the pastors of the Desert were nearer to the ideal of Christ than the Catholic clergy, the figure of 3,000,000 might have been a judicious estimate.

III

From highway regulations to the scaffold, from the organization of the Gallican Church to the status of the nobility, the edicts of Louis XIV determined the jurisprudence of the reign of his successor. This was disastrous for the Huguenots, especially those who regarded it as sinful to take advantage of the concession granted to Naaman the Syrian and bow the knee in the house of Rimmon. But they devoted all the ingenuity for which they were famed in matters of business to evading the penal laws directed against them, the mania for litigation and the inefficiency and corruption of the *ancien régime* assisting their endeavours. In theory, the goods of those who emigrated were forfeit. In 1692, to prevent would-be fugitives liquidating their assets, the newly converted were forbidden to sell property without permission, and in 1699, the nearest Catholic relatives could not inherit, everything being confiscated to the Crown. What happened in fact was that vast sums were transferred abroad through banking and commercial manœuvres;⁴⁸ by handling these transactions, Samuel Bernard, who abjured in 1685, became the greatest financier of the reign, whose loans kept Louis XIV's armies in the field. Property was shuffled around among relations, kept in the hands of those who were conforming and staying. As time went on, if there was no heir, a son or a nephew from the Refuge abroad would be sent for to come back to convert and take over the heritage.⁴⁹ The various forms of *régie* set up to organize the confiscations and sell or lease the property were unproductive. Every seizure led to seven or

eight lawsuits—there were over a thousand actions in the courts opened every year.⁵⁰ It was hard to find takers for leases, for there might be expensive complications and, in some places, more tangible dangers than mere litigation.

The laws excluding Huguenots from public office, the professions, and the guilds might be expected to be easier to enforce, with Catholics directly concerned watchful to keep out competitors;⁵¹ in fact, only the prestigious offices of the State and the judiciary were closed to heretics. The attempts of the government to ensure obedience were fitful. The edict of 13 December 1698 codified the exclusions concerning educational and judicial posts, but did not mention many others like *avocats*, surgeons, midwives, and municipal officers, an omission taken as an invitation to leniency.⁵² The edict of 14 May 1724 covered all professional employments, but after the elapse of two years, attempts to prosecute offenders were few and far between. The final effort came in 1744–5, a time of recrudescence of anti-Protestant feeling. Apart from these episodic incursions into severity, few Huguenots were penalized. In many places, it was impossible to dispense with their expertise or generosity. Rich and civic-minded citizens were needed to serve on municipalities, dipping into their private income to serve the public good, and, indeed, able to afford to buy the offices when the Crown put them up for sale. Doctors, surgeons, and midwives were judged by competence, not conformity. A village was lucky to find a fully literate schoolmaster or schoolmistress, and in Protestant areas it was hard to extract the money to pay a Catholic one. Given Louis XIV's insistence that all his subjects belonged to the Roman faith, the logic of exclusion was flawed. A 'certificate of Catholicity' was required for entrance to a trade or profession, and since idle and indifferent Catholics could get it, so could temporarily compromising Huguenots. The document might be obtained from a tolerant or venal curé or by fraud, but most were facilely genuine. The 'new Catholics' simply acted the part of the converts they were officially declared to be by attending church for a month or two to qualify. This exasperated the Catholic hierarchy, and the Assemblies of Clergy regularly registered complaints throughout the eighteenth century. In 1698, two prelates had made astonishing proposals:⁵³ the bishop of Montauban suggested that the certificates be renewable annually, and his colleague of La Rochelle wanted all 'new Catholics' excluded from office, since their conversion was bound to be insincere. They were advocating clerical domination with a vengeance, with all the accompanying circumstances of corruption

and hypocrisy. The persecuting government was not sufficiently blind to the social decencies to indulge them, and through the reign of Louis XV, doctors, surgeons, apothecaries, midwives, *avocats*, notaries, *procureurs*, masters of guilds, officers in financial posts and municipalities presented their certificates and exercised their profession, their religious affiliations manifestly dubious. This was so not only in Nîmes, the metropolis of Calvinism, but in Toulouse, the citadel of Catholic obscurantism. There were even Protestant booksellers and printers. They occasionally dealt in books concerning their religion, but this was dangerous. Mme de Beaumes, a Protestant, contrived to edit the *Journal des dames* (in one number attacking Richelieu as 'the destroyer of La Rochelle'), but she had craftily taken up lodgings in the Temple, a seigneurie of the prince de Conti, immune from the Parisian police.⁵⁴

The certificate trap caught some Huguenots whose circumstances were disadvantageous. André-Charles Caron, practising his religion in the army, where it was officially accepted, was a marked man when he came out and wanted to break into the clock-makers' guild at the higher rank of *maître*, so he abjured before the archbishop of Paris.⁵⁵ Oddly, he was thereafter a fervent Catholic, as his son Beaumarchais found to his cost. A notary already practising at Castres was thrown out when in 1741 he contemptuously told the bishop he 'did not intend to deceive him as many others have done—he would not go to church and would not perform any Catholic duty'.⁵⁶ Jeanbon Saint-André could not be called to the Bar at Montauban, for his family were proud and notorious Calvinists; he became a sailor, then a pastor, and when the opportunity came, a revolutionary administrator.⁵⁷ Lower down the social scale there was no escape from the exigencies of the clergy for a Calvinist who in his declining years fell upon evil days and had to apply to get into a municipal institution. Almost all of them demanded a certificate of Catholicity for entrance and strict religious conformity inside. This was why Isaac Girard, a broken-down drunkard but a determined dissident, held out as long as he could, then finally gave up and abjured to get into the *hôtel-Dieu* of Blois in 1722.⁵⁸ But most Protestant churches, however small, made collections to maintain their own poor, not only from Christian charity, but also to rescue brands from the burning and prevent lapses into idolatry.⁵⁹

In strict theory, members of the Reformed Churches of France gave no recognition to the ceremonies of Rome. Their book of discipline published at The Hague in 1760 limited communion to those 'publicly renouncing all the idolatries and superstitions of the

Roman Church'.⁶⁰ To give literal obedience would require heroic determination, as shown by confessors of the faith on the galleys, flogged for their refusal to kneel at mass. A variant of this dilemma arose when the curé took the Sacrament through the streets to administer to the dying, and once a year at Corpus Christi, when the *fête-Dieu* procession circulated. Failure to doff the hat generally incurred a fine or rough treatment.⁶¹ The *fête-Dieu* was a special case, since by law every householder had to decorate his premises. For the most part, Protestants did not choose to do battle on this issue, and Catholics did not choose to be exigent. After all, the procession had become a civic celebration interwoven with frivolities, while 'decoration' was a matter of definition, allowing Catholics as well as heretics to comply in a perfunctory fashion.

Draping a carpet over a window sill at Corpus-Christi was a routine gesture: resorting to the Roman Church at births, marriages, and deaths was something like treachery. In his *Lettres écrites aux protestants de France au sujet des mariages des réformés et du baptême de leurs enfants* (1730), Antoine Court was uncompromising: it was sinful to go to the curé for baptisms and weddings—indeed, such marriages were null. This refusal to accept the reality of Catholic marriage was theologically indefensible, but even Court could not deny the efficacy of baptism performed by a Christian believer, clerical or lay, of whatever denomination. Since the ministrations of the curé at his font, however unwelcome, were valid, many Huguenots accepted the established Church's baptismal ceremonies. It was impossible to conceal the birth of an infant from the authorities, and the child gained a legal existence by being entered on the register, even if a rigorist priest put down a form of words implying illegitimacy. In Poitou, there was a case of a fervent Calvinist who was sent to the galleys for his faith, but had always taken his children to the curé's font.⁶² By contrast, there were places where, probably with Catholic connivance, children were baptized in the Desert, and entered on illegal registers kept by the pastors, sometimes on official stamped paper. From 1740, more families were plucking up courage to take this course, hence the royal edict of 1751, ordering a search for these children and their conditional baptism in the parish church. A serious attempt to enforce the edict was made in Languedoc; families with children from babes in arms to 7-year-olds were marched to the fonts with a police escort.⁶³

By the laws of France, a marriage, to be legal, had to take place with the nuptial blessing from the curé, so to marry before a pastor in the Desert meant the couple would be deemed to be living in

concubinage and their children illegitimate. Edicts of 1692 and 1724 reaffirmed the law and these penalties in detail. Faced with such dire consequences, some Huguenots took a brief holiday from conscience and married 'en face de l'église'. In his journal, Paul Bosc lamented that this was the practice among the people he knew—they even applied to Rome for dispensations if they were within the prohibited degrees.⁶⁴ A rigorous curé backed by a like-minded bishop might delay the ceremony, perhaps for long, by imposing *épreuves*, tests of genuine adherence to the Roman faith, but fortunately, these intolerant characters were few. A curé of Poitou who was accustomed to pronouncing the nuptial blessing over his heretic parishioners complained that this was the only time he saw them—they never darkened the church doors again.⁶⁵ In an isolated place a curé might be found whose complicity was venal, giving the certificate, pocketing the fee, and leaving the couple to make their own arrangements with a pastor.⁶⁶ This was dangerous for all concerned: the certificate might be annulled and the parish priest sent to the galleys. In frontier areas, enterprising couples could cross the border to obtain the Reformed rite, though it was advisable to come back with a document mendaciously mentioning the blessing of the Roman Church.⁶⁷ The brave and obstinate who refused to compromise and obeyed Antoine Court to the letter evolved a procedure for establishing for themselves a legality outside the law.⁶⁸ They would go to a notary and make a contract of marriage containing the safeguarding clause: 'They undertake to proceed to the benediction of the Catholic, apostolic and Roman Church at the first request of either party'; then they waited for a Desert assembly and the presence of the pastor.⁶⁹ The future might hold troubles for them. Would the curé question their status and initiate proceedings? When a child arrived, would he put a snide entry of illegitimacy in the baptismal register? Or would there be a challenge in the law courts? This could happen if either party came to desire to be free of the other; there was a famous case at Nîmes where the woman ran off with a younger man and wanted her dowry back, and another at Toulouse where, as late as 1764, the parlement authorized a man to leave his wife and children and contract a new union.⁷⁰ On the death of the husband, a relative might sue to try to oust the wife and children from their inheritance. In the 1740s, when the old fears of Calvinists forming a fifth column in the nation in time of war revived, the more reactionary parlements embarked on a campaign to nullify Desert marriages, prohibiting cohabitation, issuing sentences of banishment, and declaring the children bastards.⁷¹

Atrociously, the magistrates of Bordeaux passed life sentences on a husband and wife, the one to the galleys, the other to the hospital, in spite of their plea that for long they had tried to marry by the Roman rite and had always been turned down by their curé.⁷² Separation orders were still being issued by the sovereign courts of Bordeaux and Grenoble in 1757 at a date when their verdicts were in defiance of all liberal opinion; the parlements were on their way to the great forensic scandals in Toulouse which were to bring them into irredeemable discredit.

Protestants marrying did well to conform for the sake of the future and their children, but when they came to die, fearing no more the frown of the great, and past the tyrant's stroke, why should they not address their last prayers to God after their own fashion? The persecutors did their best to deprive them of the Psalmist's boon of 'peace at the last'. A 'new convert' who refused the last sacraments when told he was dying was counted as 'relapsed'; if he recovered, he could be sent to the galleys (if a woman, to life internment). The squeamish who worried about the disposal of their mortal remains would know that when life left the body, it would be dragged through the streets on a hurdle to the local rubbish tip. The edict of 1724 spelt out these penalties (prescribed by Louis XIV in 1686), and added the further posthumous punishment of confiscation of property—there would be nothing left for the wife and children. The court of the *bailliage* or *sénéchaussée*, being apprised of the infraction of the law, would hear the evidence of the curé and of at least one more witness concerning the deathbed scene and consider the record of the family concerning religious practice, and could then proceed to the verdict of 'relapse' and confiscation.⁷³ In fact, such macabre investigations were few, and heirs were rarely threatened. Most curés would not make a complaint or testify, and if one of them did so, the magistrates might look for an excuse to avoid pronouncing.⁷⁴ In 1726, one local judge refused to proceed in the absence of evidence to prove that the dead Calvinist had abjured originally, for without abjuration there could be no 'relapse'; in 1733, another non-suited Catholic relatives who were alleging refusal of the sacraments on the grounds that only 'public officials' could initiate the complaint, not private persons. Protestants also took legal precautions. One was to put in the last will and testament a request to be given a Catholic burial, knowing the curé would not allow it.⁷⁵ Another was to have relatives and neighbours swear (and better still, have a notary to attest) that death had been 'sudden'.⁷⁶ Yet even when the unexpected nature of the event had

been established and the curé had made no complaint, there could be problems concerning burial. The Catholic cemetery was not available except in unusual circumstances or by dubious means. In his earlier, penurious days, the abbé Raynal buried a heretic in consecrated ground for a bribe of 60 livres and in 1770 a Calvinist banker was laid to rest in the churchyard of Saint-Eustache, having left a bequest to the poor of the parish.⁷⁷ Such concessions were rare. A visiting Englishman whose daughter died during their travels was turned away by the clergy of Lyon:

Denied the charity of dust, to spread
O'er dust, a charity their dogs enjoy.⁷⁸

In Paris, there was a 'tolerated' Huguenot cemetery in a wood merchant's yard;⁷⁹ elsewhere it would be a garden or a field. In any case, no procession or public manifestation was allowed, the formula in Paris being 'at night, in silence, without scandal or display'. This proviso, principally to ensure the Roman Church's monopoly of public ceremony, was also calculated to minimize the danger of hostile demonstrations. At Lavaur in 1749, the burial of Claude Cabanis caused two days of rioting, the mob clamouring to drag his corpse on a hurdle. Not surprisingly, his heirs closed his silk factory, and some of the demonstrators lost their employment.⁸⁰ At Dieppe as late as 1765, the municipal council changed the regulation enforcing nocturnal burials, as the police could not keep order in the darkness. Other problems arose for local authorities from the clandestine funeral procedures imposed upon Protestants: in particular, how could reliable identification of the body be ensured? In 1716, the intendant of Soissons ordered the exhumation of a woman because her husband had buried her in the garden without formal witnesses.⁸¹ In 1736, however, a government edict overcame the difficulty by going a long way to allowing the Protestants an *état civil* of their own: the relatives would notify the death to the nearest royal judicial officer, requesting his permission to proceed to burial. This would mean that the court would have available an official record of the death. Even so, the curé might be willing to put a note in his register. Most of the entries 'décédé de mort subite' in Poitou were local Calvinists. In a village in the South the standard formula all through the century was 'a new Catholic buried in a field by the diligence of relatives and friends and put down for record on the Catholic register of interments'.

A more logical variant of coercion than haunting the dying was the regulation obliging Protestant parents to send their children to

school and to the curé's catechism—after all, the great hope of the original persecution had been to catch the second generation for genuine conversions. Given the brooding ill will of the parents and the natural recalcitrance of children, this was a formula for absenteeism and disruption.⁸² The intendant of Dauphiné could have been speaking for all the *généralités* when, in 1726, he reported on his 'new Catholics': 'they perform no exercise of Catholicism and, whatever efforts are made, it is almost impossible to oblige them to send their children for instruction'. The curé would find himself facing a blank wall of opposition; he had the choice between getting his bishop to call in the secular arm, or shrugging his shoulders and being thankful for being spared a great deal of misbehaviour in his classes. In Mens in the diocese of Dié, where elementary education was provided by the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, most of the children of the Protestant majority were absent, and those who attended threatened their teachers and threw stones at their windows.⁸³ In Bergerac, another town where dissidents were numerous, the Récollet friars had a secret understanding to give instruction without mention of religion, and to ensure the flow of contributions to their collecting boxes, gave out certificates of Catholicity without asking questions.⁸⁴ A report from the diocese of Mende in 1745 said the Catholic schoolmasters were 'vilified and vexed in every way', while Huguenots were going around teaching the Calvinist catechism and the psalms of Beza and Marot.⁸⁵ This sort of information was sent to the central government by the more intolerant bishops, and the intendant who ruled locally in the king's name would be ordered to take disciplinary action. One way was to impose fines, generally collectively.⁸⁶ Another, particularly barbarous, was to take Protestant children away from their families and lock them up in a Catholic institution.

Children of the poor (mostly beneath the notice of the converters) would be sent to the orphans' wing of one of the hospitals, those of the rich to a nunnery, with the parents ordered to pay the pension.⁸⁷ Those of lesser bourgeois families, the social class most often victimized, were sent to one of the *Maisons des Nouvelles Catholiques*, conversion institutes run by nuns. This was an age of severity in the education of children: in the house at Rouen, from 7.15 a.m. prayers and mass to prayers at 9 p.m. there was four hours' recreation, the rest of the day filled with classes and pious exercises. Here, in the course of the century, we hear of seven girls who were converted and stayed on as nuns, and of one other who was released after ten years hating the place and all religion.⁸⁸ Although the edict

of 1724 nominated the officials of royal courts to initiate action, the abduction of Protestant children mostly took place at the instance of fanatical bishops corresponding directly with the minister in charge of religion and police at Versailles, directing the Maison du Roi—from 1725 to 1775 this was the comte de Saint-Florentin.⁸⁹ He had no religion—Voltaire says he was an atheist, and he certainly led a dissolute life, but as a dedicated bureaucrat with a servile zeal to please the bishops and the reactionary courtiers around the royal family, he enforced the persecution laws. Insensitive to the suffering of others and a stickler for the letter of the law, he had the mentality of the commandant of a concentration camp. It was a tragedy for the Protestants and for France that for half a century he was installed at the centre of the web of power under a drifting monarch incapable of accepting responsibility.

There were heartless interventions in Normandy in mid-century, ordained by Saint-Florentin at the instance of the bishop of Sées, who in 1748 was sending in lists of children to be interned.⁹⁰ At Athis, the boys and girls of five families were seized, the curé and his two vicaires leading the police (the *maréchaussée*) to the houses and watching as the doors were broken down with axes. A bourgeois of Alençon had his eldest daughter incarcerated for nine years (she was aged 24, and the pretext, unfounded, was that she desired conversion); the younger daughter was dragged away protesting with 'great cries'.⁹¹ In 1750, the bishop pounced on another Alençon family, the Loppé: the eldest boy was apprenticed to a goldsmith at his father's expense on condition he never saw his family and that certificates of his continuing Catholic education were sent to Saint-Florentin twice a year; the younger boy and the 9-year-old girl were put in the *Nouvelles Catholiques*. In November 1752 the bishop was demanding action against another Loppé son who had been spirited away to his grandmother's house, where he was living disguised as a girl.⁹² Another Calvinist family in Alençon craftily persuaded the intendant to order their son to a Catholic boarding-school at Paris, where they made it worth the director's while to allow the boy to spend Sundays with Protestant relatives.⁹³ Few prelates were as merciless as the bishop of Sées, though one who was crossed by the sight of self-confident heretics could always strike, like the archbishop of Rouen, who sent six girls to his *Maison des Nouvelles Catholiques* in 1748, and seven years later took away two girls aged 11 and 13, the daughters of a widow.

Fortunately, the range of operation of this odious system was limited: the families chosen for victimization were the overtly

defiant ones, or those tactically selected to stand as a warning to others. One limitation was that, quite simply, most clergy refused to invoke its rigours. Another was that there were not many places available in the institutes of the Nouvelles Catholiques; Normandy was served by houses at Rouen, Saint-Lô, Tours, Caen, and Alençon, but the biggest, at Rouen, had room for only twenty-five children. Somebody had to pay the maintenance fees of the children; in 1750, Saint-Florentin laid down the rules: the father to pay to the age of 9, the king after that age, from confiscated Protestant funds.⁹⁴ Some fathers could not pay, others would not, and given the detours of the administrative and legal processes, the years went by, the nuns clamouring for their money, which was rarely forthcoming. As ever under the *ancien régime*, strings were pulled, and funds provided by the State for fulfilling the king's will were diverted to keep private individuals comfortable. The converting institutions came to be used as refuges for decent, homeless ladies. Saint-Florentin made an investigation, and in 1747 wrote angry letters to the three intendants of Normandy and the archbishop of Lyon.⁹⁵ In Normandy, he had found a Protestant girl of illegitimate birth slipped in by the good offices of her curé, the daughter of a Catholic Irish officer killed at Fontenoy accepted at the instance of 'milord Clarck', and ladies of advanced years converted long ago and kept on as comfortable lodgers by sympathetic nuns. At Lyon, there were thirteen ladies from Switzerland who had come to France for personal reasons, abjured, and stayed on ever since with the king paying their *pension*. In future, said Saint-Florentin, every inmate must leave within three months of receiving First Communion—'these houses are not hospitals for the infirm nor refuges for the indigent, but houses of instruction for the propagation of the faith'. His anger at the thwarting of his persecution of families shows how inefficiency and corruption were doing more for religious toleration than humanitarian eloquence.

Only fanatical bishops solicited Saint-Florentin's *lettres de cachet*, and only like-minded officials executed them willingly. An intendant might reply with a letter of sardonic reservations.⁹⁶ The subdélégué of Dieppe in 1738 spoke of 'useless severities . . . seeming to me contrary to the political well being of the State'.⁹⁷ The lieutenant du roi at Havre in 1755 told his intendant that the order to seize two daughters of a widow was injudicious as well as cruel. One girl was too ill to be moved, and if the other was taken, a hundred families with Dutch and English contacts would send their children abroad. 'These people conduct themselves with the greatest loyalty and are

always ready to give generous help in the famines and shortages which so often occur. It is stabbing them to the heart to take their children away—all fear the same treatment'.⁹⁸ In this case the intendant had the order revoked, one of the rare occasions when Saint-Florentin was diverted from the policy of persecution. No doubt it was with the connivance of local officials that so many Huguenots on the north-east coast managed to get their children to safety abroad—a fishing boat takes a mother and daughter to meet the English cross-Channel sailing, while the commander of the *maréchaussée* does not hasten to make his arrest. Escape to the Refuge still meant the division of the family; in this case the mother came back to France, but the girl grew up abroad and married a merchant in Holland.⁹⁹ For insensitive men who want crude successes, persecution works. The threat of losing their children frightened many into gestures of conformity. Paul Bosc laments that so many allow their children to be educated in the Roman faith, taking consolation in the reflection that Catholicism, albeit abhorrent, if embraced in good faith can lead to salvation. Pastors touring Normandy at mid-century reported the Protestants to be loyal to their faith but not daring to show it because of the menace of the *enlèvement* of children.¹⁰⁰ One consistory at this time wrote to Antoine Court, 'Oh! que de Rachels parmi nous qui pleurent leurs tendres enfants.' It was a long-enduring and bitter memory.

IV

The Huguenots were not allowed to come together for worship: an assembly constituted defiance of Louis XIV's affirmation that all the inhabitants of his realm were Catholics, and of the general law of the kingdom forbidding unauthorized gatherings of citizens. The rationale was the danger to public order, and here was a case more serious than most, for the Camisard wars were not forgotten; when 2,000 to 3,000 Protestants were assembled, who knew what collective exaltation might inspire them to march against the curés? The lawyers, even those who hoped the king would see the wisdom of allowing Calvinist worship, insisted the law must be obeyed. 'God regards the tears and imploration addressed to him by a submissive individual,' said the standard law dictionary, 'but he is deaf to the prayers of a congregation gathered together against the orders of the Prince.'¹⁰¹ In the course of the eighteenth century, Louis XIV's absolutist policies came to be regarded as having been disastrous to

his country, but the mystique of his comprehensive legal codes lingered on. The regent Orléans, unbelieving and inclined naturally to the toleration of indifference, refused to 'derogate' from the Sun King's legacy—besides, he regarded the holding of assemblies as 'insolence'. In the first three years of his reign, three assemblies interrupted by soldiers led to a total of twenty-five men sent to the galleys for life and fifty-two women to perpetual imprisonment, nineteen individuals banished from the kingdom, and twenty condemned to death (though possibly not executed).¹⁰² Because of the harshness of the magistrates of Bordeaux, a woman caught with thirty neighbours in her house for psalm singing vanished into a convent for life, leaving seven children behind. These condemnations set a pattern of merciless intent which was codified in the draconian edict of 14 July 1724: Protestants caught in assemblies faced life sentences to the galleys or prison, and the preachers death on the scaffold.

Assembling for worship had been the universal custom of Christians since apostolic times, but was it absolutely necessary, or could it be discontinued in obedience to the positive command of the sovereign? Jacques Basnage from Holland in 1719 and pastor Desmarets from Geneva in 1745 published pastoral letters recommending compliance with the orders of the divinely ordained secular ruler 'who beareth not the sword in vain'.¹⁰³ Their views came as music to the ears of that ruler's diligent servants, and Cardinal Dubois reprinted and distributed Basnage's tract as Saint-Florentin did Desmarets'. The bourgeois Protestants in the North had a lot to lose, and rarely lived together in compact groups; they were inclined to accept this cautious line and hold their religious observances in their family circle. Antoine Court and Paul Rabaut denounced their pusillanimity. They saw the Old and New Testaments' prescriptions as clear: 'Three times shalt thou keep a feast unto me in the year' (Exod. 23: 14), 'not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is' (Heb. 10: 25). Simple folk needed instruction, and all believers needed the enheartening feeling of solidarity in fellowship. Without coming together, the Word could not be preached, and preaching was at the heart of Reformed worship—this was the only trouble with the mass, one pastor dangerously declared, it lacked 'a godly sermon'.¹⁰⁴ The view of Court and Rabaut prevailed among the peasants and artisans of the South, especially in the Cévennes. Here, there were large groupings of Huguenots leagued together to keep their secrets, smuggle in ministers, and outwit surveillance, while all around the inhabited areas were miles of desolate country where huge meetings could be

held in rocky amphitheatres and hidden ravines, with sentries posted on strategic heights. Sound theology, peasant obstinacy, and favourable terrain made the assemblies of the Desert the inspirational centres of the revival of Calvinism in France.

Paradoxically, the terrorizing edict of 1724 marked a relaxation of brutalities, not an intensification. Officials hesitated to make arrests which might bring down such savage penalties, and with peace on the frontiers, the old fears of Protestant disloyalty to the nation died away. When the War of the Austrian Succession broke out in 1740, and more especially after the declaration of war on England on 29 March 1744, the myth of Calvinists as traitors revived, leading to a new era of persecution, lasting to the end of the Seven Years War in 1763. In 1744, the bishops of Castres, Toulouse, and Lavaur sounded the alarm: the Huguenots, they said, were showing defiance—‘ils ont levé le masque’. One Ferret, a minister, was arrested, and confessed to knowing of English agents operating in the Cévennes.¹⁰⁵ In February 1750 D'Argenson noted rumours of a revolt brewing in Languedoc and Provence, where the Calvinists had ‘une armée toute prête à s'assembler’. Four years later he was recording stories of arms smuggled in from Savoy, and in February 1754 he heard of letters to the duke of Cumberland asking for a landing on the southern coast. These were matters for the consideration of the department of the Maison du Roi, where Saint-Florentin ruled as ruthless as ever. Once there was war with England, he instituted severe repressive measures. In Dauphiné, the parlement carried out his wishes with rigour, pulling down the houses of offenders and having a respectable woman flogged through the streets by the public executioner. On 7 April 1745 the bishop wrote to the *premier président* of the magistrates conveying ‘the applause of the Assembly of the Clergy of France for the zeal with which the parlement of Dauphiné has acted to stop the agitations of the Protestants’.¹⁰⁶ In the course of the following twelve months there were more than forty condemnations to the galleys and eight hangings as well as women sent to houses of correction. In the *généralité* of Auch in 1746, forty-five men of status were sent to the galleys; in that of La Rochelle there were brandings, floggings, imprisonments, and condemnations ‘to be bound to the instruments of torture until natural death ensues’.¹⁰⁷

In the Cévennes, a lethal game of hide-and-seek began, with troops deployed to seek out assemblies.¹⁰⁸ Villages plotted to outwit the soldiers by sending them on false trails, and to organize stealthy movements of worshippers converging on the final rendezvous; sentries were posted, and guides brought in the pastor at the last

minute, ready to spirit him away if the alarm was raised. The stakes were high: one assembly in 1742 brought two life sentences to the galleys and five women to prison; another in 1745, adjudged more culpable because the peasants fought against the soldiers, was marked by nine life sentences to the rowing benches of the fleet, 'the intention of the king being not to carry severity to excess'. But mostly the assemblies met, and the soldiers missed them, though the authorities might find out later and begin interrogations—that was why an *avocat* of Sainte-Foy who had taken the pastor to an assembly in 1745 sold up and fled with his family to Geneva. There were narrow escapes. In January 1751, the troops moved in too early, and all they found were two men of the advance party; no crime could be brought home to them, and after two months in gaol at Alais they were released. In November, Captain Bérat's detachment was seen long before it reached the gathering of 1,000 addressed by Pastor Combes; everyone escaped, and a watcher high on a rocky scarp showed his contempt for Bérat—'il défit sa culotte et lui montra son derrière'. At Aubais, assemblies were held with impunity, except in 1750 when the community was fined 500 livres and costs on suspicion. Sometimes, Catholics were accomplices in the conspiracy of evasion. In 1760 an army captain warned the local Calvinists when and where he was sending the dragoons, so that an assembly of 7,000 met to receive Easter communion while the official search went on elsewhere.

There are two well-documented raids on assemblies near Nîmes in 1755 and 1776 showing the mingling of black comedy and pathos characterizing these incidents of worship and repression. A soldier saw a number of people leaving the village of La Calmette; two boys sitting beside the fountain naïvely boasted about an assembly. A troop of sixty-three soldiers went out. The sentries gave the alarm; in the confusion, the pastor could not get to his horse, but escaped by running into the woods. Twenty people were arrested; five were children who had never yet been seen at church or school; eleven were women, one wounded in the thigh by a musket-shot. An old widow offered her kerchief as a bribe if they would let her go. Of the four men, when interrogated, one produced a certificate from his curé that he had been miles away at the time of the assembly; another said he had been rushing off to warn the captain of the meeting when he had been arrested by mistake. The other two declared they had gone 'to pray to God with their brethren'. One of these was kept in gaol for a year. The other, a 65-year-old tailor, declared that he would keep on going to assemblies, so he was

sentenced to the galleys for life (luckily, he was released ten years later). The four villages which had provided the congregation were heavily fined.¹⁰⁹ The other assembly, on 1 January 1756, presents a story worthy of the sentimental dramas of Nivelles de la Chaussée—indeed, a play on the theme of ‘the honest criminal’ was written about it. François Fabre and Honoré Turge, merchants of Nîmes, were caught because they were too old to run. Fabre's son Jean approached the returning soldiers and persuaded the captain to let him take his father's place. The new military commander of the province, the duc de Mirepoix, called the Protestant notables of Nîmes together; they were ‘faithful subjects’, he said, but assemblies are unlawful, even to Catholics, and he offered to release the two prisoners if Paul Rabaut undertook to leave the kingdom. The notables replied that worship at home was not enough to fulfil the laws of God. Paul Rabaut kept on preaching, and Turge and Jean Fabre were not released until ten years later.¹¹⁰ This story of suffering and self-sacrifice spread around, and was worth more to the cause of toleration than the reasonings of the Enlightenment.

The Calvinists were ‘faithful subjects’. Like the duc de Mirepoix, the officials who enforced Saint-Florentin's orders and witnessed their tragic results were acting against their better judgement and their consciences as private individuals. Tocqueville's view of the intendants as obedient agents of absolutism was mistaken: they were nobles, albeit mostly not of the ancient feudal caste, and they were rich in their own right, having risen by buying the prestigious office of *maître des requêtes* to the Royal Council. More and more, throughout the century, they demonstrated proud independence; they served the king loyally, but without subservience. In Poitou, two in succession were dismissed because they refused to enforce Saint-Florentin's orders against the Protestants, until in 1748 the ruthless Blossac took over, entering heartily into the policy of persecution.¹¹¹ In Guienne, the intendant stood aloof, leaving the distasteful business to the reactionary parlement. In Languedoc, Lenain, under orders ‘to extirpate the Protestant religion’, did nothing except what was specifically ordered in detail. When told to arrest the wives of pastors, he refused, observing tangentially that he wished everyone paid their taxes as punctually as the Protestants.¹¹² At his death in 1750, Saint-Priest took over, preaching ruthlessness, but soon he was refusing to send the soldiers to beat the countryside for assemblies. Even when there was a riot at Uzès and two curés were murdered, he left the repression to the military commander, and carried on with his plan to persuade the bishops not to ask for written

professions of faith from dissidents wanting to marry. When the Seven Years War ended, the intendant of Dauphiné wrote to Versailles asking for an amnesty and freedom of worship, if only for the economic rehabilitation of the province. ‘There are two religions in France’, he declared, ‘and it is folly to deny it.’ Turgot, ruling the *généralité* of the Limousin, typifies the spirit of a new generation of administrators inspired by the Enlightenment. He conspired with Protestants to preserve an illegal chapel from destruction, discouraged the bishop of Angoulême from sending a woman to a convent by ensuring that the cost of maintenance came from the episcopal revenues, and offered to let a Catholic who had converted to Protestantism escape when Saint-Florentin ordered his imprisonment. In fact, the man was unwilling as his property would be confiscated, so he reconverted to save it—‘a fine victory for the Roman Church’, wrote Turgot ironically.¹¹³

From Poitou, Blossac, the erstwhile hammer of dissent, in March 1764 wrote a scaring letter to Saint-Florentin, who had ordered him to take measures against the Calvinists. ‘Permit me, *Monsieur*, to ask you to tell me yourself what measures should be taken . . . experience proves it is not by fire and sword that you can annihilate this religion. It would be useless, dangerous and, perhaps, criminal to try it.’¹¹⁴

V

While the intendants were withdrawing their co-operation from the laws prohibiting assemblies, public opinion was turning decisively against those invalidating Protestant marriages. From the end of the seventeenth century, proposals for reform had been made, based on the premiss, accepted by theologians and lawyers alike, that marriage was a contract under natural law, the celebrants being the two contracting parties. Cardinal Noailles, archbishop of Paris, in 1698 had proposed allowing the secular magistrates to record the exchange of vows.¹¹⁵ Throughout the century, this was the view of the Jansenists, forcefully restated in 1756 in a treatise by Dr Jérôme Besoigne. This was welcome to the lawyers, who, if they had their way, would have treated matrimonial questions as purely secular affairs before the ordinary courts. An alternative designed to retain for the Catholic clergy a modicum of influence (and their fees) was put forward in 1726 by Robert, provost of the cathedral of Nîmes: the curé would act as registrar and pronounce a blessing, without

any question of a sacramental observance. Cardinal Fleury was prepared to countenance this, but the bishops and Rome refused. The definitive study giving all the arguments, political, legal, and theological, was published in 1755 by Karl Baër, a Lutheran pastor who had high-level advice—*Mémoire théologique et politique au sujet des mariages clandestins des Protestants de France*. His starting-point was to demolish the fiction on which the laws were based: far from there being no Protestants left in France, there were, he said, 3,000,000, half of them marrying in the Desert. The bishops keep the fiction going by their tests of Catholicity, varying all over the country. These demands harm religion by inciting to the profanation of the sacraments, and harm the State, being divisive and an obstacle to progress. Marriage is the foundation of the social order, the means by which the population is replenished and nations grow rich and powerful. The Roman Church, already imposing celibacy on its monks, nuns, and clergy, ought not to be allowed to hamper the unions of those outside its fold. If Huguenot marriages were to be legitimized, the exiles would begin to return, bringing their wealth with them. Change is easy, for since marriage is a contract under natural law, the monopoly right of the Roman Church is purely a gift from the sovereign, revokable. Instead of specifying the priest as the indispensable witness, the law could transfer the duty to the secular magistrates. Why should Catholics object? St Paul had accepted the marriages of the heathen; there was no question of their having to remarry if converted to Christianity.¹¹⁶ The treatise had enormous effect: the pious courtier, the duc de Luynes, confessed he was instantly converted by its arguments.¹¹⁷

Though the magistrates of the parlements fitfully resorted to grim severities against couples who had married in the Desert, they were bound to feel ambivalent about the legislation they were enforcing. It gave rise to lawsuits concerning legitimacy and inheritance in which the principles of family solidarity, parental authority, and the orderly transmission of property down the generations were undermined. The sovereign courts of France also regarded themselves as defenders of the laity against the pretensions of the clergy, and the matrimonial legislation greatly enhanced clerical power. There were bishops, especially in the South, who prescribed wearisome *épreuves* for Protestants before their banns could be called: even Saint-Florentin was scandalized to discover that the bishop of Dax had held up one couple for twelve years.¹¹⁸ Since the clerical monopoly in marriage was the grant of the secular sovereign, with the parlements as his enforcement officers, surely the clergy had a duty to

accept the couples who were constrained to present themselves?—Gallican France had not yet become a province of the Inquisition. Saint-Priest, intendant of Languedoc, in exasperation advised the ‘new converts’ to invoke the *appel comme d’abus* against churchmen who imposed unreasonable *épreuves*, for in such a case, a parlement, on its own principles, would have been obliged to find the ‘abuse’ of clerical authority proved.¹¹⁹ Although the magistrates operated within a system riddled with anomalies and distorted by laws designed to persecute, they were well aware of the concept of natural justice and of their duty to strive to render it to individuals. All the more so as the pre-Romantic cult of *sensibilité* was dawning, and opinion was moved by the stories of wives and children disinherited because of the invalidity of Desert marriages; judges who shed tears over tragic scenes in novels or on the stage, or were influenced by their women folk who did so, became disposed to look for ways to protect widows and orphans. From mid-century, nicely devised sanctions against predatory litigants were perfected. If either partner in a Protestant marriage wished to get rid of the other for disreputable reasons and had the union declared null, the court might decide that the abandoned wife (or could be, husband) had been, originally, the victim of ‘seduction’ by false promises, and thus entitled to heavy damages. Roux, a miller of the diocese of Dié, got the bishop to allow him to desert his wife and children to marry his servant in a Catholic ceremony; the parlement of Grenoble obliged him to return the dowry and pay 850 livres in compensation. As for collateral heirs intervening to claim the inheritance against wife or children, the courts put on them the obligation to prove that a legitimate marriage had not taken place. It was the parlement of Toulouse, breaking free from its reactionary past, which in 1769 summed up definitively the new jurisprudence in the case of widow Roubel and her two children: it was not for her to have to produce a marriage certificate, said the magistrates, since her marriage had been publicly recognized for eleven years; she had *état*, status.¹²⁰

In 1766, the papal nuncio reported the situation to Rome. The Calvinists face a choice between ‘celibacy or concubinage’ and their children are illegitimate—‘the difficulty cannot be eluded by the supposition that the sect does not exist’. Things had to change. The Pope must have an ‘instruction’ ready to take care of the impossible consequences of the clerical monopoly of the marriage ceremony in France.¹²¹ This was the year when the tide turned towards toleration, for even Saint-Florentin admitted something must be done, though he continued persecution while ways and

means were sought, a persecution modified by his order to execute the various penal decrees 'one at a time' to avoid unrest. Meanwhile he summoned the archbishop of Narbonne to Paris for discussions with Gilbert de Voisins, a royal councillor. The archbishop's reluctance was overcome by the prince de Beauvau, and he finally conceded that what he could not approve 'as a priest', he could accept 'as a citizen'. In 1767, Gilbert de Voisins produced his report recommending not only an *état civil* for the Protestants to legitimize their marriages, but also entrance to most professions and the right to resort to their own pastors for inconspicuous worship.¹²² It took another reign, another minister, and the elapse of twenty years before his proposals were implemented.

VI

Baër's treatise on marriage was a contribution to a debate on the wider issue of religious tolerance which raged with partisan bitterness in the 1750s.¹²³ The reactionary Catholic side was represented in pamphlets by the abbé de Villiers and the abbé de Montégut in 1756 and by the abbé de Caveirac in 1758—an apology for Louis XIV's revocation of the edict of Nantes with a justification of the massacre of St Bartholomew included. These writings were, in a sense, 'political' defences of religious intolerance, for Bayle's famous essay on 'Compel them to come in' had cast a cloud over the laboured scriptural and patristic citations still unconvincingly in circulation. On the Protestant side were the literary abbés Coyer, Forbonne, and Pluquet, the soldier the chevalier de Beaumont, and two Jansenists writing in collaboration, the lay canonist Maulrot and the priest Tailhé. The Jansenist contribution included praise of the Reformed religion as more conducive to moral conduct than Catholicism. This had already become a formula of the philosophes: articles in the *Encyclopédie* had recommended the Protestants' devotion to work, their limitation of the number of religious holidays, their inclination to religious toleration to promote economic expansion. In 1760, Caveirac's charges of disloyalty to the nation were refuted in Antoine Court's history of the troubles in the Cévennes; insurrection had been the result of savage repression directed against simple folk deprived of the restraining guidance of their pastors. But the main thesis of the Enlightenment had been set out in the chevalier de Jaucourt's encyclopaedia articles: secular penalties must not be used against heretics and unbelievers, the only

sanction against them being exclusion from the official Church.¹²⁴ This deceptively simple principle cut at the root of the Church–State alliance; it was too much for Rousseau, whose fervent deism did not need pastors and churches, and thought the Protestants unreasonable to ask for them. It was, however, the principle of Voltaire.¹²⁵ As he kept his immense sardonic calculation of the total of victims of religious persecution since Constantine, he could add entries every day from the oppression of the French Protestants by the Roman Church. To him, this Church was ‘l’Infâme’—not without an ironical side-glance at the menace of Protestant fanaticism under other circumstances. On 9 March 1762 an event took place in Toulouse which delivered the persecutors into his hands. ‘L’opinion fait tout,’ he was writing at the time, and here was the opportunity to muster the public opinion of France and the world to the cause of toleration.

On that day, the parlement of Toulouse condemned Calas, a respectable old Protestant, to death by breaking on the wheel. He had been convicted of strangling his son, Marc-Antoine, because he had engaged to become a Catholic—the family supposedly in complicity with the father’s cruelty. Voltaire began by accepting the verdict as possible, the crime being yet another example of religious fanaticism bitterly dividing a family. Then two sons of Calas fled to him at Ferney, and their story and the sheer improbability of all the circumstances cited in condemnation convinced him that an innocent man had perished cruelly on the scaffold. Marc-Antoine had been mentally unstable, and had hanged himself; old Calas, to avoid the shame of suicide, had cut him down and claimed to have found him on the floor. By an intense propaganda campaign and the leverage of influential contacts (by August Mme de Pompadour had been convinced), Voltaire rehabilitated the memory of Calas. On 7 March 1763 the lawyers of the Royal Council unanimously declared him innocent. The blame for the miscarriage of justice was placed on religious fanaticism. While the judges had conducted their interrogations, a Catholic mob had been demonstrating outside. The *monitoire* read in the churches had asked only for information on points relevant to a conviction. Marc-Antoine was buried with all the pomp of Catholic ceremonies, forty priests marching behind the hooded penitents in the funeral procession, the coffin lying in state on a catafalque decorated with a skeleton holding a martyr’s palm in one hand and a placard ‘Abjuration of heresy’ in the other. By contrast, the Calas family impressed the world by their simplicity and fortitude. Far from being monsters of bigotry, it turned out that

they had been models of tolerant decency: when another son had become a Catholic earlier, his parents had approved of him following his conscience and given him an allowance of 100 livres a year. Old Calas endured for two hours on the wheel, refusing the ministrations of two confessors whose good will could have brought him merciful quietus from the executioner. Voltaire was well aware of the value of these two hours of unmerited torment to the cause of the Protestants and the Enlightenment: ‘unfortunately no one was broken on the wheel this time’, he observed with savage irony when two years later he was fighting the case of another Protestant similarly accused.¹²⁶ Nonette Calas, the daughter, imprisoned in a convent, so impressed the nuns that they wrote to a contact in Court circles declaring her father could not have been guilty. Mme Calas, released from prison and called to Versailles for the rehabilitation ceremony, dignified and restrained in her tragic grief, won the respect of all. Twenty days before her husband had been unjustly executed, Pastor Rochette had been hanged, justly, as the law stood, in spite of a mass petition for mercy; the official policy of repression and the mentality underpinning it were simultaneously damned.

The Calas scandal broke the old stereotype of ‘salutary vexation’ to force dissidents to reconsider. If these things still happened in practice, they could no longer be defended. Shame changed the intellectual climate in the city of Toulouse. Loménie de Brienne, a philosophe in episcopal orders, became archbishop in 1763, making no secret of his support for religious freedom. The parlement, after one more unjust verdict on a case concerning marriage, lurched into liberalism, in 1769 establishing the doctrine of *état*, and later on even accepting the validity of a marriage certificate signed by Paul Rabaut. ‘Half of them have become philosophes,’ said Voltaire. In 1769 the tragedy *Béverley* was played in the theatre; in the fifth act, when the father raises his dagger against his son, the audience rushed out, unable to bear the memory.¹²⁷ The Académie des Jeux Floraux, the arbiter of Toulousian intellectual life, in 1770 awarded its prize to a Protestant who condemned the dragonnades, and two years later set as its subject for a new competition an *éloge* of Bayle (withdrawn on the order of Saint-Florentin, who blamed the archbishop for promoting the theme).¹²⁸ What was happening in Toulouse was happening in many places. Voltaire pressed home his victory. In 1764 his *Traité sur la Tolérance* appeared, opening with reflections upon ‘judges who are licensed to commit murder’, the only sanction against them being the posthumous censure of right-minded men.

For the State, he said, the test of a religion is its effect on society: only if its social influence is pernicious may it be suppressed. This was well understood in England, where the hero of his *L'Ingénu* (1766) found a tolerance unknown in France. Other writers joined in. In 1767, Marmontel's *Bélisaire* appeared, with Voltaire and Turgot defending it against the censures of the Sorbonne.¹²⁹ The doctors of the faculty condemned thirty-seven propositions, nineteen of them being concerned with religious toleration. There was a storm of ridicule, and the doctors took refuge in declaring Christianity incompatible with persecution and violence, which were weapons adopted by worldly men using religion as a pretext. Where did this leave Louis XIV and Saint-Florentin?

With the force of public opinion repudiating the past, in the late 1760s belated justice was done to some of the surviving victims of the persecutions serving life sentences in the galleys or (for women) in the Tour de Constance at Aigues-Mortes. In 1763, the prince de Beauvau became military governor of Languedoc, a friend of the philosophes, married to a wife with Protestant sympathies, a soldier who had looked on the face of battle and judged suffering in terms other than the bureaucrats issuing punitive orders against unseen unfortunates mentioned in their files. In 1767, he visited the Tour de Constance and was moved to find eighteen tired women, all over the age of 50, bereft of hope.¹³⁰ The longest-serving captive was Marie Durand, aged 53, sent there at the age of 15 a few months after her marriage, her crime being to have a pastor as a brother. For her first twenty-five years she had been supported by the companionship of her brother's mother-in-law, who had died thirteen years ago. The prince released Marie and three others, and soon afterwards, contemptuously defying Saint-Florentin, allowed all the rest to go. Already, some of the galley-slaves had been released, though not because of the spirit of tolerance. Diplomatic interventions by Protestant powers had succeeded in the case of a few lucky individuals, and from mid-century, a few members of rich families had been bought out by payment of a ransom. Fewer *galériens* were needed now, for the fleet which in its heyday had forty-two vessels now had only fifteen, so a rower whose family could find 3,000 livres or so might get home: typically of the *ancien régime*, mercy began with corruption. In August 1766, the prince de Beauvau persuaded the king to release an aged *galérien* on grounds of principle alone. The release of others followed. But the last two were not freed until 1775; this was because the Calvinists, so careful in compiling lists of their martyrs, had strangely lost them from their

records. Paul Achard, aged 72, and Antoine Riaille, aged 64, had first been chained to the benches thirty years before.¹³¹

The sufferings for conscience' sake of the Huguenots should not be forgotten. Over the period of persecution under Louis XIV and Louis XV, between 2,000 and 3,000 *forçats pour la foi* slaved on the galleys of France.¹³² The march on the *chaîne* to Dunkirk, Marseille, or Toulon (after 1748, Toulon only), half-naked, the iron yokes and chains constituting a weight of 150 lbs per man, was a foretaste of the living death that awaited them. Shackled by sixes to the 50-foot oars, fed on ship's biscuit and bean soup, dressed in red hats and coarse shirts and skirts alive with vermin, whipped by the *comités* who stalked down the vessel on the central planking, they belonged to a world of pain where rights were non-existent, arbitrarily and savagely ruled. If they collapsed, they were flogged until they either revived or died. In harbour they were mostly kept chained on their vessels under canvas tenting, endlessly knitting or doing useless tasks like polishing cannon-balls. For the entertainment of visitors they had to put off their clothes and perform tricks by numbers, 'the monkey game'. 'When you reflect on the horrors of such a punishment,' wrote a contemporary lawyer, 'you would at least wish to be assured that it falls only on vicious offenders whose cruel conduct has deprived them of all pity their fellow men might feel for them.' But in fact, those Huguenots were almost all respectable citizens, whose only crime was loyalty to their religion.¹³³ They were punished by the cynical device used in the twentieth century in the Gulag archipelago, equating prisoners of conscience with the vilest criminals. Indeed, it was worse, for they were treated more cruelly than the rest.¹³⁴ Often, when their sentences were up, they were still not released. Old age did not qualify for mercy: Alexandre Chambon was sent to the galleys in 1742 at the age of 53, and was not released until he was 80. (Those who could no longer row were kept in chains to do dockyard labour.) Grievous wounds received in action could earn release for other *galériens*, but they did not count for Protestants. Some of the Lazarist chaplains victimized them, taking away any money, letters, or books of devotion they had concealed in their clothing. Worst of all, if they refused to remove their hats and kneel when mass was celebrated on board, they might well be flogged, spread-eagled over the big cannon on the poop held by four Turks, a punishment raising weals as thick as a thumb and sometimes fatal. The names of some of the aristocratic commanders of galleys who organized this double penalty for religion's sake have been preserved in the Protestant martyrologies for infamy. Preserved too are

memories of two chaplains who showed compassion: a Dominican friar who allowed the *forçats pour la foi* to keep their books and even borrowed them to read himself, and who acted as intermediary for money from Holland to buy supplementary rations when in port; and the abbé Jean-François Bion, who was converted to Calvinism by the heroism of those who refused to reverence the mass, and fled to Geneva where he published an account of their sufferings.¹³⁵ But few churchmen cared. Some of the criminals on the benches showed respect for the men of conscience and called them ‘Monsieur’, and succour might come from the Turkish slaves, the ‘trusties’ of the system. It is astonishing that it is virtually impossible to find an example of a Huguenot who gained his freedom—as he could—by conversion. (One who did had, in fact, been sentenced for a secular crime of violence, and after establishing defiant Calvinist credentials, then demonstrated repentant Catholic fervour.) We catch glimpses of the forlorn tormented spirituality by which the will to resist was maintained.¹³⁶ Manuscript copies of prayers circulated, and there was an understanding to join in silent intercession when in port at the sound of the harbour cannon firing at nine o'clock to mark the end of another day. In 1699, a devotional society was founded with its own rule-book; any member who temporized with Rome would be expelled, except if his weakness went no further than bowing the knee at mass to escape the brine-soaked cable—in this case there would be exhortations and ‘fraternal encouragement’ to be brave. Those who were educated were to teach the others to read and instruct them in the faith, and all undertook the duty of reproving profanity. French Catholicism of the day had its masters of the spiritual life, interpreting every nuance of temptation and self-doubt, but theirs was a piety in the calm of the cloister, far from the stench and tumult of the rowing benches, where a *galérien* asked himself if trembling when he prayed ‘came from the spirit of God, . . . for he was concerned lest he deceive himself, fearing the ambushes and illusions of the Devil’. Struggling to the coast on the *chaîne*, they had sung the psalms of Marot for the last time—in the tyrannical underworld of the galleys, this consolation was denied them.¹³⁷

For women, the equivalent of a sentence to the galleys was imprisonment in the Tour de Constance.¹³⁸ The tower had limited space, only an upper and a lower room, so it was reserved for an élite of Huguenot resistance—most women caught at assemblies or in other acts of religious defiance were shorn and put in hospitals or nunneries. In 1763 there were twenty-three prisoners at Aigues-Mortes in weary isolation, passing the endless days in prayer, gossip,

and futile pastimes—like drafting a last will and testament leaving their meagre possessions to fellow prisoners, then when the vagary took them, making a reallocation. They could not hope for release: they died in the tower. Old age did not qualify for consideration: Victoire Boulet was 60 already when she was imprisoned without trial; she is glimpsed on the list of internees still there twenty-two years later.¹³⁹ When the prince de Beauvau finally intervened, one would wish that the survivors at least went home to enjoy a few years of honourable old age. But this was far from certain, for few would be alive who had known them, and those who remembered them were not always welcoming: Marie Durand's small property was in the hands of a niece who refused to give it back.

VII

As revulsion from persecution gripped the public conscience, the question was bound to arise: who had been responsible for the cruelties, for the hanging of pastors, the floggings on the galleys, the broken marriages, the children abducted? The answer was not straightforward, for the persecution had been an inheritance from a prestigious monarch whose image only slowly began to tarnish, and it had acquired momentum from the exasperation of authority defied and the accumulated complicity of enforcement. Furthermore, many identified with persecution in theory were backward in its practice. It was common for Catholics who accepted the necessity of putting pressure on Protestants to be happier when all was said but nothing done, and for their part to find a neighbourly *modus vivendi* with those around them. As a rule, parish priests were reluctant to report non-attendance at church or catechism or couples living together in heretically sanctioned wedlock. A government circular in 1715 complained that the laws against Protestants could not be enforced 'because of the backsliding of the curés who, by delicacy of feeling, do not wish to be delators'.¹⁴⁰ And a persecuting curé needed a persecuting bishop who would call in the secular arm; there were intolerant bishops, but they grew fewer as time went on. In some places, Protestants were too numerous for the parish priest to risk confronting them; in others, the Catholic inhabitants preferred not to have trouble. At Lourmarin in Provence, curé and church-goers combined to protect their local Calvinists, and when a strict new curé arrived in 1759, the village officials would not cooperate with him. At Aubais, near Nîmes, the inhabitants, equally

divided between the two confessions, lived in a civilized sociability.¹⁴¹ Soldiers might pass through looking for Desert assemblies, but the sound of nocturnal psalm singing would oft arise from the shadows of the town walls to disturb the sleep of Catholics. Pierre Mabelly, a Calvinist and richer than anyone else, had all the Catholics who counted along to his parties: the curé would come to dine and invite him back, and when he held one of his 'buffets', the curé, the chaplain at the château of the marquis, and the visiting preacher would attend—amid the 'pyramids of meringues', said the local annalist, 'it was the ladies, and more especially the clergy, who did the greatest execution'. In some places, this fraternization led to mutual support in crisis. A woman is accused of attending a Desert assembly, and no one will give evidence against her; when her property is confiscated, no one will bid at the auction. In a little town, a 'proposant' pastor is hanged; the Catholics join the Protestants in a mass exodus so that no one is present at the execution, and the executioner looks vainly for a ladder. Elsewhere, when the Huguenots are penalized by the addition of a third to their capitation tax, the other inhabitants join in to help to pay the extra.¹⁴² Intermarriage was common; since the dissidents tended to own the riches, it would have been foolish for Catholic parents to restrain the course of interconfessional romance. The wife would normally change to her husband's religion, and the boys would be brought up in the faith of the father and the girls in the original faith of the mother. Frenchmen were doing the best they could for themselves and their families and getting on with their neighbours; they were not denouncing persecution, but they were dissociating themselves from it. The laws were on the statute book; Saint-Florentin wished to enforce them; and a limited number of clerical informers enabled him to give precise instructions. Persecution was the occupation of a small and dwindling minority.

When Louis XIV had unleashed the dragoons, the bishops had endeavoured, on the whole successfully, to ensure that responsibility lay at the door of the secular arm. Their role was to be available, benevolently making it easy for the victims of State terrorism to find refuge in the Roman faith. As the century progressed, the myth of clerical detachment was collapsing. At every meeting the Assemblies of the Gallican Clergy asked for sternness against heretics, against their worship, their access to the professions and their marriages, and this at a time when intelligent public opinion was coming to be ashamed of the past. By an unfair inference, the intolerant demands of the official clergy in the present were taken as an indication of

their dominant role in the persecutions of earlier years. As for the persecutions still going on, the old game of demanding unspecified action, but evading responsibility for the harshness when specific measures were taken, was played out. It was no longer a case of the Sun King raging against his disobedient subjects, but of Saint-Florentin harrowing dissenters in deference to episcopal complaints. The clergy had put the blame on the king; now it fell on them.¹⁴³ Voltaire, pursuing *L'Infâme*, was determined to fix it there—by his private jokes, by his public denunciations. Writing in 1764 on behalf of Chaumont, a cobbler sent to the galleys for attending an assembly in 1751, he complained that it was difficult to know which minister of the Crown to petition—‘perhaps the employment which the worthy Chaumont now has is in the department of the *feuille des bénéfices*’. On 3 September 1753 D'Argenson wrote of troops being sent to the Cévennes. ‘How sad for [a ruler] to shed the blood of his subjects! This is the counsel of the priests, with their violent ambitions.’¹⁴⁴

46 Lutherans and Jews: Routine Intolerance

I The Lutherans of Alsace

Alsace had been a mosaic of territories within the Holy Roman Empire, and in many of its towns and principalities, the Reformation had triumphed. When the far-reaching conquests of France in the province were recognized at the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (preliminary agreement in the Treaty of Munster), it was on condition that the three religious persuasions, Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed, should retain their status as in 1624, with their churches, schools, ecclesiastical property, and rights of worship. Some of the minor sovereignties had remained under the nominal sway of the Empire at Westphalia, and these were incorporated into France in 1680–1. The Lutheran city of Strasbourg, in its articles of capitulation, received the 1648 promise of freedom of worship and uninterrupted possession, except that the cathedral became Catholic, with the Lutherans transferring to the great church of the Dominicans. In the other annexed territories, it was assumed that the religious provisions of Westphalia would be observed, but the understanding was not formal. They enjoyed, said a hostile memorandum of 1735, ‘an abusive toleration caused by political indulgence so as not to frighten the Protestants in a frontier province where they are numerous’.¹ Keeping the loyalty of the German-speaking Alsatians was to remain a preoccupation of the French officials throughout the century. ‘In appearance, the Lutherans are as good Frenchmen as the Catholics, but one must doubt it’, said a report looking back on the Austrian Succession and Seven Years War; ‘they could not hide their joy . . . at the victories of the king of Prussia and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick.’² The danger of disaffection in the fortress belt on the main invasion route was a better guarantee against the savageries of religious persecution than international treaties: as the Calvinists of France discovered, the word of a monarch to his subjects in a formal treaty did not avail.

While Louis XIV did not unleash his dragoons in Alsace, he

allowed his ministers, principally Louvois, to break the spirit of his promises and, sometimes, the letter. Precautions were devised to prevent conversions to Protestantism: interconfessional marriages were forbidden, a Catholic accepting Lutheranism would be banished, and if in the meantime he had entered a Protestant church, the pastor would share his fate. Conversely, inducements were offered to Lutherans to join the Roman fold. A child of 7 or above could announce his conversion and demand an annual income from his parents, and an adult would be allowed a three-year moratorium on his debts and taxes. All posts in State or seigneurial service were reserved to Catholics, even those of *bailli* and *prévôt* in an exclusively Protestant village. In Strasbourg,³ where there were 23,000 Lutherans and only 1,000 Catholics, this arrangement would have been unworkable, and a *lettre de cachet* in 1687 ruled that posts in the magistracy would be filled by alternation, which was interpreted to involve the preliminary achievement of parity—by 1694, fifteen of the thirty senators were Catholics. In 1684–5 Louvois laid down a rule for the use of church buildings; if seven Catholic families lived in the parish (and this was not difficult to arrange), they would be entitled to the chancel, while the Lutherans would have to move their communion table and pulpit to the nave, a division known as the *simultaneum*, as if it was a tolerant mutual arrangement rather than a contrived injustice. To compound the unfairness, the endowments of the parish were deemed to belong to the possessors of the chancel, however numerous the congregation in the nave.⁴

Besides these manœuvres along the margins of treaty obligations, Louis XIV created a structure of Catholic observance and evangelism. *Curés royaux*, their salaries paid by the king, were brought in from metropolitan France—at the end of the reign there were thirty-four of them. A seminary was established in Strasbourg, and an episcopal university—the famous Lutheran university there was handicapped by being obliged to appoint only native-born Frenchmen as professors. The Jesuits poured into the province, preaching a minimalist apologetic, making Catholicism almost indistinguishable from Lutheranism—the words ‘infallibility’ and ‘purgatory’ were not mentioned, and the number of sacraments was not defined.

In fact, most conversions were made not by persuasion, but by the legislation of inducement and penalization. From 1685 to 1687, 4,000 Lutherans, the inhabitants of ten villages, came over. In one village, the first step in a process lasting fourteen months was the annexation of the chancel by the few Catholic families; then the two

prévôts who presided over the secular affairs of the community were summoned before the intendant and arrived home gloomily admitting a new-found allegiance to Rome; this was followed by the arrest and removal of the pastor, never to return; then the seigneurial *bailli* announced that the tithe would in future be levied with the straw included—a major deprivation for peasants who needed it for the bedding of animals and manure. The men of the place therefore decided to go over as a group to Rome; the women and children stayed aloof.⁵ Louis XIV's drive to enforce nominal conformity was effective in that almost half the conversions from Lutheranism in Alsace from 1685 to 1789 took place in the first four years of the period. In the extensive area of the Catholic diocese of Strasbourg, the approximate figures are 9,000 before 1689 and 11,000 in the hundred years following. The Jesuits kept exact statistics of their successes, and recorded 7,465 in the four-year period of Louis XIV's intensive effort and, thereafter, 9,349 to 1764.

The regulations of Louis XIV remained in force after his death, but the will for concerted enforcement died away. An effort to tighten up the laws was made in 1727 under Cardinal Fleury.⁶ Protestants were not to work on Catholic holidays and were to respect Catholic processions—these, under official protection, were devised to parade through Lutheran streets with all the picturesque and provocative extremes of unreformed piety. If the bishop came to visit a church under the *simultaneum*, the Lutheran service had to be suspended so long as he was there. Illegitimate children were to be brought up as Catholics, and if one of the partners in a Lutheran marriage was converted, the children under 14 years of age were deemed to wish to follow suit. In fact, the cardinal-minister's sanction of these vexatious details added to the code of harassment did not make a serious difference to the existing situation. The rules concerning processions and holidays merely codified prohibitions already existing. The independent conversion of a wife or a husband from Lutheranism to Rome was rare, and few cared about illegitimate children either way. This was a show of zeal devised by underlings to please Fleury, and it had little impact in the province.

When Choiseul came to office in Versailles, the policy of the government moved towards toleration. As a native of Lorraine, he was conversant with the eastern frontier, well aware that the Catholics and Protestants of Alsace had long ago learned to live together before Louis XIV imposed his divisive persecutions upon their mutual understandings. A sceptic in religion and preoccupied with foreign policy, Choiseul was concerned with domestic affairs

only to allay quarrels on matters he regarded as indifferent. In 1762,⁷ the intendant was ordered to refrain from imposing Catholic instruction upon legitimate children, and to hand back the illegitimate ones if their parents married and reclaimed them within five years. Mixed marriages were allowed on condition the children were brought up as Catholics (not a surprising proviso, for in Strasbourg the magistrates had long been ensuring that the children of Lutheran–Calvinist unions were brought up in the Lutheran faith).⁸ The curés were ordered to enter Protestant births, marriages, and deaths on their registers, acting in a purely civil capacity, in places where there was no pastor to record them. In 1778, a Protestant soldier was made military governor of Alsace, and a tolerant intendant took office—he immediately raised the age when Protestant children could declare their conversion. The Lutherans had already responded to the new spirit of conciliation by removing from their Litany the prayer to be delivered from ‘the dreadful abominations of Papism and Mahomet’.⁹

The Lutherans of the eighteenth century did not have the Calvinists' fierce aversion to Catholic practices: there were images and pictures in their churches, and in the more splendid ones, richly complex music was performed; on occasion, they would join in Catholic pilgrimages to shrines of the Virgin; their pastors did not preach aggressively against Rome. A certain mellowness in pulpit style came from accommodation to the Enlightenment—a notorious sermon at Colmar described Christianity as ‘the divine intervention . . . giving us more efficacious motives than deism provides to practise virtue, showing to us, between God and ourselves, a man without whom our religion would be infinitely impoverished’. Even so, Lutherans were a far from easy prey to Catholic proselytizing, not being disposed to forsake their accustomed worship and their social milieu fortified by their schools and parish meetings. After the death of Louis XIV there were no more mass transfers of allegiance: it was a matter of winning over individuals. The Society of Jesus, the main proselytizing agency, recorded an average of only fifty-four successes a year from 1700 to 1765. These recruits included soldiers in garrison towns taking the royal bounty for converts and ingratiating themselves with their officers, outsiders trying to qualify for permission to settle in the province, isolated Protestant families in Catholic seigneuries, ambitious climbers hoping for government office, and despairing failures needing the three-year remission of debts and taxes. Yet, though conversions, including these unspiritual ones, had little to do with it, the balance between the two confessions in

Alsace changed decisively in the course of the eighteenth century. The city of Strasbourg, originally almost exclusively Lutheran, by 1770 had 20,000 Catholics and 19,000 Lutherans, and by 1789 the figures were 27,000 and 23,000.¹⁰ In the Catholic diocese of Strasbourg the Lutherans had been two-thirds of the population, but by 1777 they were only one-third. The change in the balance was caused by a great population increase on the Catholic side. It may have owed something to differential birth rates (though the Lutheran rural population was very fertile), but chiefly it arose from immigration. In 1662, the French government had laid down a policy of frontier control, barring non-Catholics from settling in the province. This was still being enforced in 1761, even in marginal cases—a Strasbourg Lutheran who bought an estate near Hagueneau was not allowed to send in a manager of his own religious persuasion, and was only authorized to keep the property as a special concession.¹¹ All the while, Catholic immigrants were pouring in, at first to take over land abandoned during the wars, later to take advantage of the growing prosperity. Probably without realizing how he was doing it, Louis XIV ensured that his hope of Catholicizing Alsace would be realized. His persecution was of small avail, and he need not have burdened his conscience with fraudulent manipulations of his treaty obligations; his law on immigration at the beginning of his personal rule was all that was needed.

II The Jews

The crisis of conscience concerning the treatment of the Protestants extended also to the Jews. But there was a difference: the Protestants were citizens asking for toleration for their variant of Christian belief, whereas the question about the Jews was, could they be accepted as citizens at all? Officially, in 1395 they were banned from France (from Provence in 1498), except in certain areas. In Bordeaux and Bayonne the *marranos* who had come in from the Iberian peninsula had authorization by letters patent describing them as ‘new Christians’, the fiction of their conversion devised to benefit the mercantilist state. In Alsace, where most of the Jews lived, they had been there from before the French conquest, and remained on sufferance. The Sephardim of the Bordeaux area, with a culture French and Spanish and many of them wealthy, were on their way to acceptance in local society. By contrast, the Ashkenazim of Alsace, Yiddish in culture, with their background of Germany and

Central Europe and the vast majority poor, were alienated from local life. In addition to the Jews allowed in France, there were others in the papal enclave of Avignon and the Comtat. These, neither Sephardim nor Ashkenazim, in their forays into France aspired to the elevated status achieved by the Sephardim—the Jews of Bordeaux, however, rejected them, anxious not to derogate from their privileges by accepting identification with their less reputable brethren.

The 3,000 to 4,000 Jews of Bordeaux¹² dominated the money-changing, banking, the grain trade, and chocolate making of the seaport, and were among the leading shipowners trading with America. One of these, Joseph Niemes Pereyre, in 1720 bought extensive feudal properties, becoming vicomte and baron. Another, Abraham Gradis, was received at Versailles, and took the spa waters at Bagnères-de-Bigorre in the company of the military governor, the maréchal de Richelieu. These men were awarded the deference extended to the great Protestant shipowners, the Bethman and the Bonnaffé; there was a point where riches gained religious toleration and social acceptance. The Jews of Bayonne, dominating the exchange trade of silk and wine for the wool and gold of Spain, were not so rich; even so, while they were only 1,000 out of the city's 15,000 population, they paid a third of the taxes. In these two cities the wealthy minority group enhanced its standing by demonstrating civic virtue, making interest-free loans to the municipalities in times of food shortage. In 1762, the 'Portuguese nation' of Bordeaux gave 24,000 livres towards fitting out a warship, and in 1782 over 60,000 for a similar patriotic purpose. During the seventeenth century the Sephardim had kept up a show of being the 'new Christians' they were officially supposed to be. But as the intendant wrote in 1727, this formula had been put in the letters patent 'to accustom the people to their establishment and to trading with them'. By the end of the first decade of the eighteenth century, they had ceased to bring their children to baptism or to go to church for the nuptial blessing, and from 1737 their funerals were registered with the civic authorities and their dead were buried in their own private cemetery. The authorities of Church and State expected discretion to be observed; in 1734 the *chancelier* wrote to the intendant saying the Jews ought not to appoint rabbis, hold religious assemblies, or employ Roman Catholics as servants; at mid-century, the archbishop objected to a plan of the Jewish community to buy land to build houses for exclusively Jewish residence: 'it is not for me to thwart the fulfilment of the prophecy that condemns you to be

vagabonds and wanderers for ever'.¹³ Even so, by 1752 there were seven synagogues masquerading as private houses, and the community was proudly demonstrating its loyalty by printing French translations of the prayers said for the royal family in the services.

Though exercising their religion without pretence of Catholic allegiance, the Sephardim took care not to appear strange to their neighbours, and indeed, their allegiance to the orthodox ceremonial law was waning. Their *Sedac* (the charitable organization caring for their poor which had also become their committee of government) organized supplies of kosher meat and wine; but, as their own writer Pinto noted with satisfaction and the traditionalist traveller Azulai with lamentation, they no longer wore beards; they took their disputes to the ordinary law courts and not to the jurisdiction of the rabbis; and they gave employment to Gentiles and took Gentile mistresses. If there was a riot endangering property, they would join with the bourgeoisie to take up arms even on the sabbath. David Gradis, who succeeded to the headship of the shipping dynasty, wrote books (privately printed) casting doubt on creation *ex nihilo*, disowning the Pharisees as representatives of true religion, and proposing the abandonment of the Talmud. The Sephardic merchants joined with the Christian trade guilds to try to prevent Avignonese families getting in, and in 1761 they gave the military governor a list of 152 individuals to be expelled. Rich and cultured, with only an easygoing allegiance to their religion, they had no difficulty in fraternizing with Christians of a similar sort. Some of their number went to Paris and were feted there—Jacob Rodrigue Pereira, who invented a method of teaching the deaf and dumb and was elected to the Academy of Sciences in 1749;¹⁴ Silva, who became physician to Louis XV and was rewarded with a patent of nobility; Pinto, an international figure at home in England and Holland as well as in his native city, who published influential books on economic issues. The government looked kindly on the Sephardim, and in 1776 recognized their contribution to national life by giving them the right to trade and reside anywhere in France.

By contrast, the 30,000 Ashkenazim of Alsace¹⁵ were miserably poor—it was estimated that only one family in thirty-five was above the poverty line. They were not allowed to own land, but in lieu of land taxes they paid a national and a local poll tax and a levy in place of the *corvée*. Debarred from agriculture, they had to find a living on the dubious margins. Many were second-hand clothes dealers, a considerable trade in those days when shoes and garments were sold down a chain of increasing shabbiness from the rich to the poor, and

when hospitals considered the sale of the personal effects of the dead as an important source of income. Some were money-lenders, generally dealing in tiny sums to tide over starving peasants. The more enterprising became traders in horses and cattle; horses, always in demand by the army in this military zone, were bought in Germany—if war seemed near, they would be regarded as contraband, and only the Jews, with their cross-border contacts and guile, could smuggle them over. This was a land of rural anti-Semitism, with usury among the indigent as its cause, accumulating hatred of ‘the vultures of the canton’. In 1777 there was a mysterious conspiracy, flooding the countryside with forged receipts, organized by educated anti-Semites to encourage the peasants to ruin their creditors by fraud. The Ashkenazim yearned to escape from the treadmill of survival where they incurred such hatreds, and they petitioned to be allowed to engage in all branches of commerce. Like their compatriots elsewhere, they were prepared to have new immigrants excluded (except women coming in to marry) as the price of freedom for themselves. It was a vain hope. No one wanted to help them to escape the misery of marginalization which had been willed upon them.

In some areas of the eastern border lands, the Jews were excluded, as at Strasbourg, or their numbers strictly limited, as in Lorraine. Here, before the duchy was incorporated into France, they had been allowed only 180 families and a single rabbi.¹⁶ Rules of this kind could not be kept—illegal immigrants continually crept in over the border. In Lunéville, where in 1753 permission had been given for two families, by 1785 there were sixteen, and they were applying to build a synagogue. In 1789, eight of the twenty *cabiers* of the guilds of the town complained of these newcomers and their infringement of trade monopolies—according to the furniture makers, they constituted ‘a quarter of the inhabitants’.¹⁷ Metz was a special case, for here 480 families and a rabbi were authorized as permanent residents, for this was a garrison town requiring imports of grain and horses—a trade which made Cerf Berr the richest Jew of the frontier provinces and the acknowledged leader of the Ashkenazim. Recognizing the indispensability of Jewish grain brokers and horse dealers and their employees did not, however, mean they were left free from disabilities: they could own property only in the riverside *quartier* of Saint-Ferroy; they were banned from trades and professions, and forbidden to lend money to heirs in anticipation of their inheritance; and their loans lapsed after five years unless they could prove ‘diligence’ in trying to recover them. From Wednesday in Holy Week

to the following Thursday they could not go out of their ghetto; they were not allowed to buy fish in Lent, and during the rest of the year not before ten in the morning.¹⁸ This rule to shorten the queue at fishmongers when pious Christians bought their fare for days of penance was naïvely thought by curé Grégoire to be a Malthusian prohibition since ‘fish transmit prolific principles’. Anti-Semitism was rife—the burning of Raphaël Lévy for ritual child murder in 1670 was not forgotten.¹⁹ A monk of Metz in 1746 urged the municipality to compel the Israelites to wear distinctive badges, perhaps the red woollen tuft their law prescribed, to remind all beholders ‘that they are the descendants of the murderers of Jesus Christ, the only true Messiah, who willed his blood to be on their heads and those of their posterity’. (He had not looked up the text in the New Testament, or he would have known who really said it.) The 3,000 Ashkenazim of Metz, unlike the Sephardim of Bordeaux, did their best to remain a tightly knit community under their elders, settling their lawsuits before the rabbi; the king had granted them the authority to do so by letters patent of 1718. The parlement of Metz, however, treated these letters, not as mandatory, but as facultative, so a Jewish litigant could go to the ordinary courts of the land, even if the rabbi had already passed sentence. In 1759, the parlement deprived the rabbi of the power to enforce his judgements by forbidding him to pronounce excommunications. Only in 1782, in the new liberal climate of the reign of Louis XVI, did the magistrates allow the Jewish community to settle its internal quarrels without appeal to Gentile jurisdictions. Those who claim the right to a closed communal life-style do well to conform in all other respects. The Jews of Metz were even more zealous than their Christian neighbours to keep out immigrants of their own persuasion, and they published loyal addresses to the Crown whenever there was occasion. In 1725 a Parisian lawyer noted the publication of the orations given in academies and parlements in honour of the new queen, including one ‘from the Jews of Metz, who did not forget the queen of Sheba, Esther and Judith in their Judaic eloquence’.²⁰

The Jews of Avignon and the Comtat²¹ (1,500 in 1700, and 2,500 in 1770), ‘les Juifs du Pape’, had freedom of worship with their synagogues and their rabbis, but otherwise lived in a state of permanent inferiority. They were confined in four ghettos called *carrières*, in Avignon, Carpentras, Cavaillon, and l’Isle. The areas allotted were exiguous: travellers observed the sordid conditions, especially at Carpentras—narrow streets, houses built up to nine storeys high,

and ‘astonishing dirt and infection’. Some of the dwellers were rich, but had no hope of spacious living; they were ‘nabobs crowded into hovels’. The gates of the *carrières* were locked at night and during the last three days of Holy Week, when coming and going were forbidden. In addition to ordinary taxation, the Jews paid for their own poor relief and education as well as some small but vexatious dues—to the bishop, for fireworks at the accession of a new Pope, contributions to the carnival, for street sweeping on certain days, for the upkeep of a house for catechumens at Rome. Papal ordinances forbade ill treatment, but since they had to wear yellow hats as distinguishing badges, the Jews were easy targets. They were ridiculed when they trooped out to hear the compulsory sermon on the Saturday before Trinity (more frequently in Carpentras); choirboys had an ancient right to break ranks in a procession and levy an instant fine if a yellow hat was spotted; in the culture of the street urchins there was a residual memory of medieval formulas of insult. The Holy Office banned the baptism of Jewish children without the consent of their parents, though there was a case in 1762 of a baptism organized by a blackmailer depriving a rabbi of his son (who eventually became a priest in Rome). Few Jews converted (about two a year), but most conformed to the way of life of their neighbours. They spoke Provençal, albeit with an accent and diversified with their own *argot*; they ate and drank with Gentiles, and used ordinary bread and wine except at Passover time—apart from the hat, said the bishop of Carpentras, there was no way of recognizing them.

Yet this disadvantaged class was becoming richer all the while—their dowries raced ahead of Christian ones, and they built new synagogues. From selling old clothes and trinkets and money-lending, they moved up to banking and, illegally, into dealing in grain and silk, extending their activities further afield beyond the papal boundaries and into France. In particular, the trade in horses and mules in Languedoc was under their control. Life in the *carrières* was crowded, and heavy communal debts had been incurred, so there was every incentive to find a niche in France and stay there. From 1741 this became easier, for after consulting the intendants, the royal government began encouraging the Jews to set up their stalls at fairs to keep prices down; if they were challenged at law by the local inhabitants, the Council would evoke the case to Paris.²²

Once a Jewish vendor arrived, he might contrive to stay on; the established retailers would complain, but nobles, monasteries, and convents were known to welcome the income from leasing out

accommodation. In 1738, at Saintes, one family was selling from premises leased from a high army officer, and at Autun another from the abbey of Saint-Martin. In defiance of the prohibition of the parlements, wanderers from the papal ghettos turned up at Grenoble and Aix, and at Bordeaux in face of a different opposition, the Sephardim in alliance with the trade guilds. At Marseille, they formed a community along with co-religionaries from Italy, the Levant, and North Africa; with others from Alsace they instituted a *kebila* of fifteen families in Lyon.²³ In 1750, the bishop of Uzès described how one Vidal had crept in to rent a room fifteen years ago; now a relative of his was running a gambling house, and two other families had come in. By contrast to these humble intruders, about mid-century 'Moses of Carcassonne', originally from the Comtat, arrived in Narbonne, and lived there in ostentatious luxury before going bankrupt in 1778 for over a million. In the last few years of the *ancien régime* the trickle of Jews escaping from the papal states became a torrent; with the Revolution the barriers came down, and by 1796 the *carrières* were all but deserted.

Amid the vast diversities of Paris,²⁴ the Jews (there were only 500 or so) eluded many of the prohibitions enforced against them in the provinces. In 1757 there are incidental references to an innkeeper, a teacher of the guitar, a widow running a carriage hire service, a lampseller and chandler, a wholesale dealer in muslins, a smelter of silver ingots, and a jeweller. It was not possible to go so far as to become a *maître* in a guild: an attempt by Jews of the Avignon group to do this by taking advantage of a royal decree of 1767 admitting 'foreigners' led to lawsuits and eventual failure. There were three Jewish communities in the capital, corresponding to their provincial origins, each with its own *syndic*, who issued certificates of identity when the lieutenant of police required them. The Sephardim lived on the Left Bank, especially in the parish of Saint-André-des-Arts and the Enclos Saint-Germain, an area around the abbey with special privileges. There were the intellectuals Pereira and Pinto, Silva and another physician Fonseca, and there were the wealthy representatives of the big commercial families in Bordeaux. On the Left Bank too dwelt the group from Avignon, mostly well off by acting as agents for the silk trade and including Bernard de Vallabrègue, the expert on Oriental languages at the Royal Library. On the Right Bank, in the *quartier* of Saint-Denis, lived the Ashkenazim, miserably poor, though they had two rich patrons, Cerf Berr and Liefman Calmer. The latter, who came from Hanover via Holland, was naturalized in 1769 for his services as an army contractor, and in 1774

bought the feudal domains of the duc de Chaulnes. He then tested the extent to which wealth could force social acceptance by exercising the right to appoint to the ecclesiastical benefices whose patronage went with his new estates—leading to a famous lawsuit with the bishop of Amiens. Each of these communities looked after its own poor and maintained its own religious observances, the richer members helping with the expenses, extending in the 1780s to buying plots of land for three cemeteries. No one challenged their conduct of their own affairs. In Paris, said Mercier, toleration can go no further: Jewish marriages are universally recognized, while Protestant ones are still held to be invalid.²⁵

The Jews in France and in the papal enclave were allowed to practise their religion while being disadvantaged in their persons. The contrasting treatment was more extreme under papal rule than under the French king—the religious toleration was less qualified, the humiliations more numerous. It was as if the object of the Church was to ensure the survival of the race, but blighted by a curse, as it were a continuing testimony to God's vindication of Christianity. The 'deicide' explanation of the dispersion and suffering of the Jews was a commonplace of Christian apologetics: Pascal and Bossuet gave it the weight of their authority, and the abbé Fleury's catechism, the most widely used of all, kept each new generation of children informed of it—because of the Crucifixion, Jerusalem had been destroyed.

'What became of the Jews?'

'They were reduced to servitude and dispersed throughout the world.'

'What happened to them since?'

'They are still in the same state.'

'For how long?'

'For 1700 years.'

The Protestant theologian Basnage,²⁶ in an otherwise fair account of Jewish history, repeated the theme of the continuing working of the ancient curse, and lightweight Catholic apologists like the abbé de Chavanettes kept it going later in the century (1769). Yet the Council of Trent had rejected the notion of a race under damnation—Christ was crucified by *sinners*; the true descendants of the deicides are the men, of whatever nation, who do not repent and seek to amend. Dom Calmet, the voluminous biblical commentator, went further, trying to explain the conduct even of the sinners among the Jews: the death sentence was not passed by their Sanhedrin, and when they clamoured for it to Pilate, they may have

been conforming to their consciences, for ‘the law of Moses condemned blasphemers to die’, and they might have convinced themselves that this was, indeed, just such a case. Here was a rare generosity; for most churchmen, the High Priests and their party were, at best, blinded by their prejudices and interests, and because they claimed to see, their sin was the greater.

The writers of the Enlightenment²⁷ demanded religious toleration, the Jews included. Montesquieu was generous in his insistence: he was from Bordeaux, and knew them through the sophisticated Sephardim. When the Portuguese Inquisition was burning *marranos* at the stake, Montesquieu describes a girl appealing to her judges: ‘we conjure you by Christ . . . to deal with us as he would himself if he was still on earth . . . we have a religion which God once loved’.²⁸ But there were other writers whose stand for toleration was offset by contempt. Bayle set a fashion, describing the men of the Old Testament as unintelligent fanatics, coarse in their morals, their hero, King David, an adulterous minor warlord. This was the sort of biblical criticism Voltaire relished,²⁹ and he adopted it, whether directly from Bayle or indirectly from Dom Calmet (using the good monk's examples of despicable conduct by the chosen people without mentioning his arguments of explanation or palliation). On two occasions, in London, then in Berlin, Voltaire had lost money to Jewish financiers, and this, no doubt, gave a personal edge to his censures of the Jews, and they for their part regarded him as unsympathetic, never asking for his support in their battle against prejudice. But he always insisted they should be tolerated—with the rider, on one occasion, ‘even though they persecute others’. More than this, he loved the vivid imagery and quaint metaphors of the Old Testament, the poetry of the Psalms, the gnomic lore of Proverbs, the stoicism of Ecclesiastes—he used the old Hebrew literature ‘to mirror his anguish, his joy and contentment and to enhance and enrich his style’.³⁰ If he was an anti-Semite, it was for ideological rather than personal reasons: he wanted to show that European civilization came from Graeco-Roman antiquity, not from the Jewish–Christian nexus; he struck at the Jews as a manœuvre in his warfare against Christianity. It gave him satisfaction to depict God's chosen people as marginal to civilization, their history a chronicle of cruelty and the trivial exploits of the rulers of tinpot kingdoms. Whatever was good in Judaism had come from the Greeks, and in taking it over they had vitiated the legacy by intolerance. From their classical education Voltaire and his contemporaries found it easy to look at the events of antiquity through the eyes of pagan

philosophers and statesmen. In 1769, Mirabaud clinched the anti-Semitic argument by publishing an anthology of quotations from Greek and Latin authors on the Jews, to demonstrate how in the eyes of reflective tolerant intellectuals they had always been an inherently fanatical and uncultured people. This had the additional advantage of getting rid of the now threadbare Christian apologetic derived from the spectacle of a long-continuing divine vengeance. The Crucifixion had not brought a curse on them, for they were inferior anyway. Modern anti-Semitism, it has been argued, is derived not from Christian attitudes, but from the Graeco-Roman culture of the West, with Voltaire, Mirabaud, and other Enlightenment writers transmitting the legacy of contempt.

Whether this argument will serve as an explanation of anti-Semitism and its terrors outside the closed world of the intellectuals may be doubted; however this may be, the Christian apologists of the eighteenth century certainly took issue with the Bayle–Voltaire ridicule of the people and the social order depicted in the Old Testament. To them, Christian and Jewish history was continuous, Christ having founded his Church to be the new Israel, to inherit the role of God's chosen people. To Pascal, the Jews were the central point of God's operations in history, even though they now suffer from having failed to recognize their moment of destiny. Bossuet, eloquent about 'the curse' on a race at once 'monstrous' and a 'laughing stock' (it was the Jews of Metz he knew), reacted sharply against Spinoza's 'slaves . . . inheriting all the superstitions of Egypt'; on the contrary, he said, they were the most advanced of ancient peoples. So too held the learned bishop Daniel Huet: Athens and Rome learned their wisdom from Jerusalem. Richard Simon, in the first critical study of the Old Testament of the source–analysis kind, defended the Jews from charges of falsification and their laws and ritual from ridicule.³¹ Claude Fleury's *Les Mœurs des Israélites* (1681), often reprinted in the following century, had as its theme the Christian inheritance from Judaism of a morality far superior to that of the Greeks and Romans; the monotheistic drive of the Old Testament and its proclamation of an austere morality even amidst cruelties and backsliding was to be the way ahead for the Christian apologists against the strictures of Voltaire. This was the argument of the abbé de Guénéée in 1769, and a group of Protestants in 1775. Instead of comic citations from the ceremonial code of Leviticus, the Protestant theologians held the broad commandments of Jewish morality to be at the heart of the ideals of the Enlightenment: for the first time in history the basic natural law had been discovered—'this

people is the only one that exhibits a law conforming to all the ideas of justice, truth and holiness which are engraved on our hearts’.

Defending an ancient race was not incompatible with despising their descendants; indeed, the contrast could be used to emphasize the severity of the divine vengeance. But there was another current of Christian thought deeply sympathetic to the Jews of the present. Its principal learned exponent was the Jansenist abbé Duguet (dd. 1733), who regarded the conversion of the Jews as the necessary prelude to the millennium. Persecution could only harden hearts and delay acceptance of the true faith, and kindness was mandatory to win over a people who had once been chosen and who would be at the heart of the new order when Christ came to reign in glory. One of Duguet's disciples, the abbé Mulot, canon of Saint-Victor in Paris, was prepared to forecast the date of the completion of the conversion and the beginning of the glorious end—his calculation was 1849. More realistic interpreters of the dark biblical indicators put the denouement in a more distant future, but they continued to hope for it, and the idea was one of the inspirations of curé Grégoire in his plan for a genuine toleration published in 1787.

By definition, in the millenarian writers the Jews were regarded as indwelt by splendid possibilities awaiting their day of fulfilment. In more routine Christian writings they also met with approval of a prosaic kind—it was inconceivable that the discoverers of the moral law at the heart of creation should have become dubious financial manipulators without hope of transformation; the abbé Fleury in the *Mœurs des Israélites* had long ago urged his fellow Christians to allow them to return to their primitive vocations as herdsmen and farmers so they could again become exemplars of austere morality. Whether by defence of scriptural morality or in apocalyptic anticipation, Christians came back to their precept of charity, and once glimpsed, charity had the power to take over, replacing the archaic gloating apologetics of the curse upon the deicides. The Enlightenment, too, rediscovered its principle of human nature, giving a hopeful zest to the grudging toleration unenthusiastically accepted by Voltaire and Mirabaud—men are malleable, their inherent goodness can be evoked by social conditioning; freeing the Jews from the shackles limiting them to gaining their living by usury in alienation from the mainstream life of the nation would bring about their transformation into citizens. There was a double edge to this argument, for its starting-point was to concede the moral unsuitability of Jews for citizenship as they were at present. Even so, the Jews themselves led the way in presenting the case—for it corresponded to the logic of

their situation: Ashkenazim, Avignonese, Sephardim, a ladder to climb if only the missing rungs could be replaced. Their opportunity to put the case to a wide audience came in the dispute, beginning in 1767, about admission to the rank of *maître* in the six great Parisian guilds. A royal decree allowed a few places to 'foreigners'. Lawyers for the Jews advanced a logical dilemma backed up by an appeal to an eternal principle. Either their clients were Frenchmen with an inherent right to belong to a guild, or they were foreigners, in which case they could apply under the edict. In any case, it was impossible to deny that they were men, and as such entitled to the ordinary freedom all men enjoy of working for their living. The lawyers for the six guilds replied that the king was offering places of *maître* to foreigners as a gesture to the sovereigns of other countries, a device of diplomatic relations: the Jews had no sovereign, not in France, not abroad; they were a race without a country, intruders. As for being men, they had disqualified themselves from the right to the ordinary freedoms by indulgence in usury, sharp practice, and malicious conduct, extending in the past even to poisoning wells. Bernard de Valebrègue's *Lettre ou réflexions d'un milord* (1767), written in the guise of an English nobleman, skilfully lifted the debate above wrangling about the validity of evidence about financial malpractice on the part of the Jews: their faults were the result of deprivation of economic opportunity, as a comparison of their situation in France with that in England and Holland demonstrates.³² This was the point at which leverage could be exerted upon the royal government: freeing the Jews would make France richer and increase the numbers of useful citizens.

Entrance to the guilds was never obtained, but reformers in the government of Louis XVI had taken notice of the controversy and proposed action on a general scale. In 1776, the Sephardim of Bordeaux were given the right to transact whatever commerce they chose, within the kingdom and outside it. The Ashkenazim of Alsace, poor, numerous, and unlikely to bring large-scale wealth to the nation, were passed over to be the subject of a less generous decree eight years later. Described as 'our subjects', they were freed from the 'degrading' seigneurial poll tax and guaranteed the right to stay in the province; they could rent farms and vineyards and open factories. This gave them freedom to embark on agriculture and manufacturing as well as buying and selling—but there was a qualification: they could not own land, only lease it. Their right of residence was also offset by a declaration that all illegal immigrants would be expelled, and a census was to be held to detect them.

Malesherbes, Louis XVI's reforming minister, now held wide consultations among liberal thinkers, hoping to formulate a decree of Jewish emancipation, but hesitated to act. The reason, quite simply, was that mass opinion in Alsace and Lorraine was solidly anti-Semitic: the *cabiers* of 1789, apart from those of the nobility of Metz and Toul, were to be uniformly hostile. The Ashkenazim themselves were not willing to make the one compromise which might have made the government's task easier: they were willing to pay for total economic freedom by accepting the exclusion of immigrants, but they were determined to keep their communal organization. The tightly knit social front they presented against the world was one of the chief grievances cited against them. Reubell, speaking to the National Assembly in August 1789, was to describe them as a group refusing to intermarry or to eat with their neighbours or to submit their lawsuits to the ordinary courts: far from being excluded from the national life, 'they exclude themselves'. Malesherbes himself felt strongly about a community which could use its corporate strength in a fashion 'prejudicial to society'. Secure in their status, the Sephardim did not attempt to sway the government to favour their co-religionists on the north-east frontier; only at the eleventh hour, in 1788, did they put forward the argument that freedom for the Ashkenazim would transform them into citizens.

From the *cabiers* of the clergy and the Third Estate throughout France it is evident there was little sympathy for the Jews.³³ The churchmen, lawyers, and Enlightenment intellectuals who advocated their cause were a small minority. Characteristically for the *ancien régime*, the liberal arguments came to a focus in essays written for the prize offered by a provincial academy, the academy of Metz, a city where opinions were vividly polarized. The prize was offered in 1785, but not awarded until 1787, since a pause to make revisions had been allowed for the treatment of a problem which most entrants had ignored: would emancipation encourage Jews to abandon their austere morals and take to Gentile vices? Clearly, the promoters wished to encourage a modicum of praise for the Jewish communal organization Malesherbes was afraid of—suddenly, this was becoming a new theme in liberal opinion, for in February 1786 the *Mercur de France*, and in the following year Mirabeau drew attention to the advantages of Jewish solidarity: they maintained their own poor generously, and their family life was exemplary. The judges passed over the lawyer who recommended deportation to Central America and the curé who felt that sufficient punishment had not yet been exacted for the death of Christ, and gave prizes to

three entries arguing that the defects of the Jews were the result of the policy of exclusion. One, by a lawyer, pleaded the cause of common humanity; another, by a Jew, ridiculed the obscurantism of the rabbis and the Talmud, and promised that liberation would begin a rush to abandon the old faith in favour of deism; the third, by curé Grégoire, was the work of 'a minister of a religion regarding all men as brothers' and a Jansenist postulating the conversion of God's ancient people as the prelude to the millennium; it was the work, too, of a thinker of the Enlightenment holding persecution to be 'an almost infallible way to make a religion dear to its followers.'³⁴ He declared the Jews to be admirable family men, paying a deference to old age 'almost unknown in our customs' and bringing up children strictly; men of ability, courageous soldiers, as their history reveals. In the army, commerce, and intellectual life they would serve France well. Grégoire therefore proposed emancipation, but with temporary reservations: the Jews must be forbidden to live together in communities and encouraged to marry outside their race; professions including financial manipulations or involving dubious contacts, like inn keeping, should be closed to them; their rabbis should be obliged to study in the ordinary universities, and the system of compulsory attendance at Christian sermons should be maintained. These reservations were to cover a period of two generations, time for education in citizenship. There was a general view, accepted by the proposers of the essay competition and by the competitors—and, indeed, by the very Ashkenazim themselves, in the *cabiers* they prepared in 1789—that the Jews of Alsace were 'despised'. From this proposition, two antithetical conclusions were drawn. La Fare, bishop of Nancy, and the abbé Maury were to tell the National Assembly that on this evidence they ought to be excluded from citizenship, though they should not be 'victimized'; by contrast, Grégoire and Canon Mulot argued that only the grant of freedom would enable them to be worthy of it.³⁵

On 28 January 1790, after a stormy debate and only by 374 to 280, the Sephardim and the Avignoneses were granted full equality; not until 27 September 1791 did the Ashkenazim receive the same promotion.³⁶ It was a reform put through by the men of the Revolution because it was necessitated by their principles, rather than out of understanding or sympathy—an acceptance of the Jews into national life, not as they were seen to be, but in the expectation they would become different.

47 Towards a Grudging Toleration, 1774–1789

By heroism, compromise, and chicanery, the Protestants¹ had reestablished themselves in the life of the nation during the three generations following the revocation of the edict of Nantes. Their churches were linked together by regional and national synods. They had a regular pastorate with modest salaries of from 1,000 to 1,700 livres,² with small pensions for widows; visiting preachers received generous contributions.³ The elders ran the local churches with systematic formality, in many places issuing certificates of the calling of banns and keeping double marriage registers on stamped paper just as the curés did, awaiting the advent of toleration to hand in one of the copies to the secular magistrates.⁴ The preaching of the pastors had become respectable and anodyne, subservient as ever to royal authority and not too prickly on disputatious points of doctrine. The Christian religion, said Rabaut Saint-Etienne, is ‘none other than natural religion unveiled to men and confirmed by Jesus Christ’, its essence being hard work, thrift, and moral conduct.⁵ This blandness reflected the influence of Enlightenment ideas and the wary temper of men who knew toleration was bound to come provided they did not reawake old hatreds. Within congregations, tacit understandings had been reached as to the degree of fraudulent conformity to Rome allowed to avoid trouble and obtain certificates of Catholicity,⁶ though a rigorist church might complain of the laxity of others in a meeting of synod, and an individual who bowed too low in the house of Rimmon might be excluded from communion.

|

By the beginning of the reign of Louis XVI, almost everywhere a *modus vivendi* between Catholics and Protestants had evolved. Some Protestant families were so successful that the government and everyone else paid deference to them—the Masson family, iron masters of Lorraine and naval contractors, the commercial house of

Massien of Caen, the Van Robais of Abbeville whose cloth manufactory employed 6,000 workers, the enormously wealthy ship-owners of Bordeaux, the Pellet and the Bonnaffé. Of the sixty banking houses listed in the *Almanach* for 1750, eighteen were owned by indigenous Protestants, and twelve by immigrants from Geneva—one of these, founded by Isaac Vernet, had the young Jacques Necker as a clerk. Other Protestant financiers moved in—Vandenyver from Amsterdam, who set up a bank (one of his clients being Mme du Barry, mistress of Louis XV), and Georges Grand from Holland, rewarded with letters of nobility for raising loans for the American colonists in their War of Independence.⁸ Political upheavals in Geneva and Belgium in 1782 brought others to the French capital, notably the Clavière brothers from Geneva, ingenious speculators.⁹ A government living on credit needed the help of international financiers, yet even so, it is strange that public opinion came to idolize Necker as he rose to riches in the banking world and to influence in government policy. In 1773, he was elected to the Academy, and his wife was the darling of the philosophes, who attended her salon on Friday evenings to enjoy the culinary immunity of Protestantism. Amid acclaim, Necker went on to bring the monarchy to its final bankruptcy by his painless loans, actuarial absurdities.

In the seaports of Marseille, Bordeaux, and La Rochelle, and in Nîmes, Protestant wealth was the decisive factor in brokering a virtual toleration. In Marseille,¹⁰ there were 2,000 Huguenots, one in fifty of the population. There were rich commercial dynasties whose names figure in the membership of the academy, in Masonry and the chamber of commerce, marrying among themselves and sending their children to Geneva to be educated. The majority of the church congregation consisted of artisans and shopkeepers, better off than most others of their class and having the advantage of support in illness and unemployment from funds managed by the deacons of the Consistory; they lived at peace with their Catholic neighbours and intermarried with them. The elders of the congregation were middling bourgeois—two small merchants, a hatter, a mattress maker, a cobbler, a *rentier*. They had their pastor and a meeting-room, exchanged in 1780 for a rented house made into a chapel. A separate but allied church, with its own pastor, chapel, and cemetery, served 'la nation Suisse', families which had emigrated from France and were now back in Marseille as foreign nationals, growing rich from banking and, after the suppression of the Company of the Indies, in the Levant and American trade.¹¹ Bordeaux had about the

same number of Protestants as Marseille, though with a larger contingent of the affluent, their numbers continually reinforced by the arrival of capitalists from Geneva and Germany, who joined in trading ventures and intermarried with the older families. The great dynasties lived in the ornate heart of the city—the Bonnaffé, who owned twenty-three houses in town, made their principal residence a newly built *bôtel* in the Place de la Comédie. The others lived in the attractive northern suburb, where in 1770 there were Calvinist, Lutheran, and Moravian chapels, two Protestant cemeteries, and a house for charitable work. Ordinary folk, many of them shopkeepers, lived to the south of the city in a crowded *quartier*, in so far as they lacked powerful protectors, an ill-disposed Catholic would occasionally make difficulties for them. But anyone of social standing had no difficulty in getting a certificate of Catholicity, in entering the legal and other professions, in sending children abroad to be educated.¹² The Consistory of Bordeaux was far from being a clandestine organization; indeed, its affairs were prominent items in the local news-sheets, as when, in 1778, Rabaut-Pommier was appointed third pastor, in spite of Jeanbon Saint-André having the support of Pierre Sers and sixty-eight other notables.¹³ In another port where Protestant shipowners and sea captains flourished, La Rochelle, an English visitor in 1776 said 'religious animosity has entirely subsided'. A few years ago, he added, the copper plates put up on the orders of Cardinal Richelieu in the porch of the Minims' chapel in memory of the Catholics killed in the great siege, had been taken down, solemnly broken, and thrown into the sea.¹⁴ Though the bishops of the diocese were intolerant, the Oratorian historian of the city took reconciliation as his theme: 'Are we not all brothers?', and the curé of Saint-Barthélemy gave a practical demonstration by refusing to baptize Protestant infants, leaving them to the pastor, and rebuking Catholic servants who played the trick of bringing the children of their Protestant masters surreptitiously to his church. Nîmes¹⁵ was a city remarkable in being dominated by Huguenots, for they were a quarter of the population, and had most of the wealth. Their sons were educated along with the sons of Catholic notables in the Oratorian *collège* and moved on easily into office as *avocats* and lawyers of various kinds and on to be magistrates of the *présidial*, and, in due course, municipal councillors. Catholics sought Huguenot brides, encouraged by the bishop, who did not see why the true believers should miss the biggest dowries—it was the pastors who raised objections. Usually, in these marriages the boys followed the father's religion and the girls the mother's; in the case of a

Catholic woman marrying a Protestant, she would change to her husband's faith once the curé had pronounced the nuptial blessing. Assemblies were openly held in a rocky amphitheatre a mile out of town, and in 1780 they were moved close to the city wall alongside the broken columns of the old temple of Diana. Here, at Pentecost 1785, the duke of Gloucester, brother of the king of England, came to worship and hear a sermon by Rabaut Saint-Etienne. Within the space of less than a generation the world had changed beyond recognition—what could a civilized man say now about the military raids on assemblies and the condemnations to the galleys and the hang-man's rope?

In areas where Protestants were in a small minority and where bourgeois caution directed their conduct—as in Dauphiné, the Cambrésis, Picardy, Normandy, and the Pays Messin—assemblies were few, and there was a superficial acceptance of occasional Catholic practice. But in the Cévennes, Béarn, Bas-Guyenne, Périgord, and Bas-Poitou, there were numerous peasants solidly adhering to the Reformed religion, as well as numerous families engaged in small-scale manufacture of cloth and other fabrics and in trading. They provided employment, and were prominent in charitable giving; Catholics sought their daughters in marriage, and were glad to receive invitations to share their good cheer. In the Cévennes, where the terrain was difficult and where there was a long tradition of defiance, once the government no longer had the heart to send troops to enforce repression, assemblies were openly held, and the elders ruled the churches without need for concealment. In the diocese of Albi¹⁶ pastors presided over marriages and baptisms, and the local officials made no difficulties about recording deaths and authorizing burials by judicial ordinance. In Bas-Poitou, Protestants could worship without hindrance, but had to be careful. The situation in 1780 is revealed in the journal of a shipowner of La Rochelle who spent two months with his relative Dr Gallot in Saint-Maurice-le-Girard.¹⁷ Gallot's religion was no secret: he employed numerous Catholic servants, and he held long family sessions of prayer and Bible reading morning and evening. In the countryside around there were six assemblies, each meeting once a month, though with the precaution of changing the place every time and calling the pastors by code-names. The Protestants were hospitable to Catholics, and even the bishop of Luçon accepted their invitations. At the village of Cheffois, when a priest acting as locum for the curé preached against strong drink, the churchwardens and congregation took offence, and refused to entertain him—it was a

Protestant, the only one in the place, who invited him to dine. The anecdote is in the tradition of a popularly recognized trait of Huguenot family life everywhere—they may have had a certain austerity of style, but they kept a good table. A curé who was a good trencherman did well to cultivate them—this is one of the standard jokes of the chronicler of the social affairs of the little town of Aubais, near Nîmes. In Périgord, there was the splendid case of the curé of Saint-André, near Sainte-Foy.¹⁸ He started to attend the Calvinist chapel on Sundays after he had said his own mass, and to invite himself to the collation put on by the richer members of the congregation after the service: he ignored repeated censures by the bishop of Sarlat, and in the end the intendant had him arrested and taken away.

II

The patchwork pattern of edgy toleration, at the mercy of events and the vagaries of malicious or fanatical individuals, could not have existed without the co-operation, or at least the acquiescence, of many of the parish clergy. When Protestants were victimized, as by the taking away of their daughters to convents or having their new chapels pulled down, it could be assumed that their curé had reported them. But consistent fanatics pursuing repression with anachronistic zeal were few. A curé might lose his temper and invoke authority because the local dissidents were becoming too self-confident:¹⁹ they are meeting openly in a house used as a chapel, the curé acts as informant, the king orders the building to be razed, but the congregation goes to ground, all religious emblems are taken away, and the matter is forgotten; a hawker is selling heretical books, so his stock is confiscated, and the bishop alerted to his activities; mixed marriages are occurring too frequently, so the law officers of the parlement of Paris are informed. When hostility to Catholicism was manifested overtly, the denouement could be tragic. In 1771, Anne Léclopé exhorted a dying co-religionist to stay firm in his faith, defying the curé—this cost her the next three years of her life, spent with shaven head among the indigent and vagrants of the *hôpital général* of Bourges.²⁰ In the same year, Suzanne de Levit, aged 16, declared her vocation to the monastic life, and her family bitterly objected. In December, she was taken away to the Ursulines of Lodève. In July 1780 she died and was buried in the religious habit, the mother superior writing unctuously to her family about her

'election to share the suffering of Christ'. On the back of this pious communication the father wrote: 'Letter to me about the death of my unfortunate daughter locked up in the aforesaid convent by order of the King and at the request of a fanatical bishop'. The convent then sent a bill for the girl's maintenance fees for two and a half years. The father minuted that he would not pay: 'She died of regret at separation from her good father and mother.'²¹

But most curés wanted to live in charity or, at least, comfortably with all their parishioners, whether from an irenical temper, compassion, friendship, love of a quiet life, or an eye to charitable contributions and invitations to dinner, and they jogged along without complaining to the bishop or the intendant. Besides, if the persecuting laws were to be enforced, more was needed than delation by the curé—the bishop would have to be a rigorist, insensitive character, and this race of prelates was dying out. The Enlightenment and the rediscovery of Christian charity was creating a new stereotype of a good bishop with Fénelon as its exemplar, 'holding back the persecuting steel', teaching 'God is not jealous and barbarous . . . but always tender and sublime'.²² Those who had seen Fénelon's correspondence knew better, but they claimed he had to go along so far with Louis XIV to be in a position to denounce the persecution when it degenerated into 'sacrilegious harshness'. Conforming to this ideal rather than to the unyielding orthodoxy of Charles Borromeo were the bishop of Langres, a nephew of Malesherbes, the last two bishops of Castres, Cortois de Balore of Nîmes, Champion de Cicé of Bordeaux, the bishop of Troyes who rebuked his clergy for demanding Catholicism as the only authorized religion in their *cabier* of 1789, and his colleague of Alais who was to urge his flock to consider the virtues and talents of the Huguenots and the long centuries of common worship before they fell into schism: 'I refuse to separate the children religion gives to me from those drawn to me by simple charity.'²³ Two archbishops were popularly supposed to be tolerant because they hardly believed in Christianity anyway. Perhaps this was true of Dillon of Narbonne, a crafty *bon viveur*, but Loménie de Brienne of Toulouse was different. Devoured by ambition and suspected of yielding to the temptations of the flesh, he was, nevertheless, an indefatigable worker, deeply concerned with the welfare of his people and seeking to reform the Church (except in so far as his own income was concerned). Since he had written *Le Conciliateur* in 1754,²⁴ he had advocated civil toleration, even though by doing so he endangered the high promotion on which he had set his heart. The known opinions of Brienne, Dillon,

and other prelates most active in politics and most often seen in Paris convinced two acute observers of the contemporary scene that the ecclesiastical establishment had been converted to liberal views.²⁵ 'It is singular', said the *Correspondance secrète* in 1786, 'to find the clergy are the least fanatical and the least unreasonable of the corporate bodies intervening in government affairs.' They were, said Mercier, 'less inclined to persecution than ever before . . . satisfied if the exterior of religious practice is not breached, they allow contrary opinions to be expressed without imprudently opposing them'.

These praises hardly serve as a reflection of the views of the rank and file of the episcopate—against them must be set the continual demands of the Assemblies of Clergy for government action against the heretics.²⁶ In 1775 the assembled prelates wanted to put a stop to their baptisms, marriages, and assemblies—'let Louis XVI', they said 'finish the work Louis le Grand had undertaken and Louis le Bienaimé had continued'; let him not lapse into 'this system of *tolérantisme* capable of shaking the throne and plunging France into the greatest misfortunes'. In 1780 they wanted the pastors driven out. 'I will always favour the pacific and charitable views of my clergy to bring back to unity those of my subjects who have the misfortune to be separated from it', the king replied. In 1787, the Assembly offered a gloomy demographical forecast: there are three million Protestants now, and in 20 years' time they will be half the population. Did the bishops really believe that their clamour for the enforcement of the old laws in their severity could succeed? Significantly, when they had lost the battle and the royal edict of 1787 was promulgated, only one bishop refused to accept it, Crussel d'Uzès of La Rochelle. And one more denounced the way it had been drafted, without consultation of the clergy: Urbain de Hercé of Dol, orating before the king on 3 January 1788 on behalf of the estates of Brittany, said that a Constantine, a Theodosius, a Charlemagne, would have called a national council of the Church to advise him before devising a law to 'shake the arches of the sanctuary'.²⁷ On this account of pride and protocol, no doubt many bishops agreed with him, but they accepted the *fait accompli*. In their hearts, they must have known that this was a measure of natural justice. The Assembly of 1775, calling for Louis XVI to complete the work of Louis XIV, was presided over by Dillon, and it was Loménie de Brienne who handed this diatribe to the king. They, and probably many of the others, knew they were indulging in a time-honoured ritual of complaint, and the last thing they wanted was to bring back the sentences to exile, prison, and the galleys. Even so, many wanted the old persecuting

legislation left in place. It constituted an affirmation of Catholicism as the one and only national religion; it was a threat hanging over the heretics to cow them; it provided authoritarian devices for occasional resort against Calvinists who were too enterprising. The clergy failed to realize that the days when the king would shoulder the blame for severities were over. The official protests of the Assemblies established the Church's reputation for intolerance, even though many churchmen were showing forbearance and understanding. The abbé Véri was right: 'The tolerance already existing in fact will in the end be established by law; the Catholic clergy will lose by this because they did not know how to adjust to the inevitable—such is the fate of all establishments which are in decline.'

III

Louis XVI²⁸ came to the throne without insight into the affairs of his country. When his advisers told him of the prevailing unofficial toleration, he stubbornly said he would enforce the law. He was a kindly man, but uncertain of himself and trying to appear decisive. Turgot attempted to persuade him to embrace the cause of religious freedom, but went too far in censuring Louis XIV as the breaker of solemn oaths to his Huguenot subjects, showing 'a deplorable blindness'. The simple young king had not the resolution to begin his reign by an implicit condemnation of the fixed policy of his two royal predecessors. Turgot came nearer to success in urging him to omit the undertaking to extirpate heresy from his coronation oath, pointing out that Louis XIV had not included it—at the coronation, the king compromised by gabbling the words. But the new reign brought one immediate blessing, the dismissal of Saint-Florentin: old, dissolute, and sycophantic, there was no place for him in the new court. His last official act was to forbid the release of a Protestant girl from a convent until he had given the case further consideration. For a brief period, Malesherbes, Turgot's friend, took over Saint-Florentin's office. The supply of *lettres de cachet* dried up, in spite of the bishop of Nîmes' submission that they were not for enforcement, but to give an opportunity to admonish offenders. The bishop of Montpellier did manage to obtain one of these royal warrants to transfer a girl to a convent at her own request, though Malesherbes sardonically obliged him to provide a certificate that 'religion really does require the taking of children from their parents'

before assenting. In the diocese of La Rochelle, a curé, supported by the bishop, was entering the babies of Protestant parents as illegitimate in his register; Malesherbes curtly ordered the cessation of the practice. In October 1775, Turgot held a three-day conference with a group of liberal administrators: Albert, the lieutenant-general of police of Paris; Malesherbes; Trudaine, the government expert on commerce; and Loménie de Brienne, engaged as ever in his balancing act between his belief in religious liberty and his obligations to the Assembly of the Clergy. They commissioned a pamphlet, *Dialogue entre un évêque et un curé sur les mariages des Protestants*, recommending the emancipation of the Huguenots from all constraints save exclusion from the high offices of State. As the title suggests, the starting-point was to be the legitimization of marriages, with the hope that the Assembly of the Clergy would cooperate.

In 1776,²⁹ the reformers were ousted from office, and Amelot took over from Malesherbes, proposing to ingratiate himself at court by enforcing the laws, beginning by excluding Protestants from municipal office and demolishing the chapels they had set up in so many places. Within a few months, the reality of the situation had forced itself upon him, and he acknowledged the folly of bureaucratic rigour. He took as his adviser the comte de Périgord, the military commander in Languedoc, who was deep in negotiation with the Calvinist churches, and was thwarting the tyrannical policies of Saint-Priest, the intendant—the old story of soldiers, who know what happens when force is used, proving more sympathetic than rule-of-thumb civilians. Amelot, with this military advice, sent orders to all the intendants to leave the persecuting legislation un-enforced. He also did something about Protestant marriages, at least in Languedoc, endorsing an agreement the comte de Périgord had reached with the pastors: they would not bless mixed marriages, and, in return, no objections would be made to Desert marriages between Protestant partners.

By now, the demand for the legitimization of such unions was well-nigh universal—the clergy excepted. Albert, the lieutenant of police, speaking in the name of public order, published an argument in favour in 1776,³⁰ and Condorcet, speaking for the literary establishment of the Enlightenment, renewed the contention three years later. In 1778, the parlement of Paris nominated one of its magistrates, Achille-Pierre Dionis de Séjour, to produce a memorandum, and he concluded in favour of civil marriage and freedom of worship, already available to Jews in Metz and Bordeaux and to Muslims in Marseille. In November, the parlement formally

petitioned the king to allow pastors to give the nuptial blessing with the secular magistrates registering the union. Even Catholic controversialists who hated the dissenters reluctantly endorsed the idea of concessions. The abbé Peys, in *La Tolérance Chrétienne opposée au tolérantisme philosophique* (1777), denounced the Calvinists as enemies of France and advocates of popular sovereignty, and urged the prohibition of the exercise of their religion in perpetuity—even so, he said, they ought to be allowed civil marriage and the right to leave their property to their children.

In 1783, the baron de Breteuil succeeded Amelot as minister of the Maison du Roi. To conciliate the bishops and the pious reactionaries at court he was prepared to make *lettres de cachet* available again, but he reaffirmed the instructions to the intendants to do as little as possible to vex religious dissidents, and he continued the custom of consulting the comte de Périgord. In deciding individual cases brought to his notice, he tried to smooth over difficulties: he would allow Protestants to buy land for a cemetery; they could hold municipal office; they could have a chapel provided it was not too near a Catholic church and looked like an ordinary house or shop. In 1785, Malesherbes addressed a *Mémoire sur le mariage des Protestants* to the government, skilfully designed to remove the scruples of Louis XVI and of anyone else who thought it would detract from the majesty of the Crown to disown the policies of Louis XIV. The revocation, the argument went, was the work of the Jesuits rather than of the king himself, and exactly 100 years ago, in 1685, he had laid down regulations for civil marriages and for burials of heretics in the interim period before their conversion. As it had turned out, there were thousands who had still not been converted, so they were entitled to the benefit of these interim arrangements.

Meanwhile, arguments for toleration were accumulating from foreign examples. For long, there had been England and Holland with their commercial prosperity; now there was a mosque in Malta built by the knights for their Turkish slaves; Joseph II was allowing the Protestants of Silesia to open chapels and schools; Gustavus III had persuaded the estates of Sweden to allow Catholics their own marriage service, provided a Lutheran pastor was present alongside the priest; and the king of Sardinia was allowing Protestant worship in Carouge (paying the pastor himself) to help to make the place a commercial centre to rival Geneva.³¹ From North America came the most convincing example of all. With the American War of Independence, a new nation, aided by French arms, had arisen across the western ocean, a home of religious freedom, severe morals, and

economic prosperity. Its praises were sung by young noblemen like Lafayette, who had gone to fight in the rebel armies, by the chevalier de la Luzerne, the ambassador there (another nephew of Malesherbes), and by Hennin, chief clerk of the Foreign Office, married to a Huguenot.³² In 1785, the year of Malesherbes' *Mémoire*, Lafayette³³ went to Nîmes on a secret mission to Paul Rabaut and Rabaut Saint-Etienne, and took back to Breteuil a report on his conversations. La Luzerne, bishop of Langres, brother of the ambassador, supported Lafayette's initiative with the aim, he said, of disposing of the 'calumny' accusing Catholicism of intolerance. Loménie de Brienne co-operated by sending in a proposal for civil marriage, though insisting on having the curés as the registration officers, a sort of indication of the continuing exclusive official standing of the Catholic Church, and with the incidental result of ensuring the parish priests continued to collect their fees. He also consulted Rabaut Saint-Etienne³⁴ to ascertain the minimum formula for an edict of toleration he would regard as acceptable: he reported that the Protestants would be willing for their chapels to display no external signs of their purpose and for their pastors to wear no distinguishing dress, while the question of public office could be left to 'la sagesse du Roi'. Breteuil himself sounded out the bishop of Alais, a civilized prelate who made the distinction which was to shape the government's legislation: the Huguenots should be guaranteed all their rights as individuals, such as freedom of marriage and of election to municipal office, but they must not be allowed to constitute a 'corps', a corporation in the State.

Two items of news full of human interest stirred up public opinion in 1786: a lawsuit and a petition. The lawsuit³⁵ came to the Royal Council in review of the decision of the parlement of Bordeaux to deprive the marquise d'Anglure of her inheritance, her father having reneged on his promise in his Protestant marriage contract to leave his fortune to his children, and had willed it to his nephews. Her *avocat*, Target, demonstrated the validity of Protestant marriages by theological arguments and by the doctrine of 'acquired status' developed by the law courts over the previous twenty years; the marquise won, and the nephews had to pay the legal costs. Another less well-known injustice was brought to notice by the petition of two Protestant army officers to be considered for decorations.³⁶ The chevalier de Luchet and Jean Bernard were distinguished veterans, *maréchaux de camp*, the highest rank a professional could achieve by merit alone. In spite of its own laws, the Crown was glad to have Huguenot officers in the army, only they were debarred

from the cross of St Louis and the pension going with it, since a solemn oath and a certificate of Catholicity from a bishop were required. To get the coveted cross would have involved a cynical gesture of hypocrisy. M. de Beaumont of the royal bodyguard had resorted to it in 1780, and was deprived of communion by his pastor; another old campaigner did the same three years later when he retired from the army, then went round the countryside near Montauban preaching at assemblies while wearing the gold cross and red ribbon that told the world he was a hero and a 'Catholic'.³⁷ In 1759, the government had provided an alternative decoration for Protestant foreigners serving in the French army (like the officers of the Swiss Guard), the *mérite militaire*, the same cross on a blue ribbon. Luchet and Bernard proudly asked: did the king require them to be hypocrites for the red ribbon, and was he depriving them of the blue because they were Frenchmen?

On 9 February 1787, the parlement of Paris renewed its insistence on civil marriage, the speech being given by the Jansenist Robert de Saint-Vincent: 'Those who destroyed Port-Royal', he said, 'are the same people who were ardent persecutors of Protestants.' On 24 May, in the Assembly of Notables (called by the government because of the financial crisis), Lafayette and the bishop of Langres made the same demand and more: the social decencies, they argued, required pastors to be publicly recognized and chapels to be known to all—there was nothing to be said for vagrant preachers and clandestine assemblies. Action became more urgent as thousands of Calvinist refugees flooded in from Holland, the 'Patriots', friends of France driven out by the victorious Stadtholder's party backed by England and Prussia.³⁸ They could hardly be made welcome without a degree of religious freedom. On 17 November, the long-awaited royal edict, subject of so much negotiation and drafting, was signed by the king. There was a last-minute attempt by pious reactionaries to delay parlement's registering it. The archbishop of Paris summoned as many prelates as could be mustered in the capital, and they appealed to Louis XVI to hold his hand until the Assembly of Clergy could consider the matter. The maréchale de Noailles, Lafayette's mother-in-law, called on the magistrates individually, exhorting them and forcing on them a pamphlet of protest written by one of her protégés, an ex-Jesuit.³⁹ (In fact, the parlement did obtain the addition of two clauses safeguarding the domination of the Catholic Church; this was probably unconnected with the activities of the reactionary lobby.) A few magistrates and peers were persuaded to vote against the edict, including d'Eprémesnil, a

devotee of a sect of *illuminés*, the Martinists, though this did not prevent him from pointing his fellow parliamentarians to the crucifix and crying, 'Will you crucify Him a second time?' The edict went through on 29 January by ninety-six votes to seventeen. Hence-forward the Calvinists could have their births, marriages, and deaths registered by the civil magistrates; restraints upon their ownership and disposal of property were ended, and they could freely enter trades and professions.

It was a disillusioning document. The concessions were fenced around. The Catholic religion alone was to have 'the honours of public worship', and all inhabitants, whatever their faith, must contribute to its upkeep. Judicial offices and posts concerned with education were reserved to Catholics. The Calvinist churches would not be allowed to form a body corporate—they could not hold collective deliberations or own institutional property, and their pastors were forbidden to wear distinctive ecclesiastical dress in public. The edict did little more than end the fiction that there were no Protestants in France. Its achievements were limited, said Rabaut Saint-Etienne, 'to allowing Protestants to become goldsmiths and wig-makers and assuring them their children are not bastards'. Civil marriage had its problems.⁴⁰ Dispensations from banns or from impediments of consanguinity up to the third degree, formerly given by the diocese, now came from the *bailliage* or *sénéchaussée* court, and dispensations from consanguinity over the third degree would need an application, not to Rome, but to the Royal Chancellery. Resort to these secular jurisdictions proved to be slow and costly. 'We married before with Gospel simplicity,' said a pastor; 'now you have to consult, appear, come and go, and every single step incurs a fee.' Marriages celebrated in the Desert (something like 400,000 of them) had to be regularized within a year. It cost 5 livres before the curé and 10 livres before the magistrate, but if retrospective dispensations were necessary, the cost might run up to 180 livres, together with days spent hanging around in the antechambers of an official.⁴¹ There were problems not foreseen by the edict. If a second marriage had been contracted, what of the first? Bigoted magistrates or curés might invent procedural difficulties; wives and husbands might refuse to co-operate with each other, or parents take a belated and unexpected opportunity to renew objections. There were wrangles concerning burials, for local communities, as was only just, had to provide a cemetery, and land and walling around were expensive.⁴² A cheap plot might be found, as at Havre, where the army allowed interments in the fortification ditches. Or the Catholic cemetery

would be used, with a dividing wall put up—or, just as likely, without a division at all; for suddenly, proximity of the dead of the two confessions ceased to be a scandal when the payment of good money was required to avoid it. A few parishes refused to act: ‘We have had a single religion since Clovis’, ‘They’ll be asking us to pay the pastors next.’ Others, without refusing, simply did nothing—‘We still bury our dead as in the days of the tempest,’ a pastor complained in July 1789, and the coffin of a Calvinist deputy to the Estates General, accompanied by no less a celebrity than the president of the Assembly, was ignobly taken out at night for burial in a field.⁴³ The position concerning Protestant worship had been left ambiguous, for strictly speaking, chapels had not been legitimized, although many existed, and new ones sprang up. On 21 May 1789, Mme Necker said that her husband dared not take the lead in recommending permission for meetings in houses. When in June, the Calvinists of Paris, who had been worshipping at the Dutch embassy chapel, hired a room of their own, Rabaut Saint-Etienne warned them not to draw attention by seeking more spacious premises, and only in February 1790 did they begin to hold services in the dignified surroundings of the Salle des Enfants d'Apollon, a museum in Protestant ownership.⁴⁴

One of the reasons why the edict had been so long in coming and so disappointing when it came was evident in the *cabiers* of the three Estates in 1789. Some of the clergy—in the Cotentin, Dijon, Evreux, and Castres—asked for toleration to be extended further, at Castres even proposing the return of the property owned by the fugitives of long ago. But such generosity was rare. Almost everywhere, with or without toleration, the *cabiers* of the First Estate insist that the Church remain ‘dominant’. In Flanders, Franche Comté, and Alsace, the churchmen wanted their provinces exempted from the scope of the edict, claiming ancient Catholic rights from the period before French annexation. There were islands of tolerant opinion among the nobles of the centre, Burgundy, and Normandy, but few elsewhere. Three *cabiers* of the Third Estate plead the cause of religious liberty—at Nîmes, Alès, and Sauve, where the pastors had assisted in the drafting. By contrast, there were a few examples of hostility. But ‘most were indifferent . . . there was little real sympathy’.⁴⁵

This page intentionally left blank

VII The Crisis of the Ancien Régime

This page intentionally left blank

48 The Twilight of Jansenism

I

The Jansenists were excluded from the ministry of the Church by the obligation to sign the formulary when taking over an ecclesiastical benefice. Their watchword was ‘vérité’; they demanded a Cartesian clarity, words meaning precisely what they appeared to mean, so they could not hope to find a casuistry of mental reservations or arcane interpretations to allow a show of outward conformity. In a few dioceses the authorities occasionally connived to forget to impose the signature, and the law courts might find an excuse to intervene by *appel comme d'abus* to force the bishop to appoint—the Assembly of Clergy in 1765 was debating such cases in the dioceses of Bayeux and Auxerre.¹ But for the most part, the rule was enforced. Some members of the party already in the Church had been deposed from their functions by a royal *lettre de cachet*. Jansenist curés had been arrested and sent to monastic houses of correction. It was a grim fate to exchange the sociability of the pastoral ministry, the satisfaction of helping the poor and being entertained by the rich, for a lonely cell under the rule of ignorant friars, in some places administering savage penitential discipline. News of a few arbitrary imprisonments kept other clergy in subjection. By the end of the reign of Louis XV such abductions were no longer sanctioned by the government except in extreme cases—though in 1776 Malesherbes declared that when he was in the government (July 1775 to May 1776), he had seen a memorandum from a bishop requesting *lettres de cachet* against Jansenists, one of them being an appellant of 81 years of age.² According to the papal nuncio in 1766, the covert Jansenists were mainly in some of the religious Orders—the Benedictines, the canons regular of Sainte-Geneviève, the Doctrinaires, the Oratorians, and the Dominicans.³ It was no longer possible, however, for a monastery to be a bastion of Jansenist resistance. Fleury had doomed these houses by banning their recruitment. The final results of this tactic of erosion were still being seen in the reign of Louis XVI. In 1715, the abbey of Notre-Dame de Gif, near

Versailles, had a population of eighty nuns. In 1749, the abbess died, denouncing *Unigenitus* in her last moments; nine years later, the prioress, aged 82, followed her to the grave. The singing ended once the voices of the remaining sisters cracked; the night offices were suspended as they were too feeble to venture out in the cold; the few pupils in the school departed when the old ladies could no longer teach. By 1782, Mme de Tourville alone was left, with twelve servants, for the nuns had decently given them life pensions to secure their future when the house finally closed. The king now confiscated the property, and a papal bull of suppression was solicited. Mme de Tourville retired to a nunnery in Paris, where she died six years later at the age of 88. In the diocese of Alet, looking out on mountain ranges and the ruins of a Roman aqueduct, the abbey of Saint-Polycarpe was down to three monks by 1771; thereupon the archbishop of Narbonne united the revenues and the fine library to his seminary, and the church was transferred to the parish. The three monks resisted as long as they dared, then were removed to another religious house at Carcassonne.⁴

Overt Jansenists were excluded from the Church, but there were still clergy who had been shaped by the movement, its austerity, high purpose, and Augustinian theology, though they did not wear the party badge and had no involvement in the warfare against *Unigenitus*. From about 1760, a new tolerance began to come into ecclesiastical affairs, making it less difficult for them, at least in some dioceses, to follow Jansenist pastoral ideals while conforming to the exigencies of orthodoxy. Apart from exacting the formulary, most bishops, weary of wrangling, wanted to forget *Unigenitus*, and were determined to do nothing more on behalf of papal authority. They are all Gallicans, said the nuncio in 1766, 'popes in their dioceses', refusing to be subservient to Rome; 'they accept the Constitution *Unigenitus*, or at least they do not oppose it, though more than one of them would set it aside as valueless or as a nest of disputes and disorders.' By now, a new generation of *Tiers Parti* bishops was arising.⁵ When Boyer died in 1755, the policy of limiting episcopal appointments to anti-Jansenists ended. The archbishop of Bourges, who held the *feuille des bénéfices* for a brief period, and Jarente, who succeeded him in 1758, were moderates. Jarente, a worldly prelate, served the Gallican Church better than many a saint could have done, seeking out worthy candidates who had more serious vocations than his own, but who shared his generous tolerance. He pacified his own new diocese of Orléans, and hoped others would do the same in theirs. Bishops of an irenical temper well disposed to

the ideals of the Jansenists were appointed to Marseille (1755), Alais (1756), Lyon (1758), Agde (1759), Lescar (1763), Saint-Omer (1766), Avranches (1767), Saint-Pons (1770), Dax (1771), Orange (1777), Blois (1776), Saint-Omer again (1778), and Saint-Claude (1785). Four of these were Jansenists in all but name. The most significant was Malvin de Montazet, a former *grand vicaire* of Fitz-James at Soissons, who was given the see of Lyon in 1758, where he ruled for thirty years. This was an archbishopric conferring the title of ‘primat des Gaules’, with vague powers over the rest of France, and at the instance of the parlement of Paris and with the connivance of the government, Montazet used them to counter the fanatical enterprises of Christophe de Beaumont, archbishop of Paris. He allowed the Jansenist nuns of the faubourg Saint-Marceau to elect their own mother superior, awarded a canonry of Notre-Dame and authorized the transfer of the Jesuit *collège* of Louis-le-Grand to the university—all in defiance of Beaumont's rulings. Within his own diocese, Montazet ended the signature of the formulary, put the Oratorians and Dominicans in charge of the education of his clergy, issued an Augustinian catechism, and closed his eyes to Jansenist publications. He followed the policy invented by his former patron, Fitz-James of Soissons: since Pope Clement XI often said that he had never meant to derogate from the doctrines of St Augustine and St Thomas Aquinas, why not accept his word for it and cease quarrelling?⁶

True, there were still a few ruthless bishops who inflicted studied humiliations on Jansenistically-inclined clergy, and a few fanatical confessors who tried to compel the dying to accept *Unigenitus* as a condition of absolution. The abbé Valet, who took over the parish of Gien at the end of 1781, records in his memoirs the tribulations of his predecessor: censured in front of his parishioners by the bishop of Auxerre at visitation time, refused help in his legitimate complaints against the encroachments of neighbouring curés, with the Jesuits sent to hold missions near his parish boundaries to incite disaffection among his flock. In 1776, the bishop of Chartres arrived in Digny to confirm, for the first time in twenty-three years. There was a vast throng, but all the candidates prepared by the Jansenist vicaire were turned away, a case of visiting the sins of the fathers-in-God upon the children.⁷ The victimization of dying Jansenists by their confessors, which had filled Paris with tumult in mid-century, was now almost over—Christian charity and common sense discredited the practice, and the law courts condemned it. Yet as late as 1788 the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* found two cases in the capital. One was that of a simple working woman whose last moments were made miserable

because she could not fathom what the ‘constitution’ was supposed to be about; the other was a wrangle at a deathbed over Quesnel's *Réflexions morales*. This volume was the favourite spiritual reading of M. Laurin, the dying man. Since he made complex difficulties about *Unigenitus*, the abbé Ladevez turned to the five propositions, which Laurin, knowing the standard riposte, ‘condemned in the sense the church condemned them’, though denying they could be found in Jansenius. Ladevez then craftily praised the *Réflexions morales*, but demanded Laurin forswear reading the book as a penance, for this was a time to abandon all allegiances, ‘not Paul, not Apollos, not Cephas’ and cleave only to Christ. This was accepted, and absolution given. When he realized he had been duped, the dying man tried to revoke his consent to abjure Quesnel, but the abbé left him shriven, orthodox, and angry. The affair was ambiguous: the confessor was determined to triumph over a Jansenist, but equally determined to give him absolution.

These were anachronistic incidents (probably provoked by an injudicious episcopal pastoral letter asking for greater strictness in the confessional); they were reversions to a past which churchmen were anxious to forget. When Christophe de Beaumont died in 1781, the feuds in the Gallican Church he had done so much to exacerbate were well-nigh appeased. His end was sad, and strangely moving. After the fearsome operation for the stone in 1774 at the age of 70, he was dispirited: he became convinced that an attempt had been made to murder him with poisoned wine in the chalice at the ablutions of his Christmas mass. After the great fire at the *hôtel-Dieu* two years before, he had packed the sick into his palace and fed them for a month, and in the year before he died he presented the hospitals of the capital with the 500,000 livres he had won in a lawsuit against the municipality. In May 1790, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, looking back on his persecutions, astonishingly expressed deep respect for him; he had been right in insisting that the secular courts had no business to intervene in matters concerning the sacraments, and in so cruelly refusing the viaticum to dying Jansenists he had only been doing what he thought was right.

With the appellants and re-appellants against *Unigenitus* excluded from the ministry, their adversarial and confrontational Jansenism survived in the printed word—the movement had always been learned and literate. In high-minded propaganda and merciless controversy, the golden days of Arnauld and Quesnel were commemorated and the memory of their enemies assailed with irony and scholarship. Doctrinal controversy had died down, but there was a

clash of weapons in the early 1760s recalling the din of the Homeric combats of the past. Before he died in 1764, Fitz-James, bishop of Soissons, had hammered the *Histoire du peuple de Dieu* by the Jesuit Berruyer in a pastoral letter of two volumes in quarto of 500 pages each; the archbishop of Lyon and the Sorbonne followed suit, more concisely, in 1762 and 1764. From the other side, in 1761, the papal brief *Dum inter gravissime* condemned the *Exposition de la doctrine Chrétienne* (1744) of Mésenguy, a masterly summa of Augustinian theology. Six out of thirteen cardinals, so it was said, had disapproved of the brief, and the courts of France, Spain, Naples, and Austria refused to receive it. (Mésenguy died two years later, safe in his total deafness from refusal of the sacraments.) Meanwhile, the Jansenists were publishing popular works on the history of Port-Royal, its spirituality, learning, and the tragedy of its suppression. Pilgrimages were made to the ruins, guided by the *Manuel des pèlerins* published by the abbé de Gazaigues in 1767. The lives of the élite souls of the movement were recounted in the seven volumes of René Cerveau's *Nécrologie*, appearing from 1760 to 1778, hagiography of a sophisticated and erudite kind. In 1759, a prospectus for an edition of the works of Arnauld, to be published at Avignon, had been circulated, encouraged by Pope Benedict XIV, though the king and the archbishop of Avignon had vetoed it. Sixteen years later, however, printing began, and the task was completed by 1783 in forty-three volumes.

All the while, in spite of all the efforts of the police, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* continued to appear, written in a uniform, dry, and lucid prose, proof-read with exactitude, accurate in its investigative journalism. The organization keeping the journal appearing so regularly and so efficiently distributed is far from being understood: like the famous 'boîte à Perrette' (a Jansenist fund accumulating from legacies), it worked because it was operated by intelligent and selfless enthusiasts. The first issue of every year began with an essay on the state of the Church, with much that was wrong in it traced back to the bull *Unigenitus*. About a third of each number was devoted to Catholic Europe outside France, with occasional forays to China and other mission fields; there were revelations about the doings of Rome and its obscurantist forces, and news about Jansenist initiatives, the most striking being the Synod of Pistoia in 1786, held by the bishop, Scipione Ricci, under the protection of the grand duke of Tuscany—voting for the four Gallican articles, a vernacular liturgy, and the government of the Church by synods and national councils. There was a similar antithesis in domestic news between

the worthy doings of Jansenists and the backslidings of the ultra-montanes. Augustinian theological treatises got favourable reviews, as did the pastoral letters of bishops sympathetic to the cause, and if a piece of eloquence by one of them, the archbishop of Lyon, could be set against a contemporaneous discourse by the bishop of Boulogne abandoning the doctrine of the changelessness of God, so much the better. The few remaining heroes in the ministry of the Church were dying off, and they were praised in long obituaries, generally appearing two or three years after decease, and showing evidence of careful research. Austerity and sobriety prolong a man's days: the five deaths recorded in 1786 were at an average age of 90. The piece on Michel de l'Épée in 1790 looked back to a distant past: he had been ordained by Bossuet and had been an appellant and a re-appellant. In the nature of the case there was more to say about scandals among the orthodox, and the meshes of the net trawling for them were fine. In 1787, there was the archbishop of Paris changing the liturgy without consultation; the thesis riddled with unsound theology presented to the Sorbonne by the abbé de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénelon; the Sulpicians of Toulouse issuing pious tracts in which there was never a reference to the love of God, and Christ and the Virgin were treated as equals; various bishops encouraging the observances of the Sacred Heart, 'this Nestorian festival'; the canons of Montpellier introducing profane music into their cathedral; the pastoral idyll of the Rosière celebrated in churches near Paris with ladies in fancy dress crowding into the sanctuary. To detect lapses from doctrinal correctness, monitoring the sermons at evangelistic missions in the parishes was the way, for unguarded statements and populist rhetoric could be expected. There was a rich collection from the sermons of a Eudist father in 1768: a priest saying the words of consecration at mass 'gives commands to God himself'; do not bring small sins to the confessional, 'but only the big ones worth the trouble of being listened to'; more scandalous still, he said, infidels and Protestants could be saved, and unbaptized children are not damned—small wonder the Jansenists were not popular with the multitude. In 1786 an opportunity for comparison arose when the Oratorians conducted a mission in the diocese of Poitiers and the Mulotins another in that of Luçon. The Mulotins gave comic performances to attract attention, sold pious trinkets, and got people to come in droves to general and first communions, while the fathers of the Oratory preached the word soberly and did not encourage the 'profanation' of the sacrament of the altar.

From the beginning of 1790, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* ceased to

be clandestine, and was sold openly on the streets. The editors reflected that the Revolution 'could be as salutary to the Church as it was necessary to the State'. However, it was not salutary to circulation: there were more interesting items of news than scandals in sacristies and salvation made easy in sermons. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy was rejected by some of the canonists and theologians of the party and welcomed by others. A rival *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* appeared with the subtitle, 'Memoirs to serve towards a history of the so-called Civil Constitution of the Clergy' instead of the old 'towards the history of the bull *Unigenitus*'. United against the Pope and the Jesuits in the days of royal absolutism, the Jansenist movement disintegrated when faced by the demands of the State, half reforming, half Erastian, in revolutionary times.

II

As a political force, Jansenism declined when it lost its chief enemy. The fall of the Jesuits undermined its *raison d'être*. Those devoted to the cause had described themselves as fervent Catholics who had been packaged by the propagandists of the Society of Jesus into a phantom heretical party. Since then, they had become what they were accused of being: a party, the standard-bearers of an anti-Jesuit alliance in French society, lending lofty motivation to a cause more Gallican and anticlerical than religious. Now the battle was won, the unthinking majority, which had sympathized with them in their persecutions, could slump into its residual distrust of preachers of puritanical living and predestinate dying. The publicists of the Enlightenment, who had enjoyed joining in the feud against Rome, the clerical establishment, and the Crown, became reticent; for it was a maxim with them that if the Jansenists achieved mastery, they would be more intolerant than their enemies had been: they were the 'wolves', said Voltaire, while the Jesuits had been 'foxes'. At the end of his life he was still declaiming in private letters against the menace of a 'new barbarian invasion—if we let it happen—they are a faction of atrocious tub-thumpers, driven on by the pretext . . . of sustaining the rights of the nation against the usurpations of Rome; they want to make a bonfire of common sense in the place de Grève'. As usual, he hoped to get his foes into trouble with authority: the king should beware of such fanatics, more dangerous to the royal authority than the Presbyterians had been in England during the Civil War. Bernis, who represented both ecclesiastical

orthodoxy and the philosophes, wrote to Choiseul in 1769 with a similar warning: do not allow the Jansenists to take the place of the suppressed Jesuits, for 'their policy tends towards a republic by rendering the parlements too powerful and the second order of the clergy equal to the bishops'. The alliance of Jansenism with the lower clergy made it suspect in the corridors of Versailles, without bringing it genuine adherents. The curés were embracing only the ecclesiological aspect of the doctrine, the writings of the canonists of the party elaborating the New Testament and later historical precedents to justify the rights of the parish priests, arguments useful in their fight for fair salaries and a share in the government of the Church. Their agitation went from strength to strength, with few of them caring whether the five propositions were in Jansenius or how many of the 101 propositions from Quesnel were blameless.

After the victory against the Jesuits, Jansenist issues faded from the agenda of the parlement of Paris. Few of the magistrates belonged to the party by conviction, and even the inner ring of dedicated campaigners was less concerned with the doctrines of Quesnel than with the iniquities of *Unigenitus*. They were Gallicans, hostile to Rome and to the Jesuits. Since the Crown, against its traditions, had taken the ultramontane side and enforced the bull, they had been provided with a battlefield where, with popular backing, they had pressed their claim to political influence and gratified their Gallican enthusiasms. The magistrates had also been drawn to the Jansenist side by their duty, one they took very seriously, to preserve the rights of Frenchmen, including those of the lower clergy, against episcopal encroachments. The effect of the sanctions of the parlement of Paris and of the parallel criminal court, the Châtelet, against priests who refused the last sacraments to dying Jansenists were still being felt towards the end of the reign of Louis XV. The orthodox curé of Saint-Médard, who had lived in hiding from 1752 to 1756, had to flee again from 1761 to 1771, and by then he was 76 years of age and could fight no longer; the parish of Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles had seen its curé and two vicaires successively exiled, so that by 1765 there was no one to take the services.⁸ On all fronts, the magistrates seemed victorious. Then, three years before he died, Louis XV took decisive action against them.

'Decisive' refers to the effect, not to the process of decision making. As ever in the reign, a policy of drift in the end forced on precipitate action—an intrigue to oust Choiseul, an edict with a preamble offensive to parliamentary pride, an ill-judged strike, and the reckless dismissal of the magistrates who refused the order to

resume their duties, and the government found itself devising a new judicial system, rigging up the 'parlement Maupeou' in place of the old parlement and Châtelet. When Louis XVI came to the throne, the innovation had become discredited, and the old courts had to be restored. The princes and peers of the parlement would not countenance the nominees of Maupeou, and public opinion swept in behind them; the duc de Chartres, son of Orléans, and his duchess were applauded at the Opéra, while the king and queen were received coldly. 'It is worthy of our nation of monkeys to regard our assassins as our protectors,' said Voltaire, who had been hoping for major reforms in the administration of justice. The ministers were aware that it would be impossible to raise loans if future taxation was to be registered before a nominated and suspect tribunal. So the old magistrates were brought back, apparently in triumph. But their self-confidence had been shaken and their powers eroded by the terms of their recall, including a ban on strikes and mass resignations. Henceforward, the 'union des classes', the alliance with the provincial parlements, was in abeyance. 'Before the great work of Chancellor Maupeou', wrote a journalist in 1778, 'all the parlements claimed to form one corporation, making common cause . . . Since their re-establishment, the gentlemen of the parlement of Paris and the others of the provinces seem to have decided to look after their own interests alone.' Apart from refusing to register Turgot's 'Six Edicts' in 1776, from its restoration to 1786 the parlement of Paris made no serious gesture of opposition. *Vingtèmes* were registered in 1780 and 1782, as were Necker's loans, and of seventeen remonstrances, only ten were on grave matters, and of these only two were reiterated.⁹

The forceful Jansenist clique which had so effectively marshalled the constitutional arguments and inspired the political interventions of the magistrates by now had declined in numbers and effectiveness. The abbé Chauvelin had retired in 1768, as had four others before him; three had moved on to join the higher service of the Crown—Lambert as a *maître des requêtes*, Laverdy as controller-general (from December 1763 to September 1768), and Drouyn de Vaudeuil to preside over the parlement of Toulouse. Promotions of this kind were a normal feature of political life: able men who had fought for the corporate rights of parlement and causes they believed in, would carry on in the service of the king as a patriotic and prestigious duty, with no sense of a betrayal of their past. By 1770 there were only eight active campaigners for the Jansenist cause among the magistrates, and another small group, whose members had no particular

religious allegiance, took over their old leadership role. Yet there were some issues, established as of high significance and principle by the battles of the past, on which the magistrates would move swiftly into action, as it were by conditioned reflex. Throughout these 'twelve years of relative tranquillity', they would rouse themselves from lethargy at the slightest rumour of a scheme to restore the Jesuits, or even to allow them to have latitude to serve the Church as individuals. When the king in common fairness wanted to allow them the rights of ordinary citizens, the magistrates demanded limitations: they must live in the diocese of their birth and never exercise a public ministry in a major town; they must subscribe to the four Gallican articles and to the definitive destruction of their Society. In 1774, a pamphlet reflecting on their usefulness to the cause of religion aroused protests against 'the new enterprises of the Society within the kingdom'. Three years later, Robert de Saint-Vincent and two other Jansenist *conseillers* reported to their colleagues a plot among the Jesuits of Lyon to control the chaplaincy of the *école militaire*. When the parlement came back from yet another period of exile in 1787, the *premier président*, haranguing the king, accused the Jesuits of inventing the calumnies which had alienated his loyal courts of justice from his royal favour. That old ally of the Society and hammer of the Jansenists, Christophe de Beaumont, was kept under suspicious observation. Shortly after they were reinstated following the collapse of the Maupeou experiment, the magistrates countermanded his instructions for the celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart on the Sunday after the octave of the *fête-Dieu*; this was engineered on an appeal from the churchwardens of the university parish of Saint-André-des-Arts, with the curé in support, though covertly, lest he incur the wrath of his archbishop.

As ever, the parlement stood by to rescue corporations or individuals from the interventions of despotic power. No fewer than three remonstrances were issued in defence of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, always suspect at court because of their Jansenist leanings, the pen in each case being wielded by the Jansenist canonist Henri Jabineau.¹⁰ Another subject of protest was the Crown's occasional intervention to nullify the procedure of the *appel comme d'abus* against bishops by their lower clergy. In 1778, the recteurs of the diocese of Nantes used such an appeal to challenge the action of their bishop in handing over the seminary to the Sulpicians, putting the teaching of theology into ultramontane hands, the next worst thing to a Jesuit take-over. When the case was evoked to the Royal Council, the parlement of Rennes made a formal remonstrance: the

parish priests, it said, were 'being denied the privileges of the nation of which they are members', and are suffering the injustice of having to 'sustain a lawsuit 100 leagues away from their place of domicile'. This protest on behalf of the lower clergy was indicative of a switch of opinion in the provincial parlements, in the past inclined to favour the aristocratic prelates moving in the same high social circles as the magistrates themselves. The fashionable enthusiasm for the 'bon curé' was taking over. In 1776 the parlement of Dauphiné had condemned Reymond's book demanding fair salaries and greater independence for priests engaged in the pastoral ministry, but four years later it overrode the laws banning associations, and granted the curés of the province the right to federate to present a petition to the king, a concession already granted by the parlement of Aix.¹¹ The definitive remonstrance against the subversion of the *appel comme d'abus* came in 1783 from the parlement of Paris, protesting against the evocation of a lawsuit by the chapter of Noyon against its bishop. The argument was on general grounds: this was an appeal process specifically devised for these sorts of cases, where justice had to be seen to be done without respect of persons, and they should never be removed from the jurisdiction of the ordinary superior courts of the land. Three years later, the magistrates made another resounding intervention, this time on behalf of the canons of Notre-Dame of Paris; they were appealing against Beaumont's successor in the archbishopric, Le Clerc de Juigné, who, without consulting his clergy, had changed the diocesan liturgy for the one he had used at Châlons-sur-Marne (this from a Jansenist point of view, was unsound on efficacious grace). Robert de Saint-Vincent, one of the few outright Jansenists among the magistrates, led the attack, publishing his indictment. It is customary for episcopal pastoral letters to state that they are issued after consultation with the cathedral chapter—this is done every year when giving permission to eat eggs in Lent: it is surely impossible to believe that the archbishop can change the rites, prayers, and ceremonies of his church without consulting his chapter, which is his council in the first instance (*son premier conseil*). This speech was a summary of the ecclesiology of the Jansenist writers: bishops are not despots, they have to consult their cathedral chapter, then move on to consult the curés in synod, their council of second instance.

During the reign of Louis XVI, 'public opinion' was spoken of as the directing force behind the social order;¹² even as they hired journalists to manipulate its manifestations, the royal ministers stood in awe of its judgements, and the fashionable, formulaic recital of its

power was an implied admission, before the crisis came, that the absolutism was breaking. This state of mind had built up from a series of storms of indignation and censure rippling out from successive scandals throughout the century; alongside expensive wars with shameful defeats, the Jansenist quarrel had played its part—*Unigenitus*, the Council of Embrun, the refusal of the last sacraments, with king and ministers, pope and bishops, confounded in enterprises against the Gallican tradition, the right of individual judgement and common sense. With the execution of Calas in 1762, the persecution of Protestants blew up into another major scandal to disillusion enlightened observers still further with the clerical and secular establishments, and it was significant that the Jansenists, persecuted themselves, had four years before declared themselves on the Protestant side with the publication of Maultrot and Tailhé's *Questions sur la tolérance*, reissued two years later with an extra barb to the title, as *Essai sur la tolérance chrétienne*.¹³ The end of the reign of Louis XV was marked by the dramatic explosion of protest which brought the concept of the empire of 'public opinion' to general acceptance, not only by its force and reverberation, but by its direct concentration on the central political issue of power and by its eventual triumph. When the parlements were abolished and Maupeou's substitute court was inaugurated, Paris was inundated by a flood of squibs, broadsheets, pamphlets, and, even, solid learned treatises, at least 500 works in all, appealing to the 'nation' and 'public opinion' against the enterprises of 'despotism', that evocative and hated word pushed into the forefront of discourse over the years by the Jansenist propagandists. In defence of the parlements, a 'patriot' party sprang up, deriving its more formal arguments and leadership from the 'Jansenist' party which had organized the resistances and remonstrances of the parlement of Paris in the last two decades.

Having rehearsed for so long the case against arbitrary interventions by authority, whether spiritual or secular, in the affairs of the Church, the Jansenist writers now used their arguments in the service of the parlements: the magistrates had protected them, and now they could show their gratitude. Their pens flowed with extra venom, because they suspected that the Jesuits were making a comeback in the Maupeou adventure: Robert de Saint-Vincent went so far as to ascribe the *coup* to their promptings, though his parliamentary colleagues thought he was exaggerating. Less specifically, the writer of 'some reflections on present events' in 1771, declared that 'State Molinism is now trying to follow in the footsteps of

religious Molinism'.¹⁴ According to Hardy, the Jansenist bookseller, the clerical magistrates of the Maupeou parlement had been recruited by the good offices of that old ally of the Society of Jesus, Archbishop Beaumont. Whatever the truth of this matter, there was a religious under-side to the new political era. Hardy observed how things had changed¹⁵—ex-Jesuits promoted to parochial cures and chaplaincies, the government issuing a law of amnesty for clerics exiled by the old parlement, a schoolmistress sacked for having an engraving of deacon Pâris as a marker in her service-book, and from the pathetic to the horrendous, two professors of the college of Auxerre sent to the galleys for teaching their pupils to abhor both Maupeou and *Unigenitus*. He also recorded the renewal of refusals of the sacraments to the dying, now that the protective watch of the parlement of Paris over individual liberties was removed—six cases between April 1772 and February 1773. One of these was an octogenarian appellant denied the consolations of religion by curé Madier, who had fled from his parish seventeen years previously before the wrath of the old magistrates, and was now newly returned, as bleakly zealous for *Unigenitus* as ever. Evidently, the sooner the parlement of Paris was back, issuing writs against these intolerant curés and sending its bailiffs to confiscate their furniture, the better. Of the eighty-five suspected pamphleteers interrogated by the police, about thirty were 'Jansenist' in inclination. Among the principal identifiable authors of Maupeouana figure the Jansenists Clément de Boissy, a magistrate of the *cour des comptes*, the Barnabite friar Mirasson, and the *avocats* Le Paige, André, Blonde, Maulrot, and Mey. The *avocats* had a special grievance, for their order, providing a base for friendship and mutual support, had been broken up by the threats and intrigues of Maupeou.¹⁶ Faced with a strike of the barristers, he had threatened to abolish some of their offices, and had further undermined their resolve by blackmailing the famous Gerbier into pleading cases before his new judges (the price for the release of his Jansenist sister from prison). Fearing for their livelihood and making Gerbier's example their justification, about half the total number of *avocats*, 200 and more, went back to work again. The others remaining on strike were embittered and out to get rid of the new judicial order from which they had excluded themselves. For half a century, in 'consultations' wrapped in the quasi-immunity which protected the publication of defence pleas proffered to the courts, they had been making criticisms of the government on issues concerning *Unigenitus*, and now their enforced leisure left them free to use their skills of argument and invective to concoct

manifestos against Maupeou wrapped in the precarious immunity of anonymity. They also had access to the Jansenist clandestine network of printing-presses and underground circulation outlets. Following some bizarre trails, the police from time to time hit upon such connections in the distribution of the anti-government publications.¹⁷ There were four ladies of respectable families travelling with anti-Maupeou pamphlets in pockets sewn into their petticoats, and runners for the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* who had added works of secular subversion to their surreptitious pious loads. Government spies were just too late to find a cache of contraband hidden by a chambermaid in the mansion of Lambert the magistrate, but they scored when they discovered the involvement of the Jansenist widow Mecquignon, the bookseller. She was put in the Bastille and sentenced to nine years' exile by the Maupeou magistrates—a sentence having a mysterious outcome, for Marie Antoinette ensured that she was pardoned, and had her to dine at Versailles.

Amid the flurry of innuendo, libel, and mirth, the serious arguments of the Maupeouana were derived from the researches of Adrien Le Paige, described by Dale Van Kley as a 'convulsionist, figuratist theologian, specialist in canon law and pro-parlementary pamphleteer and advisor', linking together in his person 'all . . . the strands of the Jansenist movement that had otherwise begun to unravel after 1730'. He was the learned propagandist of the realistic generation which had been protected by the parlement of Paris against royal oppression and was moving away from Quesnel's passive resistance confined to 'prayers and tears'. As the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* said in 1738: 'Le christianisme ne se serait jamais soutenu, si ses défenseurs n'eussent pas su qu'il est des cas où pour obéir à Dieu il faut résister aux Puissances légitimes.'¹⁸ In his *Lettres historiques sur les fonctions essentielles du parlement* (2 vols., 1753–4), Le Paige had described the parlements as descended from the general assemblies of the Franks and the Merovingian royal court, with this lineage as their warrant for acting as guardians of the fundamental laws, verifiers of the sovereign's legislation, and representatives of the king's 'real will' freed from the accidents of personal preference and advice from ephemeral councillors. In a short work, *Lettre sur les lits de justice* (1756), he had elucidated his argument in a specific example: the *lit de justice*, now used by kings as a device for forcing the registration of laws, ought to be an assembly of 'deliberation and counsel'. When the outcry against Maupeou's *coup* arose, Le Paige, who as librarian to the *frondeur* prince de Conti and *bailli* of the enclave of the Temple was immune from all but the highest-level

police proceedings, put his constitutional ideas in popular form in at least twenty pamphlets, and gave help to other more rumbustious controversialists. In 1775 the whole outburst of propaganda and anger was brought to a culmination embracing revolutionary possibilities going beyond Le Paige's version of historical development by two contrasted publications, one a learned two-volume *Maximes du droit public françois* by the canonists Maulrot and Mey, who had spent a lifetime researching against papal authority and *Unigenitus*, the other a popular manifesto, *Catéchisme du citoyen* by Guillaume-Joseph Saige, who was at least a Jansenist sympathizer. Both supported the claims of the parlements, but they also took up a theme as yet only marginally mentioned by Jansenist writers: the necessity of a resort to the Estates General, taken as the traditional body which could speak for all Frenchmen, as being the nation assembled.

The Gallican alliance with the aristocratic parlements was one aspect of the Jansenist movement; by contrast, there was the democratic drive which opened the Bible to all, simple folk and women included, pressed for the use of the vernacular in the liturgy, and encouraged the participation of the laity in parochial affairs.¹⁹ In the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, the people do not appear, as in other newspapers, as criminals or as credulous nonentities; it has been described as the only newspaper to give space to popular speech and to appeal to the opinion of ordinary folk—in it, ‘the people were . . . the repositories of the truth on which Rome, the Church and the Monarchy were forever seeking to trample’.²⁰ Granted, there would never be mass acceptance of the rigours of puritanical devotion; even so, the movement was directed towards the popular consciousness, seeking to convert, emancipate, and give ordinary people their full role in church life. To some theologians of the party, this role was to be exercised at the highest level; they went beyond the standard appeal to the superior authority of a General Council to insist on the consent of all the faithful, laity as well as clergy, to the decisions of the Church: by analogy, the consent of the people might be considered a necessity in secular legislation. In 1715, Le Gros, an advocate of broad consensus to validate doctrinal decisions (this would rectify the scandal summarized in his title, *Du renversement des libertés de l'église gallicane*), had considered extending the principle to secular politics, but finished up with being satisfied with the parlements, since they were ‘like an Estates-General always assembled’. Mignot, in 1755, proclaiming the overriding interest of the State in ecclesiastical property, had censured the clergy for clinging to their privilege of voting their own taxation instead of defending the right of the

nation in general to do so.²¹ With typical resort to a historical precedent, Le Paige stopped short of this conclusion on much the same ground as Le Gros: the Estates General of Blois in 1576, he said, had delegated the right to consent to taxation to the parlements. Since then, events had given him pause to reflect: the ease with which Maupeou had swept away the old parlements showed that they were too fragile a barrier against despotic power; further safeguards were needed, and in his correspondence and in the draft of a third volume of the *Lettres historiques* (never published), he turned to the Estates General as the final authority for making the laws of the kingdom.²² Maulrot and Mey, in their *Maximes* of 1775, said this publicly. Though still principally concerned to defend the cause of the parlements, they went on to say that where subsidies were concerned, the people had to agree through their representatives in the Estates General, a body not dependent on the royal summons, but coming together whenever the provinces—or, indeed, a single province—required it. There was also a further, reckless assertion: the nation, once assembled, had comprehensive authority, extending even to changing the very form of government. Saige's catechism for citizens bore signs of Jansenist inspiration (it defended the rights of curés and the supremacy of general councils in the Church), but it was principally Rousseauist, calling in the general will to reinforce the Jansenist ideal of universal assent; in practical terms, for France this assent could be found in the traditional meetings of the Estates General, so long suspended and due to be convened again.

From now, these arguments became items in the stock-in-trade of the patriotic party. New editions of Saige and Le Paige's *Lit de justice* appeared, one of the latter in denunciation of Loménie de Brienne's enforced registration of fiscal legislation in August 1787. In 1788, a *Dissertation sur le droit de convoquer les États-Généraux* was published, lifted verbatim from Maulrot and Mey's *Maximes*, and highlighting the revolutionary statements previously buried in the labyrinthine learning of the voluminous original: in particular, the right of the great council of the nation to assemble without being convoked by the Crown, and its residual power to change the form of government. In the same year, the Jansenist *avocat* Pierre-Jean Agier published the three volumes of his *Jurisconsulte national*; the parlements were praised for preserving the idea of liberty, but their day was over. There was nothing for it now but to call the Estates General and to stand by its decisions, even if it decided to declare France a republic. At the very beginning of the Revolution, Maulrot, old and blind but indefatigable, re-entered the fray with a work equally

voluminous and equally radical, the *Origines et justes bornes de la puissance temporelle suivant les livres saints et la tradition sainte*.²³ Not only did he proclaim the nation's exclusive right to make the laws; he also insisted on its right to choose its rulers, not in some mysterious election or contract lost in the mists of remote antiquity, but in the here and now. Kingship ought not to be inherited, like a house or a field. The eldest son was to be considered as having a family vocation to the office, but the nation must judge if he is worthy of it; heredity confers a title, but an imperfect one, which needs confirmation by the people. Thus monarchy was stripped of its last vestiges of religious mystique. True, its authority comes from God, but only indirectly; 'it comes immediately from the people and, with them as intermediaries, from God'. Even then, was God's approval always given? Maulrot accepted the comma in the Vulgate version of Romans 13: 1, which implied that only 'well-ordered powers' were ordained by God—a reading up to now adopted by only a few *dévots* when they felt the Crown was not doing enough for religion, but stoutly rejected by all the Jansenists. In spite of resemblances in style and pageantry, the coronation was not like the consecration of a bishop, a sacramental ceremony with the warrant of the early Church and Christ himself: 'there is no sacrament established for the creation of kings'—the coronation records the completion of a contract.

Though thinkers of a Jansenist cast of mind put forward the theoretical possibility that the nation could abandon kingship as its form of government, they did not expect or hope for such an outcome. Indeed, in 1786, the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, the repository of the original theological drive of the movement before its absorption into politics, took loyalty to the Crown so far as to regret that the censor had allowed the publication of a book envisaging the possibility of men governing themselves without kings.²⁴ The ideas of radical change advanced by Maulrot and Mey were only one element in their array of learned excursions, and their opinions and scholarship were only one element in the huge surge of public opinion in the reign of Louis XVI: all sorts of writers—philosophers, Voltaireans, Rousseauists, devotees of *sensibilité*, moralists, jesters, pornographers, and single-issue reformers of every kind had their peculiar slant on the ideal of liberty, promoting it as well as using it for their own ends. But in judging the importance of particular authors, there is a consideration which, perhaps, should outweigh others. For effective change to be brought about, there had to be a rallying cry and a single attainable objective that could be pursued in

the name of the nation, sufficiently ambiguous to win support from all quarters, sufficiently concrete to be the subject of a precisely formulated demand. The Jansenists' appeal to a future General Council and their demand for the participation of the laity in the decisions of the Church had been the forerunners of the appeal of public opinion to a future Estates General, appropriately given learned justification by the Jansenist canonists. Here was the objective, the rallying point. The myth of the Estates General doomed the *ancien régime*, making radical change certain. It ensured that the rising discontent was neither anarchical nor ineffective, but was focused on a clear objective; it pre-empted the achievement of the inevitable reform either by a minister in the mould of Enlightenment despotism, or by the leaders of the liberal aristocracy taking over the faltering power of the Crown. The potency of the myth arose, not from the unimpressive past history of the institution, but from an imaginative yearning drawing force from the analogy of a General Council of the Church, familiar to all from Jansenist propaganda, an assembly rarely called but there in the last resort when absolute authority broke down—the only true infallibility.

49 The Political Role of the Bishops

I

‘The deficit became the treasure of the nation.’¹ Under the shadow of bankruptcy, the government of Louis XVI had to make liberal concessions; it was a question of finding a way to enlist public support whilst modernizing, and so preserving the—theoretical—royal absolutism. At the beginning of the reign, Turgot, who tried to bring the ideas of the Enlightenment into ministerial policies and lasted only two years in office, had recommended a system of administrative assemblies, realizing that the royal authority needed a wider base of consent or, at least, discussion. At the same time, in May 1775, the *cour des aides*, inspired by Malesherbes, proposed the setting up of an assembly in each *élection* to assess for direct taxation and represent local grievances to Versailles, ‘ensuring the intendants have critics and the people have defenders’. These projects, of course, applied only to the *pays d’élection*, the *pays d’état* being already provided with traditional institutions for tax assessment and local administration. In June 1777, Jacques Necker, the Genevan banker, became director-general of finances, and while amid unsuspecting enthusiasm he mortgaged the future by raising loans, he proceeded to put liberal reforms into operation, including the formation of the now fashionably acceptable provincial assemblies. In a memorandum of July 1778 he presented his design to the king. The new bodies would levy the taxes imposed from above, maintain the roads, encourage commerce, and direct poor relief. Under the arbitrary rule of the intendants and their bureaucrats, he said, the taxpayers were oppressed and supposed they were duped—now they would be able to turn to their own local authority. (The abbé Vermond observed that the aim was to divert the multitude of complaints away from the minister, by decentralizing unpopularity.) In the end, these assemblies would take over the registration of fiscal legislation from the parlements, though this objective had to be kept secret. During Necker's tenure of office, instructions were issued for the

formation of four of these assemblies: Berry, Dauphiné, Haute-Guyenne, and Moulins. The three Orders in the State were to be represented by rich and distinguished individuals, the king naming a third of the members, and these nominees meeting to co-opt the others. In the initial plan for Berry, clergy and nobles were in equal numbers, but since churchmen did not pay ordinary taxation, there were complaints, and Necker modified the balance; his rule remained, however, that the Third Estate was to have as many representatives as the other two Orders combined. The final pattern was: Berry, 10 clergy, 14 nobles, 24 *Tiers*; Dauphiné, 12, 18, 30; Haute-Guyenne, 10, 16, 26; Moulins, 10, 15, 25. In every case, the presidency was reserved for the clergy. In his *Compte rendu* of 1781, Necker gave the reason: 'in an assembly which does not consent to taxation, but simply shares out the assessment, it is not the weight of property that provides the essential qualification, but rather the love of order and justice, and in this respect, can one deny the members of the clergy the confidence due to them?' As a Protestant, Necker was careful to show deference to the Catholic hierarchy; even so, his decision was logical. The episcopate was a reservoir of administrative talent, as the activities of the prelates in the *pays d'état* showed. Owing their promotion to the Crown and aware, as were all aristocrats, of the benefits royal patronage could confer on families and friends, the bishops had an ingrained tradition of being 'king's men', along with their desire to exercise initiative and gain fame in the public service. From his palace in his episcopal city, a bishop could conveniently supervise the *commission intermédiaire* running affairs during the long intervals between the full sessions of the assemblies, and he was more likely to be detached from local family and interest groups than a secular magnate would be. Turning to the Second Order would assuredly lead to challenges and disputes; what circumstances could be used to prefer one great noble to another—ancestry, riches, property, local or elsewhere, court connections, military service, known competence? It was, of course, unthinkable that a member of the *Tiers* could occupy the presidential chair.

Two of the assemblies got no further than the local planning stage. The parlement of Paris delayed registering the letters patent for Moulins, and when an enemy of Necker leaked his memorandum referring to the design of depriving the parlements of their right to register fiscal laws, the magistrates were irreconcilable. Rivalries for precedence prevented progress in Dauphiné. The heirs of the 'Five Barons' of the defunct estates wanted to be guaranteed seats in the new organization. There were murmurings in the lesser towns

against Grenoble being the meeting-place, and, most disastrous of all, the three bishops of the province could not agree. The obvious choice for president was Le Franc de Pompignan, archbishop of Vienne, a dedicated pastor and administrator; but Leyssins, archbishop of Embrun, able and choleric, 'with an ambition at least equal to his knowledge and talents', pushed himself forward, while Cairol de Madaillon, bishop of Grenoble, outranked by the other two, would not yield place to them in his own episcopal city; backed by the parlement of Dauphiné, he rushed to Paris to claim the presidency, and when it was not awarded, he resigned his see. Hay de Bonteville of Saint-Flour was translated into his place, but once he arrived in his new episcopal city, he proved equally intransigent.²

Necker's reliance on episcopal leadership was justified in the two provincial assemblies successfully formed. Under the presidency of the archbishop of Bourges, and with the abbé Pierre de Séguiran (later bishop of Nevers) in charge of detailed execution, the assembly of Berry substituted a money tax for the *corvée*, set up commissioners for public works, and began investigations into the working of charitable institutions. In Haute-Guyenne, the huge task of evaluating all property was taken in hand, so the *taille*, the land tax, could be allocated to communities on a new and equitable basis. Richeprey, the expert in charge of the survey, produced examples of places paying double per head as compared with others, and of maps where fictitious entities were counterbalanced by omissions. The inspiration of this reform, as of others, came from Jérôme-Marie Champion de Cicé, bishop of Rodez. Necker, who knew him already as an attender at his wife's salon in Paris, gave him the highest praise: 'it is rare to find such love of the good, determination to pursue it and intelligent methods of doing so, allied to sheer practicality—without which all you get are more fine theories, with nothing to set in motion even the smallest cog of the administrative machine'.

By Necker's plan drawn up in deference to the wishes of the king, the provincial assemblies would be kept in tutelage. Their members were nominated or co-opted: there was no question of stirring up unpredictable passions in an electoral process. The central government laid down how much tax had to be paid; the local decision concerned only the assessment. It soon became evident that this was not enough to satisfy the great ones honoured by the king's invitation to attend. In Berry and Moulins, the nominated members, led by their presidents (the archbishop of Bourges and the bishop of Autun) asked for elections—they were refused. In Dauphiné, Hay de Bonteville, when being received, as of ancient right, into the

parlement at Grenoble, made a speech showing he meant to arrogate more power to the assembly than the government had intended. Amid fashionable eloquence about turning men into citizens and a new spirit of devotion to the common interest, he referred to the members of the three Orders as 'learning with joy that a new career had been opened to serve the fatherland', with all of them 'able to aspire to government and to merit well of it'; he talked of sacrificial taxes cheerfully paid because we direct their employment (*parce qu'on en dirige l'emploi*); and the province 'calculating its needs and resources' and 'negotiating its contributions with its king' (*traitant et s'abonnant avec son Roi*). 'Abonner', that was the verb used of the voting of money by the *pays d'état*; he intended to have the same liberties for Dauphiné. The bishops were coming forward as the leaders of the privileged classes seeking a political role now that absolutism was breaking.

Necker resigned in May 1781, having published a *Compte rendu* showing how he had been running the country at a small profit. This best-selling statistical analysis made him the most popular man in France, and deprived his successors of all hope of credibility—how could they explain to a nation convinced by Necker's figures that the annual deficit (46 million when he wrote) was racing upwards out of control? Two years and two ephemeral ministries later, Calonne took over as controller-general. While he lavished millions to reward the queen and the courtiers who had helped him to office, he pondered a desperate initiative to avert bankruptcy, inevitably involving an attack on fiscal privileges, those of the clergy included. The Assembly of the Gallican Church of 1785 met in the shadow of danger; there were so many issues of concern that the normal session from May to October was supplemented by a further sitting from July to September 1786.³ Outrageous writers were attacking the Christian religion. The king was not disposed to help; on the clergy's memorandum of complaint he noted: 'it is useless to multiply laws and regulations if the Clergy do not win the respect they desire . . . the high standing of a corporate body can come only from its virtues'. However, to encourage a vote of money, the king banned the Kehl edition of the works of Voltaire (containing previously unpublished letters ending with the motto, 'il faut écraser l'infâme'). Sunday observance was in decline. No comment came from the king; probably he considered this another case where 'laws and regulations' were useless. Protestant pastors, said the Assembly, were celebrating marriages with impunity, and preaching a 'doctrine enemy of all religious practice and destructive of all authority'—therefore,

let there be a law making the production of a Catholic marriage certificate essential before a child could be baptized—that is, registered as existing. Again, no reply; the demand was so reactionary and theologically incorrect that success could hardly have been expected—it was a device to express angry concern. In twenty dioceses the curés were agitating over their meagre living standards, and the Assembly yielded to the extent of asking for the *congrue* to be raised to 700 livres, effected by a royal edict in 1786. Since the parish clergy were drawing attention to themselves, the thirty-two bishops (of the sixty-four members of the Assembly) took a renewed interest in an old proposal for improving the quality of the pastoral ministry; they proposed a system of qualifying examinations, with the diocesan bishop presenting to the patrons of livings three names, selected on the basis of ‘the examination results, age and personal qualities’—a reform indeed, but one tending to increase episcopal power. As always, there were cases of the infringement of clerical immunities, and this Assembly had a sensational one: Cardinal Rohan brought to trial before the peers and magistrates of the parlement of Paris over the ‘Diamond Necklace’ affair, without any reference to the judicial machinery of the Church. Though the king gave assurances this would not constitute a precedent, the Assembly renewed its protest, possibly without enthusiasm, for by then Rohan had been acquitted in a verdict reflecting harshly on the reputation of the queen.

From the very start, however, the major preoccupation of the Assembly was the preservation of clerical fiscal privileges. A specific threat loomed from the handling of tithe cases by the parlement of Normandy. New crops were being introduced, and new land was becoming chargeable after the expiry of the twenty years' exemption allowed to those who brought waste into cultivation; the magistrates required tithe owners to prove in every case that the crop was liable. Dillon, archbishop of Narbonne, in his opening speech as president, insisted on the Royal Council disavowing the new jurisprudence, going almost as far as to say that the vote of money by the clergy would depend on it. In the end, the innovations in tithe law were suppressed—along with the Voltaire edition—and the Crown received a *don gratuit* of 18 million. The Assembly had a lively anticipation of Calonne's machinations: he was known to want to subject ecclesiastical revenues to the *vingtièmes*, and it was rumoured he proposed to deprive the papacy of annates; pamphlets denouncing the luxury of the higher clergy were rightly believed to be the work of journalists in his pay. So the arguments in favour of the

exemptions of the clergy were reiterated. Churchmen were ‘depositaries’ of their wealth held in trust for the poor, the maintenance of the ministry and of public worship; as such, they could not be taxed by the government or local authorities—they voted ‘free gifts’. Because they did so, and did so generously, the king was bound to observe their rights of assembly and self-taxation—‘nos dons lient le Roi’.

The Assembly broke up in September 1786, having made a substantial grant, but sternly reaffirming its privileges. Calonne was already deep in discussion with the king, trying to persuade him to agree to a novel plan for sweeping away all fiscal immunities, whether of clergy, nobles, or the *pays d'état*, thereby providing the Crown with permanent financial security. By the end of December, Louis was convinced, and the scheme went into operation. Calonne's radical proposals were to be put before an entirely new assembly set up for the purpose, a convocation of ‘notables’, a device last used by Richelieu 160 years ago.⁴ Everything was done in haste, leaving no time for sounding out individuals and contriving alliances; the first meeting was set for 29 January 1787, though, as Calonne fell ill and his ally Vergennes died, it had to be postponed to 22 February. The notables, chosen from the highest in the land, were called individually by royal nomination. Fifteen bishops were summoned.⁵ It might have been supposed Calonne would have chosen pliable characters likely to support the government; but if the assembly was to impress public opinion, it had to be manifestly representative of talent, and the minister had the courage, or insouciance, to pride himself on welcoming the inclusion of critics, saying he would rather confront them than have them disagreeing behind his back. In any case, under the *ancien régime* appointments to prestigious office were subject to rival pretensions, social pressures, and Court intrigues. The controller-general seems to have exercised personal choice mainly by exclusion. Bareaud de Girac, bishop of Rennes, presiding over the estates of Brittany, had gained the reputation of an intriguer, promoting his own standing among the local nobles rather than serving the Crown; Conzié of Arras had outstanding ability, but when Calonne had been intendant of Hainault, the two had fallen out; Montmorency-Laval of Metz, *grand aumônier* of France and prince of the Holy Roman Empire, was a friend of Calonne, but too well-known to him to be summoned—his aristocratic pride and aloofness would be a menace to any cause he supported. The four great administrative archbishops of the Midi had to be chosen: Dillon of Narbonne, president of the estates of

Languedoc and of the last Assembly of the Clergy; Loménie de Brienne of Toulouse, reformer of the monasteries and initiator of programmes of public works; Champion de Cicé of Bordeaux, who, as bishop of Rodez, had presided over Necker's provincial assembly of Haute-Guienne; and Boisgelin of Aix, who called himself 'the first minister of Provence'. All four had histories of managing provincial affairs in the interests of the Crown; they could be supposed to want the prizes the king could bestow (especially a cardinal's hat for Dillon and the cordon bleu for Boisgelin), and, more important still, they aspired to be great public servants, engaged and seen to be engaged in lofty affairs of State. Loménie de Brienne, a favourite of the queen and incomparably able, was a serious rival to Calonne for the highest ministerial office; he had spent his life preparing for it, 'slaving at theology at the Sorbonne to become a bishop, and studying the memoirs of Cardinal de Retz to be a statesman', reflecting on the papers of his great-grandfather, who had been a Secretary of State, and cultivating an interest at Court. Calonne sought to conciliate him by asking his advice on other appointments. It was a high-risk strategy: according to a journalist, Brienne told his confidants, 'he has jumped into our nets of his own free will, we'll hold him there'. Yet only two candidates seem to have been nominations of the archbishop of Toulouse: one his former vicar-general, Seignelay-Colbert, who had succeeded Champion de Cicé in the see of Rodez and as president of the provincial assembly, and Fontanges of Nancy, another friend (he had consecrated him to the episcopate in the chapel of his château at Brienne), well known at Court as a protégé of Marie Antoinette. Two of the episcopal notables were the choice of Louis XVI: Juigné, archbishop of Paris, and the bishop of 'Damascus', coadjutor of Albi and nephew of Cardinal Bernis, the ambassador to Rome. Montmorin, the Foreign Minister, put forward Lauzières de Thémis of Blois, a brilliant figure who, in any case, could hardly have been passed over, ruling his diocese austerely (even his enemies testified to the purity of his morals),⁶ sparkling in the salons of Paris, and widely travelled in Europe. Talleyrand-Périgord, archbishop of Reims, was one of those untalented though industrious dignitaries who from loftiness of birth and Court and family connections had to be included. Court favour, a portmanteau phrase for a whole complex of influences at Versailles, recommended others: Galard, bishop of Le Puy, had distinguished old connections from the reign of Louis XV and new ones through the Polignacs; Bausset of Alais had charmed the royal family by his oratory when he had waited on

them on behalf of the estates of Languedoc, and had been given the opportunity (refused) to stay on as tutor to the dauphin. Three other prelates came to notice for outstanding qualities, in one case piety, in the other two sheer ability—Dulau of Arles, an uncompromising pastor and churchman, was described by Calonne as ‘éloigné de toute intrigue’; La Lazerne of Langres, a nephew of Malesherbes, was an outstanding orator; while Séguiran of Nevers had won a reputation as an administrator and financial expert in the provincial assembly of Berry—with an eye to royal favour, he had refused to receive Cardinal Rohan, of Diamond Necklace notoriety, in his diocese.

The fifteen bishops were one of the smaller groups among the Notables. They were outnumbered by the *grands seigneurs* (thirty-six, perhaps forty-three if the seven princes of the blood are put in the same category), by the officials of the various parlements (thirty- seven) and the municipal officers (twenty-six, all except three being nobles). But like the other smaller groups (provincial estates and the Royal Council, a dozen each), they were a coherent group with specific corporate interests to defend. Apart from a few intendants among the notables, they had more administrative experience than the others, and as churchmen, more than other groups, they could claim to speak for something resembling the national interest. Ten of them were close associates, having been members of the Assembly General of the Clergy meeting for five months in 1785 and another three in 1786, eight months spent in reflecting on ways to resist Calonne's threatened encroachments. Some had continued in Paris since the dissolution of the Assembly early in September, and as their colleagues arrived, they absorbed them into their discussion and con- fraternity, the postponement of the first session to 22 February giving them extra time for caballing. Loménie de Brienne circulated memoranda on the danger to the Church, and held forth in the salon of Mme de Montesson; Archbishop Dillon kept open house; and opponents of Calonne, lay and clerical, gathered in the salon of the princesse de Beauvau; her husband, a fervent Neckerist, was to defend the Genevan financier's policies and accounts in the first bureau of the notables. No doubt the Assembly was divided into bureaux (seven in all) with a design to nullify the impact of a pressure group like the episcopate. The prelates were distributed in the various bureaux on a system of one (in the case of the first bureau, two) from the South and one from the North or centre: Narbonne and Albi joined with Nevers, Toulouse with Langres, Aix with Nancy, Arles with Blois, Alais with Reims, Rodez with Paris, Bordeaux with Le Puy (a nearer geographical pairing than the

others). In fact, in these groups, under the presidency of princes of the blood of limited competence and commitment, the bishops with their facility of speech and mastery of committee work, came to dominate, and by their links with each other pulled the whole activity of the notables into coherence. 'Truth to tell,' said Weber, 'the clergy led this assembly of Notables. It had ability, experience, the bonds of confraternity and a focus of organization all working for it.' It was bishops who raised tricky questions when others shied away. The Espagnac scandal, a shady transfer of estates on the royal demesne, was brought into the open by the prelates of Toulouse and Langres. On the second bureau, Loménie de Brienne took the bull by the horns and rebuked the comte d'Artois for his failure to exercise the presidency impartially, and on the third, when the duc d'Orléans refused to carry on in the chair and there was a wrangle over the right to take his place, Boisgelin, scorning to push his own claim, brought the issue into a dignified, uncontroversial perspective.

The grandiose plan which Calonne brought to the notables was suspect from the start. Public opinion and experts alike considered it a fraud—all he wanted was money. A journalist reported that the controller-general had raised a new troupe of actors to put on the play *Les Fausses Confidences* and the ballet *Le Tonneau des Danaïdes*; a cartoonist portrayed the barnyard fowls being invited to choose the sauce they would be eaten with. 'A trivial design to get money—' said the Austrian ambassador, 'the single aim of everything done nowadays'.⁷ 'A farce devised by the minister', said his British counterpart. 'Il ne veut que de l'argent', reported Boisgelin to the comtesse de Grammont after hearing Calonne's opening speech. Necker's son-in-law, the baron de Stael, who had family reasons to be censorious, said the same. 'He has to have money, he asks for it, and if the Notables consent, they will be free to change as they will the plan he puts before them.'⁸ If this had been so, Calonne might have had a chance, a slim one, of succeeding. In fact, he began by declaring his plan to be the king's will, not open to challenge: all the notables could discuss was how to implement it. Nor was this a show of inflexibility to win credit for concessions later, for what concessions were made were tardy and unconvincing.

The essence of Calonne's design was to abolish privileged exemptions from taxation. He would replace the main existing impositions with a stamp duty and a uniform land tax, levied in kind, to be paid by clergy and nobles as well as commoners. Consideration would be given to reforming or abolishing the *corvée*, the *gabelle*, and the internal customs duties. Like Necker, he proposed to accompany

his reform with the establishment of a nation-wide network of assemblies, this time in a pyramidal hierarchy. At the base would be parish assemblies elected by owners of property worth 600 livres (smaller proprietors grouping to share a vote, larger ones having extra). Units of thirty parishes would meet to name representatives to district assemblies, and these in turn would nominate to provincial assemblies. In this system the clergy and nobility were to have no privileged standing; Calonne was particularly determined to have no administrative bishops running affairs—he complained of the episcopal presidents of Necker's assemblies having 'a dominant and absolute influence on the administration'. What he wanted was a battery of discussion groups all over the country watching to ensure that the great paid their fair share of taxation.

The notables did not object to assemblies policing their payments so much as to the threat to their own importance and standing in the countryside. They considered the new system would be at once 'democratic and despotic', enhancing the power of the intendants, whereas the aristocratically manipulated estates of the *pays d'état* with which they were familiar, limited it. They did not mind if the *Tiers* had double representation, so long as the distinction of Orders was preserved and proceedings were hierarchically dominated. In the general discussions of the details of the tax programme, the clergy took the lead, for through visitations, questionnaires to curés, and in the business of provincial estates they were comprehensively informed about how taxes worked and what bitterness they created. The two impositions falling most heavily on the peasants were denounced by episcopal delegates—the *corvée* by the archbishop of Narbonne allied to the duc de La Rochefoucauld, the *gabelle* by the archbishop of Arles. The bishop of Nevers produced a memorandum on the tithe, 'learned, profound, equitable and luminous'.⁹ Expertise in tithe affairs informed Brienne's critique of the controller-general's scheme to levy the land tax in kind. Levy at a flat rate was unfair, since the cost of production of crops varied from area to area—ecclesiastical tithe was not a relevant parallel, for it was a proportion settled by centuries-old prescription, an expense long ago incorporated in land prices. Collection was a good parallel, showing that it would run away with 20 to 25 per cent of the takings. The tithe had to be levied in kind to protect the clergy from inflation, whereas the government did not need to do this, for if the value of money fell, the tax level could be raised. The raising would need reapproval, and this was just as it should be: a tax should be limited in duration and amount, with the government periodically having to explain itself.

‘Tout le fardeau tombe sur le Clergé’, said Boisgelin after hearing the controller-general’s opening speech—if not all the burden, certainly a disproportionate share of it. Churchmen were ‘citizens and subjects’, Calonne insisted. ‘The liberalities of kings and of the nation’ had enriched them, and to set a good example and to atone for their inability to serve their country in war and productive employment, they ought to be willing to contribute generously to the needs of the State. So let their lands be assessed and taxed like everyone else’s. True, they have incurred a huge debt on which they pay interest, but now is the time to redeem it; this can be done by selling off marginal possessions, hunting rights, feudal jurisdictions, and rents, ‘vain titles . . . sterile rights which the laws of the Church forbid them to enjoy in person’. It was an insidious proposal. With the debt liquidated, the necessity for the Crown to allow the quinquennial assemblies by which the Church ran its affairs went with it, and the sale of titles and rights, however vain and sterile, admitted the possibility of alienating ecclesiastical property, a dangerous precedent. If the bishops offered implacable opposition, they ran the risk of appearing unpatriotic and of finding the secular nobility abandoning them. Loménie de Brienne led the way in taking a disinterested national stance. ‘The clergy do not care about money—they are citizens first and foremost, and . . . in the Assembly of Notables above all, they are citizens and nothing else.’ The clergy agreed not to push the case for the exemption of their property (when the maréchal de Mouchy tried to argue this on their behalf, the bishop of Nevers prompted him to desist: ‘M. le maréchal, nous ne disons plus cela’). They offered to pay on their lands exactly at the rate other citizens paid on theirs. But, they insisted, they must levy the taxes themselves, through their assemblies. For one thing, a proportion was devoted to Church objects; for another, they wished to favour poor curés, putting the weight of contribution on rich benefice holders (a belated zeal for fairness on the part of the episcopate). In insisting on their rights, they were at one with the *pays d’état*:

Fair contributions from all, but according to the forms the constitution prescribes . . . If the king has an obligation of equity to his subjects in taxing them in proportion to their fortune, he also owes to the provinces which had made contracts with him the execution of these contracts, and to corporations with privileges the conservation of these privileges . . . The same principles of justice postulating equality are also absolutely opposed to uniformity.

As for redeeming the debt, the minister was proposing unjust means towards an unjust end. It was a public debt, since the king had habitually asked for more money than the taxes could yield, and the clergy had used its credit to borrow on his behalf and its taxes to pay the interest. Besides, the proposed sale of marginal assets would hit most severely *collèges* and hospitals—these, said the bishop of Langres, are the departments of the Church of greatest practical use to the people. Incongruously, he added a personal plea about alienating hunting rights: ‘it would be disagreeable for a bishop, one who is a duke and peer to boot, not to be able to shoot a hare in his park, and to see the peasants firing away under the windows of his château’. The tactical aim in presenting the Church’s case was to win the lay nobles over to defending it, and with some, La Luzerne’s plea for shooting practice may have evoked as much sympathy as the cause of ‘preserving the forms the Constitution prescribes’.

The bishops voiced and co-ordinated the opposition to Calonne. In the first bureau, Dillon denounced the minister’s fiat limiting discussion of the royal plan to means of implementation: ‘this is to mock the Nation and the diverse Orders in the State; it is to take its so-called representatives for sheep, for cattle’. On 1 March, at the end of the first week, the British ambassador reported, ‘the clergy are already inflamed to a great degree’. On the following day, the controller-general, realizing where the nerve-centre of the opposition lay, called a meeting of the archbishops of Toulouse, Bordeaux, Narbonne, Aix, and Reims; he granted the right of free discussion, withdrew his insistence on collecting the land tax in kind, declared the deficit to be 100 million, and appealed to their patriotism—at least let them say what course of action they would propose themselves. He got nowhere. Loménie de Brienne was intent on supplanting him; Boisgelin had a grievance, believing (unjustly) that Calonne had invited him to the notables only as an afterthought; Dillon expounded the figures from the last clerical general assembly showing how the total contribution of the clergy would not be any bigger, however it was calculated; Champion de Cicé was a Neckerist, and still believed the budget analysis of the *Compte rendu*, so either Calonne was exaggerating the deficit or had caused it himself by wasteful expenditure; they all regarded the calling of the notables as the setting of an ambush to trap them into conniving at the plunder of the Church. As for producing their own proposals, the archbishops said they had shown what was wrong with a long-considered plan prepared by others—it would take a full year to work out a coherent substitute. On 12 March, when Calonne,

ignoring all the criticism levelled at his ideas, had the audacity to assure the notables of the king's satisfaction at their approval of the basic principles of his reforms, Dillon expressed the universal outrage: 'Vous voulez donc la guerre. Eh bien, vous l'aurez. Nous vous la ferons bonne, franche et ouverte'. On 30 March, Calonne published a manifesto calling for public support against the aristocratic notables, and required the curés to read it from their pulpits. 'An appeal to the people is repugnant to the constitution of a monarchical State,' said the bishop of Alais; 'the intentions of the sovereign are never transmitted to the Nation except through formal laws'; and he joined the archbishops of Toulouse and Bordeaux in demanding the publication of a rejoinder.

Once it was clear Calonne could not persuade the notables to countenance his money-raising schemes, his fall could not long be delayed. The appeal to the country, his last despairing gamble, fell on deaf ears; he was seen as a spendthrift, a fixer with no reputation for probity to draw on—as Malouet said, 'he appeared to unite in his own person all the abuses he proposed to reform'.¹⁰ Being from the milieu of the *maîtres des requêtes* who provided the intendants ruling the provinces and the experts of the Royal Council, he had many administrative contacts, but no power base in high society—in Boisgelin's disdainful words, he was proceeding with the 'audace tremblante d'un bourgeois et d'un financier'. His clientele at Court had been built up by paying the vast debts of members of the royal family and buying Saint-Cloud for Marie Antoinette; when he had no more to give, there was no gratitude. The queen feared he was about to dismiss her favourite minister, Breteuil; 'she felt her power and influence in danger', said the British ambassador, 'and got rid of her rival'.¹¹ She admired Brienne, and he was recommended to her as Calonne's successor by her brother, the emperor, his ambassador at Versailles, and her man of affairs, the abbé Vermond. Calonne fell from power on 8 April, and from the 12th, Loménie de Brienne was passing memoranda to the king through Marie Antoinette. He accepted the ending of privileged exemptions from taxation, but said the tax demands of the Crown should be precise, limited in time, and kept as low as possible by strict economy. The new provincial assemblies must be led by the clergy and nobles, with the office of president reserved for them. These assemblies would assess all land for taxation, the clergy's included, but the assemblies of the Gallican Church must go on as before, levying the sums they owed in their own way. The so-called debt of the clergy was not theirs, and it was 'a manifest derogation from property rights' to suggest it was. When,

towards the end of the month, the accounts of the government were sent to the notables, he pointed out their inadequacies and the scandal of the revelation that the king had paid the debts of the comte d'Artois and Monsieur.

'Ni leur prêtraille ni leur Neckeraille,' said Louis XVI. There were two possible candidates to rescue the State, and he trusted neither. Necker knew all about money and little about France, and Louis muttered about this 'fanatic' and his overweening wife 'trying to reduce my kingdom to an outlandish republic like their home town of Geneva'. The archbishop of Toulouse was of dubious morals and was too clever. Besides, the episcopal notables had overthrown Calonne, and to appoint one of them in his place would have been an admission that they were right—'ce serait donner trop évidemment raison au clergé'.¹² The king tried Fourquieux as controller-general, honest, old, and gouty; 'if they were choosing among the dead,' said the comte de Brienne, Loménie's brother, 'it would have been better to have Sully or Colbert'.¹³ But after three weeks, there was no postponing the inevitable, and Loménie de Brienne became 'Ministre principal'.

II

A notable promoted to minister was no longer a notable. Brienne granted the concessions he had fought for himself: about the taxation of the clergy, the presidency of provincial assemblies, and the providing of detailed accounts. But the government had to have money, and the king expected him to put through Calonne's land tax. On 9 May he held a conference with twenty-eight of his former colleagues, including the archbishops of Aix, Arles, Bordeaux, and Reims and the bishops of Langres and Nevers. They insisted on severe economies, with an audit by experts from each of the three Orders and the revelation of the full details of the pensions list. Further discussions in the bureaux obtained permission for raising a loan of 84 million. The bishop of Nevers, still a believer in Necker's accounting system, protested, reading a memorandum entitled 'Neither Loans nor Taxes'. Some of the lay nobles fell out with the clergy, saying they ought to pay the capitation tax and accusing them of deliberately pushing up their debt to make themselves indispensable; ecclesiastical property, they said, 'is the patrimony of the State from which the clergy draw their salaries'. This would have been music to Calonne's ears. But what the notables would not do was to

authorize new taxes. As the prince de Beauvau said, this would 'compromise them in the opinion of the Nation'. The proceedings were brought to an end on 25 May. Public opinion approved of the refusal to subsidize a spendthrift and faltering regime. The bishops were applauded for their leadership: 'ils ont manifestement conduit la nation et l'ont conduite dans la route du vrai et du bien', said Morellet.

On the evidence of a couple of *bontades*, Brienne compared himself favourably to Richelieu, who had 'stopped half way' and 'feared his enemies rather than scorning them'. In fact, he lacked Richelieu's ruthlessness; he was a clever, affable, social figure, in love with power, but unable to exercise it without self-questioning, essentially a negotiator. Marmontel described him as 'glittering, like a cut diamond from numerous little facets, master of the details but not of the whole'. The trouble was, 'the whole' was simply the obligation to find money, and no one was willing to authorize it. There was no alternative now but to put the new taxes to the parlement of Paris for registration. The recalcitrance of the magistrates was foreseeable, and the best advice was to enforce registration at once in a *lit de justice*. Inexperienced, the First Minister hesitated and delayed; on 2 July the magistrates turned down the stamp duty and on 19 July the land tax—in their remonstrances they called for the summoning of the Estates General. A *lit de justice* was held on 6 August, and the parlement was exiled to Troyes. No sooner were the magistrates recalled than another royal session was required (19 November) to enforce the registration of loans, amid tumult, leading to the arrest of two *conseillers*. During these crises the conduct of the bishops who were peers of France entitled to attend parliamentary sessions showed how Brienne no longer had their support.¹⁴ The archbishop of Paris was tentatively in favour of the land tax, but was alienated by the *coup* of 19 November; the archbishop of Reims attended only seven times and did not speak; the bishop of Noyon stayed away; Blois took little part; Laon attended but spoke only for provincial assemblies, not for giving money; Clermont-Tonnerre of Châlons-sur-Marne denounced the new taxes and led in demanding the calling of the Estates General. La Rochefoucauld of Beauvais was so hostile that he was barred by royal order from attending; his proud and angry protest was read aloud in open session by the *premier président*. Of bishops who were not peers, at least two found occasion to manifest their dissent, Séguiran of Nevers publicly denouncing ministerial despotism, and Barral of Troyes giving ostentatious entertainment to the parliamentarians exiled in his episcopal city.

Brienne was tempted to resort to the gamble of Maupeou at the end of the reign of Louis XV and deprive the parlements of their right to verify royal edicts. Once again, he talked of outdoing Richelieu: 'Mazarin fled before the parlements, Richelieu scorned them, I am going further, I'll destroy them.' So he said, though in the end it was other ministers who pushed him to take drastic action. His edict of 8 May 1788 set up a plenary court to take over the registration of legislation from the parlements. There was a storm of disapproval in the country; the king was absolute in a peculiar fashion, he had to work within the established forms. A court of royal nominees approving taxation seemed well on the descent to arbitrary rule.

There was another way to raise money, and Brienne had made preparations to use it. When a *vingtième* was imposed (usually in an emergency), the estates in the *pays d'état* discussed the royal request and made an *abonnement*, a contribution. It was now possible to extend this system to the rest of France through the recently devised network of new assemblies. There were Necker's creations at Bourges and Montauban, and the Notables had agreed to twenty-three more. Brienne had made haste to constitute these, ready to receive his taxation demands. He had amended the original design, on the one hand increasing hierarchical control, on the other widening the electoral base. In his system, nobles were in a majority on the standing executive committees, and the presidents were churchmen or nobles selected by the king from names proposed by the first two Orders. Brienne had looked after the precedence of the nobles, but forgotten the curés, who were left subordinate to the *syndics* in the village assemblies—often, this meant no co-operation or leadership from the clergy.¹⁵ The popular base was wider, with parish assemblies elected by the 10 livres a year taxpayers (half the population) from those paying 30 livres a year (a sixth of the population). From these basic units the provincial assemblies were generated, with the *Tiers* having double representation and vote by head, a formula destined to be at the heart of the sweeping demands of the nation which overthrew the *ancien régime*. To get things going, the king named half the provincial representatives, and they co-opted the rest; the electoral process would take over in 1790. Given time to allow the first elections to be completed, the system could have thrust down deep roots into the social complex, becoming the basis for a new taxation code, with popular representation acting as a check to prevent the recrudescence of privileged exemptions.

Thirty-four bishops were made founding members of the

assemblies (nine assemblies without them), and in fourteen cases a bishop was nominated as president. It was a question not so much of Brienne looking for support from episcopal colleagues as of taking ability where it was most obviously found. There was always going to be trouble, and it was a forlorn hope to try to ensure against it by looking for sycophantic characters to nominate. In some provinces, clergy and nobility leagued together to make difficulties. In Chartres, Orléans, and Alsace the clergy swung the assemblies to their side by refusing to obey the directions to have ecclesiastical property surveyed for inclusion on the rolls of the *vingtième*; it was stated to be 'pour mémoire seulement', but how long would that promise be kept? This recalcitrance, however, threw into relief the patriotic fervour of Archbishop Champion de Cicé, who applauded the surveys 'as a proof of our zeal for the good of the State and our disinterestedness'; if they show we are underpaying, he said, 'we will vote more, and if we are overpaying, we will not ask for a rebate'. On behalf of the clergy and nobility of Franche Comté, the archbishop of Besançon put forward a demand to have the old estates of the province revived in place of the new assembly; his curés supported his initiative, but received no reward, for they found themselves excluded from the new arrangements. When the idea of assemblies had been mooted to the notables, they had suspected that the royal intendants were meant to dominate, and so it proved, for they claimed priority of honour in the meetings and withheld or produced information as it pleased them. The bishops were the leaders of the local aristocracy against this arrogance of power, and protests to Versailles from Lyon, Tours, Reims, and other sees led to the relegation of the intendants by a royal decree of early November.

What the government expected from its presidents was the direction of their assemblies towards making a substantial grant of money; in the *vingtième* Brienne proposed, a standard sum was prescribed for each area, with the hope it would be achieved or, even, exceeded. In the old estates, procedures were well established, and the bishops had expertise in management. Dillon's 'zeal and dedication' persuaded Languedoc to make a much higher *abonnement* than usual; the estates of Foix gave the bishop of Pamiers exactly what he asked for; the bishop of Tarbes was applauded for his successful handling of the meetings in Bigorre, though in fact he had left the presidency to one of his *grands vicaires*. Louis de Conzié of Arras had long dominated his province, but this time ran into opposition from all sides, though he ended up with a compromise vote more favourable to the government than had once seemed possible. In Roussillon, the bishop of

Perpignan obtained an increase, though only of a fifteenth over the standard sum. In Béarn, however, the bishop of Oloron, new to the presidency, obtained less than half of what was expected, and made himself ridiculous by offering to produce the trivial sum of 200 livres as an extra offering from his clergy.

In the new provincial assemblies, the presidents faced a harder task, lacking established conventions to help them or the acquired appreciation of the protocol of trying to appear generous to the Crown as an insurance for the continued fiscal autonomy of the province. In Aquitaine, Champion de Cicé met insuperable difficulties, for the parlement of Bordeaux, strong in the support of high society, forbade his assembly to meet, and he made himself so unpopular by trying to fulfil his orders that the king considered translating him to Bourges as a rescue operation. By contrast, in Normandy, the presiding bishop of Lisieux, assisted by his colleague of Evreux, led the way in defying the parlement of Rouen and voting an *abonnement* over the ban of the magistrates. In addition to the archbishop of Bordeaux, five prelates failed to obtain the vote the king wanted. The archbishop of Reims lacked the force of personality to carry the assembly of Champagne. François de Conzié, archbishop of Tours, well-liked though lacking the dynamism of his brother at Arras, lost control because he had been saddled with a complex problem of organization (three smaller assemblies had to be co-ordinated into one, and in the process the delegates fell out with him and with each other). In an area conscious of being poorer than most, the bishop of Poitiers showed undiplomatic zeal for the government's demand, and was promptly turned down altogether. At Auch, Archbishop La Tour du Pin Montauban was put in an impossible position by the intendant, who asked for more after his first figure had been granted. These were prelates who, though they failed, tried hard to fulfil the established role of the bishop as a 'king's man' in local administration. The others in presidential office probably did as well as could be expected in extracting funds for the Crown, certainly better than secular magnates could have done. Even the unpopular bishop of Metz got the government business through the assembly of the Trois Évêchés, though perhaps his haughty dictatorial style may have been the paradoxical reason for his success. There was, however, an exception to the rule of episcopal co-operation in a prelate hostile to Brienne and indifferent to the royal financial plight; Montazet of Lyon, Jansenistically stern and never really accepted by the ecclesiastical or secular establishments, from the start opposed any increase in the

abonnement, and urged the ministers of the Crown to make economies instead of touting for higher contributions.

The censure was unfair, for in truth Brienne was pushing through economies in so far as the nexus of privilege at Versailles allowed—suppressing Court sinecures and pensions and saving a tenth of the annual expenditure on the army, while improving its efficiency. The annual accounts which he published in April 1788 were a model of honesty and lucidity. But honesty got him no credit in the country at large: what concerned everyone was the deficit, now revealed as running at the unsustainable figure of 161 million. His fifteen months of rule was a period of reform;¹⁶ fiscal and social, on the principles of the Enlightenment, a brief flowering of imaginative government after decades of sterile quarrels and indolence. At last, the *corvée* was replaced by a money tax, the grain trade freed, an enquiry instituted into the chaotic internal customs duties; the legal system was transformed by the abolition of the special courts for the official finances, the salt tax, and the royal forest, and the reduction of seigneurial courts to insignificance, together with the simplification of appeal procedures and the ending of the last vestiges of judicial torture. There was a minor change pleasing not only legal reformers but also the theologians, the abrogation of the rule whereby condemned criminals were executed on the day of sentencing—which made it impossible to give them the viaticum, however sincere their repentance; Brienne imposed a month's delay. Above all, there was the edict giving the Protestants legal existence, a law more limited than some of the king's advisers would have wished, but sweeping away an archaic injustice seemingly too entrenched to be overthrown. As usual, however, the first reaction to such reforms were the complaints of the aggrieved, the courtiers, army officers, and lawyers who were losing their perquisites, and of the clergy against the relaxation of the restrictions on Protestants. Brienne needed time, time for the country to appreciate his reforms, time to stave off the advancing bankruptcy.

The provincial estates and assemblies had been asked for *abonnements* to the *vingtième*: what would the clergy give? An extraordinary General Assembly was called for 27 August 1787, but subsequently adjourned to 1 May 1788.¹⁷ It was a mistake, for some deputies were already in Paris and had a chance for caballing, exactly as Brienne himself had done before the notables. It was a fateful meeting and recognized as such. At the request of the archbishops, the king added two new deputies for each ecclesiastical province, the final attendance being seven archbishops, twenty-five bishops, and thirty-two

other ecclesiastics, all of course being aristocrats. The king asked for a *don gratuit* of 8 million. The clergy had been eloquent in proclaiming their patriotism and protesting that they paid as much on their property as anyone else: perhaps they would clinch their case by generosity. The Assembly's initial reaction was along familiar lines, though with a degree of asperity rarely seen before, except in 1750 and 1765. Archbishop Dillon set the tone by recalling the meeting of the notables, the 'unfathomable' deficit they had discovered and Calonne's enterprises against the Church. 'Our rights were denounced as abusive, they wanted to persuade the nation that it was in its interest to pluck them from us to force us to sell our property. . . . Are we a foreign horde arrived to invade the possessions of your Majesty—Did not our fathers, brothers and relatives fight in your Majesty's armies?'—a revealing phrase, assuming the monopoly of the highest places in the ecclesiastical hierarchy must go to the military aristocracy. The danger, he said, was still there, implicit in Brienne's land tax and the endeavour to put ecclesiastical property on the rolls of the *vingtième*. Dillon set the tone for the subsequent discussions when the old arguments in defence of clerical immunities were rehearsed, culminating in a demand for the king to give a formal confirmation, as Louis XIV had done in 1711 and Louis XV in 1726. The argument included a phrase evocative of tradition and centuries-old prescription: the right to vote taxes was the 'reste précieux du droit commun de la Nation gardé par le clergé'—implying clearly that the laity of France had lost such a right and that it ought to be restored to them. Boisgelin, archbishop of Aix, drew out the liberal implications of this argument when he urged his colleagues to announce an intention of paying a due share of the tax Brienne had imposed to replace the *corvée*. 'If the Assembly refuses . . . it establishes an opposition between the interests of the clergy of France and that of the nation—this on the eve of the Estates General, the Assembly making a claim the Estates General will not be willing to accept and which is therefore unsustainable . . . It is important for the clergy to anticipate or to conform to the progress of public opinion.'¹⁸ In short, the days of corporate exemptions were over.

As ever, the Assembly drew the attention of the king to grievances arisen since the last meeting, like the royal severities, too-long continued, against Cardinal Rohan and Bishop Hercé of Dol. But routine complaints were overshadowed by the edict in favour of the Protestants. The king was reminded of his coronation oath, and warned of the danger to national unity from 'diversity of religious

opinions'; one concession leads to demands for more, and would be seized on by atheists posing as religious dissenters. So the Assembly asked for assurances that non-Catholics would be excluded from official posts and the public exercise of Calvinist worship would never be authorized. As for the granting of legal existence to Protestants, the clergy made qualifications without any guiding logic behind them: they wanted all children to be baptized by the curés, to exclude the record of the deaths of schismatics from the parish registers, and they declared marriages before lay judges to be invalid to the Church. Yet, after these protestations, the archbishop of Narbonne proceeded to bland irenic phrases: 'far from us the thought of afflicting or humiliating non-Catholics—we will always love their persons, honour their talents and defend their property'. Truth to tell, while some deputies believed in his proclamation of tolerance and others believed in the intolerant demands, they all knew their protests were formal, 'pour mémoire seulement' as it were—the tide was coming in, and could not be turned back. The king's replies were vague: he would always protect religion; he accepted the clergy's liberty to make free gifts, and they would not be included in any fiscal law unless expressly named.

Archbishop Dillon led—with relentless determination—in defending the tax privileges of the Church and—without conviction—in protesting against liberty to Protestants; but he was not proposing to throw off the conventions of deference to the Crown. Of the seven old hands who had been with him at the Assembly of 1785 and the notables, five (the archbishops of Aix, Paris, and Reims and the bishops of Rodez and Langres) were supporters of his politic stance, knowing the limits of the profitability of intransigence. From the start, however, these *prélats politiques* lost control. Lauzières de Thémis, bishop of Blois, and Champion de Cicé of Auxerre (brother of the absent archbishop of Bordeaux) asked for the formation of a commission to draw up remonstrances against the edict of 8 May and the institution of the *cour plénière*. Pleas for moderation from Dillon and two Breton bishops went unheeded. 'All the grace and seduction and loftiness of the archbishop of Narbonne', said a well-informed observer, 'failed before the ingenious but sombre and mordant censures of the bishop of Blois.'¹⁹ The commission was set up by forty-five votes to fifteen. Procedure by remonstrance had been a tactic of the Assemblies from mid-century, used in 1750 (three times), 1755, 1760, 1762, and 1765. But all these had been concerned with religion and the privileges of churchmen. It was a reckless new departure to protest against the royal action in a purely

secular matter. It was strange too for the clergy to crusade on behalf of the magistrates—there was no love lost between the clerical and judicial establishments—the disparate groups of the aristocracy were coming together in a common cause, as they had done in the bureaux of the notables. No doubt the multitude of family and personal relationships in the upper reaches of the aristocracy had something to do with the new alliance. But the compulsion driving the Assembly to protest was public opinion—not just aristocratic opinion, but that of the ‘nation’. ‘When the first Order of the State finds itself the only one which can lift up its voice’, ran the remonstrance, ‘and there is a public outcry soliciting it to bring the wishes of all to the foot of your throne, it is necessary to speak, not for our own glory, but because, it is shameful to be silent. Our silence would be a crime that the Nation and posterity would never forgive.’

The remonstrance was a forthright statement of the traditional limits on the king's absolute power. It endorsed the parlement of Paris's claim to play an indispensable role in the legislative process. ‘The laws are established in the Royal Council privately, but they are examined in public council. The will of the prince who has not been enlightened by his courts can only be regarded as ephemeral.’ The dismissal of the parlement had been an arbitrary gesture, ‘putting fear in place of confidence and love’. The new *cour plénière* was likely to be ‘complaisant’ before the demands of the government; besides, it was not entitled to accept laws on behalf of the whole of France, for Normandy, Brittany, Provence, and other *pays d'état* had been united to the Crown on certain conditions, while the clergy had franchises they had enjoyed from time immemorial. There was a structure of consent which the Crown was not entitled to bypass—‘le Peuple français n'est pas imposable à volonté’. Facing bankruptcy, there was one further institution in this structure of consent available for the king to consult: let him call the Estates General—‘assemble your Nation and you will be invincible . . . the glory of your Majesty is, not to be king of France, but king of Frenchmen, and the heart of your subjects is the finest of your domains’. This ringing proclamation of the rights of the nation was reinforced by a practical demonstration of the hopelessness of trying to extract money by any other way: the Assembly voted a *don gratuit* of 1,800,000 livres, less than a quarter of the 8,000,000 asked for.

Loménie de Brienne said his habitual advice to Louis XVI had been: ‘never appear far from calling your subjects together, but delay doing so as long as you can’. The clergy had forced his hand, and in replying to their remonstrance, the king promised to call the Estates

General, making it clear, against any self-important pretensions they might cherish, that he regarded this as the only assembly to represent the nation. The Assembly of the Clergy, like the parlement of Paris (which on 3 May 1788 declared the nation's right to accord subsidies in the Estates General to be one of the 'fundamental laws of the kingdom'), wanted regular sessions to exercise continuing control of government expenditure; but, like the magistrates, the clergy expected the meeting to be convened in the old form of 1614, with the three Orders equally balanced and voting separately. They did not want 'le désordre d'une fausse égalité'—the great council of the nation must be hierarchically ordered. The bishops commissioned the abbé Desprez de Roche to write a learned study for urgent publication, *Sur les formes de la composition des États Généraux*, setting out the details of the old system.²⁰ But Brienne, humiliated and abandoned by his own Order, was meditating a desperate leap in the dark. On 5 July he issued an invitation to the country at large to send in opinions as to how to make the forthcoming Estates General 'une Assemblée vraiment nationale par sa composition comme par ses effets'.

This could only mean he was contemplating swinging the balance of power in favour of the *Tiers État*. 'Since the Nobility and Clergy abandon the king, who is their natural protector', he is reported to have said, 'he has to move into an alliance with the Commons to crush them.' Lamoignon said something in the same vein to two canons of Notre-Dame: 'the Parlements, Nobility and Clergy have dared to resist the king . . . in two years' time the Parlements, Nobility and Clergy will be no more'. These are outbursts of exasperation intended to frighten—no doubt the two canons shook in their shoes. One cannot be sure if Brienne would have gone through with the threat; nor do we know what form of alliance with the *Tiers* he proposed, but at least he hoped that it would be possible for the new provincial assemblies to nominate the deputies to the forthcoming Estates General.²¹

But by August 1788, the Treasury was empty. Brienne issued *billets* bearing interest at 5 per cent to pay for the indispensable work of government—a scandalous forced loan, and brought forward the meeting of the Estates General to 1 May following. Neither at Court nor in the country was there support to maintain him in office, and he resigned on 25 August. Necker, following on, predictably lamented the loss of the fifteen months his predecessor had wasted; in fact, collapse might have been averted if Brienne had been granted the time Necker had spent in raising loans and issuing

misleading accounts, making it impossible for his successors, financially and psychologically, to devise an escape from bankruptcy.

Given time, Loménie de Brienne might have been remembered as the supreme reforming minister of the Enlightenment. As it was, he went down to posterity as a failed imitator of Richelieu. The aristocrats and churchmen who fled from France during the Revolution blackened his memory as the author of their misfortunes. Whatever credit was going for a courageous attempt to avert shipwreck was stolen by Necker. As Brienne was to take the oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, orthodox churchmen classed him with Talleyrand, his treachery wiping out the thanks he deserved for his reforms in the Gallican Church and improving its image with the nation. Alas, in assessing Brienne's tenure of office, it must be confessed that nothing became him less than the leaving of it. As compensation, he took a cardinal's hat and the promise of establishments for his brother, nephew, and niece. He had translated himself from Toulouse to the much wealthier see of Sens, and annexed the lucrative abbey of Corbie. In mitigation, it might be said: at Sens he also had the attraction of being conveniently near his family estates at Brienne, while he took no salary as a minister of the Crown—the Church provided his rewards. He saw clearly into the future: the clergy were likely to have to foot the bill for the national deficit, so he was 'taking precautions . . . I will count myself happy if I keep half of what I am taking.' It was hardly appropriate conduct for a minister imposing economies—'that is not the spirit of moderation of which he ought to be setting the example', said the abbé Véri, 'after all the sacrifices he has forced others to bear'. It was an inglorious way to go, but typical of a grandee of the *ancien régime*, as proud as Lucifer, but never too proud to appropriate a lucrative sinecure.

When Brienne asked the country for advice on the composition of the Estates General, he opened Pandora's box—a swarm of pamphleteers, agitators, theorists, scholars, cranks, and sober citizens in their fashionable debating groups and masonic lodges clamoured for the doubling of the representation of the *Tiers*;²² after all, it had already happened in the new provincial assemblies and in the newly constituted estates of Dauphiné. Necker was hesitant, though he realized his immense popularity would melt away if he failed to meet the expectations of the nation. He temporized by recalling the notables to sound their opinion.²³ They were the same group except that time and accident had brought a few changes—of the bishops, Talleyrand-Périgord and Brienne were absent, and Conzié of Arras

had been added. The proposal for the doubling was lost decisively, by 111 votes to 33, all the bureaux except the first turning it down. Only one prelate diverged from the cautious majority—and this was Dillon, spendthrift, worldly, and cynical, but an astute politician who saw the way events were moving. To some extent he must have been influenced by the coincidence of an accumulation of liberals (making a majority of one) on the first bureau—five representatives of the *Tiers*, the comte de Provence, and six *grands seigneurs* (one supposedly waking with a start from geriatric slumber and taking his neighbour's direction as to which way to vote).²⁴ But more importantly, as archbishop of Narbonne, Dillon had long presided over the estates of Languedoc, where the three Orders deliberated in common and voted by head, with the suffrages of the *Tiers* equal to those of the nobles and clergy combined. Generally, he had got his way, and he saw no difficulty in concessions to the commons, provided hierarchical influence was conserved. He also knew how business went comparatively well under episcopal presidency in the estates of Béarn, with clergy and nobles in one chamber and the *Tiers* in the other, and in those of Provence where before the fraudulent 'reform' of 1787, the bourgeoisie of the towns outnumbered the privileged. Yet whether Dillon was more of a realist than his episcopal colleagues is arguable. He was going with the tide, but had misjudged its dangerous force; he was assuming that the old habits of deference would survive, while at least some of the others knew they were crumbling away. He was also ignoring the force of an argument against the doubling which was not simply aristocratic self-interest—the consequences were incalculable, since this multitude of deputies of the *Tiers* would inevitably represent the towns rather than the countryside; in so far as the peasants could be spoken for, the curés and other churchmen might do it most effectively. The liberal case was put to the third bureau by the comte de Rochambeau, a hero of the American War: since 1614 the *Tiers* has become an Order with innumerable highly educated members, many imbued with patriotism and a love of liberty, and in maritime commerce and manufacturing building up riches for France. 'Il n'est pas question ici de Philadelphie,' said the bishop of Blois unimaginationally. The notables were dismissed on 12 December, and on the 27th the Royal Council decided on the doubling of the *Tiers*. The king, believing himself betrayed by the aristocracy, was determined to thwart their ambitions. 'Tout va se perdre,' said the bishop of Langres. The world of government was in confusion. The administrative bishops struggled on in the provinces trying to keep order and

harmonize interests. Boisgelin presided over stormy meetings of the estates of Provence. He won some popularity by publishing a letter to his clergy declaring that their exemption from national taxation must end, and by trying to persuade the nobles to renounce their privileges before they were taken away. But he could do nothing to calm the popular outcry against the proposal of the nobles to have the elections to the Estates General made by the provincial estates—his advocacy of a complicated compromise scheme pleased no one. There were riots. ‘It seems as if the king has withdrawn his protection from the first two Orders to leave them at the mercy of the people,’ he wrote on 30 January 1789.²⁵ The archbishop of Narbonne, who had stood for the liberal cause in the second assembly of the notables, lost control of the estates of Languedoc—their day was over anyway. Bareau de Girac had the impossible task of presiding over the estates of Brittany; he sympathized with the *Tiers*, but was unable to stop its representatives from walking out of the sessions and raising tumults in the province, a virtual civil war. With the battle between the third and the first two Orders dominating the political scene, the clerical Order was splitting; the curés, demanding their fair share of representation in the Estates General, were throwing off episcopal control. It was only six months since the prelates of the Assembly of Clergy had been acclaimed as speaking for the nation. It was doubtful now if they could speak even for the Church.

50 The Revolt of the Curés

I

Centuries of Church–State alliance had made Christianity a religion of submission to sovereign authority, with Romans 13 as the key scriptural reference. It did not necessarily follow, but preachers commonly extended the doctrine to proclaiming the God-given nature of the inequalities of the social hierarchy, qualifying their denunciations of social evils by reserving the punishment of the oppressors to the hand of God alone. Yet while this was the broad, non-revolutionary implication, the potentiality of the gospels for undermining deference and privilege remained. Theologians described the Creator's original plan as one of equality. The Fall had led to the differentiation between the haves and the have-nots, creating disparities beyond the comprehension of logic—as the abbé Terrasson said from the pulpit, ‘astonishing to behold’.¹ Though the poor were ordained to poverty, they were God's elect; the Saviour had chosen to come to earth under the shelter of a thatched roof and not under the dome of a palace, and he still preferred to be identified with the disinherited. ‘O poor, rejoice!’ cried Bossuet, ‘a companion is coming to you . . . better be poor in his company than be found with the powerful in worldly gatherings!’² Similarly, if the rich were shielded by the precepts of religion from envious onslaughts, they were warned of their dangerous responsibilities. They were but stewards of their possessions, ‘dispensers of the gifts of God’, said the Jansenist Nicole, ‘the representatives of providence towards the poor’, said Massillon. Their revenues were not a private possession, said La Motte, bishop of Amiens—the true ownership was vested in ‘Jesus Christ, in the person of his poor’.³ The obligation of charity was far-reaching: Remy Breyer, a canon of Tours, in a *Catechism for the Rich* (1711) said all our superfluity must go to the poor and, if they are starving, our necessities as well.⁴ There was one obvious sanction, expounded from every pulpit, to constrain the great to

fulfil their duty of charity. The condemnation of God hung over them. One day—who knew how soon?—‘the sovereign dispenser of human possessions’ would withdraw his gifts, and in the dust, equality would reign; those who had failed to recognize the face of Christ in his poor would stand before his judgement in the last Great Assize. There were churchmen, though few of them, who proposed allowing some measures of enforcement in this life. The abbé Baudeau in 1765 seemed almost to justify insurrection: ‘Our fundamental maxim is that the genuinely poor have a real right to insist (*exiger*) on what is absolutely necessary to them.’ It was the duty of the State to provide, said the abbé Méry’s *L’Ami de ceux qui n’en ont pas* (1767)—‘the indigent belong to the State like the others and have their right to live from it’.⁵ Examples of the clergy endorsing this insistence in practice were necessarily oblique—putting forward explanations of the grievances of the people and making pleas for clemency if their insistence caused disorder. This role often fell to the curés, but great ecclesiastics might join in: the chapter of Lyon, composed exclusively of nobles, challenged the municipal authorities over the repression of the riots of 1786 and solicited pardons for two leaders condemned to death, and the archbishop gave a pension to the widow of one of them.⁶

Under the doctrine of stewardship, the rich were not entitled to luxuries. Bernis, archbishop of Albi, known as a courtier and diplomat rather than a pastor, was forthright in addressing the representatives of the privileged classes gathered in the estates of his province: ‘the cost of a simple feast, more boring than splendid, would feed the family of an agricultural labourer for a year’.⁷ Voltaire had justified self-indulgent spending by arguing it provided employment for the working poor. In 1786, the abbé François Pluquet, in his *Traité philosophique et politique sur le luxe*, demolished this comfortable contention; renounce your futile pleasures, he said, so you can reduce the leases on your property, enabling your farmers to pay their workers more; with this increased spending power, they will consume more, thus creating employment of a genuinely useful and permanent kind. Ecclesiastical eloquence also denounced the abuses by which the prosperous increased their wealth at the expense of the defenceless. For the bourgeoisie of commerce and industry, it was monopolistic practices, overcharging, manufacturing things designed not to last, holding back wages or paying them in kind, concealing from the workers in cottage industries the actual price the goods they made brought in the urban markets.⁸ For estate owners and possessors of feudal fiefs, it was exploitation of servants, raising the

leases of tenants who had nowhere else to go, defrauding the peasants of their rights by verdicts in seigneurial courts or by influence over royal judges, hunting over sown fields, imposing heavy penalties for poaching—this is why there must be a Last Judgement, said a theologian in 1763: if a man rots on the galleys for illegally taking a rabbit, God's majesty will not be vindicated until the oppressive seigneur is condemned, with the whole of time and creation witnessing his fall.⁹

The Church was imposing a sumptuary code on the rich and great and laying on them the obligation of charity: it was not challenging their right of possession or their privileges of birth and favour. Yet indirectly, the challenge was being made, in the *colleges* and from the pulpits. The *colleges* were enclosed societies whose internal ideal was a hierarchy based on merit; here the concept of the career open to talents was nurtured.¹⁰ Given the domination of privilege in society at large, the ideal could be only partially realized in the classrooms, and so far as it was, served to evoke disillusionment and revolutionary envy among the sons of modest families when they emerged into the world of aristocratic domination. In the sermons of the day, especially those of the missionaries,¹¹ the universal obligation to work was proclaimed and the dignity of labour, however apparently humble in the eyes of the world. The Genesis curse on fallen man, obliging him to live by the sweat of his brow, was interpreted as a rule of God, along with the instinct of sociability and the institution of marriage, meant to discipline men into moral and peaceable conduct. This was the social theory of the abbé Pluche, who exalted 'the honourable diversity of professions', putting them into a hierarchy from which he excluded the intellectuals and the drones. The rich who do not work are 'parasites' and 'vagabonds', together with their lackeys and all who minister to their pleasures.¹² In 1784, the abbé Petiot, an ecclesiastic prominent in the mesmerist cult, drew a further inference: not only are the aristocrats useless, but 'the king and people have a common interest against them'. It was the language of a revolution put through by enlightened despotism. In March 1791 Brissot was to salute Petiot as the originator of the anti-aristocratic doctrine of the patriots of the Revolution.¹³

Bringing the social implications of the gospel to practicalities was the task of the curés, the only members of the educated classes in everyday touch with the people, especially those living on the margin of survival. Their involvement went beyond compassion, for public opinion expected them to draw on their own revenues to rescue the indigent. They could not help resenting an obligation

onerous for all and, for those on small incomes, impossible to perform. Their exasperation is reflected in the contrasting reactions of two Breton recteurs. In 1773, one complained of the 'malignant fever' afflicting sixty and more of his parishioners; the nobles are all in town, where they live from All Souls to St John the Baptist's Day and are but distant spectators, while he himself has only 500 livres a year and cannot help. 'I do not know of a single rich person who has given so much as five *sous* to get bread or meat to succour them in their illness.' Another, with a much larger income, was plaintive in his charity; he gave generously to the poor, as was expected of him, but complained of thriftlessness—'they have only straw to sleep on and rags to cover them, but they get through up to five barrels of wine a year'.¹⁴ The letters of other Breton parish priests to the intendant at Rennes show their sense of isolation as they struggle to feed the starving: the grain merchants are monopolists profiting from famine by their '*négoce honteux et détestés*'; the doctors, charging 20 or 30 *sous* a visit, with medicine extra, ruin the sick rather than cure them; and 'the great nobles do not live on their estates and give no help, whether by alms or offers of casual employment, although they draw annually the biggest part of the revenue of the countryside'.¹⁵ Of the 2,200 people in my parish, wrote one recteur, 1,800 are asking for bread, and only five or six families are well-off enough to give alms, 'and then only to those who knock at the door; I can't tell you this without shedding tears at my powerlessness to help'.¹⁶

In their comments on local matters in their journals and parish registers, the curés reflect their compassion and their bitterness. When they are not recording the weather and its effect on the crops, they are preoccupied with a related theme (related because of the ever-present fear of starvation): the high taxation and the misery it brings. 'We are lucky they still leave us our lives,' wrote a curé of Maine in 1711.¹⁷ On the death of Louis XIV, another addressed verses 'to the powerful ones of the realm': 'moderate our tributes and reduce expenditure, we suffer more than you know'.¹⁸ Of the worthless paper circulated by Law's Scheme, one wrote darkly in 1720: it is a lesson to all to lay up their treasures in heaven. In 1764, it was the heavy taxation for the war effort: 'they scrape the flesh to the very thigh bone', 'all our money is gone, drained off to Bohemia'. There were complaints of the iniquity of the land tax regulations, especially of the *contrainte solidaire* by which the rest of the parish had to pay extra to cover the defaultings of those who had collapsed into total penury, and of the *corvée*, the forced labour on the roads, 'done by the poor, without their being given payment,

bread or tools for the work, and taking up the most of their time'.¹⁹ In 1787, it was the national deficit opening up the prospect of further ruinous exactions ahead. The hoary pretence that it was evil councillors misleading the good king was a device to avoid the smack of treason in public complaints: in their registers, the curés revealed what they really thought. The regent Orléans—'all decent folk regard him as the punishment of the wrath of God provoked by our sins'; Louis XV—'Our good king, having made a peace treaty as disadvantageous to France as it is dishonourable, continues the taxes and, indeed, increases them'.²⁰ When he dies, he is not the official 'Louis-the-well-beloved' but 'Louis the greatly hated'.²¹ In his register, one curé enters: 'in 1774, Louis XV died of smallpox: it was high time, for France was in despair'. Another was more circumstantial in his bitter record: 'he was so infected by corruption caused by his libertinage, that the surgeon who opened the corpse died of it. A weak prince, slave of favourites debauched beyond all limits, he lived continually in incest and adultery'—with a note too of the rumour that he had poisoned his wife and his heir.²² The virtuous Louis XVI could be given the benefit of the doubt, but not his brothers and Marie Antoinette: 'the queen pillages on every hand to send money, it is said, to her brother the Emperor; the ministers steal with impunity, the king's brothers surpass themselves in extravagance'.²³

'It is natural to hate evil; it is also natural to hate those who do evil to us unjustly. You cannot hate too much.' In 1729, Jean Meslier, for forty years curé of Etrépigny in the diocese of Reims, died, leaving a 'philosophic' testament, a mordant revelation of secret, long-cherished bitterness.²⁴ Son of a prosperous peasant family, well-read, and conscientious, he had performed his parish duties exactly, but had fallen into disgrace with his archbishop because of his relations with his young serving-girl and through a feud with his local seigneur. Ordered to say the customary prayer for the seigneur at *prône*, he had produced his idiosyncratic version: 'This is the common lot of the poor curés of the countryside; the archbishops, who are *grands seigneurs*, scorn them and do not listen to them, they have ears only for the nobility. So then let us remember the *seigneur* of this place and pray for M. de Cléry, let us ask God to convert him and give him grace not to plunder the inheritance of orphans.' In his testament, Meslier declared he had taught Christian doctrine, all the while regarding it as superstition (probably, he was projecting back to the beginning of his ministry a scepticism which had only gradually taken him over). There was no God to right the wrongs of

the world, and there was no next world: 'the dead I go to are concerned with nothing and remember nothing'. He accepted Christian morality, though adding to it kindness to animals and vegetarianism, and subtracting from it the condemnation of sexual relations outside marriage—free love was unexceptionable provided it arose from 'la bonne amitié' and not from 'chiennerie'. His main theme, however, was hatred of the 'league of kings and priests' which deprives men of happiness, kings from their love of domination and warfare and their heavy taxes, priests because they sanctify suffering and glorify the massacres of the battlefield in their Te Deums. The aristocrats 'fainéants et inutiles', are their parasitic accomplices, and one day the people will rise against them, strangling them with the guts of the priests already slain.²⁵ Meslier's life and grievances are well documented, and his testament seems authentic, a lurid and almost pathological example of the hatred of an intelligent man for the privileged classes who kept him in subjection.

Though curé Meslier longed for the day of popular revolution, we do not know if he was of great assistance to his parishioners, except for keeping the record of their births, marriages, and deaths meticulously. His colleagues, conservative for the most part in their attitude to the social hierarchy, could give practical leadership against the oppression of landowners and seigneurs. The days were past when they had led insurrections, though in 1754, when the villagers in the vast hunting preserve of the duc de Bouillon in the Mantes-Meulan area turned out in force to slay the game destroying their crops, the curés were in the van with their fowling pieces.²⁶ As educated men who did not ask lawyers' fees, they served their parishioners well by representing them in lawsuits. It was time-consuming and could take courage: the curé of Saint-Maurice-aux-Riches-Hommes in the diocese of Châlons had to lead in suing his bishop, and by 1778 had spent 1,080 days travelling on the case, and the parish owed him 3,500 livres in expenses, equal to two-thirds of its annual payment in direct taxation.²⁷ If a lawsuit was impractical, the curés would help in other ways, protesting to the government, petitioning the intendant, organizing collective action. In the vexed question of the enclosure of common lands, they spoke for the landless who could not afford to enclose a field for themselves, and for the village in general against the seigneur.²⁸ The old feudal jurisprudence in these cases was outrageously unjust, giving the feudal overlord everything if the village could not document its title and a third in any case whenever he chose to demand the *triage*—the share-out. Unless moral persuasion from the curé and, perhaps, his

ecclesiastical superiors could be brought to bear, the inhabitants would come off badly. At the end of the *ancien régime* we find a curé organizing a boycott of the farmer who had leased the common land appropriated by the duc de Nivernais,²⁹ another publishing a history of his parish to establish the right of the inhabitants to take wood from the royal demesne, another warding off a claim on wasteland made by the neighbouring parish backed by the *subdélégué*, and petitioning the intendant to obtain permission for woodcutting and house building to bring in a communal income.³⁰

When the curés joined in the rush to publish reforming proposals at the end of the *ancien régime*, they did not embark on tirades of hatred of the Meslier kind. They wrote, rather, of specific abuses, like ‘the inconvenience of feudal dues’ and the abuses of the taxation system;³¹ or if they wrote more generally, it was to offer utopian schemes based on sentimental Christian egalitarianism. They might hark back to the Garden of Eden, refusing to recognize the subsequent usurpations of exclusive property rights (‘Adam n’a point fait de testament’), or might simply appeal to the brotherhood of man implicit in Christ’s teaching: ‘Christianity is an order more appropriate to man in society than the order founded on natural law . . . United by religion, men compose a single great family.’ The abbé Charmet, in Poitou, discovered the doctrine: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need.

The poor have need of the superfluity of the rich . . . They have a right to it. Wages should be proportioned, not only to services rendered, but also to the needs of the worker . . . If the customary tariff is not sufficient for the family of the artisan or farm labourer, one of three things must necessarily happen, . . . he must be given the extra he needs, or he must seize it unjustly, or he must die. And by dying I mean a state of exhaustion so life is not worth living.³²

In practical terms, this meant men with children should be paid more than the childless, the aged and feeble must be supported by society, and instead of taxing the poor, the State should give them a contribution as a supplement. A different route to the same goal was proposed by the abbé Guénot, a Burgundian curé, in an essay for the prize competition of the academy of Arras in 1785.³³ He began from present evils: conditions in the countryside were miserable; he had seen peasants starving, women dragging the plough like animals, a farmer bringing back his crippled horse on a wagon after slaving on the *corvée* to repair the king’s highway. Things were even worse in the slums of the cities, and in defiance of the doctrine of the

physiocrats, the government was allowing a drift of population into the crowded urban milieu, a process already far advanced in England, with France not far behind. The cause lay in the unfair distribution of landownership, with the bigger estates run by blood-sucking administrators, 'bourgeois sous-fermiers et non-cultivateurs'. The land, he said, should belong to those who till it; there should be a share-out, every agricultural worker to become proprietor of his own plot, tended with his own hands, and sufficient to support him. This would create a world of sturdy independent peasant farmers, like the men who were the foundation of Rome's early greatness, enjoying 'innocent pleasures' and providing the state with a nursery of 'tireless indefatigable soldiers'. He put his idea in the cahier he wrote for his village in 1789, and his bemused peasants asked the authorities to pay special attention to the proposals of this apostle of fair shares, 'our pastor, our friend, our father and our benefactor'.

In the tumult of propaganda of 1789, 'the year of the restoration of French liberty',³⁴ the voices of parish priests were raised against injustice. No one else, they believed, understood the needs of the mass of ordinary people. 'The bishops know only the great', said one of them in a letter; 'the people do not come near them. Our duty and our ministry draw us near to all the public.'³⁵ As against towns-men and officials, said another, 'the clergy of the countryside . . . alone can make known the miseries they witness and suggest remedies'.³⁶ A pamphleteer agreed: 'pastors and curés who know the distress of the people' was the invocational refrain of the *Litanies du Tiers État*, a parody of liturgical intercessions.³⁷ A few of the curés took up pamphleteering themselves. The abbé Sibire of Paris, an exotic figure who had been a missionary in Africa and wrote an instruction manual for playing the lute, published his *L'Aristocratie négrière*, a plea to emancipate the slaves.³⁸ Others found conditions approaching slavery near to home. A curé of Franche Comté published his *Cri de la Raison* denouncing the servile tenure of mort-main still surviving in the province, a plea, he said, on behalf of 1,500,000 peasants still suffering from its absurdities.³⁹ In the diocese of Chartres, curé Aimable Rousseau circulated an attack on the exactions of the officials of the duc d'Orléans. It was 'infamy', said another parish priest near by, for 'a free people under a just and generous king' to have to pay their seigneur a fine when they sell their property, and to have to take their grain to be ground at his mill and their loaves to be baked in his oven.⁴⁰ The *cabiers* of the clergy are naturally chiefly concerned with their own grievances and aspirations and the sacrifices they propose to make for the common

good, but they also contain pleas on behalf of the peasants and artisans, attacking serfdom, guild monopolies, hunting rights, 'the barbarism of feudalism maintaining the population and agriculture in a mortal torpor', stamp duties and land tax, levies on foodstuffs and the extortionate fees of officials.⁴¹ The parish priests of Toul sent in a complaint about the deficiencies in the official *cabier*—'the draughts-men have never seen the miseries of the people except at a vast distance, far removed!⁴² Many curés helped their parishioners to write down their grievances, and on occasion this had to be done in defiance of the richer inhabitants. One parish priest sent the village *cabier* to Necker in confidence: he was 'the secret depository' to conceal it from the score of petty lawyers who tyrannized over the 450 parishioners.⁴³ Another sent the 'true' *cabier* to the *bailliage* of Chartres, because the seigneurial lawyer had banned any reference to the oppressions of the vicomtesse de Talaru—'it is the wish of all my parishioners, though fear prevents them expressing this by their signatures'.⁴⁴ Jean-François Carion, of a bourgeois family of Autun, who had succeeded his uncle as curé of Issy l'Évêque by 'resignation in favour', had affinities by his social class with the local landlords, but he broke with them over their treatment of their tenants, the poor *métayers*—their system of sharp practice not mentioned in the *cabier*. Though he failed to win the battle to have a revised version, he published his indictment as an independent pamphlet, letting the world know how the landowners ruthlessly forced up the leases, knowing their wretched tenants had nowhere else to live or work.⁴⁵

In the second half of July, after the fall of the Bastille, a wave of rumours of an 'aristocratic plot' led to peasants marching on the châteaux; in the Norman *bocage*, the Limousin, Brittany, and near Marseille, parish priests are found as leaders.⁴⁶ The nobles, said one, were trying to set all classes of the people at strife with one another, part of their design for domination.⁴⁷ Another accused his local seigneur of a conspiracy to blow up the church during divine service, to get his stroke in first before the parishioners marched against him to demand 'restitution'; the congregation dragged the lord of the manor into the building so he would die with them.⁴⁸ Another was reported to have said when mass was over: 'You are great cowards if you don't go off at once to set fire to the château and grill the lady and her estate agent . . . If I didn't wear the cassock I'd put myself at your head.' Curé Carion of Issy l'Évêque who had challenged the possessing classes over the *cabier* took advantage of the disorders of late July to persuade his parishioners to declare themselves an independent commune, with himself as head of the

executive, legislative, and judicial organization (his 'laws' included fines of 50 livres on men found in taverns during divine service). The bourgeois authorities had him arrested, but in May 1792 he was in charge again legally, being curé, mayor, and president of the revolutionary club and the village committee of public safety.⁴⁹

The dangerous doctrine of a new share-out of the land, already proposed by a few radical curés, was in the air in 1789.⁵⁰ This was the dreaded *loi agraire*, anathema to the thrusting successful men who made the Revolution. Among the intellectuals, echoes of the idea came from reflecting on classical antiquity and the laws of Solon and on the implications of some of the sayings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Restif de la Bretonne. A few peasant *cabiers* hinted at the hope of some generosity sponsored by the government. In two of the *cabiers* of the clergy, the curés sponsored entries casting doubt on the sacredness of property rights; at Autun, an enquiry into the structure of landholding was proposed, to see if there was anything 'which violates natural law'; at Châtillon-sur-Seine there was a declaration that all property must be respected 'except that judged abusive by the Estates General'. In one of the many Parisian discussion groups in 1789, the abbé Fauchet, the famous preacher, was reputed to have said that all men have a right to necessities, and that the only way to have a legitimate property in land is to work on it. His enemies accused him of recommending the *loi agraire*, so by 1790 he was proposing no more than reducing the size of the bigger landed estates by not allowing children to inherit property above the value of 50,000 livres a year, a substantial income indeed. It was rural curés, concerned for their people, who ventured furthest towards challenging the rights of proprietors. In 1790, the abbé Franchet of Montbrison wanted legislation 'to enforce a principle, natural yet forgotten: no one can make a restrictive use of his land which harms the public, for it belongs to them rather than to the proprietor'—this is to prevent the eviction of tenants.⁵¹ In the Soissons area, curé Chapuis attacked not only absentee landlords, but the big peasant proprietors: 'would we not gain infinitely by distributing the land to the greatest possible number of cultivators?' 'You will never suppress poverty', said the curé of Viroflay, 'if you do not bring back the people to the basic art of agriculture—this will attach them to the soil and make them into citizens. The true cause of poverty is the accumulation of land in a small number of hands.'⁵² When ecclesiastical property was sold, it was the rich who bought it; rather than being a beginning of a share-out, it was a new measure of expropriation against the poor. In the commune of Épineuil, three individuals

annexed the lion's share. Curé Petit-Jean, whose lean, pallid intensity frightened the bourgeoisie, denounced them and preached total communism. 'Goods ought to be held in common . . . there will be a single cellar, a single barn, from which each will draw what he needs.'⁵³

These were prophets of provincial celebrity. There were two others who became notorious by publicizing their egalitarian ideas into the high Revolution, bringing them into the national debate in the days of the Terror. Jacques Roux⁵⁴ was the son of a seigneurial official (an ex-lieutenant of infantry), and served his early days as a priest as chaplain to an aristocratic family—an apparently improbable recruit to the ranks of levelling extremists. But he was inspired to liberal fervour by the fall of the Bastille. At Saint-Thomas-de-Conac on 29 April 1790, it became clear he had gone on from enthusiasm for liberty to devotion to the cause of complete equality: the land, he said, belonged to all men, and he exhorted his people to begin their claim for a rightful share by refusing to pay seigneurial dues. Inflamed by his rhetoric, his parishioners marched out to plunder the two local châteaux; Roux was fortunate in being able to prove he had not taken part himself. After going into hiding, he reappeared in Paris and became a vicaire in the grim slum parish of Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, where the sight of such misery completed his conversion to the cause of the disinherited. The other egalitarian curé was Pierre Dolivier of Mauchamp,⁵⁵ who seems to have kept his dangerous ideas to himself for the first three years of the Revolution, until in March 1792 the inhabitants of the town of Étampes appealed to him to compose an address of justification. Peasants gathered to demand lower food prices had rioted and killed the mayor, Simmoneau, who was being commemorated by the assembly in Paris as a martyr to the cause of property. Dolivier's address could hardly have forwarded their cause, for he defended disorder with subversive logic. He spoke, he said, for the majority who had no vote because they could not reach the income qualification, and against the 'active citizens' who could, 'the aristocracy of the electoral process'. The voteless poor who toil to produce the grain are the very people who go hungry, and there will be no remedy until private property in land is abolished and all belongs to the nation.

At the end of July 1793 Dolivier published a detailed working out of his ideas, his *Essai sur la justice primitive*, a scheme for a fantastic rolling reallocation of land, newly shared out on the death of each proprietor, thus preserving equality to all future generations. His

local popular society sent his *Essai* to the Convention in Paris; they could not follow his arguments, they said, but agreed with the conclusion: it was wrong for some to be born rich and others poor. Jacques Roux went on to be an idol of the sansculottes, at once a man of simple benevolence, seated at his fireside with the orphan boy he had adopted and his faithful dog, playing his harp for distraction, and a lurid orator in pulpits and at the Cordeliers Club, demanding the execution of hoarders and speculators and of the treacherous king. Unfortunately, instead of having his parishioners sending his ideas to the Convention, Roux went there in person with a few of his fellow 'enragés' and denounced its constitution making as a design of the rich against the poor; Robespierre had him sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal.

The unbelieving Left and the Catholic Right tend to treat the *curés rouges* as vocationless churchmen, the one side preferring not to admit Christian origins for the socialist ideal, the other repudiating men in holy orders proclaiming a doctrine of cynical expropriation. In fact, there is every reason to suppose they began with genuine vocations, socially conditioned, but within the assumptions of the time, sincere enough. Even Jacques Roux did not renounce his priestly orders. Their championship of the disinherited arose from their Christian beliefs, and though they were few in number, their insistence is a pointer to the rising passion of dissatisfaction with inequality in the minds of so many of their colleagues at the end of the *ancien régime*.

II

As regards equality, the curés had a professional grievance of their own, with a theology to support their case. They had no say in diocesan affairs, and though they had security of tenure in their parishes and the inherent right to officiate and hear confessions there, they were subject in other respects to the bishops' authoritarian sway. In addition to having jurisdiction by canon law, the bishops had been given extra powers by Louis XIV's edict of 1695. They alone could give licences to preach or hear confessions in the diocese (that is, a curé could not act outside his parish without permission), and they could discipline the lower clergy by sentencing them to three months' imprisonment in a seminary; if further severities seemed necessary, they could ask the king to issue a *lettre de cachet*. Since these powers were used against the Jansenist clergy in various

dioceses, the theologians of the party began to look closely at the validity of episcopal authority.⁵⁶ When, in 1714, the *lettres de cachet* were pouring out penalizing the appellants against *Unigenitus*, Père Vivien de la Borde of the Oratory rushed off—in three days—his famous *Traité de la Vérité*. Christ's promises were made to all, he said, so in the end the agreement of the faithful is needed to verify the decrees of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Nicolas Le Gros, in his *Du renversement des libertés de l'Église Gallicane* brought his line of argument to a more practical conclusion: the first necessity was the consent of all the pastors generally. In so doing, he used the scriptural text from Luke 10, 'the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two and two before his face, into every city and place whither he himself was about to come', with power to heal the sick, bring down judgement on those rejecting the message, trample serpents underfoot, and bring the devils into subjection. This was held to be the foundation charter of the parish priests. The bishops were descended from the twelve apostles, the curés from the seventy-two disciples—directly commissioned by Christ himself. The role of both clergy and laity in doctrinal decisions was set out in a Gallican treatise on infallibility in 1722.⁵⁷ The 'active' means of reaching total certainty was that of Le Gros, the agreement of all the pastors. As this is almost impossible to organize, the 'passive' way must be taken. First, there must be a General Council deliberating freely, with priests and doctors voting, as well as bishops, and reaching unanimity. Thereafter, the doctrine must be preached universally, with the laity consenting, whether tacitly or formally, not as 'judges', but as 'witnesses' (*témoins*).

The debate on authority in the Church now proceeded at three levels. Gallican sniping at Rome continued—decorous propaganda in Jansenist catechisms, learned argument against the primacy of Peter, and uninhibited denunciations with titles like *Human and Divine Law Overthrown . . . by the Bulls against Jansenius* (1756) and *Rome Becomes Pagan Again and Worse than Pagan* (1763). At the other end of the scale, the role of the laity was elaborated. The Jansenist theologians insisted on the right of laymen to study and discuss the Scriptures, and in liturgical books and experiments implied that they sacrificed along with the priest in the Eucharist. A few extremists asked why pious laymen should not be allowed to say the prayer of consecration. The *Lettres à un ecclésiastique sur la justice Chrétienne* (1733) denied the necessity of confession to a priest, though endangering the valid argument from Scripture by tying it up with the predestinarian heresy of the impeccability of the just. To go

further and suggest that laymen should bear rule was too near to presbyterianism for even the Jansenist theologians, though there was an eccentric and isolated example in 1780. Curé Verniollet of Mesmil-Saint-Pierre published a *Mémoire pour la réformation civile d'une paroisse de France* addressed to the parlement of Paris, proposing to reject the 'idolatrous' supremacy of the bishop of Beauvais and go back to apostolic times by surrendering his own authority in the parish to an assembly of his flock. Three years later he admitted his mistake in his journal—the parishioners did not have the capacity to rule themselves: 'perhaps I did not have enough faith in the sacerdotal power conferred on me, unworthy as I am'.⁵⁸

The main drive of the debate on authority, however, was concentrated on the rights of the parish priests. The Jansenist *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* adopted the argument from the seventy-two disciples as its declaration of principle, while its network of correspondents systematically documented every act of episcopal encroachment. If the second Order of clergy was to have a say in the doctrinal pronouncements and administrative decisions of the bishops, it could only be by the holding of diocesan synods. Although they were provided for by canon law, only reforming prelates resorted to them. In 1718, Canon Maslef of the cathedral of Amiens published an open letter to his bishop, who had just ordered the acceptance of the bull *Unigenitus*. 'You published . . . the constitution *Unigenitus*, but was it in full synod, at the head of your chapter and your curés? Have you asked them for their votes and left them free to deliberate?' he demanded ironically.⁵⁹ Nine years later the curés of Paris petitioned for synods, their 'remonstrances' composed by Nicolas Petitpiéd, who had clandestinely come back from exile for the purpose. Fleury sent to arrest him, but while the police officer was stroking the cat, the great Jansenist canonist jumped out of the window and was next heard of in Holland. Two years afterwards, the curés of Autun claimed to be the bishop's 'council', without whose agreement he could not publish ordinances.⁶⁰ The same claim was made in the diocese of Angers, arising from a dispute over ceremonies in the cathedral. The twelve curés of the town had the titles of *curés cardinaux*, with the right to escort the bishop when he celebrated pontifically: they went to law when they were ordered to yield precedence to the canons, and in 1757 they finally won their case. The worldly splendour of the bishops, said their lawyers, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that they are 'simple depositories, responsible for their actions', and dependent on the advice and co-operation of their curés, the descendants of the seventy-two

disciples, forming the 'Presbyterium', the 'Sénat', or 'Concile' of the diocese. As for canons, they hold offices of 'purely human institution', and indeed, if justice prevailed, the stalls in the cathedrals would be given to senior curés, rewarding them for their long years in the pastoral ministry.⁶¹

Along with the question of the right of the lower clergy to have a say in diocesan affairs went the more narrowly focused and embarrassing one of their pastoral autonomy. The curés were proud of their status, jealous of their right to rule their flock, resentful of interference. But some of them, mostly in town parishes, faced humiliating challenges, being dependent on abbeys and chapters, institutions enjoying the rights of *curé primitif*.⁶² The law courts upheld the curés' monopoly of baptizing, marrying, and burying, although there was frequent litigation, especially over funerals; but there was no escaping the obligations to render honour to the *curé primitif*. The monks and canons took over the parish high mass of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the patronal festival, while on certain days the curé would be obliged to perform some subordinate functions—saying an early mass at the monastery or walking in a procession of the chapter. The bells and church silver were usually the property of the *curé primitif*, and in some churches the monks or canons said their services in the chancel, while the parishioners were relegated to the nave. It was gall and wormwood to the curés to have their inferior status openly demonstrated on so many parish occasions—the pastors of the flock commissioned by Christ were ousted from the honours of religion by monks who were supposed to have forsaken the world and canons holding offices invented long after scriptural days were over.

The bishops, pastors in chief and with unimpeachable warrant from Scripture, had an undoubted right to a say in the way curés ran their parishes, but the theological argument was being developed to show that so much of the power they claimed had been arrogated, a late development in the history of the Church. A curé, the case went, is head of his parish by the same authority as a bishop is head of his diocese. His authority comes from Christ. True, the seventy-two disciples were not at the Last Supper, nor did they receive the promise 'as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you'; but St Matthias was not there on the first occasion, and St Thomas was absent on the second. The practice of the first century recognized the divine commission of the seventy-two; St Paul told an assembly of presbyters at Ephesus that the Holy Ghost had given them power to rule the Church, and it is impossible to translate 'presbyter' here as

a 'bishop': they were priests, St Paul was the bishop. Apollos was a presbyter, and Paul recognizes his ministry as coequal: 'I planted, Apollos watered.' A bishop ordains a priest, true, but he does not thereby acquire power over him, for he is acting merely as 'the channel of divine grace' in the name of the whole Church, which is the repository of the authority coming from Christ. Except for the fact that he cannot ordain to the ministry, a curé exercises 'episcopal' powers within his parish. These included, according to a decision of the parlement of Paris in 1730, the right to choose his own vicaires (a judgement cancelled by the Royal Council). There was also an absolute right to hear confessions of whatever gravity; in a *consultation* published in 1734, Nicolas Travers upheld the right of every priest to give absolution in all circumstances—no *cas réservés*, nothing to be referred to the bishop or to Rome, no episcopal licence required. At that time, Jansenist curés were being banned from hearing the confession of anyone not resident in their parish; in 1737, a parish priest of the diocese of Rodez took his grievance to the parlement of Toulouse. The Royal Council thwarted him by evoking the case, though the king refused the appeal of the Assembly of Clergy of 1740 to give a general ruling in the bishops' favour.⁶³

About mid-century, the debate moved from theology and theory to practicalities, from the sufferings of Jansenist priests to the financial grievances of all the curés. Each diocese had a 'bureau' assessing the individual clergy for the taxation imposed by the Assembly General of Clergy; everywhere, the membership was by abusive nomination or co-optation, and the bureaux were notorious for allowing great churchmen to evade paying their fair share. In 1746, the curés of Tarbes demanded the right to meet and elect their own representatives, and those of Dax and Metz followed suit. A royal declaration of 1750 ordering the bishops to publish annual taxation tables was ignored in most dioceses, and in any case came too late to prevent the agitation spreading. The Assembly of Clergy, instantly combustible if Protestant encroachments were reported, only got round to facing the scandal in 1765, drawing up a differential tariff of taxation running from one-sixth to one-twenty-fourth of the value of the benefice concerned. Three years later, the Royal Council ordered the Assembly to take steps to make the bureaux genuinely representative of the various classes of clergy. Meanwhile, from 1760, new agitations, more intensely focused on financial injustices, arose among the clergy of the west of the Paris basin, Dauphiné, Provence, and the Midi. The curés on the *congrue* were leaguering together to demand higher wages; the 300 livres a year (150 for

vicaires) was barely enough to live on, and since the value of the tithes had risen, the tithe owners could easily afford to pay more. The Assembly of Clergy of 1760 set up a commission of enquiry, and it took six years to devise a proposal. Regarding all associations of subjects as potential conspiracies, the Royal Council banned cabals of the lower clergy, 'persons who do not form a corporation or community in the State'. Even so, the government had to act, and in Choiseul's edict of 1768 the *congrue* was raised to 500 livres for a curé and 200 for a vicaire. It was little enough, and to obtain the new scale, a curé had to renounce the *novales* (tithes on new crops), thus signing away his share in the growing prosperity of the country. The government of the later years of Louis XV was belatedly and feebly intervening to conciliate the parish clergy, and the Assembly of Clergy, the club of the richest benefice holders, was concerning itself only with reluctance.

In individual dioceses, the edge of grievance might be sharpened by the conduct of the bishop—aristocratic pride might alienate the curés, and conspicuous idleness or luxury might lose their respect. More to the point, the issue of authority might be raised by a prelate who was an autocrat, though these were few, requiring a combination of aristocratic contempt for inferiors with religious zeal and fanatical orthodoxy. There were, however, two examples at the end of the reign of Louis XV which were notorious, a warning to the clergy of neighbouring dioceses of what might happen if they did not insist on their rights. Bishop Drouas of Toul (dd. 1773) imposed his own choice of vicaires in the parishes, and kept a check on their subsequent progress by insisting on reading the drafts of their sermons. According to one of his *grands vicaires*, a personal friend, 'he believed that to arrest the progress of heresy (Jansenism) he had to keep the curés disunited: he governed without their co-operation and even thought such co-operation would be dangerous'.⁶⁴ His clergy had to attend monthly *conférences*, where he read out orders; they protested that they 'received' the episcopal ordinances in the sense of 'confirming' them, but he would allow no discussion. Caritat de Condorcet, uncle of the philosophe, had to leave Auxerre because his harshness to Jansenism was rendering the diocese ungovernable. Translated to Lisieux, he proceeded, like the cavalry officer he had once been, to regiment its lower clergy like a troop of dragoons. In 1773, his order to the curés to present themselves at monthly meetings at his seminary led to revolt. Of the 552 in all, 60 protested and got consultations of lawyers declaring their prelate unreasonable and uncanonical in his demands, while 360, without

joining the protest, simply stayed away. The 60 who spoke out bluntly proclaimed the thesis of the seventy-two disciples: 'you are the first but not the only pastor of your diocese,' they told their bishop; 'we do not hold our authority from you, it comes to us directly from Jesus Christ'.⁶⁵

The revolt of the curés came, however, not among those with impossible bishops, but in the seven dioceses of Dauphiné where financial grievances were most acute and the financial situation was worsening. While in France generally a third of the curés were on the *congrue*, in Dauphiné it was three-quarters. As a result, there was a solidarity in grievance among the parish priests; with their parishioners backing them, they demanded a fairer share of the tithes income, all the more necessary as the province saw a steep rise in prices after mid-century.⁶⁶ The edict of 1768 had increased the *congrue*, but the committees of tithe owners controlling the incidence of clerical taxation in the dioceses scored off the beneficiaries by imposing disproportionately high reassessments—in the diocese of Gap, the salary rise of 68 per cent was offset by a taxation rise of 350 per cent. Henri Reymond, curé of Saint-Georges, Vienne, from 1770, expressed the discontent in a sharply formulated argument in his *Droits des curés et des paroisses*, published in 1776.⁶⁷ A pupil of the Jesuits and the Sulpicians, he was not a Jansenist, nor was he a canonist; but he mastered the case for the curés while conducting a successful lawsuit in person before the parlement of Grenoble against the canons who owned the tithes of his parish. His book specifically referred to the situation in Dauphiné, but it was widely read elsewhere, going through three editions and providing materials for at least half a dozen of the pamphlets circulating in the ferment of public opinion in 1788–9. Reymond spoke essentially of material demands. Though he used the usual arguments from Scripture and canon law to claim the rights of the curés to preach, hear confessions, and choose vicaires, and from reason to insist on their freedom to elect their own representatives to the diocesan bureaux, he was mainly concerned with the destination of the tithes. By right they belong to the curé, and the first charge on them ought to be the provision of salaries appropriate to their rank and responsibilities in the community, freeing them from the burden of levying the unpopular *casuel* and providing for the furnishing of their churches. What was left was for the poor (in his *Droit des pauvres* five years later, he proposed detailed arrangements, with the curés 'the natural protectors' of those in need, in charge of the dispensation of the surplus tithe revenues to succour them). Along with the change in

emphasis on objectives went a change in the weighting of the supporting arguments: the pre-eminence of the pastoral ministry from divine institution was reinforced by a consideration of its utility to society and to the sovereign. The curés were at the crucial point of contact between government and people: as Turgot's brief ministry (ending in May 1776) had shown, their role as agents to exhort and guide could be imaginatively developed to further the cause of reform and enlightenment.

For material demands, Reymond's attempt to enlist the good will of the sovereign was the only realistic way ahead: the tithe owners would not surrender revenues because Scripture and canon law were cited against them; only orders from the government would prevail. In Dauphiné and Provence, groups of curés appealed to their respective parlements—Grenoble and Aix—for permission to elect *syndics* to take a petition to the king, and in 1779, the lower clergy of the dioceses of Vienne and Grenoble sent representatives to Paris: one was Reymond, and the other was Hélie, a curé of the city of Grenoble. Here they sought the advice of the canonists, especially Maultrot and Camus. From these consultations a cautious proposal was devised. Only 716 livres was asked for the *congrue*, and the idea of taking back tithe, amounting to a social revolution which would beggar many a bishop, chapter, monastery, and aristocratic pensioner, was dropped; the new money would be found by the 'union of benefices'—that is, annexing those without cure of souls. The petition, with others, was referred to the agents-general of the clergy. While consideration proceeded, a royal declaration of 1782 renewed the standing prohibition of 'any sort of union or league' among the curés.

This archaic rule was now irrelevant. A well-run diocese had to have synods, retreats, or the fashionable 'conférences', and it was unreasonable to expect parish priests to assemble for prayer or reflection on a problem of the confessional and not discuss their inadequate salaries in the courtyard or the tavern afterwards. Besides, in some dioceses—as in Gap, Grenoble, and Vienne—the lower clergy had won the right to meet to elect their representatives on the bureau, a meeting when the whole object was to talk about money. The salary agitation was under way no longer weakened by divisive issues concerning Jansenism or demanding and disputable ones involving theology: a standard of grievance had been planted to which all could rally. The Parisian canonists had been enlisted, and the editors of the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* had taken up the cause. The most wary politician of the episcopate, Loménie de Brienne of

Toulouse, recognized the inevitability of reform, and identified himself with it in a synod in his episcopal city in 1782. The curés, he said in his synodical ordinance, 'are depositories and doctors of the law', thus seeming to include them in the process of approval of doctrinal statements; they ought to have a *congrue* of from 700 to 1,000 livres; the *casuel* ought to be reformed, at least to the extent of ending fees for burials, and he promised to reserve four prebendal stalls in his cathedral for parish priests grown old in the ministry. The Assembly of Clergy of 1785, on the recommendation of the agents-general Talleyrand and Boisgelin, ambitious young men of progressive ideas, decided on a *congrue* of 700 livres (half for vicaires). It had been a leisurely progress towards a minimum sum, and the Royal Council, without hurrying, embodied the figures in a declaration of September 1786.

Meanwhile, the old arguments of the canonists on authority in the Church were circulated everywhere, learned curés in the provinces studying them and publishing treatises to enlighten their colleagues.⁶⁸ Chatizel, who ruled the rich parish of Soulaines in Anjou, in 1782 produced an essay on dispensations from impediments to marriage, proving the rights of the curés in this as in other matters, including the power to lay on hands in confirmation when the bishop failed to come round to do so. Four years later, Thiébault, curé of Sainte-Croix in Metz, published a two-volume dissertation on the respective jurisdictions of bishops and curés, covering every field of dispute. But Paris remained the central propaganda factory for the rights of the lower clergy. Maulrot was over 70 now and blind, but in 1785, in a volume ostensibly dealing with the *cas réservés*, ranged far beyond his narrow theme of sins reserved for papal or episcopal dispensation, and proved the rights of curés to pronounce on dogma in synods, to celebrate, preach, and catechize, to choose their own Lent and Advent preachers, and name their own vicaires. This was done with a shift in the pattern of argument, for he regarded priests as the inheritors, not only of the commission of the seventy-two disciples, but of the twelve apostles as well.⁶⁹ Maulrot was a powerful advocate, but on a narrow front. He was fighting for the lower clergy, but he was not going to weaken his standing in the matter by adopting any other ecclesiastical cause which might appear dangerously liberal. He did not assign the laity an active role in the church, hence his future opposition to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy, and he was a great supporter of the necessity of clerical celibacy (he said St Peter's wife and the 'one wife' approved for a bishop by St Paul were women who had given themselves to a

marriage consecrated to continence).⁷⁰ Another septuagenarian, Cotelle de la Blandinière, canon of Blois, who had been given a pension by the Assembly of Clergy in 1780 for defending the rights of the episcopate in the *Conférences ecclésiastiques* of Angers, produced a supplementary volume of *conférences* on the hierarchy in reply to Maulrot on the *cas réservés*; within two years, Maulrot issued a three-volume riposte to his challenge.⁷¹ Striking at what seemed to be a weak point in this vast structure of argument, Cotelle de la Blandinière came up with a discourse on diocesan synods—necessary and useful, he said craftily, but with no power, called by the bishop merely to ask advice and to be able to promulgate his findings with maximum publicity.⁷² The blind canonist's secretaries quickly got together materials from his twenty-nine volumes of manuscript notes to put out a powerful rejoinder,⁷³ just in time before the printing-presses were taken up by the pamphlets of the Revolution.

There was scope for learned argument for and against the right of the curés to share the governance of the Church with the episcopate: there was none about the proposition that bishops should be chosen for piety and merit. The books of moral theology called down damnation on those who turned to this high vocation from worldly motives, and on parents and relatives who put forward candidates for dynastic reasons—finding a niche for a younger son, taking a reward for services to the State from ecclesiastical endowments, thinking ahead about dowries for daughters and family influence in great affairs. From New Testament days came precedents for the election of the president of a Christian community by the faithful, or for appointment by a senior in the apostolic hierarchy; nomination by the king required a very different justification, presumably from altered social circumstances. Tronson of Saint-Sulpice rehearsed it when he guardedly admitted that a young man of the Colbert clan could be made an archbishop: there was nothing in him to disqualify him, and ‘he can do service for the Church’—that is, in the circles of power. What in practice this amounted to was described, not entirely fairly, by an angry curé in 1789: ‘provided he is a noble with influential backers, *agent du clergé*, the younger son of a poor family—given some superficial learning, this is all the vocation he needs.’⁷⁴ The specific demand that commoners should be eligible for bishoprics was slow in surfacing, though it had been implicit in all the learned literature of clerical dissidence throughout the century. Whenever the case was made against the aristocratic commendatory abbots or canons, there was the unspoken rider, why was the episcopate the preserve of the nobility? The curés who came to the

fore in the advocacy of the rights of their class, the Chatizels, Rangeards, Grégoires, and Reymonds, were manifestly as capable of running a diocese as half the incumbents in place. Mercier's *Tableau de Paris* sums up the verdict of public opinion in the last few years of the *ancien régime*. "To whom do they give bishoprics? To nobles. The rich abbeys? To nobles. What, you have to be an aristocrat to serve God? No. But the Court wins the support of the nobility by this means; military services, and even less important ones, are paid for from Church property.⁷⁵ The two leaders of the revolt of the curés in the East, Reymond and Grégoire,⁷⁶ published brochures asking for promotion in the Church to be thrown open to all in holy orders. Reymond, deprived by the peculiar provincial arrangements in Dauphiné from getting the views of the lower clergy into the *cabier*, drew up his own and circulated it for signature. The career open to talent was the culminating provision in his vision of a clerical utopia: the curés, with uniform and generous salaries and canonries to solace their retirement, would be in charge of official charity in their parishes, drawing on a fund of a quarter of all ecclesiastical revenues for the purpose; they would exercise police powers against drunkenness and prostitution, vote in their regular assemblies to elect representatives to the provincial and national councils replacing the old oligarchical Assembly of the Clergy; and they would know all the while that their merits could bring them promotion to the episcopate, for which an indispensable requirement would be long pastoral experience.⁷⁷ The demands of the curés for status and independence in their parishes and for fair salaries and taxation, were non-revolutionary: they were asking for such recognition as became their situation. When they moved on to demand equal opportunity for promotion, they were adding their voices and influence to the overwhelming tide of revolutionary opinion surging towards the abolition of aristocratic privilege, the dominant emotion of Frenchmen in 1789.

III

A feature of the surge of public opinion at the beginning of 1789 was the enthusiasm of the lay propagandists for the curés. For long the stereotype of the *bon curé* had flourished in the thought of the Enlightenment, at once a literary myth, an anticlerical manœuvre of the philosophes, and a cliché of polite discourse. When the *cabiers* were drawn up, one of the standard entries of the *tiers état* was a

request for justice to the parish clergy. ‘Ah! above all else let a sympathetic regard be paid to the curés, those worthy pastors who relieve the poor and console the broken-hearted,’ said the magistrates of the *présidial* of Angers; ‘it is high time’, said the Faculty of Law in the same city, ‘that the respectable class of pastors should be avenged for the long indifference, nay, almost, scorn, with which it has been treated’. The sentiment, genuine enough, had a nuance of political opportunism about it—a pamphleteer was urging the parish priests to ally with the *tiers état*, defying ‘the imposing glance’ of the bishop and ‘his brand-new air of affability’.⁷⁸ The stereotype of the *bon curé* was operating to force on the progress of revolutionary events. By emphasizing the unmerited exclusion of worthy pastors from promotion in the Church, it provided the extreme example of the injustice of aristocratic privileges, privileges provoking the bourgeois demand for equality, the driving force of the Revolution. It drew curés and *tiers état* into alliance; what the commons asked for in the council of the nation, the curés asked for in the Order of the clergy and beyond into national politics—a representation proportionate to numbers and usefulness. The universal praise of the *bon curé* allied to disillusionment with the great nobles and bishops who had refused to help the Crown out of bankruptcy influenced the Royal Council in framing the *règlement* of 24 January 1789 prescribing the method of electing deputies to the Estates General. While doubling the representation of the *tiers état*, it also gave predominant voting power in the electoral assemblies of the clergy to the parish priests; from this decision came their majority in the clerical deputation to Versailles, followed by the union of the Orders into the National Assembly.

Twenty-five members of the fifth bureau of the second assembly of notables made the original proposal to allow a personal vote in the election of deputies to the Estates General to every curé—‘placed by their office amidst the people of both town and country, they can witness to their misery, resources and needs’. This phraseology was adopted by the government for use in the *règlement*. As the notables went home in the days following 12 December 1788, the parish priests were lobbying Necker to make their case. On 23 October, eighty-three curés of the diocese of Reims petitioned on behalf of their 40,000 colleagues over the whole of France, deprived of representation in the assemblies of the clergy, ‘yet the most useful of all churchmen, being in direct touch with the people’. Had the redactors, ruling the out-of-the-way parishes of Nanteuil-la-Fosse and Villers-devant-le-Thour, not asked for representation to be

confined to 'rural clergy', they would no doubt have collected more signatures. On 23 December, Chatizel and Courtillé, the Angevin leaders, were writing to the king and Necker giving assurances of loyalty: 'one of the principal aims of our ministry is to maintain among your people respect and submission towards your sovereign authority'. On 8 January 1789, Thibault, curé of Souppes in the diocese of Sens, wrote of the 40,000 parish priests seeking representation in proportion to their numbers, so they could 'announce in person the sacrifices they intended to make and express for themselves their patriotism'. The curés of Bordeaux and Nancy petitioned with similar sentiments. From the diocese of Nîmes came a warning from the priests on the *congrue* of a plot of the bishop and canons to restrict voting to tithe owners, and on 26 January, before they knew of the *règlement*, seventy-two curés, an appropriate gospel quorum, pleaded for their class to have as many representatives as the higher clergy; the news soon reached them that they would control the elections as they pleased.

The regulations of 24 January broke the grip of the bishops and higher ecclesiastics in the dioceses. Canons were to be represented in the election assemblies at the rate of one in ten, monasteries by a simple vote for each house. Hospitals and colleges, being regarded as 'minors under public tutelage', were not represented; nor were mendicant houses, 'as not belonging to society by any sort of property'. Unbeneficed clergy in towns were allowed a vote for each group of twenty, as were the minor ecclesiastics employed by the great collegiate churches. Occasionally, these severe limitations were breached by local official connivance. Canons crept into electoral assemblies by virtue of other benefices they held (a dubious qualification arousing the ire of the curés), and a house of mendicants might send a representative on the ground that it had ceased begging and now paid taxes. But these exceptions did not swing the balance of power. Every curé had a personal vote, the same as his bishop. Those living at a distance had to find a priest as locum; very few failed to do so, and even then, they could give their proxy to a colleague to vote in their place. 'At a stroke of the pen, Necker had set up a clerical democracy.'

The electoral assemblies had two tasks: naming deputies to the Estates General, and drawing up a statement of grievances (*cahier de doléances*) to be sent to Versailles. With sure judgement, the curés realized it was the choice of deputies that mattered, for in the Estates General the decisions would be made. Even before the event, it seemed unreasonable to suppose the royal ministers would

commission an analysis of the *cabiers* to determine the framing of policies, still less that the Estates General would do so. Yet, while they were sidelined at the time, the *cabiers* are remarkable documents for the historian, giving a unique insight into the hopes and fears of Frenchmen under the *ancien régime*.⁷⁹ Even so, they are not quite ‘the authentic testament of the old France’ Tocqueville cherished. With the clergy, there were distortions caused by clashes of interest and compromises, for not all parties could get the entries they desired. A few prelates (of Amiens, Pamiers, and Luçon) tried to force their private views on the electoral assembly, and their curés, invoking help from the government, compelled them to withdraw their drafts. By contrast, the austere and ancient bishop of Boulogne, who had ruled the diocese for forty-six years, contrived to pack the *cabier* with his favourite severities—censorship, the prohibition of Sunday work, regulations to limit luxurious living, and the ending of the *appel comme d'abus* (which would have freed bishops from the interventions of the law courts when they disciplined their clergy and laity). At Langres, a joint *cabier* of all three Orders, based on the surrender of taxation privileges, was drawn up by Bishop La Luzerne, well known for his liberalism. Two bishops (of Verdun and Tarbes) omitted clauses they disliked from the final version, and others (of Troyes and Clermont) sent a covering letter with theirs denying it represented the true opinion of the diocese. Yet, while there was an underlying power struggle, usually the *cabiers* were the result of much lobbying and committee work, with give and take between the conflicting interests to put forward a forceful representation of the needs of the Gallican Church as a whole. Concentrating on the election of deputies, the curés were willing to make concessions elsewhere to mollify the bishops and canons and produce statesmanlike documents free from the denunciations of the contemporary pamphleteers and the angular legalism of the anti-episcopal canonists. The conflict between higher and lower clergy appears in the *cabiers*, but not in its full extent and intensity.

The clergy united to promote the influence of the Church in the national life. Of the 118 general *cabiers* produced by the electoral assemblies of the clergy, 104 insist on Catholicism as the dominant religion, and of the others, a dozen contain clauses implying this—only two are silent. Sixty-seven asked for Protestant religious exercises to be banned, leaving Catholicism with the monopoly of exterior ceremonies, while a few wanted the edict of 1787 repealed—a law inspired, said the meeting at Saintes, ‘by profound hatred of true religion’. Eighty-four *cabiers* wanted Sunday

observance enforced, and eighty wanted a severe censorship of publications, while there were some denunciations of particular irreligious or immoral actions: gambling (seventeen), failure to observe Lent (fourteen), duelling (twelve), blasphemy (seven). There were a few proposals for village tribunals to police morals, with the curé as consultant. There seemed to be no awareness of incompatibility between theocratic tutelage and a liberal constitution: a curé of the diocese of Auxerre proposed periodical Estates General controlling taxation, equal assessments on all classes, the end of privilege, and the suppression of the intendants—and sentences to the galleys for selling books attacking religion. No doubt the lower clergy favoured the demands of the *tiers état*, but the desire to conserve clerical power in national affairs influenced one in four of the clerical assemblies to insist on the maintenance of the distinction of Orders, fearing the consequences of a vote by head in the Estates General. The resolution to abandon taxation privileges was much more enthusiastically expressed; one in four of the assemblies made the offer outright, and it was evident in many of the others that the principle was conceded, provided certain difficulties were resolved. Who would be responsible for the vast debt the clergy had incurred on behalf of the Crown? Would there be a resort to the sale of church property? Would proper investigation be made of the properties held by laymen (so much easier to conceal)? And were measures proposed to tap the hidden profits of financiers and commercial men? As a worldly-wise curé observed, ‘was it wise to rush to lay down one's arms before the battle was joined?’

The *cabiers* show the case for economic justice to parish priests had been won; it was just a question of how much and how the money might be found. Of the 118, 104 asked for an increase of the *congrue*. A general figure for curés was 2,000 livres in towns and 1,500 in the countryside (half the *cabiers* assumed the *casuel* would be abolished). As to finding the money, a third of the submissions wanted the curés to own the tithes, and half wanted a confiscation of the wealth of the monasteries, beginning with the sinecures of the commendatory abbots. The houses of men (the nuns were not mentioned) should be made into austere and useful foundations; the assembly at Chatellerault proposed four categories: preaching, charity, and two for education, one for theology and the other for the humanities. In any case, reorganization would leave a surplus to improve the salaries of the parochial clergy; a third of the *cabiers* suggested these extra funds should also be used to improve elementary education. The effect of the learned propaganda to establish the curés as partners in

the rule of the Church was evident in the one out of two *cabiers* insisting on regular diocesan synods, two out of three wanting provincial councils and one out of three wanting national councils. At Velay, the first item proposed for the national agenda was episcopal wealth—this, however, was not a preoccupation generally; the implied censure of the bishops came chiefly in the complaints against non-residence and plurality. Various proposals were also made concerning the rights of curés as aired in the controversies of the century: freedom from degrading subservience to the honorific precedences of the *curés primitifs* and from the bishops' power of arbitrary discipline conferred by the edict of 1695, the right to choose vicaires from an approved list, majority representation on committees assessing clerical taxation, pensions, or canonical stalls for aged parish priests.

On the most radical demand of the curé leaders the *cabiers* were reticent. Less than one-third (thirty-four in all) asked for promotion in the Church by merit; of these, twenty-three hoped the king would be advised on appointments by 'a council of virtuous ecclesiastics', and fourteen wanted experience of the pastoral ministry to be made a necessary qualification. The clergy of Toul made the most daring submission, urging the repeal of the Concordat by which the Pope had given the king the power to nominate, instead reverting to the system of the early centuries: 'if election was restored, the face of the Church would be transformed; the voice of the people always decides more surely than the intrigues of a Court'. To insist on throwing open the episcopate to commoners was to encroach on the king's independence of nomination, as well as implying censure of the bishops already in place: it went against all the ingrained hierarchical assumptions of the *ancien régime*. And it was not an urgent reform; it was one whose effects could only operate over the long term, as episcopal sees fell vacant; only an élite of curés approaching the prime of life could ever hope to benefit from it. Not surprisingly, most of the assemblies did not make explicit demands on this point.

But the pamphlets were crying from the roof-tops what the *cabiers* cautiously hinted at.⁸⁰ The wealth of the bishops was a scandal—could the curés and vicaires in their poverty, 'beset with a thousand toils', be 'priests of the same God?': 'You call yourselves bishops by the grace of my Father', Christ is pictured as saying as he drives the money-changers out of the temple for a second time, 'and all your actions are a blasphemy against his name.' Why should they have estates and palaces, when they are supposed to be 'dead to the

world'? Solely because of these vast revenues, the bishoprics are filled by nobles. 'All the property of the Church has become the patrimony of this order. And if a commoner, however outstanding his merit, was to ask for an abbey, what reply would he get?—a smile of the most ironical pity.' In the *Journal ecclésiastique* the abbé Barruel proposed that the forty leading curés of a diocese should meet when a see became vacant, and elect a new occupant: 'you fear that by this method some bishoprics would fall to commoners. I know of no commoners in the Church save those who are so because of ignorance or lack of piety.' A curé of the diocese of Chartres, a doctor of the Sorbonne, published a pamphlet heavy in its irony: 'would you make an admiral of a man who had never served at sea, or a general of one who had never commanded a company?'—yet bishops arrive in their great office without pastoral experience, 'if by chance one of them has pronounced the formula of absolution, it would be because he had stumbled over someone dying by the roadside as he passed'.⁸¹ The old inhibitions broke down as quickly as the censorship of the press had collapsed; language of grievance became the language of Revolution. Only five months separated the *cabiers* from Marat's *L'Ami du Peuple*.

The electoral regulations of 24 January did not apply to Brittany, Navarre, Béarn, Dauphiné, or Paris. In the Parisian elections,⁸² the curés constituted only two deputies out of ten, not because of the special rules for the capital laid down on 13 April 1789, but because of the sheer numbers of other ecclesiastics voting, many inclined to the side of authority. There were as many canons as curés, the 173 unbeneficed clergy of Saint-Étienne-du-Mont and the 120 of Saint-Sulpice had fourteen representatives, and the archbishop held the proxies of 120 nunneries. Reforming proposals (objections to the edict of 1695 and the prescribing of service as a curé to be eligible for a bishopric) were omitted from the *cabier*, though the archbishop sought applause by putting in the suggestion of the confiscation of the revenues of Saint-Germain-des-Prés for the benefit of the parishes. The complete deputation was the archbishop, one of the two aristocratic agents-general of the clergy, two canons of Notre-Dame, the provost of the chapter of Saint-Louis-du-Louvre, the general of the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, a *conseiller-clerc* of the parlement of Paris, Dumouchel, the rector of the university, and the curés of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet and Saint-Gervais. Dumouchel in particular aroused the ire of the curés. If grammar and Latin roots were to be discussed in the Estates General, said one, he would be useful, otherwise not; even about education he could say

nothing, 'since the University itself needs reform'. In Navarre, Béarn, and Dauphiné, election was by the provincial estates, where the hierarchies and deference of the *ancien régime* prevailed. The bishop of Bayonne was sent to Versailles by Navarre, and the bishop of Lescar by Béarn.⁸³ In Dauphiné,⁸⁴ the assembly of the three Orders decided to insist on vote by head in the Estates General (hence the scandalous outburst by the archbishop of Embrun, 'les deux premiers Ordres sont foutus',⁸⁵) but this liberalism did not extend to favouring the curés, who had only two representatives to plead their case. The archbishop of Vienne, Le Franc de Pompignan, old, pious, and pastorally minded, was elected, as he almost certainly would have been under any system, and the other three deputies were canons. Significantly however, the archbishop of Embrun and the bishops of Digne and Gap were passed over.⁸⁶ In Brittany the higher clergy and nobility were expecting to have an election by the provincial estates, where the clerical chamber consisted of the nine bishops, a canon from each cathedral, and the abbots of the great monasteries—not a single curé. But this proved impossible, for rioting brought the province to the verge of civil war, the *tiers état* insisting on its autonomy and demanding voting rights for the parish priests, the recteurs. The king issued new electoral instructions, and the nobles and higher clergy meeting at Saint-Brieuc on 16 April decided to boycott the whole process. The recteurs obeyed the royal instructions to meet in two stages, and on 28 April their representatives at the second-stage meeting named three deputies for Versailles. The bishops, having gambled on oligarchical nomination in the estates of Brittany, had given up in pique, and left the parish priests victorious.⁸⁷

Apart from Paris and these four outlying provinces, the whole of France was subject to the *règlement* of 24 January. Its rules, clarified and liberalized to the advantage of the curés, so far as categories of voters were concerned, otherwise were entangled in the labyrinthine complexity of the ancient electoral areas, the 176 *bailliages* and *sénéchaussées*, mostly unrelated to the 130 dioceses. This confusion worked against the bishops.⁸⁸ There were two tiny electoral areas where the curés had a walk-over, the *bailliage* of Gien (enclosed in the diocese of Auxerre) had only twenty clerical voters, all of the second Order, and the comté d'Eu (enclaved in Rouen) had only an archdeacon to represent the higher clergy, and he failed to attend.⁸⁹ Fifteen bishops (though it was not certain which) were necessarily going to be excluded because of the incidence of boundary lines; for example, the *sénéchaussées* of Draguignan, Forcalquier, and Béziers

each had four bishops, but only two places for deputies. Other prelates were in electoral areas where most of the clerical votes belonged to dioceses other than their own; Cortois de Quincey of Belley, Barral of Troyes, and Raffelis de Saint-Sauveur of Tulle could reasonably have hoped to be sent to Versailles by their own curés if the meeting had not been dominated by parish priests from other dioceses who did not know their virtues. There were other factors working against the bishops stemming from the very structure of the episcopate. A bishop held office for life, so at any one time the incidence of mortality would ensure that two or three sees were vacant, as in the spring of 1789 were La Rochelle and Grenoble. Also, there would always be a contingent of bishops advanced in years: in this case, those of Verdun (age 73), Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux (85), Glandève (78), Grasse (71), and Boulogne (75) felt that after presiding over the electoral assembly and signing the *cabier*, they had no wish to struggle off to Versailles to set the affairs of the nation in order. Age no doubt worked against Plan d'Augiers of Dié (81) and Belloy of Marseille (76); altogether, only three over the age of 70 were elected. Séguiran of Nevers was chosen in first place, after a charming speech urging his curés to elect one of their own number instead of him, 'unless they are good enough to count me as one of their number, something I greatly desire'. He was only 50 years of age, but eight days later he died.⁹⁰ State service excluded two bishops: Bernis of Albi was ambassador at Rome and Loménie de Brienne of Sens had gone to Italy, following the convention that fallen First Ministers left the political arena and, in his case, fleeing from universal recrimination. Perhaps government office could be said to have excluded a third: Marbeuf, minister of the *feuille des bénéfices*. Newly promoted to Lyon, he stayed at his duties with the king as would normally have been expected; his absence and the effrontery of his new *grands vicaires* ensured his failure. There were also the prelates who refused to compete, one because of bankruptcy (Orléans) and two, of Tarbes and Blois, out of pride—the one being piqued because he was not designated to preside over the preliminary assembly of all three Orders, the other refusing to have anything to do with an election by a 'chambre des curés'. There was also the newly appointed incumbent of the tiny see of Senez, who chose to concentrate on getting to know his diocese. The bishops of Arras and Le Puy were elected, but only after trouble and harassment, so they refused to accept. Twenty-three other prelates were apparently not unwilling to become deputies, but chose not to come to preside over their electoral assemblies—one (of Dié) because of extreme old

age, three because of rioting in their episcopal city (those of Sisteron, Toulon, and Gap), others no doubt from a desire for a quiet life allied to a lively anticipation of defeat. Not surprisingly, only three absentees (of Beauvais, Condom, and Montauban) were elected. The picture of 130 bishops all yearning to be elected and comprehensively routed in the voting—a proof of their unpopularity—is a historical myth. Some were not available, some were only halfhearted candidates, and some were in circumstances where they could not realistically hope to be considered.

The number of prelates who retired from the field before battle was joined indicates their awareness of the overwhelming power of the curés, but it was overwhelming only if organized. Leaders were needed to make arrangements for nominating candidates beforehand and settling the order of voting for them; where there was more than one diocese in the electoral area, an agreement had to be reached on how the spoils were shared. To make assurance doubly sure, it might be as well to name the tellers for counting the votes and the *suppléants* (the reserve candidates who took over if an elected deputy later fell out). The elections at Angers were a model of such caucus politics.⁹¹ At the end of 1788, Chatizel published a manifesto against ‘the conspiracy of canons and regulars’, declaring ‘the curés are to the Church of France what the *tiers état* is to the nation’. In January, another brochure denounced the diocesan bureau: over twenty years the lower clergy had laid out 2 million livres to make up for the tax evasions of the bishop, four abbeys, and eight chapters. From his rectory at Andard, Rangeard, the historian and laureate of the province, put the theological and historical case for ‘the exclusive right of the curés to the tithes of their parish’, as the title of his pamphlet ran. He followed up with a dialogue between a curé and a cathedral canon, with a ‘philosopher’ as umpire; the pastor has 700 livres a year, the philosopher noted, while the aristocrat half his age has 4,600 a year on which he does not pay full taxation. A specimen *cabier* from the Chatizel–Rangeard party was circulated, demanding annual synods and salaries of 2,000 livres a year for curés. There was a decisive footnote: ‘for the private business of M.M. les curés’ they were invited to meet ‘in the main hall of the Palais des Marchands’ at 5 p.m. on 15 March and at 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily for the rest of the time’. When the election assembly met on 16 March, it had already been decided to send Chatizel and Rangeard to Versailles together with one representative of the group of 100 *prieurs curés* in the diocese and another from the priests of the fragments of the three dioceses other than Angers included in the electoral area.

In huge *bailliages* like Anjou with several dioceses involved, diplomatic skills were needed to achieve consensus, but it was usually forthcoming. At Troyes,⁹² the *curés* of the diocese and those of Sens, Langres, and Auxerre were held together by regular caucus meetings at the *hôtel de ville* to steer the proceedings in the formal electoral assembly. The bishop of Lodève stayed away from the *sénéchaussée* of Béziers,⁹³ but his three colleagues of Agde, Béziers, and Saint-Pons were there. The *curés*, 260 in number, refused to consider them, and the bishop of Agde's transparent manœuvre of leaving the hospitality of the episcopal palace of Béziers to lodge with a parish priest in town impressed no one. A wall of hostility met the bishops of Dax and Aire at the *sénéchaussée* of Landes (their colleague of Bayonne did not attend); they were bitterly taken to task for the edict of 1768 depriving the *curés* of the *novales* (tithes on new crops), and the continuing tumult persuaded both prelates to depart.⁹⁴ So too at Evreux, blatant hostility greeted the local bishop and his neighbour from Lisieux. 'The *curés* treat us with contempt,' the bishop of Evreux complained to Necker; 'they want to be the masters of everything that is done. They pass notes to each other even during the mass of the Holy Spirit. They say everyone is equal and appropriate the best seats . . . and shout as if they were in a public square.'⁹⁵ At the elections at Périgueux,⁹⁶ Grossoles de Flamarens presided in the cathedral of Saint-Front, the other two prelates qualified to attend having stayed away. A despondent *curé* thought 'the only chance to throw off the yoke' would be thrown away, because authority would have the votes of 'apostates' fortified by the proxies of 'imbeciles'. In fact, from the start, the lower clergy were so defiant during the early discussion on the *cabier* that the bishop and his train of dignitaries stalked out; two *curés* from the diocese of Sarlat and one from that of Périgueux were named, and Grossoles de Flamarens was left to rage: 'I'd have been angry if his rabble of *curés* (*curetaille*) had elected me a deputy. They are pigs (*cochonaille*) whose votes I scorn. In spite of them I'll be at the Estates General—it's my right.' The noisy challenges to authority complained of at Evreux and Périgueux marked the meetings in many places, discouraging the higher clergy, whether from pride, confusion, or despair, from making a fight. At Digne, the assembly refused to meet in the bishop's palace, and insisted on a neutral chapel: in Agen, there was 'a terrible insurrection'. A naïve young lady described the tumult at Lectoure: 'the lower clergy made as much noise as the *tiers* and all because they felt Necker was on their side. If all they ask for is granted, the nobles will have nothing left but their parchments.'⁹⁷ At Angers, Bishop Couet

du Vivier de Lorry absented himself from the crucial votes because he could no longer face the ‘clamour and motions’; the din at Caen persuaded the bishop of Bayeux and his canons to withdraw; at Mâcon, the bishop was accused of time-wasting in the hope the country clergy would give up and go home—the insult decided him to go home himself.⁹⁸ Even at Cahors, where under the presidency of the bishop of Montauban, the local bishop, a gentle, pastorally minded soul, was elected, there were scandalous scenes. A nobleman described the preliminary assembly of the three Orders conjoined: ‘packed like sardines, everyone with colds and coughing and spitting . . . The clergy could not have been more disorderly; there were hoots and insults and some gentlemen were punched in the stomach. A young curé was knocked over on to the dean of Monpezat, who told me he'd got his wig pushed over his face and hair powder in his eyes.’⁹⁹

In Lorraine, a preliminary battle was fought at the end of 1788. The king had promised to set up provincial estates, and the dispute was over the composition of the planning commission. Guilbert, curé of Saint-Sébastien in Nancy, and Grégoire, curé of Emberménil in the diocese of Metz, organized a petition of 400 of their colleagues, and got themselves and three other parish priests appointed—five out of the twelve clerical representatives. On 22 January 1789 Grégoire published his letter *A MM les curés Lorrains*: he asked the recipients to send him letters of adhesion saying they wanted full representation in the provincial estates and in the Estates General, and were willing to pay ordinary State taxation. ‘In the first place’, he said, ‘we are citizens; in many respects all other qualities yield before this one; but as curés, we have rights. In the course of twelve centuries, may be, such a favourable opportunity to exercise these rights has never presented itself—seize it!’¹⁰⁰ The curés of Lorraine did so. Elections were in two steps: according to size, the *bailliages* had to appoint from one to four electors, and these electors reported to two *assemblées de réduction* where the deputies to go to Versailles were named. To the *assemblée de réduction* meeting at Metz, the three *bailliages* sent seven curés, one abbot, and the principal of the Benedictine college of Metz. The principal was there because the curés wanted to conciliate the monks ‘and to stop them voting for the interesting personage we wished to exclude’—the aim was to show up the bishop by leaving him voteless—it was Montmorency-Laval, a haughty aristocrat who treated his inferiors with glacial contempt.¹⁰¹ At the other *assemblée de réduction* meeting at Nancy (six *bailliages* covering the whole diocese of Nancy and parts of those of

Toul and Metz), there were nine curés and La Fare, bishop of Nancy, a brilliant young politician who had made eloquent promises—even so, only getting there by 152 votes to 149. The lower clergy had all given undertakings to elect only curés to the Estates General, yet at the last moment they fell out and in mutual chagrin put in the bishop along with Grégoire.¹⁰² They were to be two distinguished deputies: La Fare gave the sermon at the opening of the Estates General, and Henri Grégoire went on to be a Constitutional bishop, defying the Convention and the Paris mob in his purple cassock—yet a friend of every democratic cause, the only man to go through the Revolution without betraying a friend or abandoning a principle.¹⁰³

The slip-up at Nancy showed the importance of unity behind an agreed plan. There were collapses in other places. At Le Puy, the curé of the principal town parish had agents on the roads and in the inns to intercept the rural clergy and convene them to meet at his house—but they considered him too forward to co-operate with the third Estate, so many of them abstained in the voting, allowing the bishop to be elected. In the same way, the town curés of Orléans¹⁰⁴ had put out propaganda urging unity to carry the elections, and proposing giving support to the commons for vote by head in the Estates General and a system of taxation uniform for all. Tax privileges formed the rock of shipwreck: the nobles gave up theirs, but the clergy wrangled and refused. The meetings dragged on for eighteen days, and the number of clerical voters (including the proxies of absentees) fell from 482 to 350. The three deputies chosen were a curé in league with the hierarchy, a canon of the cathedral, and Armand Chapt de Rastignac, a commendatory abbot and vicar-general of Arles—it should be said that he was a sympathetic figure, who had three times refused a bishopric and had rescued a family from a flood when the local boatman refused to take the risk. At Viviers, Bishop La Font de Savine, brilliant, diligent, but of unstable mind, failed at the first ballot, but was elected in second place because of a split among the lower clergy between the supporters of rival candidates.¹⁰⁵ In the *sénéchaussée* of Nîmes,¹⁰⁶ the balance of power lay with the 100 rich and conservative *prieurs curés* of the diocese of Uzès (some of the curés of Nîmes and Alais being in the adjoining *sénéchaussée* of Montpellier). This dominant group decided they would elect their own bishop and one of their own number, and allot the other two vacancies to the parish priests of Alais and Nîmes, one to each diocese. But the consensus collapsed. Once elected, the bishop of Uzès urged the assembly to give the second

place to his colleague of Nîmes, Cortois de Balore. For his part, Cortois de Balore denounced the candidate of his curés as a dangerous reformer, who was willing to give up church property and remove all constraints upon the Protestants (coming oddly from a prelate known for his tolerance). A dinner at the episcopal palace with sixty covers the night before the vote did his cause no harm, and he went to Versailles instead of one of his parish priests.

The breakdown of the organization of the lower clergy was not the sole cause of the success of the bishops of Le Puy, Viviers, and Nîmes and Armand Chapt de Rastignac: each in his way was an attractive figure. The curés were prepared to vote for a prelate they admired. Trained in casuistry, they were used to making distinctions; a bishop had been eligible for his great office because he was an aristocrat—true, but he may have been worthy of it or, as time went on, risen to the height of its responsibilities. A good man ruling a small diocese where all his clergy knew him (and where the drawing of the electoral boundaries had not nullified their vote) was sure to be returned. Ruffo de Laric of Saint-Flour, a conscientious administrator, Maillé de la Tour Landry of Saint-Papoul, a hearty ex-army officer, and du Tillet of Orange, who humbly walked round his parishes on foot, were enthusiastically elected. Virtue and pastoral concern were also passports to election in some of the larger dioceses. The 1,385 parishes of Rouen were divided between the *bailliages* of Caux and of Rouen proper. In the latter, Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld stood for election; 77 years of age, he had ruled for thirty years, spending all his vast income on charity and entertaining (when he fled into exile, he had to borrow travel money). His clergy cheered him in by 783 votes out of 799, and his standing was such that his nephew crept into third place at Caux.¹⁰⁷ Not that the curés of Rouen were weakening their effectiveness by a touch of deference to the great—their total deputation of seven was completed by curés and a Benedictine prior. Clermont-Tonnerre of Châlons-sur-Marne, simple in life-style and a dedicated pastor, might well have succeeded by his episcopal virtues alone, but when he came out for the taxation reform the *tiers état* was demanding, and praised the curés as representing ‘all that is saintly, all that is great and all that is consoling in religion’, the vote was certain. The pious Dulau of Arles, conspicuous for his charity in the harsh winter of 1788, was chosen by acclamation. Royère of Castres pleaded ill health, but the assembly insisted on him accepting. Duplessis d'Argentré of Limoges faced a vociferous opposition led by the three brothers Gay-Vernon, all curés; he was returned almost

unanimously, and took a Christian revenge by giving the eldest Gay-Vernon a rich benefice. Two other worthy prelates just scraped home. Archbishop François de Conzié of Tours was elected the last of four deputies; probably because of this, he refused, but his clergy insisted he change his mind. J. B. M. Champion de Cicé of Auxerre was both charitable and crafty; he got in by 117 to 113 votes, the scale turned by his imaginative gesture in embracing a curé who denounced him. The outstanding victory for manifested piety was won by Talleyrand, the new bishop of Autun.¹⁰⁸ Handsome and lame, unbelieving and morally lax, he arrived at his episcopal city on 14 March, gave dinners to his curés with lots of Lenten fish, was seen in the garden of his palace reading his breviary, said the mass of the Annunciation showing fervour though not familiarity, and gave an excellent discourse including reflections upon the importance of preserving the property of the Church. Once elected, he departed for Paris on the morning of Easter Sunday without visiting his cathedral, and was never back in Autun except once in his days as a revolutionary diplomat, when his carriage broke down on his way to the frontier.

Patriotism—in the sense of greeting the dawn of the era of liberty and equality—was often, though not always, a strong recommendation to bring a bishop the approval of the voters. Lubersac of Chartres, the patron and friend of the abbé Siéyès, universally known as a liberal, and popular in his diocese for his attempts to curb the overwhelming power of the wealthy cathedral chapter, was elected as first choice by 302 to 22 votes. Seignelay-Colbert of Rodez had already proclaimed the duty of the clergy to pay ordinary taxation in the provincial assembly of Haute-Guyenne, and his welcome of the Revolution ensured his return as sole deputy. Had du Tillet of Orange needed more votes, his prophecy of ‘a new golden age’ would have won them. At Mende,¹⁰⁹ there was an attempt to play the patriotic card by the bishop's cousin and *grand vicaire*, Siran, with the dual aim of promoting the episcopal candidature and getting himself elected by the *tiers état*. But the effect of his pamphlets denouncing privilege was negated by Mgr Jean-Arnaud de Castellane's attempt to prevent the commons complaining of his feudal exactions in their *cabier*. The clergy elected a curé, and asked for the salaries of bishops to be limited to 20,000 livres a year, though as a sop to wounded pride in the palace, they named a nephew of the bishop as the *suppléant*. In two other elections, patriotism was the secret of a prelate's success, though it was provincial patriotism, not national. At Nancy, La Fare was respected as able, and, having been

appointed only two years before, allowances were made for him. Even so, he went on to the final *assemblée de réduction* by a mere majority of three votes, the scale being turned by his eloquence in denouncing taxes imposed on Lorraine since the union with France. The other case was the enthusiastic return of the immoral and worldly Rohan, bishop of Strasbourg, by the *bailliage* of Haguenau.¹¹⁰ He had been exiled to his diocese by the king because of his conduct in the Diamond Necklace scandal, even though the parlement of Paris had acquitted him. This was no way to treat a prelate of the province who had succeeded his uncle in the see thirty years ago, a cardinal, the handsomest figure on the episcopal bench, and a prince of the Holy Roman Empire—he was voted in by acclamation.

Even where the lower clergy disliked their bishop, there were still reasons to consider his candidature seriously. They had to set their determination to win their rightful place in the Gallican Church against their desire to maintain the dominance of Catholicism in the national life. There was sense in ensuring the presence of a leaven of deputies at Versailles who were known at Court and had the prestige of episcopal rank. The curés were sympathetic towards prelates new to the diocese, provided they appeared at the electoral assembly in person without arrogant pretensions. Respect for the office, willingness to give a chance to a newcomer, and good first impressions led to the unanimous election of the archbishop of Bourges and the bishop of Perpignan, and the less dramatic success of those of Dijon and Lombez, and of Talleyrand at Autun. Other established figures had administrative expertise and familiarity with responsibility to recommend them. The two great administrative archbishops, Champion de Cicé of Bordeaux and Boisgelin of Aix, were wisely chosen.¹¹¹ Both prelates, especially Boisgelin, were shameless intriguers for office and distinctions, but their manœuvres in the corridors of power were unknown to the rank and file. Both had campaigned for improved salaries for curés and for uniform national taxation, and after some wavering on the issue of granting power in the Estates General to the *tiers* had moved sufficiently in their public pronouncements to appear as Neckerites. They had been active in charitable and administrative works—in Aix, the food supply to the city during the grain riots of March 1789 was ensured by the arch-bishop's interventions. They were convincingly elected as intelligent and experienced statesmen. Apparently, the archbishop of Bordeaux told his clergy 'to vote for those whose names are indicated to you by the Holy Spirit'—in the circumstances, the pious cliché seemed

to some incongruous—and in case the right inspiration did not descend, Champion de Cicé had entered himself as a candidate at two places, Bordeaux and also the neighbouring *sénéchaussée* of Libourne. At Reims,¹¹² Talleyrand-Périgord had been around for twenty-seven years as coadjutor and archbishop: there was little to recommend him save routine experience and splendid connections, but these proved enough, as so many of his penurious and downtrodden curés had given their proxy votes to canons. They balanced the account by electing a curé, Dumont, in second place, but they were duped by their archbishop, who knew Dumont had already been elected by the neighbouring *bailliage* of Vitry, but did not tell them. So they sycophantically elected Lagoille de Loche-Fontaine of the cathedral as the *suppléant*, and he got the place. Their only consolation was that at Vitry, where the other half of the diocese voted, the two deputies were parish priests.

Some unpopular bishops adopted a tough stance, played on the residual deference of their clergy, and got away with it. Lastic had ruled at Couserans for ten years, visiting his seventy-seven parishes regularly. He turned up at the assembly with the *cabier* already written, and made it clear he had to be elected. The bishop of Agen caused a near riot by dictatorial tactics, but prevailed in the end. Machault of Amiens tried to impose a reactionary *cabier* demanding vote by Order in the Estates General, the recall of the Jesuits, and the withdrawal of all concessions to Protestants; the curés appealed to Necker, who had his draft rescinded. Even so, they respected their bishop for his charitable contributions in the harsh winter, and were persuaded by his argument that they needed the prestige of his rank to defend their interests in the councils of the nation. In the huge *bailliage* of Poitou, with seven deputies to elect, the bishops of Poitiers and Luçon were heavy-handed; even so, they qualified, though the curés showed their lack of respect by putting them in fourth and sixth places. This is an illustration of Canon Baston's observation: 'The curés occasionally let in their bishop by pity, or to give themselves the proud pleasure of putting him after three or four country priests elected before him.'¹¹³ Something like this happened in the *bailliage* of Coutances with two bishops present. After three curés were elected, the bishop of Avranches, normally an idle, genial character, stalked out in a rage, and the assembly elected his colleague of Coutances. At Le Mans, where five deputies were to be chosen, four curés were returned and a fifth seemed certain, but the last elected curé refused to serve if the bishop was passed over, and the nobles announced they would adopt his candidature if the clergy

turned him down. Rather than press their triumph to a divisive extreme, the moderate majority relented and put their prelate in last.¹¹⁴

In the upshot, forty-nine diocesan bishops were elected to the Estates General. There were three others in episcopal orders: the ex-bishop of Senes, the famous preacher the abbé de Beauvais; the coadjutor of Albi, ruling the see in the absence of his uncle, the ambassador in Rome; and Gobel, suffragan in charge of the Lorraine parishes of the foreign prince-bishop of Bâle. By contrast, there were 208 curés returned, along with twelve canons and thirty-five monks and other ecclesiastics of various kinds. The privileged classes looked with astonishment on this overthrow of the hierarchical traditions of the *ancien régime*. The curés ‘had committed outrages’, said a Breton nobleman.¹¹⁵ Another noble wrote in apocalyptic terms: ‘they marched blindly on to seize the tithes, to bring down the higher clergy, to disperse the religious orders: had they been allowed the time and means, they would have blundered into establishing presbyterianism without realizing what they were doing’.¹¹⁶ Angry and reproachful letters went up from episcopal palaces and cathedral closes to Versailles.¹¹⁷ ‘A scandalous insurrection . . . the curés forgot the decencies of their status’; ‘a spirit of cabal and intrigue . . . they have no interest in our landed property or feudal dues or in the jurisdiction which conserves discipline’; ‘they are ignorant of our *grandes affaires* in which they have never been concerned’; ‘our property, our civil and political survival, all is in danger’; ‘please heaven that the storm rumbling above the heads of the ministers of the altars respects the altars themselves’. The canons of Tulle protested to the king that Necker had brought the Church into ‘a monstrous anarchy’, leaving it defenceless before the ‘insatiable avidity of the clergy of the second Order’. ‘We have been shocked’, said the canons of Rouen, ‘to find ourselves alongside simple deacons, insignificant chaplains, modest curés of the countryside’, our rights as ‘the hereditary senate of the bishop, the superiors and leaders of the Church’ entirely set aside. The chapter of Notre-Dame of Paris drew up a protest circulated to all the other chapters of the realm for signature—‘all subordination is destroyed, the spirit of independence and insurrection is favoured, the most sacred rights of hierarchy and property are violated . . . Religion itself is attacked, even in the sanctuary, for when the inferior class of ministers of religion puts itself on the same level as the superior class from then the submission which is a special characteristic of the government of the Church will be entirely annihilated.’¹¹⁸ Revealing admissions are made in

anger. These protests sum up the assumptions of the *ancien régime*: because of the accident of birth, some are not entitled to be occupied in the *grandes affaires* of the Church or prosper from its property; the hierarchy of religion must be the mirror of the hierarchy of society. Surprisingly, many of the bishops quickly came to terms with the sudden collapse of these aristocratic assumptions: they had the prejudices of their ancestry, but also its magnanimity. Had the zeal for national sovereignty and the conviction of their own rectitude and absolute authority not inspired the deputies of the National Assembly to enforce a Church settlement without respect for the canonical means by which ecclesiastical decisions are made, the chances are that the political leaders of the episcopate would have steered the Gallican Church united and peacefully into the new revolutionary order. As for the curés, they were moving towards considering themselves as members of the First Order where the interests of the Gallican Church were concerned, and of the Third when the interests of the nation were at stake. The abbé Siéyès had declared there were only two divisions among Frenchmen: 'those who have privileges and those who have not'. The *Tableau moral du Clergé* (1789) drew out the implications: 'Why talk of three Orders of citizens . . . two suffice, nobles and commons; the clergy are divided, like the country, between upper and lower strata.' Already the curés were spoken of as the 'mediators' who would help to overcome the intransigence of nobles and higher clergy and enforce voting by head.¹¹⁹ This is what they did, turning the Estates General into the National Assembly and the agency of total reform. They served the nation well, and for a few months they were able to bask in the illusion that it would show its gratitude.

Notes

Chapter 22

1. R. Daon, *Conduite des âmes dans la voie du salut* (1750), 4; T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), p. lxxxiii.
2. Bachaumont, xxxi. 157–8 (10 Mar. 1786).
3. Daon, *Conduite*, 2.
4. P. Collet, *Traité des devoirs du pasteur* (1758), 299–300. In the *Rituel* of Châlons there were rubrics in Latin on 'pregnant women, miscarriages, embryos, baptismal injection and monsters'. The diocese of Boulogne adopted these entries in 1776.
5. Le maréchal duc de Cröy, *Journal, 1718–84*, ed. le vicomte de Grouchy and P. Cottin (4 vols., 1906), ii. 202.
6. Luynes, xiii. 154 (Feb. 1754).
7. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, p. lxxxiii.
8. A. Zink, *Azereix: la vie d'une communauté rurale à la fin du xviii^e siècle* (1969), 243–5; H. Diné, *Un Intendant de Poitiers sous Louis XVI: Boule de Nanteuil* (1962), 11; J. Ferté, *La Vie religieuse dans les campagnes parisiennes, 1622–95* (1962), 300.
9. E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1763–81* (2 vols. 1882), i. 6.
10. Croÿ, *Journal*, i. 1–2.
11. S. Poignant, *L'Abbaye de Fontevrault et les filles de Louis XV* (1966), 180.
12. Collet, *Traité*, 290–1.
13. Guyot, xlv. 419–20.
14. H. M. Legros, 'Le Fessier et son Bérus', *Reu. Anjou* (1916), 189.
15. E. Coornaert, *Les Corporations en France avant 1789* (1941), 189.
16. Charles de Ribbe, *Les Familles et la société en France avant la Révolution* (2 vols., 1879), i. 45.
17. L. Audiat, *Deux victimes des Septembriseurs: Pierre-Louis de la Rochefoucauld, dernier évêque de Saintes et son frère, évêque de Beauvais* (1897), 13.
18. G. Bouchard, *Prieur de la Côte d'Or* (1940), 14.
19. J.-F. Bodin, *Recherches historiques sur la ville de Saumur* (2 vols., 1813), ii. 379–80.
20. For this and the following, F. Lebrun, *La Vie conjugale sous l'ancien régime* (1975), 118–24.
21. e.g. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, 167.
22. E. Lecroq, *Les Annonciades de Fécamp, 1648–1792* (1947), 152, 211.
23. L. Tronson, *Correspondance.*, ed. L. Bertrand (3 vols., 1904), ii. 414.

24. R. Laprun, *Histoire religieuse de Montiers-sur-Saulx* (5 vols., dupl.), i (1967), 28–9, iii (1969), 28.
25. For the age of 6, M. Jadert, *Nicolas Dumont, curé de Villars-devant-le-Thour (Ardennes)* (1885), 11.
26. *Mémoires historiques de M. le chevalier de Fonvielle de Toulouse* (4 vols., 1824), i. 41.
27. Register published by M. Jadert, *Trav. Acad. nat. Reims* (1902), 190–1.
28. Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* (Pléiade, 2 vols., 1955), i. 90.
29. *Mémoires et notes de Choudieu*, ed. Barracand (1897), 14–17.
30. G. Coolen, *Helfaut: essai sur l'administration d'une paroisse sous l'ancien régime* (1939), 121–2.
31. G. Le Bras, *Introduction à l'histoire de la pratique religieuse en France* (1942), 43.
32. P. Girault de Coursac, *L'Éducation d'un roi: Louis xvi* (1972), 47; *Mémoires de Mme la duchesse de Tourzel*, ed. J. Chalons (1967), 65.
33. A. Lecoy de la Marche, 'La Première Communion de Philippe d'Orléans à Saint-Eustache', *Bull. Com. Paris* (1883), 355–8 (date 20 Apr. 1760).
34. Collet, *Traité*, 396–7.
35. Mme Roland, *Mémoires*, ed. Cl. Perroud (2 vols., 1905), ii. 44.
36. Daon, *Conduite*, 30.
37. The essential work is E. Germain, *Langages de la foi à travers l'histoire: approche d'une étude des mentalités* (1972). See also J.-C. Dhotel, *Les Origines du catéchisme moderne* (1967).
38. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, 210–17.
39. A. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial catholique en Haute-Alsace sous l'ancien régime, 1648–1789* (1960), 166.
40. M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique Religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen sous Louis xiv', *Ann. Normandie* (1955), 251, 257.
41. J.-F. Soulet, *Tradition et réformes religieuses dans les Pyrénées centrales au xvii^e siècle* (1974), 150.
42. A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime* (1990), 176.
43. V. Dubaret, 'Notices historiques sur les évêques de l'ancien diocèse d'Oloron', *Bull. Soc. Pau*, 2^e sér. 17 (1887–8), 47.
44. L. Couture, 'Un Catéchisme en vers français imprimé à Tarbes en 1701', *Reu. de Gascogne* (1897), 292–306. It was 123 pages long.
45. R. Dartevelle, 'Cathéchèse et enseignement', in *Pratiques religieuses, Mentalités, Spiritualité: Actes du Colloque bicentenaire de la Révolution, Chantilly, 1986*, (1988), 439.
46. Germain, *Langages*, 92–6.
47. I. Bonnot, 'Le Courant janséniste à travers les catéchismes des xvii^e et xviii^e siècles', *Actes 109^e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes: section histoire moderne et contemporaine*, Dijon, 1984 (1984), i. 59–80. Commentary on the catechism 'of the three Henrys' in L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de la Rochelle de 1648 à 1726: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 276–7.
48. Hézard, *Histoire du catéchisme* (1900), 275–482.
49. J.-R. Armogathe, 'Les Catéchismes et l'enseignement populaire en France au xviii^e siècle', in *Images du peuple au xviii^e siècle, 6^e Colloque du Centre aixois d'études et de recherches sur le xviii^e siècle, Oct. 1969, Aix-en-Provence* (1973), 103–21.

50. F. Lebrun, *Le Diocèse d'Angers* (1981), 135.
51. L. Bassette, *Jean de Caulet, évêque de Grenoble* (1946), 73–5.
52. L. Trénard, 'La Catéchèse sous les épiscopats de Mgr de Montazet et de Mgr Fesch', in *Pratiques religieuses . . . Colloque Chantilly*, 496 ff.
53. L. Châtellier, *Tradition chrétienne et renouveau catholique dans les cadres de l'ancien diocèse de Strasbourg, 1650–1770* (1981), 254–7.
54. H. Espitalier, 'Les Évêques de Fréjus', *Bull. Soc. Draguignan* (1898–9), 201–2.
55. G. Courraze, *Lombes, évêché rural, 1317–1861* (1973), 192, 206–8.
56. E. Martin, *Histoire des diocèses de Toul, de Nancy et de Saint-Dié* (3 vols., 1900–3), iii. 26–8. For the story concerning the abbé de Bragelongne, see Mme d'Épinay's letter of 19 Oct. 1771 in Diderot, *Correspondance*, ed. G. Roth and J. Varloot (16 vols., 1955–170), xi. 212.
57. Rousseau, *Émile*, in *Œuvres*, ed. C. Wirz and P. Burgelin (Pléiade, 1969), 554, 722.
58. Germain, *Langages*, 44–51.
59. Daon, *Conduite*, 47–50; J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 145–6.
60. E. Appolis, *Le Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Lodève au XVIII^e siècle* (1952), 124.
61. M. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique à la fin de l'ancien régime: le cardinal de Luynes, archevêque de Sens, 1753–88* (1966), 46.
62. Germain, *Langages*, 102–6.
63. F. Masson, *Le Cardinal de Bernis depuis son ministère* (1884), 55.
64. Armogathe, 'Les Catéchismes', 106–12.
65. E. Germain, *Parler du salut* (1968), 286.
66. M. C. Péronnet, *Les Évêques de l'ancien France* (2 vols., 1977), ii. 930–3.
67. F. Lebrun, *Histoire des catholiques en France du XV^e siècle à nos jours* (1981), 161.
68. For the use of the laity to go to distant hamlets, B. Peyrous, 'La Vie religieuse dans le pays Bordelais à la lumière des visites pastorales—XVIII^e siècle', *L'Information hist.* (1975), 76.
69. R. Chartier, M. Compère, and D. Julia, *L'Éducation en France du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle* (1976), 9–10.
70. J. de Viguier, *Une Œuvre d'éducation sous l'ancien régime: Les Pères de la doctrine chrétienne en France et en Italie, 1592–1792* (1976), 369–70. A town might make a donation—e.g. 100 livres in 1713 (Ch. Portal, *Inventaire des archives communales antérieures à 1790: la ville de Cordes* (1903), 88).
71. J.-L. Ménard, 'Les Petites Écoles dans les Mauges au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1976), 88–9.
72. R. P. Henri de Grèges, *Histoire de l'Institut des écoles charitables du Saint-Enfant Jésus, dit de Saint-Maur, 1700–1877* (n.d.), 592–3.
73. Chartier *et al.*, *L'Éducation*, 81.
74. Lebrun, *Histoire*, 164; Germain, *Langages*, 72.
75. Mme de Chastenay, *Mémoires, 1771–1815*, ed. A. Rosenot (1896), 46.
76. Mme Roland, *Mémoires*, ii. 9–12.
77. Restif de la Bretonne, *M. Nicolas*, in *Œuvres*, ed. M. Bachelin (9 vols., 1930–2), vii. 156–9.
78. The indispensable sources are R. Briggs, 'The Church and Family in 17th-century France', in his *Communities of Belief: Cultural and Social Tensions in Early Modern France* (1989), 235–76; R. Pillorget, *La Tige et le rameau: Familles anglaise et française, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècle* (1979);

- Lebrun, *La Vie conjugale*; J.-F. Flandrin, *Les Amours paysannes, XVI^e–XIX^e siècles* (1975); G. Piveteu, *La pratique matrimoniale en France d'après les statuts synodaux* (1957).
79. Pillorget, *La Tige*, 22.
 80. See C. B. Paris, *Marriage in 17th-century Catholicism: The Origins of a Religious Mentality, L'École française, 1600–50* (1975).
 81. J. Duguet, *Conduite d'une dame chrétienne* (1724), cited by Briggs, 'Church and Family', 238.
 82. See, generally, J.-T. Noonan, *Contraception: A History of its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (1966), and Briggs, 'Church and Family', 268.
 83. R. Phillips, *Family Breakdown in Late 18th-Century France: Divorces in Rouen, 1792–1803* (1980), 5; A. Lottin, 'Les Procès de séparation en Cambrésis', *XVII^e Siècle* (1974). In this area, all petitions for separation had to come to the ecclesiastical courts—details in A. Lottin, *La Désunion du couple sous l'ancien régime: l'exemple du Nord* (1975).
 84. For this and what follows, J. McManners, 'Living, Loving and Dying', in *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 446–8.
 85. Phillips, *Family Breakdown*, 4.
 86. *Ibid.* 6.
 87. Principal source Lebrun, *La Vie conjugale*.
 88. E. Shorter, 'Différences de classe et sentiment depuis 1750', *Ann.* (1974), 1041–3.
 89. Lebrun, *La Vie conjugale*, 37–8. See also A. Villien, 'La Discipline des sacrements: le mariage', *Rev. Clergé fr.* (1913), 5–32; (1914), 264–86.
 90. In the procession the whole community stands witness that the girl has passed from one family to the other (N. Belmont, 'La Fonction symbolique du cortège dans les rituels populaires du mariage', *Ann.* (1978), 650–4).
 91. Laprunne, *Montier-sur-Saulx*, iii. 32.
 92. A. Burguière, 'Le Rituel du mariage en France: pratiques ecclésiastiques et pratiques populaires, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1978), 640.
 93. This section is based on McManners, *Death*.

Chapter 23

1. M. Baurit and J. Hillairet, *Histoire de la Paroisse de Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois* (1955), 146.
2. M. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique à la fin de l'ancien régime: le cardinal de Luynes, archevêque de Sens, 1753–88* (1966), 97–9.
3. J. Lovie, 'La Vie paroissiale dans le diocèse de Die à la fin de l'ancien régime', *Bull. Soc. Drôme* (1931–2), 380–2.
4. R. Poulle, *Histoire de l'église paroissiale de Notre-Dame et Saint-Michel à Draguignan* (1865), 361–2.
5. J. Corblet, *Histoire dogmatique, liturgique et archéologique du Sacrement de l'Eucharistie* (2 vols., 1886), i. 423–4.
6. S.-P. Hardy, *Mes Loisirs*, ed. M. Tourneaux and M. Vitrac (1912), i. 50 (5 June 1760).
7. P. Collet, *Examen et résolution des difficultés qui se rencontrent dans la célébration*

- des S.S. mystères* (1762), 8–9, 18–23, 31, 36–9, 43, 237.
8. G. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury et le mouvement janséniste* (1925), 327.
 9. R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–50* (1960), 143–4.
 10. E. Pasquier, *Un Curé de Paris pendant les guerres de religion: René Benoist, le pape des Halles, 1521–1608* (1913).
 11. The essential guide is E. Chédozeau, *La Bible et la liturgie en français: l'église tridentine et les traductions bibliques et liturgiques, 1600–1789* (1900). See also V. Baroni, *La Bible dans la vie catholique depuis la Réforme* (1955).
 12. Baroni, *La Bible*, 31.
 13. *Ibid.* 35–7.
 14. J. de Viguierie, 'La Dévotion populaire à la messe dans la France des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', in *Actes de la 3e Rencontre d'histoire religieuse organisée à Fontevraud* (Angers, 1980), 1–25.
 15. J. de Viguierie, 'Les Missions intérieures des Doctrinaires toulousains au début du XVIII^e siècle . . . le père Badou', *Rev. hist.* (1969), 54.
 16. H. Grange, *Les Idées de Necker* (1974), 556–7.
 17. F. Brunot, 'Le Culte catholique en français sous la Révolution', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1925), 209–10.
 18. Saint-Vincent de Paul, *Œuvres*, ed. P. Coste (1925), xii. 258.
 19. Dom P. Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques* (4 vols., 1878), i. 498–500.
 20. Cited by J. Pandellé, 'Une Grande Figure épiscopale', *Rev. de Gascogne* (1938), 104–8.
 21. Mésenguy, *Lettres écrites de Paris à un chanoine de l'église cathédrale de xxxxx concernant quelques réflexions sur les nouveaux Bréviaires* (1735) (Bibl. nat. 87389).
 22. N. Chastellain, *Réponse aux remarques sur le nouveau Bréviaire de Paris* (1680) (Bibl. nat. 4627), 7–11.
 23. Dom Guéranger's complaint (*Institutions*, i. 52) is worth recording—'Wherein lies the impossibility of this story? Where is the evidence against it?'
 24. *Ibid.* i. 57–62.
 25. L. Charpentier, *Un Évêque de l'ancien régime: Louis-Joseph de Grignan, 1650–1722* (1899), 85–7.
 26. Mésenguy, *Lettres*, 22.
 27. R. Delamere, *La Renaissance liturgique dans les diocèses de Normandie* (1935).
 28. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique*, 95–6.
 29. J. Blampignon, *L'Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 476. The missal, in 1737, is nearer to Rome.
 30. J. Charrier, *Histoire du Jansénisme à Nevers* (1920), 41–4.
 31. E. Martin, *Histoire des diocèses de Toul, de Nancy et de Saint-Dié* (3 vols., 1900–3), ii. 534–7.
 32. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 48.
 33. H. Lancelin, *Histoire du diocèse de Cambrai* (1946), 242–3.
 34. Mésenguy, *Lettres*, 25–9, 61–9, 872–6.
 35. Foinard, *Analyse du Bréviaire ecclésiastique* (1726) (Bibl. nat. 5844), 5–6, 17–18.
 36. A. Gazier, *François Boucher et le Bréviaire de 1736* (1911), 9–10.
 37. P. Battifol, *Histoire du Bréviaire Romain* (1911 edn.), 355 ff.
 38. L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* (E.T. 40 vols., 1891–1953), xxxiv. 155–7, 272–5.
 39. Père Honghant, SJ, *Lettre sur le nouveau Bréviaire* (1737).

40. Lancelin, *Cambrai*, 243, 246–7.
41. J. Pandellé, ‘Une Grande Figure épiscopale du XVIII^e siècle: J.-F. de Montillet, archevêque d’Auch’, *Rev. Gascogne* (1935), 57–77.
42. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1900), 412.
43. Ch. Robert, *Urbain de Hercé, dernier évêque et comte de Dol* (1900), 66–7.
44. M. Riollet, ‘Le Journal d’un curé de campagne, 1768–90’, *Rev. Lyon* (1911), 295. (Dijon, a new diocese, adopted the Paris liturgy in 1766—Gautereau, *L’Évêché de Dijon* (1885), 11–15.)
45. A. Salvan, *Recherches historiques sur la liturgie en général et celle du diocèse de Toulouse en particulier* (1850), 159–75; G. Cormery, *Loménie de Brienne à Toulouse, 1763–88* (1935), 75.
46. Baurit and Hillairet, *Histoire*, 146; C. Baloché, *L’Église Saint-Merry de Paris* (2 vols., 1911), i. 516–17; A. Krieger, *La Madeleine* (1937), 51.
47. P. Chevallier, *Loménie de Brienne et l’Ordre monastique, 1766–89* (2 vols., 1959–60), i. 337; Dom P. Schmitz, *Histoire de l’Ordre de Saint-Benoît* (7 vols., 1942–56), v. 160–2.
48. H. Darré, ‘Dom Louis Geslu et la liturgie’, *Rev. hist. Église Fr.* (1957), 289 ff.
49. A. Dupuy, ‘Journal d’un curé’, *Ann. Bretagne* (1889–90), 398–9.
50. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d’Orléans de la Motte, évêque d’Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 83; E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1703–81* (2 vols., 1882), ii. 146.
51. See also Bachaumont, xxxiii. 192–3 (2 Dec. 1782).
52. P. Jounel, ‘La Semaine Sainte en France, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles’, *Maison-Dieu* (1955), 132–43.
53. *Vie de M. Marquis-Ducastel, curé de Sainte-Suzanne*, ed. F. Pichon (1873), 86.
54. M. D. Chapotin, *Le Dernier Prieur du dernier couvent, 1736–1800* (1893), 116–17.
55. Dom R. P. Piolin, *Histoire de l’église du Mans* (2 vols., 1868), i. 24.

Chapter 24

1. M. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique à la fin de l’ancien régime: le cardinal de Luynes* (1966), 2–3; R. Darnton, *Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France* (1968), 55–8; A. Le Moy, ‘Les Lettres à Rosette’, *Ann. Bretagne* (1930–1), 50–1; Grimm, xii. 5–6 (Apr. 1766).
2. ‘Le Père Caffé, 1738–93’, *Soc. sav. hist. arch. Savoisiennne* (1952–4), 97–8; cure A. Plassard, *Journal*, ed. Ch. Joachim, *Ann. Acad. Mâcon* (1954–5), 103; E. Harriette, *L’Abbé Prévost: histoire de sa vie et de ses œuvres* (1886), 311–12; A. Niderst, *Fontenelle à la recherche de lui-même, 1657–1702* (1972), 38.
3. Père de Villier, SJ, *L’Art de prêcher* (1682).
4. A. Rosne, *M. de Beauvais, évêque de Senes, 1731–90* (1883), 15–17, 22, 29, 35.
5. Bachaumont, x. 18 Apr. 1778.
6. J. Charrier, *Claude Fauchet* (1909), 3–4, 10, 19–20, 22.
7. J. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs français dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (1909), 384–6.
8. L. Desgraves and J.-P. Poussu, in F.-G. Pariset (ed.), *Bordeaux au XVIII^e siècle* (1968), 141.

9. C. Baloché, *L'Église Saint-Merry de Paris* (2 vols., 1911), i. 568–9; C. Hamel, *Histoire de l'église de Saint-Sulpice* (1900), 201–2; Ch. Collas, *Saint-Louis d'Antin* (1932), 66.
10. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne, 1725–90* (1976), 271.
11. F. D. Mathieu, *L'Ancien Régime en Lorraine et Barrois* (1907 edn.), 245.
12. E.-G. Léonard, *Mon Village sous Louis XV* (1941), 236–8.
13. C. Robert, 'La Seigneurie de Givry', *Tran. Acad. nat. Reims* (1913), 362.
14. *Mémoires de l'abbé Baston, chanoine de Rouen*, ed. J. Loth and C. Verger (3 vols., 1897), i. 223.
15. J.-J. Gautier, *Essai sur les mœurs champêtres* (1787), ed. X. Rousseau (1935), 19.
16. Léonard, *Mon Village*, 150.
17. Chantal Gueudré, *Les Monastères d'Ursulines sous l'ancien régime* (1960), being vol. ii of her general history, 391.
18. Père Albert, *Nouvelles Observations sur les différentes méthodes de prêcher* (1757), 235.
19. J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 289 ff.
20. J. Gaiches, *L'Art de la prédication* (1712), 79–80; Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 318.
21. E. Chevrier, 'Notice sur les églises de Sablé', *Rev. Maine* (1876), 403–6.
22. Baston, *Mémoires*, i. 232.
23. J.-B. Bergier, *Histoire de la communauté des prêtres missionnaires de Beaupré* (1853), 121.
24. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 71, 46, 62.
25. *Ibid.* 24.
26. X. Azéma, *Louis Fouquet, évêque et comte d'Agde, 1656–1707* (1963), 92.
27. Père Milley, SJ, correspondence ed. H. Bremond, *Le Courant mystique au XVIII^e siècle: l'abandon dans les lettres du Père Milley* (1943), 39.
28. J. Blampignon, *L'Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 125.
29. A. H. Van der Weil, *Paul-Louis de Mondran, un chanoine homme d'esprit* (1944), 57.
30. Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 54, 60.
31. Baston, *Mémoires*, i. 222.
32. Cited by A. Rosne, 'Le Père Elisée', *Bull. Com. Paris* (1883), 238.
33. J. Clément, *Anecdotes dramatiques* (1775), 34.
34. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), vii. 210 ff.
35. Voltaire, *Notebooks*, ed. Th. Besterman (1968), ii. 245.
36. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 53.
37. Th. Besterman, *Voltaire* (1969), 291–2.
38. G. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire et la société française au XVIII^e siècle*, 2nd edn. (8 vols., 1867–76), iii. 291–3, i. 319.
39. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 12–13.
40. *Ibid.* 99–100, 54.
41. *Ibid.* 85.
42. Luynes, iii. 79 (1739), v. 23 (1743), x. 79 (1751), xiv. 20.
43. Gautier, *Essai*, 20.
44. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 439.
45. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 188, 198; Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 164–6.

46. M. A. Gros de Besplas (vicar-general of Besançon), *Essai sur l'éloquence de la chaire* (1767), 14.
47. J. Jacquart, *L'Abbé Trublet, critique et moraliste, 1697–1770* (1926), 130–1.
48. Rosne, 'Le Père Elisée', 241.
49. A. de Coulanges, *La Chaire française au XVIII^e siècle*, (1901), 129; Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 436–8; A. Chérel, *Fénelon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–1820* (1917), 558; Gros de Besplas, *Essai*, 68–9 (eloquence should burn on like a fire); for Lamourette, F. Bowman, *Le Christ romantique* (1973).
50. Père Jard, *Sermons pour l'Avent, le Carême et les principales fêtes de l'année* (5 vols., 1768), ii. 37–72.
51. *Ibid.* iii. 3–22.
52. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d'Orléans de la Motte, évêque d'Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 150–65.
53. Van der Weil, *Mondran*, 56–7.
54. The abbé de Beauvais's sermon is in Migne, *Orateurs sacrés*, lxxi.
55. For these earlier preachers, see J. R. Joly, *Histoire de la prédication* (1767) and Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, pp. x–xii.
56. J. Truchet, *La Prédication de Bossuet* (2 vols., 1960), i. 19, 23, 43, 60–1.
57. Verdict of the abbé Augier on Fénelon (*Discours sur l'éloquence* (1779)), cited by Chérel, *Fénelon*, 587.
58. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 33, 46, 82, 258–9.
59. Jacquart, *L'Abbé Trublet*, 144.
60. Cited by Van der Weil, *Mondran*, 58.
61. Chérel, *Fénelon*, 275–7; Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 662–6.
62. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 112–13, 158, 220–4, 236; Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 367, 493.
63. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 202.
64. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 30, 227, 231.
65. Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 10.
66. e.g. Canon Le Gouz—see his correspondence, *Reu. quest. hist.* (1914), 125–6.
67. Gros de Besplas, *Essai*, 25–31, 38, 61, 82–3.
68. Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 123, 250, 247, 420.
69. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 448.
70. Gros de Besplas, *Essai*, 104; J. F. Marmontel, *L'Éloquence de la chaire (Éléments de littérature)*, cited by Rosne, *M. de Beauvais*, 258.
71. Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 63.
72. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 35; Joly, *Histoire*, 482.
73. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 54.
74. Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 18.
75. Joly, *Histoire*, 511–12.
76. Cited by R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–50* (1960), 135.
77. Gaiches, *L'Art*, 117.
78. Massillon, *Sermon sur le mauvais riche*; Poulle, *Sermon sur l'Enfer, Sermon sur la Foi*.
79. Albert, *Nouvelles Observations*, 164–6, 169–70; Gaiches, *L'Art*, 341.
80. De Lasne d'Aiguebelle, *La Religion du cœur* (1778). On the general theme of eternal punishment see McManners, *Death*, chs. 5 and 6.
81. For his intolerance in other respects, McManners, *Angers*, 9, 176–7, 306.

82. J. de Viguerie, 'Quelques aspects du Catholicisme des Français au XVIII^e siècle', *Reu. hist.* (1981), 366–7.
83. Gautier, *Essai*, 20.
84. *Lettres secrètes*, cited by E. Lavaquery, *Le Cardinal de Boisgelin, 1732–1804* (2 vols., 1920).
85. Bossuet, *Sermon sur la mort*.
86. Candel, *Les Prédicateurs*, 55; Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 79–80.
87. Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 340, 143.
88. Charrier, *Fauchet*, 54.
89. Père Elisée, *Sermon pour le jour de l'Annonciation*.
90. P.-L. Lacretelle, *L'Éloquence de la chaire*, in *Œuvres* (5 vols., 1802–7), i. 201.
91. Cited by Chérel, *Fénelon*, 279.
92. Joly, *Histoire*, 517.
93. Gautier, *Essai*, 21.
94. Gros de Besplas, *Essai*, 53–4.
95. Grimm, xii. 497–8.
96. Mathieu, *L'Ancien Régime*, 332–3.
97. 8 Dec. 1776 to d'Alembert, Voltaire, *Corresp.* xiv. 232.
98. Grimm, x. 281 (Sept. 1773).
99. *Ibid.* viii. 183–4.
100. *Ibid.* x. 77 (Oct. 1772); Charrier, *Fauchet*, 14–15.
101. Le Chapelain, *Sur l'incrédulité des esprits forts* (cited by Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 263).
102. Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 409–19, 476–7.
103. Cited by Coulanges, *La Chaire française*, 157.
104. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1967 edn.), 86–7.

Chapter 25

1. J.-L. Brunet, rev. D. de Maillane, *Le Parfait Notaire apostolique* (2 vols., 1775), i. 670–1.
2. Bachaumont, xvii. 4 (Jan. 1781).
3. Père Albert, *Nouvelles Observations sur les différentes méthodes de prêcher* (1757), 97–103.
4. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne, 1725–90* (1976), 172–4.
5. J. Dulumeau, *Le Diocèse de Rennes* (1979), 139.
6. J.-H. Mioland (ed.), *Actes de L'Église d'Amiens, 811–1849* (2 vols., 1849), ii. 504.
7. Curé E. Barbotin, *Lettres*, ed. A. Aulard (1910), 65 (4 Oct. 1789).
8. J. Meyer, *La Noblesse bretonne au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), ii. 853–4.
9. A. Babeau, *Le Village sous l'ancien régime* (1878), 123–4.
10. A. Mathiez, 'La Lecture des décrets au prône', in *La Révolution et L'Église* (1910), 41.
11. H. Strohl, *Le Protestantisme en Alsace* (1950), 230.
12. P. Collet (of the Congrégation de la Mission), *Traité des devoirs d'un pasteur* (1758), 256.
13. Restif de la Bretonne, *La Vie de mon père*, in *Œuvres*, ed. M. Bachelin (9 vols., 1930–2), i. 180.

14. H. Grange, *Les Idées de Necker* (1974), 198.
15. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 90.
16. Collet, *Traité*, 218, 244–5.
17. R. Darricau, *La Formation des professeurs de séminaire au début du XVIII^e siècle, d'après un directoire de M. Jean Bonnet* (1960), 112.
18. A. Gazier, *Lettres à Grégoire sur les patois de France, 1790–4* (1880), 9, 58, 81, 90–7, 139, 203, 287.
19. A. Dupuy, 'L'Administration municipale de Bretagne', *Ann. Bretagne* (1889–90), 662.
20. A. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial en Haute-Alsace sous l'ancien régime, 1648–1789* (1960), 91–3.
21. Gazier, *Lettres à Grégoire*, 257.
22. Mioland (ed.), *L'Église d'Amiens*, ii. 341, 397–405.
23. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, xxix. 87 (1746).
24. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 216.
25. Métra, xii. 121–5 (1781).
26. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 163–5.
27. E. G. Léonard, *Mon Village sous Louis XV* (1941), 173.
28. F.-M. Luzic (ed.), 'Sermon sur la fête de Toussaint' (probably by M. Morin, dd. 1791), *Ann. Bretagne* (1893–4), 120–35.
29. Jean le Marc, 'Le Placet d'un vicaire, 1766', *Bull. Soc. Orléanais* (1943), 460.
30. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 144–6.
31. Introductions to the parish missions in E. Sevrin, *Les Missions religieuses en France sous la Restauration, 1815–30* (2 vols., 1948), i. 1–20, and J. de Viguier, 'Prédication et théologie populaire au temps de Grignon de Montfort', *L'Information hist.* (1974), 210.
32. Ch. Berthelot du Chesnay, *Les Missions de Saint Jean d'Eudes* (1967), 32–6.
33. J.-F. Soulet, *Tradition et réformes religieuses dans les Pyrénées centrales au XVII^e siècle* (1974), 248. On the Capuchin missions more generally, B. Dompnier, 'Les Missions des Capucins et leur empreinte sur la Réforme Catholique en France', *Rev. hist. Église Fr.* (1984), 127–47, and J.-R. Armogathe, 'Les Missions des Capucins dans le diocèse de Mende au XVII^e siècle', *Rev. Gévaudan* (1972), 223 ff.
34. L. Kerbirou, *Les Missions bretonnes* (1933), 110–30; P.-F. Hacquet, *Mémoire des missions des Montfortains dans l'Ouest, 1740–79*, ed. L. Pérouas (1964), 3.
35. E. Préclin, 'La Situation ecclésiastique et religieuse de la Franche Comté à la veille de la Révolution', *Bull. Féd. Franche Comté* (1955), 25–6.
36. Hacquet, *Mémoire*, 6.
37. Chevassu, *Prônes avec une méthode pour les faire servir à un dessin de mission* (4 vols., 1758), i. pp. ii–iii.
38. Ch. Langlois, *Le Diocèse de Vannes au XIX^e siècle, 1800–30* (1974), 93.
39. Chabaut, 'Barbaroux physicien', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1934), 122.
40. J. Pandellé, 'Une Grande Figure épiscopale du XVIII^e siècle, Jean-François de Montillet, archevêque d'Auch', *Rev. Gascogne* (1937), 133–4; Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 139, 146; J.-B. Bergier, *Histoire de la communauté des Prêtres Missionnaires de Beaupré* (1853), 55, 47, 100–1; J. de Viguier, 'Les Missions

- intérieures des Doctrinaires toulousains au début du XVIII^e siècle’, *Reu. hist.* (1969), 41–2.
41. J.-J. Gautier, *Essai sur les mœurs champêtres* (1787), ed. X. Rousseau (1935), 17.
 42. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 392; J. Charrier, *Histoire du Jansénisme au diocèse de Nevers* (1920), 112–16; Bergier, *Beaupré*, 168–9; C. Duvoisin, *La Vie de M. Daguerre fondateur du séminaire de Larressore* (1861), 243, 258, 275; E. Appolis, *Le Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Lodève au XVIII^e siècle* (1952), 42; P. Balme and L. Tézenas, *La Vie à Clermont au XVIII^e siècle* (1960), 29; A. Degert, ‘L’Ancien Diocèse d’Aire’, *Reu. Gascogne* (1907), 173; Langlois, *Vannes*, 92.
 43. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d’Orléans de la Motte, évêque d’Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 18.
 44. Ch. Robert, *Urbain de Hercé, dernier évêque et comte de Dol* (1900), 49–51.
 45. L. Alloing, *Le Diocèse de Belley* (1938), 275.
 46. Robert, *Urbain*, 51; G. Cormary, *Loménie de Brienne à Toulouse, 1763–88* (1935), 37.
 47. H. Espitalier, ‘Les Évêques de Fréjus’, *Bull. Soc. Draguignan* (1898–9), 122, 206.
 48. Degert, *Dax*, 360–1. For the mission foundations of the Doctrinaires, J. de Viguerie, *Une Œuvre d’éducation sous l’ancien-régime: les Pères de la Doctrine Chrétienne en France et Italie, 1592–1792* (1970), 372–3.
 49. E. Goiffon, *Monographies paroissiales: paroisses de l’archiprêtre de Nîmes* (1898), 147–8.
 50. Viguerie, ‘Les Missions’, 42.
 51. Bergier, *Beaupré*, 84–96.
 52. L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 94 ff.
 53. Viguerie, ‘Les Missions’, 54–60.
 54. Père Milley, SJ, correspondance ed. H. Bremond, *Le Courant mystique au XVIII^e siècle: l’abandon dans les lettres du Père Milley* (1943), 36–8, 50; J. Pra, *Les Jésuites à Grenoble, 1587–1763* (1901), 293–4; Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 192; P. Delattre, *Les Établissements des Jésuites en France . . . répertoire topobibliographique* (5 vols., 1949–57), i. 65–6, 747; ii. 146, 342, 344, 1265; iii. 948–9; iv. 947.
 55. G. Guitton, *Les Jésuites à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV* (1953), 145–9.
 56. M. Venard, ‘Les Missions des Oratoriens à Avignon’, *Reu. hist. Église Fr.* (1962), 34.
 57. V. Durand, *État religieux des trois diocèses de Nîmes, d’Uzès et d’Alais à la fin de l’ancien régime* (1909), 48.
 58. N. Chabannes, ‘Monographies paroissiales: Roches’, *Reu. Vivarais* (1911), 378–9.
 59. Sevrin, *Les Missions*, i. 168.
 60. Hacquet, *Mémoire*, 8.
 61. J. Blampignon, *L’Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 187–9.
 62. P. Azaïs, *Bridaine et ses missions* (1882), 28.
 63. Viguerie, ‘Les Missions’, 51.
 64. Chabannes, ‘Monographies’, 378.
 65. ‘Documents: La Fête de la Fédération à Jaulgonne (Aisne)’, *Rév. fr.* (1901), 364.
 66. e.g. curé A. Plassard, ‘Journal’, ed. Joachim, *Ann. Acad. Mâcon* (1954–5), 102.

67. G.-T.-J. Carron, *La Vie du Père Brydayne* (1831), 106–7; Azaïs, *Bridaine*, 141.
68. F. le Quéré, *Un Missionnaire au XVIII^e siècle: Jean-Jacques Bridaine* (1959), 18.
69. C. Hamel, *Histoire de l'église de Saint-Sulpice* (1900), 199–200.
70. As recollected by Marmontel, cited by Blampignon, *Massillon*, 172.
71. Cited by E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1763–81* (2 vols., 1882), i. 71.
72. J. R. Joly, *Histoire de la prédication* (1767), 479, 486.
73. Sevrin, *Les Missions*, i. 132.
74. Gautier, *Essai*, 17.
75. Venard, 'Les Missions', 32.
76. H. Riondel, *Bull. Soc. Nantes* (1932), 191–2, cited by A. Bachelier, *Le Jansénisme à Nantes* (1934), 45–6.
77. Bergier, *Beaupré*, 156–7, 183–5, 255; Duvoisin, *Daguerre*, 235–40, 250–1; J. Lestoquoy, *Le Diocèse d'Arras* (1949), 157–8; M.-C. Guibert, *Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de la ville de Dieppe*, ed. M. Hardy (2 vols., 1878), i. 336.
78. Bergier, *Beaupré*, 131, 144–6, 197–8, 272, 275–6, 277.
79. Blampignon, *Massillon*, 189.

Chapter 26

1. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), p. lxxxv.
2. M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen sous Louis XIV', *Ann. Normandie* (1953), 252.
3. E. Appolis, 'Les Non-pascalisans dans l'ancien diocèse de Lodève au XVIII^e siècle', *Actes 75^e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes Rennes* (1951), 161.
4. G. Le Bras, *Introduction à l'histoire de la pratique religieuse en France* (1942), 98 n.
5. *Ibid.* 94–5.
6. G. Le Bras, 'État religieux et moral du diocèse de Châlons au dernier siècle de l'ancien régime', *Nouv. Rev. Champagne et Brie* (1935), 168. (Also in his *Études de sociologie religieuse* (2 vols., 1955–6), i. 54–68.)
7. G. Minois, 'Les Visites épiscopales dans le diocèse de Tréguier de 1700 à 1750', *Méms. Soc. Côtes-du-Nord* (1978), 28.
8. J. Déchelette, 'Visites pastorales des archiprêtres de Charlieu et de Rousset', *Ann. Acad. Mâcon*, 3e sér. 3 (1898), 576; Le Bras, 'État religieux', 175–6.
9. Le Roy Ladurie, *Les Paysans de Languedoc* (2 vols., 1966), i. 541.
10. B. Peyrous, 'La Vie religieuse dans le pays Bordelais à la lumière des visites pastorales dans le XVIII^e siècle', *L'Information hist.* (1975), 76.
11. Minois, 'Tréguier', 28.
12. J. Ferté, *La Vie religieuse dans les campagnes parisiennes, 1622–95* (1962), 372, 317.
13. P. Deyon, *Amiens, capitale provinciale: étude sur la société urbaine au XVII^e siècle* (1969), 385; L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1726: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 348, 420–1.
14. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse', 273.
15. Yves Bernard, *Souvenirs d'un nonagénaire*, ed. C. Port (2 vols., 1880), i. 49; *La Vie de M. Marquis-Ducastel, curé de Sainte-Suzanne*, ed. F. Pichon (1873), 65.
16. J. Charrier, *Histoire du Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Nevers* (1920), 134–5.

17. See Le Bras, *Introduction*, generally, and J. de Viguierie, *Christianisme et Révolution* (1986), 13–14.
18. D. H. Gordon and N. T. Torrey, *The Censoring of Diderot's 'Encyclopédie': The Re-established Text* (1947), 79.
19. e.g. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 232–3.
20. P. Vial, 'L'église de France vue par le nonce en 1766', *Cahiers hist.* (1966), 115, 120.
21. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), ii. 79–93, iii. 70, 80, iv. 152.
22. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse', 254.
23. J. C. Perrot, 'Rapports sociaux et villes au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1968), 258–9.
24. A. Farge and A. Zysbert, 'Géographie de la violence . . . à Paris au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1979), 1012.
25. A. Dupont, 'La Condition des paysans dans la sénéchaussée de Rennes . . . d'après les cahiers des paroisses', *Ann. Bretagne* (1900–1), 49.
26. G. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile: Sennely-en-Sologne au XVIII^e siècle* (1972), 289.
27. S. Lemaire, *La Commission des Réguliers* (1926), 20–1.
28. L. Boisse, 'Les Chapelles anciennes: l'église primitive et l'église actuelle des Granges-Gontardes', *Bull. Soc. Drôme* (1931–2), 120–2. It was also important to have a watch to prevent animals being illegally taken to browse on the common pasture during service hours (P. de Saint-Jacob, *Les Paysans de la Bourgogne du nord au dernier siècle de l'ancien régime* (1960), 267–9).
29. Curé A. Dubois, *Journal*, ed. M. Platelle (1965).
30. A. Dupuy, 'Les Épidémies en Bretagne au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1886–7), 125.
31. T. Leuridan, *Histoire de Linselles* (1883), 120.
32. G. Lefebvre, 'Foules révolutionnaires', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1934), 3.
33. P. Grosclaude, *Malesherbes, témoin et interprète de son temps* (1961), 4.
34. P. Chevallier, *Loménie de Brienne et l'ordre monastique, 1766–89* (2 vols., 1959–60), ii. 194–5.
35. A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime* (1990), 181.
36. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile*, 289–90.
37. B. Plongeron and R. Pannet, *Le Christianisme populaire* (1976), 152, 157.
38. A. Dupuy, 'L'Administration municipale de Bretagne au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1889–90), 164.
39. Barbier, ii. 341 (Aug. 1732); H. Carré, *La Noblesse de France et l'opinion publique au XVIII^e siècle* (1920), 172.
40. Restif de la Bretonne, *Les Nuits de Paris*, in *Œuvres*, ed. M. Bachelin (9 vols., 1930–2), i. 155.
41. Barbier, i. 422 (May 1726).
42. R. Collier, *La Vie en Haute-Provence de 1600 à 1850* (1973), 82.
43. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse', 269.
44. J. Meyer, 'Un Libelle sur les parlementaires bretons', *Ann. Bretagne* (1960), 263.
45. A. Dupuy, 'L'Administration', *Ann. Bretagne* (1888–9), 472; (1889–90), 159.
46. Marivaux, *La Vie de Marianne*, 2e partie, ed. M. Gilot (1978), 90–1.

- Eloquence on the same theme in Ch. de Neuville's sermon, *Le Respect des Temples* (Migne, *Orateurs sacrés*, lxvii).
47. J. B. C. Joannet, *Lettre sur quelques ouvrages de piété* (2 vols., 1754), i. 343.
 48. Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 237.
 49. S. Desan, *Reclaiming the Sacred: Lay Religion and Popular Politics in Revolutionary France* (1990); L. Pérouas and P. d'Hollander, *La Révolution française: une rupture dans le Christianisme? Le cas du Limousin, 1775–1822* (1989).
 50. F. Lebrun, *Histoire des catholiques en France du XV^e siècle à nos jours* (1981), 188.
 51. H. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France* (11 vols., 1916–32), ix. 52–103.
 52. H. Busson, *La Religion des classiques* (1948), 23.
 53. R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–50* (1960), 426–7.
 54. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d'Orléans de la Motte, évêque d'Amiens, 1685–1774* (1962), 85–6.
 55. Massillon, *Sur les dispositions de la Communion* (Avent 4e).
 56. E. Vaillé, *Un Scandale financier au XVIII^e siècle. l'affaire Billard* (1934).
 57. Champion de Poutalier, *Le Trésor du Chrétien* (2 vols., 1778), cited by J. de Viguerie, 'Quelques aspects du Catholicisme des Français au XVIII^e siècle', *Reu. hist.* (1987), 346–7.
 58. C. Laplatte, *Le Diocèse de Coutances* (1942), 51.
 59. Discussion of indicators in A. Latreille, 'La Déchristianisation en France à l'époque moderne', *Cahiers hist.* (1969), 13–27.
 60. A. Babu, 'Les Paysans de la région de Clermont de l'Oise à la fin de l'ancien régime', *Ann. hist. Réu. fr.* (1937), 202; D. Dakin, *Turgot and the Ancien Régime in France* (1939); A. Babeau, *Les Artisans et domestiques d'autrefois* (1886), 221–2.
 61. 'Souvenirs des deux Ducos, 1721–1831', *Bull. hist. prot. fr.* (1919), 161.
 62. Fr. de la Rochefoucauld, *Voyages en France, 1781–3*, ed. J. Marchand (1923), 91.
 63. A. Babeau, *La Vie rurale dans l'ancienne France* (1883), 59–60, 81.
 64. Guyot, v. 193.
 65. Ferté, *La Vie religieuse*, 303.
 66. G. Constant, 'Les Registres de marguilliers', *Reu. hist. Église Fr.* (1938), 175.
 67. F. Lebrun, *La Vie conjugale sous l'ancien régime* (1975), 121.
 68. Deyon, *Amiens*, 392.
 69. Cabantous, *Le Ciel*, 136–43.
 70. B. Cousin, *Le Miracle et le quotidien: les ex-voto provençaux, images d'une société* (1983). Detailed review by J. M. Sallman, *Ann.* (1984), 202 ff., Cabantous, *Le Ciel*, 39, 164–70.
 71. Babeau, *Les Artisans*, 133–4.
 72. A. Pardaillé-Galabrun, *The Birth of Intimacy: Privacy and Domestic Life in Early-Modern Paris* (1991), 195–205 (trans. of *La Naissance de l'intime* (1988)); R. Lick, 'Les Intérieurs domestiques dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle d'après les inventaires après décès de Coutances', *Ann. Normandie* (1970), 309 ff.
 73. See A. Bieler, *L'Homme et la femme dans le monde calviniste* (1963), and A. Perrenoud, 'Malthusianisme et Protestantisme', *Ann.* (1974), 975–88.
 74. J. Dupâquier, *Villages et petites villes de la généralité de Paris* (1969), 27; J. P. Bardet, *Rouen aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles: les mutations d'un espace social* (2

- vols., 1982), i. 313 (here, there was a low for Protestants too).
75. After the Revolution, the incidence of weddings in Lent was an indicator of indifference to religion (J. Houdaille, 'Un Indicateur de pratique religieuse: la célébration saisonnière des mariages', *Population* (1978), 367–80).
 76. F. Lebrun, 'Le Mouvement des conceptions sous l'ancien régime', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1974), 45–9. For the failure of a Jansenist curé to discourage sexual relations in Lent, see id., *Le Diocèse d'Angers* (1981), 145–6.
 77. J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 239–43.
 78. F. Lebrun, *Les Hommes et la mort en Anjou aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1971), 463.
 79. The indispensable pioneering study is M. Vovelle, *Piété baroque et déchristianisation en Provence au XVIII^e siècle* (1973).
 80. P. Chaunu, *La Mort à Paris, XVI^e, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1978), 448–51.
 81. Ibid. 371–2, 394.
 82. Ibid. 434–5. Cf. Rouen in P. Goujard, 'Échec d'une sensibilité baroque: les testaments Rouennais au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1981), 26–8.
 83. J. de Viguerie, 'Les Fondations de messes en Anjou aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', *Reu. hist.* (1976), 289–317.
 84. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 123.
 85. Cited by A. Lottin, *Chavette, ouvrier Lillois* (1979), 278–80.
 86. Pavillon, bishop of Alet, cited by J.-B. Thiers, *Dissertation sur la clôture des chœurs des églises* (1688), 27.
 87. P. Collet, *Les Devoirs d'un bon pasteur* (1762).
 88. Viguerie, 'Les Fondations', 38–9.
 89. J. Meyer, *La Noblesse bretonne au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), ii. 1148.
 90. Le duc de Croÿ, *Journal, 1718–84*, ed. le vicomte de Grouchy and P. Cottin (4 vols., 1906), ii. 338–441, iv. 360–1. See also R. Dauvergne, *Les Résidences du maréchal de Croÿ, 1718–84* (1950), 30.
 91. McManners, *Death*, 301–2.
 92. The indispensable source is T. Tackett, 'L'Histoire sociale du clergé diocésain dans la France du XVIII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1979), 198–214.
 93. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse', 35–9. Occasionally, the collapse in numbers is caused by the neglect of an absentee bishop—e.g. J. Charay, *Petite histoire de l'église diocésaine de Viviers* (1977), 162–75.
 94. G. Minois, 'Les Vocations sacerdotales dans le diocèse de Tréguier au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1979), 45–53.
 95. Peyrous, 'Bordelais', 75–6.
 96. J. Delumeau, *Le Diocèse de Rennes* (1979), 135.
 97. Pérouas and d'Hollander, *La Révolution*, 200, 218–20, 449.
 98. L. Pérouas, 'Le Nombre des vocations sacerdotales est-il un critère valable en sociologie religieuse?' *87^e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes: histoire moderne et contemporaine, Poitiers* (1962). A deficit probably shows that the area was abandoning religion, but a surplus probably results from social and economic factors.
 99. See P. Bois, *Les Paysans de l'Ouest* (1960).
 100. M. Vovelle, *The Revolution and the Church: From Reason to the Supreme Being* (Eng. trans. 1991; orig. French, 1988), 171–3; T. Tackett, *La Révolution*,

L'Église, la France (1986). See Tackett on the oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy: 'nothing from the past seems to have correlated with the oath as well as the oath would correlate with the future patterns of religious practice in the 19th and 20th centuries' (*Religion, Revolution and Regional Culture in 18th-Century France: The Ecclesiastical Oath of 1791* (1986), 299).

Chapter 27

1. L. Cognel, *La Vie parisienne sous Louis XVI* (1882), 10–12.
2. M. Vimont, *Histoire de l'église et de la paroisse Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles à Paris* (1932), 147.
3. M. Fosseyeux, 'Processions et pèlerinages parisiens sous l'ancien régime', *Bull. Soc. Paris* (1944–5), 35–7. E. de Barthélémy, 'L'Abbaye de Montmartre', *Bull. Soc. Paris* (1883), 308–10.
4. Marais, i. 226–7; H. Marion, *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (2 vols., 1923), i. 459.
5. Barbier, i. 395–7; Marais, iii. 202. Marais says the effect was good weather for the crops. For events in 1740, Barbier, iii. 206, and Mlle Zephirin, 'Le Lampadaire de Sainte-Genève', in *La Montagne Sainte-Genève* (1971), 13–14.
6. Marais, iv. 22.
7. E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1703–81* (2 vols., 1882), i. 195–7.
8. Grimm, xi. 244 (Apr. 1776).
9. A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime, XVI^e–XIX^e siècle* (1990), 198.
10. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), ch. 3.
11. Barbier, i. 217–18.
12. J. Grente and O. Havard, *Villedieu-les-Poêles* (2 vols., 1988), i. 201–3.
13. Thomas Marwood's Diary, in the Beddingfield Papers, *Catholic Record Society Miscellany*, vi (1909), 103.
14. . *Explication des cérémonies de la Fête-Dieu d'Aix-en-Provence* (1772) (Bodl. Douce G420, 201 pp.).
15. 21 June 1671, in Mme de Sévigné, *Lettres*, ed. Gérard-Gailly (3 vols., 1953), i. 312.
16. J. F. Marmontel, *Mémoires*, ed. J. Renwick (2 vols., 1972), i. 315.
17. G. Cholvy, *Le Diocèse de Montpellier* (1976), 165.
18. McManners, *Angers*, 19.
19. J. Locke, *Travels in France, 1675–79*, ed. J. Lough (1953), 223.
20. A. M. P. G. de Nolhac, *Marie-Antoinette Dauphine* (1947 edn.), 315.
21. H. Chabeuf, 'La Croix-reliquaire de Rouvres', *Méms. Comm. Côte-d'Or XII* (1889–95), 177; V. Pierre, 'Religieuses françaises en exil', *Rev. quest. hist.* (1903), 188.
22. [J.-L. Brunet, rev. D. de Maillane], *Le Parfait Notaire apostolique* (2 vols., 1775), i. 665–7.
23. L. Cête, *Histoire du prieuré clunisien de Souvigny* (1942), 273.
24. Luynes, x. 144–5.

25. E. Houth, *Versailles: la paroisse royale* (1962), 5.
26. Bachaumont, xxvi. 97 (15 July 1784).
27. Choiseul to Voltaire, 28 Sept. 1761, reply 10 Oct. in Voltaire, *Corresp.* xlvii. 61, 94.
28. McManners, *Angers*, 16.
29. Métra, xviii. 42–3 (Apr. 1785).
30. A. Kleinclausz, *Histoire de Lyon* (2 vols., 1948), ii. 199; McManners, *Angers*, 22.
31. J. Godart, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon: Benoît Fourgon* (1934), 112.
32. P. Grosclaude, *Malesherbes, témoin et interprète de son temps* (1961), 512.
33. D. Van der Cruyse, *La Mort dans les Mémoires de Saint-Simon* (1981), 264.
34. Métra, ix. 313–14 (15 Apr. 1780); E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), ii. 254.
35. ‘Saint-Guingalois, ses reliques, son culte et son prieuré à Château-du-Loir’, *Reu Maine* (1879), 384–5.
36. Choiseul to Voltaire, May 1760, in Voltaire, *Corresp.* xlii. 16–17.
37. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, ii. 259.
38. Dom Pierre Chastelain, ‘Journal’, ed. H. Jadart, *Trav. Acad. nat. Reims* (1902), 132–40.
39. J. Blampignon, *L’Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 42–3.
40. E. Jarossy, *Histoire de l’abbaye de Ferrières en Gâtinais* (1901), 435—‘danger of excesses that the municipality will never be able to suppress’.
41. N. S. Bergier, *Dictionnaire de Théologie* (1788) in *Œuvres*, ed. Migne (1855), v. 118–25.
42. G. Coolen, *Helfaut: essai sur l’administration d’une paroisse sous l’ancien régime* (1939), 77 (date 1769).
43. R. Briggs, *Communities of Belief: Cultural and Social Tensions in Early Modern France* (1989), 377.
44. Barbier, iii. 206 (June 1740). The procession had not been held since 1725. See also Mlle Zephirin, ‘Le Lampadaire de Sainte-Geneviève’, *La Montagne Sainte-Geneviève* (1971), 13–20.
45. J. A. Dulaure, *Nouvelle Description de Paris* (2 vols., 1787), i. 10–11, 164–9.
46. J. Breval, *Remarks on Several Parts of Europe* (2 vols., 1738), ii. 53.
47. J. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites français* (1974), 21–33.
48. *Ibid.* 262–6.
49. Dom P. Doyère, *Mélanges des sciences religieuses* (Lille), xiii (1956), 83—one of a series on ‘ermites et ermitages’.
50. Dom P. Doyère, ‘Ermites et ermitages au diocèse d’Arras’, *Bull. Soc. Morinie* (1960), 373–6.
51. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 179; A. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial catholique en Haute-Alsace sous l’ancien régime, 1648–1789* (1960), 184, 241–2.
52. E. Martin, *Histoire des diocèses de Toul, de Nancy et de Saint-Dié* (3 vols., 1900–3), ii. 602–3.
53. Doyère, *Mélanges* (Lille), 80–96.
54. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 194–204.
55. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 251–2.
56. J. Juge de Saint-Martin, *Changements survenus dans le mœurs des habitants de Limoges depuis une cinquantaine d’années* (1817, 1st edn. 1808), 25.
57. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 132–41.

58. Doyère, 'Arras', 366.
59. N. Wraxall, *A Tour through the Western, Southern and Interior Provinces of France* (3 vols., 1777), ii. 189–90.
60. Doyère, 'Arras', 364–5.
61. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 237.
62. Dom P. Doyère, 'Ermites et ermitages au diocèse de Boulogne', *Bull. Soc. Morinie* (1955), 393; A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne, 1725–90* (1969), 87–8.
63. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autum de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 96; Dom P. Doyère, 'Ermites et ermitages au diocèse de Saint-Omer', *Bull. Soc. Morinie* (1951), 393, 496.
64. R. Collier, *La Vie en Haute-Provence, 1600–1850* (1973), 215; Doyère, 'Arras', 383.
65. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 248.
66. Dulaure, *Paris*, i. 19, 23–4.
67. Collier, *Haute-Provence*, 359.
68. F. Lemoign, *Ermites et reclus du diocèse de Bordeaux* (1953), 86–7, 19.
69. A.-J.-M. Hamon, *Notre-Dame de France* (7 vols., 1861–4), vi. 270.
70. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 109–14.
71. E. G. Léonard, *Mon Village sous Louis XV* (1941), 89, 232–4.
72. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 175–9.
73. C. Guérin, 'Les Bénédictins français avant 1789', *Rev. quest. hist.* (1870), 507–8.
74. Marais, ii. 154.
75. L. Deries, *La Vie monastique en Normandie* (1933), 304–5.
76. *La Vie de M. Marquis-Ducastel*, ed. F. Pichon (1873), 48; Mme de Genlis, *Mémoires inédits* (2 vols., 1825), ii. 193, 196–7.
77. Métra, xiv. 317–18 (14 May 1784).
78. Ch. Chauvin, 'Jean-Antide et la société des Solitaires, 1795–7', in *Pratiques religieuses, Mentalités, Spiritualité. Actes du Colloque bicentenaire de la Révolution, Chantilly 1986* (1988), 587.
79. J. Lovie, 'La Vie paroissiale dans le diocèse de Dié à la fin de l'ancien régime', *Bull. Soc. Drôme*, 64 (1933), 39–40.
80. J. Gutton, *La Société et les pauvres: l'exemple de la généralité de Lyon, 1534–1789* (1971), 188.
81. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 162–3, 299.
82. Doyère, 'Boulogne', 386; id., 'Saint-Omer', 489; Lemoign, *Bordeaux*, 65–6; F. Chauvin, *Trets (Bouches du Rhône) et sa région* (n.d.), 86–7.
83. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, p. lvi.
84. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 239.
85. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 72.
86. R. Mandrou, *De la culture populaire aux 17e et 18e siècles* (1964), 142–3.
87. Boileau, Satire VIII, in *Satires*, ed. Ch.-H. Boudhors (1952), 57.
88. Sainsaulieu, *Les Ermites*, 58–84.
89. R. Darricau, 'De la cour de Louis XIV à l'ermitage de Lormont, l'abbé de Brion, 1647–1728', *Rev. Bordeaux*, NS 4 (1955), 89–109.
90. Wraxall, *Tour*, ii. 217–18.
91. Juge de Saint-Martin, *Limoges*, 27.
92. Guyot, xlv. 414–15, lxiv. 4; Duchesne, *Code de la Police* (1767), i. 49.

93. Gutton, *Lyon*, 191, 196.
94. See the romantic but learned study of G. Goddard King, *The Way of St James* (3 vols., 1920), and J. S. Stone, *The Cult of Santiago* (1927).
95. Map in J.-F. Bourgoing, *Tableau de l'Espagne moderne* (3 vols. plus suppl. Atlas, 4th edn. 1808). The routes across the Pyrenees Bedens–Urdos and Perpignan lead to Madrid, with no way to the north-west.
96. Bonnot d'Hoët (ed.), *Le Pèlerinage d'un paysan picard* (1890).
97. B. Plonger, 'Benoît-Joseph Labre au miroir de l'hagiographie Janséniste en France, 1783–1789', in Y.-M. Hilaire (ed.), *Benoît Labre: errance et sainteté: histoire d'un culte, 1783–1883* (1984), 40, 58.
98. J. Galt, *The Life and Times of Benjamin West Esq.* (1817), 95 (West was in Rome in 1760).
99. H. Vaussard, *Daily Life in 18th-Century Italy* (E.T. 1962, French 1955), 25, 200; F. Masson, *Le Cardinal de Bernis depuis son ministère* (1884), 288, 293–5, 422–3; Galt, *Benjamin West*, 95, 109, 139. For the parasols, Voltaire, 'La Princesse de Babylone', and 'Lettres d'Amabad', in *Romans et Contes*, ed. H. Bénac (1954), 382, 494, 463.
100. Guyot, xlv. 414.
101. Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, i. 226.
102. Cholvy, *Montpellier*, 155.
103. J.-F. Soulet, *La Vie quotidienne dans les Pyrénées sous l'ancien régime* (1974), 274.
104. 'La Vierge miraculeuse de Notre-Dame de Meslier', *Cahiers Vitrezois* (1973), 1–3.
105. J.-F. Soulet, *La Vie quotidienne*, 268; id., *Traditions et réformes religieuses dans les Pyrénées centrales au XVII^e siècle* (1974), 272.
106. Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, vii. 25. For the following examples, *ibid.* iv. 146; vi. 289; vii. 359, 217; vi. 16–22; vii. 280–1.
107. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, 'Fêtes' in *Œuvres*, xix. 443.
108. C. Port, *La Vendée angevine* (2 vols., 1888), i. 331–2.
109. B. Maës, 'Le Pèlerinage de Notre-Dame de Liesse de 1780 à la Révolution', in *Pratique religieuse dans l'Europe révolutionnaire*, Colloque (1986), 612–44; P. Luez, 'Pourquoi vient-on prier à Notre-Dame de Liesse?', *Reu. hist. Église Fr.* (1988), 39–48.
110. A. Dupuy, 'L'Administration municipale en Bretagne', *Ann. Bretagne* (1887–8), 571.
111. The usual reaction of curés—e.g. when two children found a statue in an oak tree near Reims (Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, v. 265).
112. L. Roger, 'Deux crosses: Fontevault-Bordeaux', *Reu. Anjou* (1910), 94–103, 256–62; id., 'Mense abbatiale de Fontevault: l'agent P. Serin', *Reu. Anjou* (1912), 100.
113. Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, iii. 338–40; cf. iv. 294, v. 169.
114. e.g. B. de Ville d'Avray, *Pèlerinages à Notre-Dame de Grace, vœux, guérisons, sauvetages* (n.d.), 12, 13, 19, 20, etc.; J. E. B. Dronchon, *Histoire illustrée des pèlerinages français de la très Sainte-Vierge* (1890), 455.
115. J. Ferté, *La Vie religieuse dans les campagnes parisiennes, 1622–1695* (1962), 349–55.
116. G. Robert, 'La Seigneurie de Givry-sur-Aisne, XII^e–XVIII^e siècle', *Trav. Acad. nat. Reims* (1913), 365–6, (1911), 305.
117. R. Anchel, 'Cinq procès de religion dans l'Eure', *Rév. Fr.* (1912), 537.

118. R. Bertrand, 'Un Sanctuaire de la fécondité . . . Notre-Dame des œufs', *Le Monde alpin* (1977), 173–8; Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, iii. 318–21.
119. The 'espace sacré' of A. Dupront, 'La Religion populaire dans l'histoire de l'Europe occidentale', *Rev. hist. Église Fr.* (1978), 197.
120. G. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile: Sennely-en-Sologne au XVIII^e siècle* (1972), 303.
121. Collier, *Haute-Provence*, 391.
122. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial*, 289.
123. C. Port, *Dictionnaire historique, géographique et biographique de Maine-et-Loire* (3 vols., 1878), ii. 732.
124. M. M. Guillot, 'La Confrérie de Sainte-Julienne et Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas', *La Montagne Sainte-Geneviève* (1971), 26–33; also by Guillot, 'L'Église et le pèlerinage de Sainte-Julienne', *Bull. Comm. Seine-et-Oise* (1968–9), 43–52.
125. For the following, Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, v. 41–2, iii. 375–7, vii. 375, iii. 234–5.
126. Jarossy, *Gâtinais*, 401–11.
127. L. Ampoullange, *Le Clergé et les élections aux États-Généraux de 1789 dans la sénéchaussée principale de Périgord* (1912), 99; V. Dubard, *Études locales* (2 vols., 1889), i. 181.
128. F. Le Lay, 'La Fête de la Trinité Porhoët', *Ann. Bretagne* (1901–2), 328–33.
129. 'Un Sanctuaire Girondin: Notre-Dame de Montuzet', *Cahiers Vitrezois* (1973), 1–11.
130. M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard, *La Religion populaire en Provence orientale au XVIII^e siècle* (1980), 300–26.
131. J. McManners, *Popular Religion in 17th- and 18th-Century France: A New Theme in French Historiography*, John Coffin Memorial Lecture (1982).
132. Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, v. 156, 170.
133. S. Dontenwill, *Une Seigneurie sous l'ancien régime: L'Étoile en Brionnais, 1575–1772* (n.d.), 114–16.
134. Ferté, *La Vie religieuse*, 348–9.
135. G. Cormary, *Loménie de Brienne à Toulouse, 1763–1788* (1935), 96.
136. L. Armand-Calliel, 'Faires', *Ann. Bourgogne* (1961), 165.
137. 'Quand le clergé s'opposait au pèlerinage à la Bonne Dame de Montuzet', *Cahiers Vitrezois* (1975), 89.

Chapter 28

1. C. Jamet, 'Les Confréries de dévotion dans le diocèse de Rennes XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles', *Ann. Bretagne* (1980), 481–2.
2. M. Vimont, *Histoire de l'église et de la paroisse Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles à Paris* (1932), 135–9, 6, 143.
3. J. Meyer, *La Noblesse bretonne au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), ii. 1114.
4. 'La Confrérie des clercs . . . de l'Assomption de Douai', *Méms. Soc. Nord*, 3^e sér. 11 (n.d.), 10–50, 225–75, 302, 508–16.
5. O. Bled, 'Histoire des Arbalétriers de Saint-Omer', *Méms. Soc. Morinie*, 22 (1892), 369–70.
6. e.g. Lebay, *Semaine religieuse de Rouen*, x (1876), 631.
7. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archi-diaconé*

- d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 209.
8. B. Peyrous, 'La Vie religieuse dans le Pays Bordelais à la lumière des visites pastorales . . . durant le XVIII^e siècle', *L'Information hist.* (1975), 76.
 9. A.-J.-M. Hamon, *Notre-Dame de France* (7 vols., 1861–4), ii, 79–81.
 10. J. Déchelette, 'Visites pastorales des archiprêtres de Charlieu et de Rousset, 1745–6', *Ann. Acad. Mâcon*, 3^e sér. iii (1898), 474–5, 483, 584; iv (1899), 514, 575, 588–9; v (1900), 447, 470; vi (1901), 405.
 11. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, 207–8. An example of a confraternity of the rich in Savoy: seventy-two members, two at a time provide the banquet at a cost of 175 livres each—the price of three cows (R. Devos, 'Pratique et mentalités religieuses dans la Savoie au XVIII^e siècle', *Le Monde alpin* (1977), 109).
 12. Guyot, xiv, 330–4.
 13. M. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique à la fin de l'ancien régime: le cardinal de Luynes, archevêque de Sens, 1753–88* (1966), 111–14.
 14. M. Jousse, *Traité du gouvernement spirituel et temporel des paroisses* (1769), 61–73, 84–6.
 15. Potier de la Germondaye, *Introduction au gouvernement des paroisses suivant la jurisprudence du Parlement de Bretagne* (1777), 200–2.
 16. E. Houth, *Versailles, la paroisse royale* (1962), 117.
 17. E. Coornaert, *Les Corporations en France avant 1789* (1941), 231–3.
 18. M. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité méridionale. Confréries et associations dans la vie collective en Provence orientale à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), i, 39–40.
 19. *Ibid.* i, 157–8.
 20. Guyot, liii, 236.
 21. C. Brégail, 'Les Confréries ouvrières à Auch au XVIII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. Gers* (1927), 117–22; E. Sol, *La Vie à Quercy à l'époque moderne (le mouvement économique)* (1948), 345; A. Babeau, *La Ville sous l'ancien régime* (2 vols., 1884), i, 14–49.
 22. S. Kaplan, 'Réflexions sur la police du monde de travail, 1700–1819', *Reu. hist.* (1979), 61–4, 261.
 23. Found as patron of goldsmiths, clock makers, and foundry workers as well (J.-R. Coursmaceul, 'Les Confréries religieuses à Vimontiers à la fin du 18^e siècle', *Pays d'Auge* (1979), 25).
 24. Houth, *Versailles*, 128.
 25. P. Lerou, 'La Confrérie Saint-Fiacre des jardiniers de Strasbourg', *Reu. Alsace* (1988), 71–91.
 26. e.g. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 17; A. Rébillon, 'Recherches sur les anciennes corporations ouvrières et marchandes de la ville de Rennes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1903–4), 53 ff., 249 ff.
 27. Coornaert, *Les Corporations*, 236.
 28. M. Juignet, *La Chaussure, son histoire, ses légendes, son compagnonnage* (1977), 109–10.
 29. P. Deyon, *Amiens, capitale provinciale* (1967), 377–8.
 30. H. D. Chapotin, *Le Dernier Prieur du dernier couvent, 1756–1806* (1893), 44–8.
 31. P. and R. Lerou, 'La Vie des confréries de métiers sous la Révolution', *Pratiques religieuses, Mentalités, Spiritualité. Actes du Colloque bicentenaire de la Révolution, Chantilly 1986* (1988), 549–50, 515–18.
 32. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i, 92–8, 102–31.

33. Ibid. ii. 618.
34. M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard and J. C. Poleur, 'Les Romérages en Provence orientale au XVIII^e siècle: expression d'une culture populaire', *Le Monde alpin* (1978), 166.
35. If there was an altar to the Virgin, there might be a group of girls called 'reines' making collections for its adornment (A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne au XVIII^e siècle* (1976), 265–6).
36. A. Dupuy, 'L'Administration municipale en Bretagne au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1887–8), 572.
37. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 80–7.
38. M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard, *La Religion populaire en Provence orientale au XVIII^e siècle* (1980), 170 ff.
39. J. B. Varel, 'L'Abbé Joseph Courbon, 1748–1824', *Bull. Lyon* (1922), 57–61.
40. Vimont, *Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles*, 143.
41. M. Baurit and J. Hillairet, *Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois* (1955), 145–6.
42. Hamon, *Notre-Dame*, i. 47–53.
43. C. Hamel, *Histoire de l'église de Saint-Sulpice* (1900), 167.
44. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 57–60.
45. P. Deslandes, *L'Ordre des Trinitaires pour le rachat des captifs* (2 vols., 1903), i. 345–50.
46. Guyot, xl. 169–72.
47. Ferdinand Dreyfus, 'L'Association de bienfaisance judiciaire, 1787–1791', *Rév. fr.* (1904), 387–98.
48. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 88–92.
49. A. Galpern, *The Religion of the People in 16th-century Champagne* (1976), 20 ff., thinks collective salvation was a response to the crises of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.
50. M. A. Coulandres, 'Journal de Bernard-Laurent Soumille', *Méms. Soc. Alais* (1879), 179.
51. Ch. Vérel, 'Le Plantis', *Bull. Soc. Orne* (1894), 172–4, 111.
52. Coursmaceul, 'Les confréries religieuses', 27.
53. J. B. Bergier, *Histoire de la communauté des prêtres missionnaires de Beaupré* (1853), 153.
54. E. Préclin, 'La Situation ecclésiastique . . . de la Franche Comté à la veille de la Révolution', *Bull. Féd. Franche Comté* (1955), 25–6.
55. J. Juge de Saint-Martin, *Changements survenus dans les mœurs des habitants de Limoges depuis une cinquantaine d'années*, 2nd edn. (1817, orig. 1808), 27.
56. D. Moulinet, 'Étude de deux registres de confréries en Bourbonnais', in *Pratiques religieuses, Colloque Chantilly*, 563–7.
57. Jamet, 'Rennes', 482, 487.
58. F. Lebrun, *Histoire des Catholiques en France* (1980), 198.
59. T. Leuridan, *Histoire de Linselles* (1883), 182.
60. Lorin, 'La Confrérie de Saint-Sébastien à Saint-Nicolas de Maule', *Méms. Soc. Rambouillet* (1913), 434–5.
61. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 179–81.
62. L. Guibert, *Les Confréries de pénitents en France et notamment dans le diocèse de Limoges* (1879), 117–18, 163–4.
63. J. Boursiquot, 'Pénitents et société toulousaine au siècle des Lumières', *Ann. du Midi* (1976), 159–71.

64. Guibert, *Limoges*, 117.
65. E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont archevêque de Paris, 1763–81* (2 vols., 1882), ii. 203.
66. Boursiquot, 'Pénitents', 170–7.
67. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 285. The following details from Marseille are from A. E. Barnes, *The Social Dimension of Piety: Associative Life and Devotional Change in the Penitent Confraternities of Marseilles (1499–1792)* (1994).
68. Vinatier, *Histoire . . . de Treignac sur Vézère* (2 vols., 1974), ii. 50–60.
69. Report of the French consul, M. Bordes, 'Contribution à l'étude des confréries de Pénitents à Nice aux XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles', *Ann. Midi* (1978), 387.
70. Froeschlé-Chopard, *Provence*, 250.
71. Bordes, 'Nice', 380.
72. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, i. 205–6.
73. *Ibid.* i. 197–8, 222–9, 251, 253.
74. Guibert, *Limoges*, 106–15: cf. *ibid.* 168, 172.
75. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité*, ii. 654.
76. *Ibid.* i. 235–47.
77. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, 203–4.
78. M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard, 'La Signification des statuts pour les Pénitents de Provence orientale', *Ann. Midi* (1980), 218.
79. A. Lestra, *Le Père Coudrin, fondateur de Picpus* (1952), 43.
80. J. C. Meyer, *La Vie religieuse en Haute-Garonne, 1789–1801* (1982), 96.
81. Y. Poulet and J. Roubert, 'Les Assemblées secrètes des XVII^e–XVIII^e siècles en relation avec l'*Aa* de Lyon', *Divus Thomas* (1967), 131–85.
82. Cl. Tournier, *Le Chanoine Maurice Garrigou, 1766–1852* (1948), 19–20.
83. Le comte Bégouen, *L'Aa de Toulouse aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1913), 54–8, 62, 67, 78–9, 84, 87–9, 95.
84. Tournier, *Garrigou*, 33–4.
85. *Ibid.* 30–2.
86. C. De Rochemonteix, *Un Collège de Jésuites . . . La Flèche* (4 vols., 1889), i. 253–62.
87. L. Blond, *La Maison Professe des Jésuites de la rue Saint-Antoine à Paris* (1965), 126–34.
88. J. Pra, *Les Jésuites à Grenoble, 1587–1763* (1901), 302–15.
89. Poulet and Roubert, 'Les Assemblées secrètes', 74–6.
90. E. Villaret, *Les Congrégations mariales* (2 vols., 1947), i. 559.
91. *Ibid.* i. 556.
92. Leuridan, *Linselles*, 177–8.
93. G. and L. Trénard, *Le Diocèse de Belley* (1978), 121–3.
94. Froeschlé-Chopard, *Provence*, 170–1.
95. Playoust-Chaussis, *Boulogne*, 247–8, 344.
96. A. M. Gutton, 'Le Culte du Sacré-Cœur en Lyonnais aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', *Cahiers hist.* (1987), 33–40.
97. J. Déchelette, 'Visites pastorales . . . Mgr. Delort de Sérignan de Valras, évêque de Mâcon', *Ann. Acad. Mâcon*, 3e ser. 3 (1898), 558–60.
98. Régis, curé of Gap, *La Voix du Pasteur* (1773), cited by B. Groethuysen, *Origines de l'esprit bourgeois en France: L'Église et la bourgeoisie* (1927), 22.
99. M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen de 1707 à 1789', *Ann. Normandie* (1955), 47–8.

100. R. Poulle, *Histoire de l'église paroissiale de Notre-Dame et Saint-Michel à Dragnignan* (1865), 362–99.
 101. G. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile: Sennely-en-Sologne au XVIII^e siècle* (1972), 308–9.
 102. 'Le Livre de raison d'un chirurgien de Blaye: P. J. Bonnard, 1699–1775', *Cahiers Vitrezois* (1972), 10–11.

Chapter 29

1. In 1797, cited by B. Plongeron, 'Le Procès de la fête à la fin de l'ancien régime', in Plongeron and R. Pannet (eds.), *Le Christianisme populaire* (1976), 193. Essential reading is M. Vovelle, 'La Religion populaire: problèmes et méthodes', *Le Monde alpin* (1977), 7–29.
2. A. Vauchez, 'Église et vie religieuse au moyen âge', *Ann.* (1973), 1050.
3. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World* (Eng. trans. 1968, orig. Russian 1965), 72.
4. H. Cox, *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivities and Fantasy* (1969), 64.
5. A. Galpern, *The Religion of the People in 16th-Century Champagne* (1976), 68.
6. R. Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites* (1978), 19, 117, 200. The analysis is more subtle in detail—popular urban culture is separated from rural (179, 189).
7. J. Delumeau, *Le Catholicisme entre Luther et Voltaire* (1971), 227 ff.
8. Y. M. Bercé, *Fête et révolte: les mentalités populaires du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle* (1976), 9.
9. J. Delumeau, *Le Diocèse de Rennes* (1979), 151.
10. For the process, R. Manselli, *La Religion populaire au Moyen Âge: problèmes de méthode et d'histoire* (1975), 17–19.
11. M. H. Froeschlé-Chopard, *La Religion populaire en Provence orientale au XVIII^e siècle* (1980), 279.
12. M. Lagrée, *Mentalités, religion et histoire en Haute Bretagne au XIX^e siècle: le diocèse de Rennes, 1815–48* (1977), 7.
13. P. J. Grosley to d'Alembert, *Rev. Champagne et Brie* (1876), 121–2.
14. W. Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (1963), 181. For historians versus anthropologists see Keith Thomas, 'An Anthropology of religion and magic', *J. Interdisc. Hist.* (1975–6), 71–109; J. Butler, 'Magic, astrology and the early American religious heritage, 1600–1760', *Am. Hist. Rev.* (1979), 317–46.
15. J. C. Schmitt, 'Religion populaire et culture folklorique', *Ann.* (1976), 941.
16. P. Brochon, *Le Livre de colportage en France depuis le XVI^e siècle* (1954); H. J. Martin, *Livre, pouvoir, et société à Paris aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (2 vols., 1969).
17. J. L. Marais, 'Littérature et culture "populaires" au XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', *Ann. Bretagne* (1980), 82–4.
18. Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, 10–12, 117, 220.
19. A. Babeau, *La Vie rurale dans l'ancienne France* (1885), 78. Cf. religious books and tobacco (J. P. Gutton, *La Société et les pauvres: l'exemple de la généralité de Lyon, 1534–1789* (1971), 199).
20. Marais, 'Littérature', 75–81.

21. Grégoire, cited by M. Certeau, D. Julia, and J. Revol, *Une Politique de la langue: la Révolution française et les patois* (1975), 20.
22. R. Mandrou, *De la culture populaire au 17^e et 18^e siècles* (1964), 84 (analysis from 450 titles, a tenth of the production of the Bibliothèque bleue).
23. Ibid.
24. See G. Bollême, *Les Almanachs populaires aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1969).
25. L. Trénard, 'L'Histoire et la civilisation du livre', *L'Information hist.* (1972), 130–1.
26. Martin, *Livre*, ii. 776–9.
27. Ibid. ii. 953–4.
28. Ch. Langlois, *Le Diocèse de Vannes au XIX^e siècle, 1800–30* (1975), 428–9.
29. Grégoire, cited by Certeau *et al.*, *Une Politique*, 20.
30. Martin, *Livre*, ii. 953–4.
31. Babeau, *La Vie rurale*, 144, 258.
32. B. Chédozeau, 'Les Grandes Étapes de la publication de la Bible catholique en français, du Concile de Trente au XVIII^e siècle', in J. R. Armogathe (ed.), *Le Grand Siècle et la Bible* (1989), 341–60. For the massive Protestant production, F. Delforge, 'Les Éditions protestantes de la Bible en langue française', *ibid.* 325–40.
33. J. Deprun, 'Comment l'être suprême entra dans la Bible', *ibid.* 321–3.
34. Restif de la Bretonne, *La Vie de mon père, Livre premier*, ed. G. Rouger (1970), 24.
35. A. Galland, 'Un Jeu de cartes qui tient lieu de Bible', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 449–51.
36. Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, 75.
37. Bercé, *Fête et révolte*, 148.
38. R. Chanaud, 'Folklore et religion dans le diocèse de Grenoble à la fin du XVII^e siècle; les visites pastorales de Mgr Le Camus', *Le Monde alpin* (1977), 38–9, 56–60, 61, 63–4.
39. R. Collier, *La Vie en Haute-Provence de 1600 à 1850* (1973), 388.
40. J. M. Chouraqui, 'Le Cycle de carême en Provence: rites et coutumes, XVI^e–XIX^e siècle', *Ann. Midi* (1979), 154.
41. J. Malet and R. Pannet, 'Vialart de Hersé, évêque de Châlons-sur-Marne, 1640–80', in Plongeron and Pannet (eds.), *Le Christianisme populaire*, 164–5.
42. R. Devos, 'Pratiques et mentalités religieuses dans la Savoie du XVIII^e siècle: la paroisse de Combloux', *Le Monde alpin* (1977), 143.
43. Bercé, *Fête et révolte*, 150–1.
44. A. Varagnac, *Civilisation traditionnelle et genres de vie* (1948), 60–1.
45. Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, 265–6; Malet and Pannet, 'Vialart', 167.
46. E. Martin, *Histoire des diocèses de Toul, de Nancy et de Saint-Dié* (3 vols., 1900–3), ii. 371–2.
47. J. Sahuc, *Un Ami de Port-Royal, M. Pierre-Jean-François de Percin de Mont-gaillard, évêque de Saint-Pons, 1633–1665–1713* (1909), 213–14. He was a Jansenist, and tolerant of Protestants.
48. Bercé, *Fête et révolte*, 144.
49. M. Vovelle, *Les Métamorphoses de la fête en Provence de 1750 à 1820* (1976), 81.
50. Bishops had the right to establish and suppress saints' days (Guyot, xxiv. 521–6). Rome kept making new saints, but the Gallican liberties excluded

- them (Dom P. L. P. Guéranger, *Institutions liturgiques* (3 vols., 1840–51), ii. 84–91).
51. Bercé, *Fête et révolte*, 154.
 52. Plongeron, 'Le Procès', 171–9.
 53. M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen sous Louis XIV', *Ann. Normandie* (1953), 270.
 54. Delumeau, *Rennes*, 151.
 55. J. Chetail, 'Les Curés de Bugey et les fêtes patronales', *Le Bugey* (1971), 105–6.
 56. H. Grégoire, *Traité de l'uniformité et de l'amélioration de la liturgie* (1801), cited by Plongeron, 'Le Procès', 174.
 57. Bercé, *Fête et révolte*, 173.
 58. Often told, e.g. by J.-A. Dulaure, *Nouvelle Description de Paris* (2 vols., 1787), i. 151.
 59. Delumeau, *Rennes*, 47–9.
 60. Froeschlé-Chopard, *La Religion populaire*, 47.
 61. A.-M. Gutton, 'Le Culte du Sacré-Cœur en Lyonnais aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', *Cahiers hist.* (1987), 28, 31.
 62. Plongeron, 'Le Procès', 187–91.
 63. A. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial catholique en Haute-Alsace sous l'ancien régime, 1648–1789* (1966), 179.
 64. J. Loth, *Histoire du cardinal de la Rochefoucauld et du diocèse de Rouen* (1893), 29–30.
 65. Guyot, xxiv. 522.
 66. *Ibid.* xxiv. 526. There were twenty-nine feasts of obligation.
 67. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne au XVIII^e siècle, 1725–90* (1970), 129.
 68. R. Lapruné, 'Histoire religieuse de Montier-sur-Saulx' (dupl. thesis, 1969), iii. 44.
 69. J.-M. Le Méné, *Histoire des paroisses du diocèse de Vannes* (2 vols., 1891), ii. 242, cited by Langlois, *Vannes*, 504–5.
 70. Barbier, i. 1–3 (27 Apr. 1718).
 71. Luynes, xii. 40.
 72. 'La Chute d'une montgolfière à Lacune en 1785', *Rév. fr.* (1894), 545–7.
 73. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), vii. 97.
 74. J. Jeanvrot, 'Le Masle, évêque constitutionnel du Morbihan', *Rév. fr.* (1892), 347–8.
 75. P. Sébillot, *Le Folk-lore de France* (3 vols., 1904–8), i. 43, 58.
 76. A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime, XVI^e–XIX^e siècle* (1990), 124.
 77. N.-S. Bergier, *Œuvres* (8 vols., 1830), vii. 444–50, 'Superstition' (date 1788).
 78. M. Vovelle, 'Le Chapitre cathédral de Chartres', *Actes 85^e Congrès national des Sociétés savantes: section d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 1960* (Chambéry, 1961), 266.
 79. Plongeron, 'Le Procès', 56.
 80. Berthelot du Chesnay, 'Les Statuts synodaux de Dol publiés en 1741', *Méms. Soc. Bretagne* (1972–4), 123–32.
 81. H. Platelle (ed.), *Les Chrétiens face au miracle: Lille au XVIII^e siècle* (1968), 20–30, 33–4, 49–51. Cf. the procedure in 1678 concerning the multiplication

- of loaves of bread in P. de la Haye, *Histoire de Tréguier, ville épiscopale* (1977), 237–9.
82. Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, 267.
 83. Bachaumont, xxxiii. 223 (15 Dec. 1786).
 84. J. Lestocquoy, *La Vie religieuse d'une province, le diocèse d'Arras* (1949), 157–8.
 85. P. Deyon, *Amiens capitale provinciale, étude sur la société urbaine au XVII^e siècle* (1967), 394.
 86. H. Carré, *Recueil curieux et édifiant sur les cloches de L'Église* (1752), 35–6.
 87. R. Pinsseau, *Gien sous l'ancien régime et la Révolution* (1923), 167–8.
 88. *La Logique de Port-Royal*, iv (14), cited by P. Marin, 'Philippe de Champaigne', *Annales* (1970), 27.
 89. J. J. Gautier, *Essai sur les mœurs champêtres*, ed. X. Rousseau (1935; orig. 1787), 56.
 90. Dom A. Calmet, *Traité sur les apparitions des esprits et sur les vampires*, new edn. (2 vols., 1751), i. pp. xx–xxi.
 91. Voltaire, *Le dîner du comte de Boulainvilliers*, in *Œuvres*, xxvi. 547.
 92. Barbier, ii. 525 (Dec. 1734).
 93. Cited by A. Guellonz, 'L'Évolution de l'idée internationale dans les écrits de l'abbé de Saint-Pierre', *Colloque: La Régence* (Paris, 1970), 331.
 94. Barbier, ii. 25; Marais, iii. 199–200 (5 June 1725).
 95. Bergier, 'Miracle', in *Œuvres*, v. 308.
 96. J. Godart, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon: Benôit Fourgon* (1934), 117.
 97. See Hervier de la Boissière, *Traité des miracles* (2 vols., 1763–4), i. pp. xi, 412–19, 47; ii. 73–9, 101, 184, 207, 225, 260, 366–70.
 98. Bergier, 'Prodiges', in *Œuvres*, vi. 5–6.
 99. The New Testament guaranteed by tests of style, content, the authority of the Church, and the admissions of heretics (J. B. Davoisin, *L'Autorité des livres du Nouveau Testament contre les incrédules* (1775)).
 100. Held by Baillet, late in the century, to make the separation of true from false miracles impossible (B. Plongeron, 'Recherches', *Rev. hist. mod. contemp.* (1969), 598).
 101. Bergier, 'Superstition', vii. 451.
 102. J.-B. Thiers, *Traité des superstitions qui regardent tous les sacrements* (3 vols., 1704, 1st edn., 1696), i. 88–93, 171; ii. 7, 97–8, 491, 497.
 103. A. Monod, *De Pascal à Chateaubriand: les défenseurs français du christianisme de 1670 à 1802* (1916), 356.
 104. C. Port, *La Vendée angevine* (2 vols., 1888), i. 256.
 105. Le chevalier de Mautort, *Mémoires* (1891), cited by E. Davin, *Ann. Haute-Provence* (1976), 285.
 106. Thiers, *Traité*, ii. 7, 499.
 107. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 120; Delumeau, *Rennes*, 150.
 108. Schmitt, *L'Organisation*, 195.
 109. H. Diné, *La Grande Peur dans la généralité de Poitiers* (1951), 22.
 110. Published by E. Charavay, *Rév. fr.* (1882), 171–2.
 111. Guyot, xxiv. 235.
 112. A. Babeau, *La Ville sous l'ancien régime* (2 vols., 1884), ii. 233.
 113. Collier, *Haute-Provence*, 372.
 114. Marais, i. 290. Marais comments on plague at Marseille under an anti-Jansenist

- bishop and hail at Châlons under an appellant (i. 369, 373). He concludes that miracles prove nothing (iii. 355).
115. Devos, 'Pratiques', 112; Chanaud, 'Folklore', 101. The legal rule in Guyot, v. 395.
116. P. de Saint-Jacob, *Documents relatifs à la communauté villageoise en Bourgogne* (1962), 132–3.
117. S. P. Hardy, *Mes Loisirs*, ed. M. Tourneaux and M. Vitrac (1912), 355.
118. Chanoine E. Sol, *L'Église de Cabors à l'époque moderne* (n.d.), 252. Examples of the clergy trying to focus pilgrimages and processions on the saying of a mass in Ph. Martin, *Les Chemins du sacré; paroisses, processions, pèlerinages en Lorraine du XVI^e au XIX^e siècle* (1995). This significant study came out too late for me to make due use of it.

Chapter 30

1. R. Mandrou, *Magistrats et sorciers au xvii^e siècle* (1968), 199, 220–37, 246–8, 253, 265–9.
2. Ibid. 237.
3. J. Orcibal, *Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, abbé de Saint-Cyran et son temps* (2 vols., 1947), i. 140. There were some executions on the Spanish side of the border, but more in France—in any case, no more than 100 (Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbours: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (1996), 189–90). This is the latest and best general study of witchcraft.
4. R. Sauzet, in F. Lebrun (ed.), *Histoire des catholiques en France du XV^e siècle à nos jours* (1980), 107.
5. A. Lottin, *Chavatte, ouvrier Lillois* (1979), 262–76.
6. A. Soman, 'Les Procès de sorcellerie au Parlement de Paris, 1565–1640', *Ann.* (1979), 790–814. See also his *Sorcellerie et justice criminelle: le parlement de Paris* (1992).
7. F. Bavoux, *La Sorcellerie au pays de Quingey* (1951), 185.
8. J. Palou, *La Sorcellerie* (1975), 80.
9. Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 453–9.
10. Malebranche, *Recherche de la vérité* (1674), bk. 2, ch. 6, ed. G. Lewis (3 vols., 1954), i. 205–11.
11. J. Ehrard, *L'Idée de Nature en France dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1963), i. 29; Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 478; M. Milner, *Le Diable dans la littérature française, 1772–1861* (2 vols., 1960), i. 22–9.
12. R. Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites* (1978), 314–16.
13. P. Chaunu, 'Sur la fin des sorciers au XVII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1969), 895–910.
14. Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, 329; E. Delcambre, *Le Concept de la sorcellerie dans le duché de Lorraine au XVI^e et XVII^e siècle* (3 vols., 1948–51), i. 32–3. (But see Bavoux, *Quingey*, 41–4.) All these explanations are now largely superseded by Briggs's psychological analysis (*Witches and Neighbours*, 371–94).
15. R. Muchembled, 'L'Autre Côté du miroir: mythes sataniques et réalités culturelles aux XVI^e et XVII^e siècles', *Ann.* (1985), 289–98.
16. R. Muchembled, *La Sorcière au village* (1978), 18; Bavoux, *Quingey*, 41–4.
17. Delcambre, *Le Concept*, i. 35.

18. J. M. Goulemot, 'Démon, merveilles et philosophie', *Ann.* (1980), 12–23.
19. See J. Gillet, *Le Paradis perdu dans la littérature française de Voltaire à Chateaubriand* (1975).
20. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 378.
21. Milner, *Le Diable*, i. 52–5; C. Bila, *La Croyance à la magie au XVIII^e siècle en France dans les contes, romans et traités* (1925), 62–3, 71.
22. Erhard, *L'Idée*, i. 34.
23. Milner, *Le Diable*, i. 59.
24. J.-B. Thiers, *Superstitions anciennes et nouvelles* (2 vols., 1733), i. 81, 168, 355–7.
25. Grimm, xi. 158.
26. Dom A. Calmet, *Traité sur les apparitions des esprits et sur les vampires*, new edn. (2 vols., 1751).
27. Erhard, *L'Idée*, i. 35; Milner, *Le Diable*, 50.
28. L. Tronson, *Correspondance*, ed. L. Bertrand (3 vols., 1904), ii. 14–15, 22–4, 187, 204–5.
29. Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 531.
30. Th. de Cauzons, *La Magie et la sorcellerie en France* (3 vols., 1861), iii. 361.
31. Erhard, *L'Idée*, i. 33–5.
32. Cauzons, *La Magie*, iii. 363–5; Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 531–2.
33. Milner, *Le Diable*, i. 64.
34. B. R. Kreiser, 'The Devils of Toulon', in *Church and State under the Bourbon Kings* (1982), 173–93.
35. R. Richard, 'Travaux et recherches', *Ann. Bourgogne* (1957), 271.
36. See M. Foucault, *Les Procès de sorcellerie dans l'ancienne France devant les juridictions séculières* (1907).
37. Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 511.
38. J. Klaitz, 'Witchcraft Trials and the Absolute Monarchy in Alsace', in *Church and State under the Bourbon Kings*, 148–9.
39. P. Villette, 'La Sorcellerie à Douai', *Mélanges Sc. relig.* (1961), 123–73.
40. Muchembled, *La Sorcière*, 136, 183–217.
41. Muchembled, *Culture populaire*, 364.
42. J.-B. Thiers, *Traité des superstitions qui regardent tous les sacrements* (3 vols., 1704; 1st edn. 1696), iii. 504, 567–84.
43. Chaunu, 'Sur la fin', 907.
44. Bibl. Nat. D3 1609, 111–12.
45. Mme de Campan, *Mémoires sur la vie de Marie-Antoinette*, ed. F. Barrière (1886), 162.
46. L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 427. See details in M. P. Denis du Péage, 'Un Sorcier', *Méms. Soc. Cambrai* (1912), 138–40; G. Lefebvre, *Les Paysans du Nord pendant la Révolution française* (1959), 321.
47. D'Argenson, v. 409, 413; Barbier iv. 356; for Dieppe, A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime, XVI^e–XIX^e siècle* (1990), 128.
48. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *La Sorcière de Jasmin* (1983), 36–52. This substantial fee was about the going rate—cf. 7 livres, 20 sous, in V. Foix, 'Glossaire de la sorcellerie Landaise', *Rev. Gascogne* (1903), 365–7.
49. Barbier, ii. 89; C. P. Duclos, *Mémoires*, ed. F. Barrière, 410–12; P. Chevallier, *Les Ducs sous l'acacia, ou les premiers pas de la Franc Maçonnerie française, 1725–43*

- (1964), 168–9; G. Maugras, *Lauzun and the Court of Marie-Antoinette* (Eng. trans. 1890), 307–9.
50. The prince de Ligne, *Memoirs and Letters* (Eng. trans. 1899), i. 212–13; A. Piron, *Lettres*, ed. E. Lavaquery (1921), 64 (22 Feb. 1752); D'Argenson, vii. 91–2 (Feb. 1752); cf. Métra, iv. 234–5 (1777).
 51. A. Viatte, *Les Sources occultes du Romantisme* (2 vols., 1928), i. 44.
 52. François-Joachim, cardinal de Bernis, *Mémoires et Lettres*, ed. F. Masson (2 vols., 1878), i. 12.
 53. Luynes, xiii. 78–80 (1753).
 54. J.-B. Millot-Saint-Pierre, *Recherches sur le dernier sorcier et la dernière école de magie* (1858), 4, 11, 13–24, 31.
 55. Cauzons, *La Magie*, iii. 372–4; H. d'Alméras, *Cagliostro* (1904), 113.
 56. Viatte, *Les Sources occultes*, i. 89–96, 103, 110–11, 200–2.
 57. *Ibid.* i. 201.
 58. Forbidden in the diocese of Amiens in 1696 (P. Deyon, *Amiens: capitale provinciale* (1967), 387).
 59. Thiers, *Traité*, i. 208–9.
 60. R.-L. Séguin, *La Sorcellerie au Canada français du XVII^e au XIX^e siècle* (1961), 90–118.
 61. Thiers, *Traité*, i. 120.
 62. Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 498.
 63. See Ch. de Coynart, *Une Sorcière au XVIII^e siècle: Marie-Anne de la Ville, 1680–1725* (1902).
 64. Milner, *Le Diable*, i. 29; Palou, *La Sorcellerie*, 109. A rural *devin* could use the same tricks (J. Varlier, *Sabbat, juges et sorciers: quatre siècles de superstitions dans la France de l'Est* (1908), 200).
 65. Mandrou, *Magistrats*, 516, 497; J. Français, *L'Église et la sorcellerie* (1910), 180.
 66. G. de Closmadeuc, 'Les Sorciers de Lorient: procès criminel devant la sénéchaussée d'Hennebout', *Bull. Soc. Morbihan* (1885), 11–33.
 67. H. Beaune, 'Les Sorciers de Lyon: épisode judiciaire du XVIII^e siècle', *Méms. Acad. nat. Dijon*, 2e sér. 4 (1868), 65–81 (also separately printed).

Chapter 31

1. See R. Murphy, *Saint-François de Sales et la civilité chrétienne* (1964), 75–171.
2. R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–1750* (1960), 340.
3. François-Joachim, cardinal de Bernis, *Mémoires et lettres*, ed. F. Masson (2 vols., 1878), i. 36.
4. R. Mauzi, *L'Idée du bonheur dans la littérature et la pensée française au XVIII^e siècle* (1960), 203.
5. F. K. Montgomery, *La Vie de . . . Père Buffier* (1930), 28–9.
6. R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation*, 60–7.
7. J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 224–5.
8. The standard antithesis conceals dark currents of the mind common to both novels: L. Versini, 'Bernardin de Saint-Pierre et Choderlos de Laclos', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1989), 811–24.
9. Lester G. Crocker, *An Age of Crisis: Man and World in 18th-century French Thought* (1959), 477–8.

10. P. Trahard, *Les Maîtres de la sensibilité française au XVIII^e siècle* (4 vols., 1931–3), i. 15.
11. J. Starobinski, *Jean-Jacques Rousseau: la transparence et l'obstacle* (1957), 99–104.
12. Restif de la Bretonne, *Les Nuits de Paris, 1788–94*, in *Œuvres*, ed. M. Bachelin, (9 vols., 1930–2), i.
13. J. A. Dulaure, *Nouvelle Description de Paris* (1787), 207–8.
14. R. Darnton, *Mesmerism and the Ending of the Enlightenment in France* (1968), 72–3, 97–103. For what follows, see A. Monglond, *Le Prérromantisme français* (2 vols., 1930, new edn. 1965), ii. (1930). 317–19, 144–5.
15. McManners, *Death*, 347–8.
16. Monglond, *Le Prérromantisme*, ii. 383.
17. R. Desne, 'Un Sermon inédit du 18^e siècle sur les rapports de la sensibilité et de la religion', in *Éclectisme et cohérences des Lumières: Mélanges offerts à Jean Ebrard* (1952), 207–21.
18. [Desprez], *Instructions sur les dispositions . . . des sacrements* (1753), 478–9.
19. J. P. de Caussade, *L'Abandon à la Providence divine* (1966) and *Lettres spirituelles* (2 vols., 1960), both ed. M. Olphe-Galliard, SJ; M. Huillet d'Istra, *Le Père de Caussade et la question du pur amour* (1964).
20. Cited by P. Bénichon, *Morales du grand siècle* (1948), 88–9.
21. *Dictionnaire portatif des cas de conscience* (2 vols., 1761), ii. 180.
22. R. Daon, *Conduite des âmes dans la voie du salut* (1750), 20–2. 1st edn. 1738; in the end there were over 100 editions. The author was a Eudist priest, superior of the seminary of Rennes from 1706 to 1719 (J. Delumeau, *Histoire du diocèse de Rennes* (1979), 132).
23. The preacher P. Clément denounces those who move from confessor to confessor (1750); see A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 233.
24. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 53.
25. *Ibid.* i. 131–7. As a boy of 7, the future Cardinal de Bernis got mixed up in an absurd affair of invoking the Devil, and a black cat appeared from behind some barrels. 'On me fit confesser à un grand vicaire, et je fus absous' (*Mémoires*, i. 12). Normally, at that age, the reservation would not have been enforced.
26. Daon, *Conduite*, 54.
27. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 217–21.
28. And he invented the 'abbé d'Arpagon de Sainte Foy' as the confessor in question (B. Fay, *Beaumarchais* (1971), 41–2).
29. Choderlos de Laclos, *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, letters 120 and 123, ed. J. Mistler (1948), 294–5, 299–300, and 307.
30. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 219–21.
31. G. de Closmadeuc, 'Les Sorciers de Lorient: procès criminel devant la sénéchaussée d'Hennebout', *Bull. Soc. Morbihan* (1885), 13.
32. Bachaumont, xi. 110–11 (21 Feb. 1778). The sentences were probably not carried out, as the case was evoked to the Royal Council.
33. R. Briggs, 'The Sins of the People', in *Communities of Belief: Cultural and Social Tension in Early Modern France* (1989), 277–338—the best discussion of the confessional in the seventeenth century.
34. L. W. Brockliss, 'The *Lettres Provinciales* as a Jansenist calumny', *Fr. St.* (1980), 5–22; R. Duchêne, *L'Imposture littéraire dans les Provinciales de Pascal* (1985).
35. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 244–6.

36. Ibid. i. 244–6.
37. Daon, *Conduite*, 72–3.
38. Mme de Sévigné (M. de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de), *Lettres*, ed. Gérard-Gailly (3 vols., 1955), ii. 906 (28 Dec. 1681).
39. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 247; [Mangin], *Science des confesseurs, ou décisions théologiques, canoniques, domestiques et morales* (3 vols., 1757), iii. 42–3, 102–3.
40. L. Tronson, *Correspondance*, ed. L. Bertrand (3 vols., 1904), iii. 178–81.
41. [Mangin], *Science*, iii. 157–60.
42. J. Contrasty, *Histoire de la cité de Rieux-Volvestre et de ses évêques* (1936), 377.
43. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 14–15.
44. J. Guerber, SJ, *Le Ralliement du clergé français à la morale Liguorienne: l'abbé Gousset et ses précurseurs, 1785–1832*, *Analecta Gregoriana*, 193 (1973), 34.
45. Ibid. 49. For what follows, ibid. 59–84. It is Guerber's view that delays of absolution were probably 'an important element' in causing the abandonment of religious practice in the eighteenth century (ibid. 89).
46. McManners, *Death*, 245–6.
47. A. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer: Christianisme et civilisation maritime, XVI^e–XIX^e siècle* (1990), 108, 236–7.
48. *Dictionnaire portatif*, i. 17, 14.
49. Daon, *Conduite*, 31, 272, 278, 322–3.
50. Cited by Guerber, *Le Ralliement*, 91–2.
51. Ibid. 90.
52. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne au XVIII^e siècle, 1725–90* (1976), 174.
53. Because the Church makes Easter communion obligatory, absolution must not be withheld unless for 'essential reasons' (*Lettres de M. Bxx sur differens sujets de morale et de piété* (2 vols., 1737), i. 446 (by the abbé Boileau)).
54. Sermon of Père Clément, in Bernard, *Le Sermon*, 233.
55. R. Briggs, 'Sins of the People', 311–13.
56. R. Anchele, 'Cinq procès de religion dans l'Eure', *Rév. fr.* (1912), 337–9; (1914), 5–6.
57. G. Laurent, *Reims et la région rémoise à la veille de la Révolution* (1930), pp. ccclxxxvii ff.
58. M. Agulhon, *La Sociabilité méridionale: confréries et associations dans la vie collective en Provence orientale à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), i. 423–41.
59. Brottier, *La Réforme du Clergé* (1789), 10–11.
60. Guyot, vii. 61.
61. O. Hufton, *The Poor of 18th-Century France, 1750–1789* (1974), 115.
62. The marquis de Mirabeau, *L'Ami des hommes* (6 vols., 1758–60), i. 212–13, ii. 219–20.
63. P. Le Marchand, 'Journal d'un curé', *Bull. méms. Soc. Côtes-du-Nord* (1960), 81–2.
64. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), vi. 164–7.
65. G. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile: Sennely-en-Sologne au XVIII^e siècle* (1972), 291–2.
66. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer*, 288–97.
67. A. Sarramon (ed.), *Les Paroisses du diocèse de Comminges en 1786* (1968), 14.
68. The title of a chapter in a manuscript in Marais, iii. 327 (24 Oct. 1725).
69. R. Collier, *La Vie en Haute-Provence de 1600 à 1850* (1973), 448.

70. A. Babeau, *La Vie rurale dans l'ancienne France* (1883), 279.
71. Y. Castan, *Honnêteté et relations sociales en Languedoc, 1715–80* (1974), 75–93.
72. M. Jousse, *Traité de la justice criminelle de France* (4 vols., 1771), i. 35.
73. Cabantous, *Le Ciel dans la mer*, 288–97.
74. Bouchard, *Senneby-en-Sologne*, 51, 73, 82–3, 122–3.
75. Curé A. Dubois, *Journal d'un curé de campagne au XVII^e siècle*, ed. H. Platelle (1965), 77.
76. Roland (Mme Marie-Jeanne Phillipon), *Mémoires*, ed. Cl. Perroud (2 vols., 1905), ii. 44.
77. Diderot, *Correspondance*, ed. G. Roth and J. Varloot (16 vols., 1955–70), iv. 162.
78. *Factum pour Marie-Catherine Cadière contre le père Jean-Baptiste Girard, Jésuite* (1731), 1.
79. *Mémoires du Marquis d'Argens*, ed. L. Thomas (1941), 149–59.
80. *Factum pour Marie-Catherine Cadière*, 137.
81. *The Case of Mrs Mary Catherine Cadière against the Jesuit Father John Baptist Girard in a Memorial Presented to the Parlement of Aix*, 10th edn. (London, 1732), pp. i–ii. The reply of Girard was also published in full (*The Defence of Father . . . Girard*, 4th edn. (London, 1732), pts. I, II, and III).
82. For Billard, see Grimm, viii. 485 (Mar. 1770), the full hilarious story in E. Vaillé, *Histoire générale des Postes françaises* (6 vols., 1953), v. (1).
83. Métra, iv. 348.
84. De Mouhy, *Mémoires d'une fille de qualité* (1747); see F. C. Green, *La Peinture des mœurs de la bonne société dans le roman français, de 1715 à 1761* (1924), 108; and Duclos, *Confessions du Comte de XXX*, cited by J. Brengues, *Duclos* (1971), 439. Other examples, including the invention of a seducer, the 'abbé Rapt', in L. Versini, *Laclos et la tradition: essai sur les sources et la technique des 'Liaisons dangereuses'* (1968), 106–7.
85. A. Aulard, 'Documents inédits: Mémoires de Billaud-Varenne', *Rév. fr.* (1888), 760–1.
86. N. Boileau-Despréaux, *Satires*, ed. C.-H. Boudhors (1952), 100–2 (Satire X, lines 560–75).
87. Marivaux, cited by Green, *La Peinture*, 106. Marivaux elsewhere concedes the value of the confessor in placing servants in employment, organizing reconciliation, and being around for show at dinner-tables and riding out in the carriage (*Des femmes*, cited by Larroumet, *Marivaux* (1882), 416).
88. Montesquieu, *Lettres persanes*, 48 (Pléiade, 2 vols., 1949), i. 198–9.
89. R. Everdell, 'The Rosières movement, 1766–1789, a Clerical Precursor of the Revolutionary Cults', *Fr. Hist. St.* (1975), 23–36.
90. Guyot, lvii. 72–96 ('Rosière').
91. Bachaumont, xxxv. 68–9 (3 May 1787).
92. W. d'Ormesson, *Le Clergé et l'Académie* (1965), 308–9.

Chapter 32

1. M. Courdurié, *La Dette des collectivités publiques de Marseille au XVIII^e siècle: du débat sur le prêt à intérêt au financement par l'emprunt* (1974), 57. Pages 19–95 of Courdurié's volume are a first-rate introduction to the subject.

2. On the 'contrat Mohatra' see the 8^e *Lettre* of Pascal's *Provinciales*, ed. H. F. Stewart (1920), 85.
3. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 58.
4. [J. le Semelier], *Conférences ecclésiastiques de Paris sur l'usure et la restitution* (4 vols., 1718), i. 361–416.
5. Full of moral problems, however! A whaler could be insured against fire caused by the boiling process, but not, morally speaking, against seizure because the passport documentation was not in order through carelessness (*ibid.* 361).
6. [Mangin], *Science des confesseurs* (3 vols., 1757), i. 107.
7. *Dictionnaire portatif des cas de conscience* (2 vols., 1761), i. 566, but p. 563 seems to contradict this.
8. Y. Durand, *Les Fermiers Généraux au XVIII^e siècle* (1971), 392–4.
9. *Ibid.* 396.
10. Guyot, lxiii. 7.
11. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 63.
12. Guyot, lxiii. 7–8.
13. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 31.
14. As cited by five doctors of the Sorbonne in discussion with the lawyers of Louis XIV, who were devising a new code of commerce; see C. W. Cole, *Colbert and a Century of French Mercantilism* (2 vols., 1939), i. 1–2.
15. Voltaire, 'Intérêt', in *Dictionnaire philosophique*, in *Œuvres*, xix. 490–3.
16. For Peter, see P. L. Thomasin of the Oratory, *Traité du négoce et de l'usure* (1697); for Zacchaeus, the *Conférences d'Angers*, both cited by Durand, *Les Fermiers Généraux*, 389–90.
17. Voltaire to Prost de Royer, 1 Oct. 1763, in *Corresp.* xxvii. 12 (D 1441). Prost de Royer was the author of the famous *Lettre à Mgr l'archevêque de Lyon*.
18. R. Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes et le prêt à intérêt* (1960), 21. Like Courdurié, *La Dette*, this provides a valuable introduction to the whole subject.
19. B. Groethuysen, *Origines de l'esprit bourgeois en France. i. L'Église et la bourgeoisie* (1927), 268–9.
20. *Ibid.* 244–5. Another example of rigorism—a shipowner of La Rochelle, converted from Protestantism, worried by his father's usury (but not by the slaves dying on his ships). See R. Forster, *Merchants, Landlords, Magistrates: The Depont Family in 18th-Century France* (1980), 23.
21. Cited by Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes*, 47.
22. *Ibid.* 124.
23. e.g., the abbé E. Mignot, *Traité des prêts de commerce* (Lille 1738) and (4 vols., 1759), argues for loans as entirely within the province of the secular power.
24. Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes*, 85–6.
25. C. de la Taille-Lolainville, *Les Idées économiques et financières de Montesquieu* (thèse Droit, Paris, 1940), 191.
26. Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des Lois*, xxi. 20, in *Œuvres complètes* (Pléiade, 2 vols., 1951), ii. 639.
27. *Ibid.* xxii. 19; *Œuvres*, ii. 675.
28. *Ibid.* xxii. 19, v. 15; *Œuvres*, ii. 676, 298.
29. A. Cotta, 'Le Développement économique de la pensée de Montesquieu', *Reu. hist. écon. sociale* (1957), 396–7.
30. Groethuysen, *Origines*, 254.

31. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 45.
32. *Encyclopédie*, xviii (1775), 545, 'Usure'.
33. A. Rougon, *Les Physiocrates et la réglementation du taux de l'intérêt* (thèse Droit, Paris, 1906), 41–72, 81, 99.
34. H. Mason, 'Voltaire et le ludique', *Reu. hist. litt. Fr.* (1984), 545–6. Details in J. Donvez, *De quoi vivait Voltaire?* (1949).
35. Claude-François Menestrier, SJ, *Dissertation des loteries* (1700), 41–2, 55, 77, 88, 103, 107.
36. *Ibid.* 112–19.
37. *Ibid.* 36–7.
38. G. Guitton, *Les Jésuites à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV, 1640–1768* (1953), 221.
39. R. Mauzi, 'Écrivains et moralistes du XVIII^e siècle devant les jeux de hasard', *Reu. sc. hum.* (1958), 232.
40. Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes*, 197–202.
41. M. Marion, *Histoire financière de la France depuis 1715*, i (1914), 290–1.
42. Mauzi, 'Écrivains', 220.
43. J. Dusaulx, *De la passion du jeu depuis les temps anciens jusqu'à nos jours* (2 vols., 1779), i. 93–4, 193.
44. G. Girault de Coursac, *L'Éducation d'un Roi, Louis XVI* (1972), 229.
45. Dusaulx, *De la passion*, i. 30.
46. Métra, vii. 779 (29 Apr. 1779).
47. Mauzi, 'Écrivains', 235–56.
48. Dusaulx has plenty of horror stories—titled people who sign on as 'bankers' for Pharon, as patricians at Rome became gladiators (*De la passion*, i. 98–9), etc.
49. *Ibid.* i. 236.
50. Guitton, *Les Jésuites*, 81–2.
51. X. Azéma, *Un Prélat janséniste, Louis Foucquet, évêque d'Agde, 1656–1702* (1963), 83–5.
52. Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes*, 48.
53. J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 17–18.
54. C. C. Fairchild, *Poverty and Charity in Aix-en-Provence, 1640–1789* (1976), 59–60.
55. Tavenaux, *Les Jansénistes*, 55.
56. Lewis Watt, SJ, makes this the key document in the process of the change to the modern attitude allowing partnership and rent charges, in his *Usury in Catholic Theology* (1965, 1st edn. 1945), 17–29.
57. Cited by Courdurié, *La Dette*, 51, 54.
58. Even rigorist confessors are silent or unconvincing in their blame says Dorlhac, *Traité de la légitimité du prêt lucratif* (1788), 43. (See Courdurié, *La Dette*, 59.)
59. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 59–60.
60. *Ibid.* 81–2.
61. Cited, *ibid.* 74.
62. A. R. J. Turgot, *Mémoire sur les prêts d'argent* (1770), in *Œuvres* (2 vols., 1844), i. 119.
63. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 54.
64. *Ibid.* 86–91.

65. Guitton, *Les Jésuites*, 84–5.
66. T. Tackett, *Priest and Parish in Eighteenth-Century France: A Social and Political Study of the Curés in a Diocese of Dauphiné, 1750–1791* (1977), 132.
67. E. Esmonin, 'La Fortune du Cardinal Le Camus', in his *Études sur la France des XVII^e and XVIII^e siècles* (1964), 389.
68. Voltaire, *Corresp.* xxvii. 12 (D 11,441).
69. 'Du neuf et du vieux chez les Cordeliers de Belley', *Le Bugey* (1973), 617–19.
70. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 71–3.
71. R. Bigo, 'Aux origines du Mont-de-Piété parisien: bienfaisance et crédit, 1777–89', *Ann. hist. écon. sociale* (1932), 115–16.
72. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 65–6.
73. A. de Tocqueville, *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* (1856), Bk. II, ch. 6, ed. G. W. Headlam (1933), 75.
74. Courdurié, *La Dette*, 74–6. A number of the lay *cabiers* of 1789 had asked for liberty (E. Champion, *La France d'après les cabiers de 1789* (1921), 159; C.-L. Chassin, *Les Élections et les cabiers de Paris en 1789, documents* (4 vols., 1888–9), iii. 327). The clergy of Villeneuve-de-Berg (Champion, *La France*, 159) and of the four *bailliages* of Franche Comté were for liberty; see Rossignol, 'Les Cahiers du clergé Franc-Comtois en 1789', *Méms. Acad. Besançon* (1909), 218. The clergy of Amiens were against: M. Kovalevsky, *La France économique et sociale à la veille de la Révolution* (2 vols., 1909–11), i. 14.

Chapter 33

1. J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), 248.
2. J. McManners, *Abbés and Actresses: The Church and the Theatrical Profession in 18th-Century France* (1986), 10–14.
3. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), ii^{xx} 213 (1721).
4. Marais, iv. 419, 423 (1732).
5. G. Guitton, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV: activités, luttes, suppression* (1952), 146, 249.
6. R. Sauzet, in F. Lebrun (ed.), *Histoire des catholiques en France du XV^e siècle à nos jours* (1980), 138.
7. J. Croisset, *Parallèle des mœurs de ce siècle et de la morale de Jésus-Christ* (2 vols., 1743, 1st edn. 1727), i. 205–14. For Porée see G. Snyders, *La Pédagogie en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1965), 42.
8. R. Daon, *Conduite des confesseurs dans le tribunal de la pénitence*, 6th edn. (1778, 1st edn. 1738), 86.
9. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 1759, cited by A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne au XVIII^e siècle, 1725–1790* (1976), 118.
10. e.g. Daon, *Conduite*, 106–7.
11. M. Bloch, 'La Lutte pour l'individualisme agraire', *Ann. hist. écon. sociale* (1930), 526.
12. M. Bordes, *Contribution à l'étude de l'enseignement et de la vie intellectuelle dans les pays de l'Intendance d'Auch au XVIII^e siècle* (1958), 45–8.
13. M. Perrel, 'L'Enseignement féminin sous l'ancien régime: les écoles populaires en Auvergne, Bourbonnais et Velay', *Cabiers hist.* (1978), 208.
14. J.-B. Thiers, *Traité des jeux et des divertissements qui peuvent être permis ou qui*

doivent être défendus aux chrétiens (1686), 256, 332.

15. Snyders, *La Pédagogie*, 142.
16. X. Azéma, *Un Prélat janséniste: Louis Fouquet, évêque et comte d'Agde, 1656–1702* (1963), 90.
17. Cited by P. Feret, *La Faculté de théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres* (7 vols., 1900–10), vii. 154–8.
18. J.-J. Gautier, *Essai sur les mœurs champêtres* (1787), ed. X. Rousseau (1935).
19. J. Bonnet, *Histoire générale de la danse, sacrée et profane* (1723), pp. xiii, xxxiv.
20. Cited by E. Sevrin, *Les Missions religieuses en France sous la Restauration* (2 vols., 1948), i. 276–7.
21. The boy-king asked why certain young nobles had been sent away, and was told they had been pulling down the railings of the park of Versailles.
22. P. Stewart, *Le Masque et la parole: le langage de l'amour au 18^e siècle* (1973), 39–40.
23. See L. Versini, *Laclos et la tradition: essai sur les sources et la technique des 'Liaisons Dangereuses'* (1968), 461–2, 129–30, and Stewart, *Le Masque*, 149.
24. Versini, *Laclos*, 61–79.
25. Saint-Simon, xviii. 341 (1721).
26. E. de Magnieu and M. Prat (eds.), *Correspondance inédite de la comtesse de Sabran et du chevalier de Boufflers* (1875), 286, 289 (31 July 1787).
27. Restif de la Bretonne, *Les Parisiennes* (4 vols., 1787), i. 272–3, ii. 18.
28. McManners, *Death*, 248, 194.
29. H. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France depuis la fin des Guerres de Religion jusqu'à nos jours* (11 vols., 1916–32), i. 382.
30. [Vincent-Bareau], *Les Amours de la Magdeleine, ou l'amour divin triomphe de celui du monde* (1618), 288.
31. See V. Saxer, *Le Culte de Marie Madeleine en occident* (1959), 5–7. Also, M. Feuillas, *La Controverse Magdelienne au milieu du XVII^e siècle: ripostes provençales à Jean de Launoy*, 89–101. For further information on the cult of the saint see E. Duperry (ed.), *Marie Madeleine dans la mystique, les arts et les lettres*, Colloque, Avignon, 1988 (1989).
32. e.g. *Almanach des adresses des demoiselles de Paris, ou calendrier du plaisir* (1791, facs. edn. 1980), 57.
33. Sermon 46 (for her day), cited in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, x (1950), 573.
34. Reproduced in G. Rodier-Lewis, 'La Madeleine de Georges de la Tour', in Duperry (ed.), *Marie Madeleine*, 268.
35. J. S. Maury, *Essai sur l'éloquence de la chaire* (3 vols., 1827; 1st edn. 1777), i. 160.
36. Bossuet, 'Sermon pour le jeudi de la semaine de la Passion', in *Sermons* (9 vols., 1772), iii. 156, 172–3, 252.
37. M. H. Cotoni, *L'Exégèse du Nouveau Testament dans la philosophie française du 18^e siècle* (1984), 177, 185, 298.
38. Massillon, 'Pour le jour de Sainte-Magdeleine', in *Sermons: Panégyriques* (1763), 200, 214, 272, 170, 195. Also 'Pour le jeudi de la semaine de la Passion: la pécheresse de L'Évangile', in *Sermons: Carême*, iv (1745), 261–2, 267–8, 272.
39. Frey de Neuville, 'Pour la fête de tous les saints' and 'Instruction sur le Jubilé', in *Sermons du Père Frey de Neuville* (9 vols., 1777), i. 13, v. 376. Père Elisée's 'L'Évangile de la pécheresse' similarly concerns true conversion.

40. E. M. Bénabou, *La Prostitution et la police des mœurs au XVIII^e siècle* (1987), 21, 9–10, 247. This book concerns Paris only, but is basic for the whole theme. See also S. Pillorget, *Claude-Henri Feydeau de Marville, Lieutenant-Général de Police de Paris* (1978), 127 ff.
41. D. A. Coward, '18th-century Attitudes to Prostitutes', *S.V.E.C.* (1980), 363–4.
42. C. C. Fairchilds, *Poverty and Charity in Aix-en-Provence, 1640–1781* (1974), 119.
43. M. Sabatier, *Histoire de la législation sur les femmes publiques et les lieux de débauche* (1828), 165.
44. Prévost, *Histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut*, ed. F. Deloffre (1990), 165. On Louisiana, A. Billy, *Prévost, un singulier bénédictin* (1969), 145–6.
45. M. Lhéritier, *L'Intendant Tourny* (1920), 92–3.
46. O. Hufton, *The Poor in 18th-Century France, 1750–89* (1974), 306.
47. Restif de la Bretonne, *Le Pornographe: l'état actuel de la prostitution*, in *Œuvres*, ed. M. Bachelin (9 vols., 1930–2), iii, 37–41.
48. O. T. Brennan, *Public Drinking and Popular Culture in 18th-Century Paris* (1988), 31, 50, 220.
49. For what follows, Bénabou, *La Prostitution*, 43–8, 124, 180–4, 247–8, 264.
50. *Ibid.* 89–92. For an outrageous case, an ex-Capuchin, Bachaumont, xxiii. 204–5 (13 Oct. 1783).
51. Bénabou, *La Prostitution*, 63–4, 72.
52. C. Jones, 'The Montpellier Bon Pasteur and the Reform of Prostitution in the Ancien Régime', in *The Charitable Imperative: Hospitals and Nursing in Ancien Régime and Revolutionary France* (1989), 241–74 — a brilliant study indispensable for the subject.
53. Restif de la Bretonne, *M. Nicolas*, in *Œuvres*, i. 213.
54. See Manon Lecler's letters to Grimm in A. Sauvy, 'Théâtre et société au 18^e siècle', *Ann.* (1961), 541–3.
55. N. Rival, *Rétif de la Bretonne ou les amours pervers* (1982), 75.
56. J. B. B. Possevin, *Pratique . . . et office des curés* (1619), cited by Bénabou, *La Prostitution*, 442.
57. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse*, 277; E. Laurès, *La Municipalité de Béziers à la fin de l'ancien régime* (1926), 163.
58. C. Piveteau, *La Pratique matrimoniale en France d'après les statuts synodaux* (1952), 70–7.
59. A. Lottin, *La Désunion du couple sous l'ancien régime: l'exemple du Nord* (1975), 181–2.
60. Bénabou, *La Prostitution*, 43, 124–50.
61. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse*, 204.
62. G. Bouchard, *Le Village immobile: Sennely-en-Sologne au XVIII^e siècle* (1972).
63. Comment on trends in P. Chaunu, *Histoire science sociale* (1974), 327.
64. J. Depauw, 'Amour illégitime et société à Nantes au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1972), 1155–82.
65. R. Pillorget, *La Tige et le rameau: familles anglaise et française, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècle* (1979), 267; A. Molinier, 'Enfants trouvés en Languedoc', in *Sur la population française au XVIII^e et au XIX^e siècle: hommage à Marcel Reinhard*, ed. J. Dupâquier (1973), 462.

66. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris* (12 vols., 1782–8), xii. 84–8.
67. H. Bergues and P. Ariès, *La Prévention des naissances dans la famille: ses origines dans les temps modernes*, I.N.E.D., Cahier 35 (1960), 229; Hufton, *The Poor*, 324.
68. Y. Castan, *Honnêteté et relations sociales en Languedoc, 1715–80* (1974), 243.
69. J. E. Malaussère, *L'Évolution d'un village frontalier de Provence, Saint-Jeannet* (1909), 208–9.
70. M. Humbert, 'L'Établissement de la paternité naturelle sous l'ancien régime', *Reu. Nord* (1978), 181–2.
71. M.-C. Phan, 'Les Déclarations de grossesse en France, XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1975), 61–82.
72. J.-L. Brunet, rev. D. de Maillane, *Le Parfait Notaire apostolique* (2 vols., 1775), i. 209.
73. E. Guitton, *Jacques Delille, 1731–1813, et la poésie de la nature* (1976), 28.
74. J. Dupâquier, 'Villages et petites villes de la généralité de Paris', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1969), 18.
75. M. H. Jouans, 'Les Originalités d'un bourg artisanal normand, 1711–90', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1969), 103–4.
76. S.-A.-A. D. Tissot, *Onanisme, ou dissertation physique sur les maladies produites par la masturbation* (1760). Comment in P. Lejeune, 'Rousseau et l'onanisme', *Ann.* (1972), 1015 ff.
77. M. D. T. de Bienville, *La Nymphomanie ou l'excès de tempérament chez les femmes* (1777), 83.
78. A. Godeau, *Morale chrétienne pour l'instruction des curez et des prestres du diocèse de Vence* (3 vols., 1709).
79. Thesis of A. C. Kliszawski, Paris III, cited by J.-L. Flandrin, 'Mariage tardif et vie sexuelle', *Ann.* (1972), 1369.
80. J. P. Bardet, *Rouen au XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles: les mutations d'un espace social* (2 vols., 1983), i. 326. It is unrealistic to give references for all the other places.
81. Some statutes said forty days, others two days (Piveteau, *La Pratique matrimoniale*, 23). See also A. Armengaud, *La Famille et l'enfant en France et en Angleterre du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle: aspects démographiques* (1978).
82. Ph. Wiel, 'Une Grosse Paroisse en Cotentin', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1969), 162.
83. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire*, ix. 292.
84. R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–50* (1960), 82.
85. Cited by Bergues and Ariès, *La Prévention*, 222.
86. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire*, ix. 312–13, 317.
87. R. Hoffman, *La Femme dans la pensée des Lumières* (1978), 18, 36; M. Albistur and D. Armogathe, *Histoire du féminisme français* (2 vols., 1972), i. 128.
88. R. Mauzi, *L'Idée du Bonheur au XVIII^e siècle* (1960), 398–9.
89. He argued that in emergency, the life of the mother should be saved before that of the child.
90. Cited by Albistur and Armogathe, *Histoire*, i. 220.
91. *Dictionnaire des cas de conscience* (1749 edn.), col. 1202, cited by J.-L. Flandrin, *XVII^e Siècle* (1974), 8–12.
92. Sauvy, in Bergues and Ariès, *La Prévention*.
93. R. Forster, *The Nobility of Toulouse in the 18th Century: A Social and Economic Study* (1960), 129; Bardet, *Rouen*, i. 281, 5, 276–7, 265–9; J.-C. Perrot, *Genèse d'une ville moderne: Caen au 18^e siècle* (2 vols., 1975), ii. 1119–50.

94. S. Beauvalet-Boutouyrie, 'La Limitation des naissances: Verdun dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1990), 199–202.
95. B. Garnet, 'La Fécondité des classes populaires à Chartres au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1986), 95–124; see also (1988), 91–5.
96. J. P. Bardet, R. Chaunu, and J. M. Gouesse, *Histoire de la Normandie* (1970), 332.
97. Armengaud, *La Famille*, 88. Births fall by as much as two-thirds in time of famine.
98. M. Lachiver, 'Fécondité légitime et contraception dans la région Parisienne, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', in *Hommage à Marcel Reinhard: sur la population française aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, ed. J. Dupâquier, Société de démographie française (1973).
99. E. Ackerman, 'The Commune of Bonnières-sur-Seine', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1977), 89.
100. A. Blum, 'L'Évolution de la fécondité en France aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles: analyse régionale', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1988), 157–77.
101. Sceptical analysis in the thesis of David R. Weir, 'Fertility Transition in Rural France' (Stanford, 1982). I am grateful to Professor Paul David for making this thesis available.
102. P. A. David and T. A. Mroz, 'Evidence of Fertility Regulation among Rural French Villagers, 1749–89', *Eur. J. Population* (1989), 1–26, 175–89.
103. Le prince de Ligne, *Mémoires* (2 vols. 1928), i. 263.
104. J.-L. Flandrin, *Famille, parenté, maison, sexualité dans l'ancienne société* (1976), 125–8.
105. McManners, 'Living, Loving and Dying', in *Death*, ch. 13.
106. In 1672, 23 Mar., 15 and 20 Apr., 2 June (smallpox); 9 Mar., 27 June, 11 July (pregnancy) (Mme de Sévigné, *Lettres*, ed. Gérard-Gailly (Pléiade, 3 vols. 1953–5) ii. 501, 519, 523, 562, 490–1, 579, 590.
107. Gautier, *Essai*, 11.
108. R. Bourdelais and Y.-J. Raulot, 'Les Risques de la petite enfance à la fin du XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1976), 305–11.
109. Cited by A. Fauve-Chamoux, 'La Femme devant l'allaitement', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1989), 19.
110. J. Stengers, 'Des pratiques anticonceptionnelles dans le mariage au XIX^e et XX^e siècle', *Rev. belge phil. hist.* (1971), 403–37.
111. Daon, *Conduite*, 131–2.
112. Bénabou, *La Prostitution*, 392–3.
113. M. Gouesse, 'Les Refus de l'enfant au tribunal de la pénitence', *Ann. dém. hist.* (1973), 243–50.
114. Bergues and Ariès, *La Prévention*, 225.
115. P. Segneri (French trans. 1695), cited by M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, i: *La Volonté de savoir* (1976), 27.
116. Gouesse, 'Les Refus', 256–7.

Chapter 34

1. See generally, A. Reyval, *L'Église et le théâtre: essai historique* (1934).
2. The Fathers were condemning naked dancers, human sacrifices, and ritual

- prostitution, says Montesquieu ('Spicilège', in *Œuvres complètes* (2 vols., Pléiade, 1951), ii. 1305, nos. 322–3). Cf. d'Aubignac, Scudéry, and Corneille in H. Phillips, *The Theatre and its Critics in Seventeenth-Century France* (1980), 74.
3. Caffaro to Bossuet, 11 May 1694, and Boursault to the archbishop, n.d., published in Ch. Urbain and E. Levesque, *L'Église et le théâtre* (1930), 143–65.
 4. Caffaro, *Lettre*, published *ibid.* 93.
 5. Comment in Ch. Arnaud, *Les Théories dramatiques au XVII^e siècle: étude sur la vie et les œuvres de l'abbé d'Aubignac* (1888).
 6. C.-F. Menestrier, SJ, *Des Représentations en musique anciennes et modernes* (1681), 3–4, 39. This was Clement IX's *La Comica del Cielo* (1668), décor by Bernini.
 7. *Des Ballets anciens et modernes selon les règles du théâtre* (1682), 14, 16–17, 29, 31–2, 311.
 8. For Mme de Maintenon's hesitations, because the girls were too successful in acting *Andromaque*, see A. Taphanel, *Le Théâtre de Saint-Cyr, 1689–1792* (1876), 33. Even in Louis XIV's pious later years, the Court continued to enjoy dramatic performances, and this even in the winter of 1709, when cold and misery closed the Parisian theatres (L. Bourquin, 'La Controverse sur la comédie au XVIII^e siècle', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1919), 75–7).
 9. The date of publication, later than has been supposed, is fixed by J. M. Piemme, 'Le Théâtre en face de la critique religieuse: un exemple, Pierre Nicole', *XVII^e Siècle* (1970), 50.
 10. J. B. Bossuet, *Maximes et réflexions sur la comédie*, published in Urbain and Levesque, *L'Église*, 169–276.
 11. Urbain and Levesque, *L'Église*, introduction, 33.
 12. 'Il faut laisser à décider ces sortes d'affaires dans le confessionnal,' said Fléchier (*ibid.* 36). Bossuet is recorded as approving a particular play in 1702, and attending private theatricals in 1698 and 1703, the latter being a performance of *Tartuffe*.
 13. 2 Nov. 1702. She says that the bishops had a special seat and that Bossuet had always been there (*Correspondance de Madame, duchesse d'Orléans*, trans. E. Jaeglé (3 vols., 1890), i. 277).
 14. J. Calvet, *Bossuet* (1941), 72–4, 154.
 15. R. Derche, 'Encore un modèle possible de Tartuffe', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1951), 192 ff. Discussion in E. S. Chill, 'Tartuffe, Religion and Courtly Culture', *Fr. Hist. St.* (1963–4), 154–68.
 16. P. Butler, 'Tartuffe et la direction spirituelle au XVII^e siècle', in *Modern Miscellany presented to Eugene Vinaver*, ed. T. E. Lawrenson, F. E. Sutcliffe and G. T. D. Gadoffre, (1969), 48–65, followed by J. Cairncross, 'Tartuffe ou Molière hypocrite', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1972), 894. Or, more subtly, was Molière usurping the powers of the confessor and of God himself in claiming the right to identify hypocrisy? (G. Couton, 'Réflexions sur Tartuffe et le péché d'hypocrisie, cas réservé', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1969), 404–13).
 17. Molière, *Œuvres*, ed. G. Couton (2 vols., 1971), i. 888.
 18. Père Senault (1644) and Père Lamy (1678), in Phillips, *Theatre*, 91, 93.
 19. P. Nicole, 'Pensées sur les spectacles', in *Essais de morale* (6 vols., 1755), v. 382.
 20. P. Nicole, *Traité de la comédie*, ed. G. Couton (1961), 44. A similar rigorist attitude to booksellers is seen in a standard confessional handbook in 1724.

- Novels of amorous intrigue may not be stocked, even if the censor has passed them (B. Neveu, 'Imprimeurs et libraires au confessionnal', in *Le Livre et l'historien: études offertes en l'honneur du Professeur H.-J. Martin*, ed. F. Barbier *et al.* (1997), 440–1).
21. J. Lebrun, *La Spiritualité de Bossuet* (1972), 317–18. Did the scene between Tartuffe and Dorine rouse Bossuet's anger on the question of 'nudity' on the stage, seeing that the Church throughout the century had waged war on the *robe décolletée*? (H. P. Salomon, *Tartuffe devant l'opinion française* (1962), 170–1; R. Jean, 'Nudité et dévoilement dans le *Tartuffe* de Molière', *Europe* (Jan.–Feb. 1966), 300).
 22. J. Jacquart, *Un Témoin de la vie littéraire et mondaine au 18^e siècle, L'abbé Trublet* (1926), 197–8.
 23. Caffaro was summarizing the Italian position without realizing that it included judicious criticism of the evils of the contemporary theatre, as in Ottonelli (1646–52); see M. Fumaroli, 'La Querelle de la moralité du théâtre avant Nicole et Bossuet', *Rev. hist. litt. Fr.* (1970), 1024–6.
 24. G. Capon and R. Yve-Pessis, *Les Théâtres clandestins* (1905), 13–15, 96, 158; J.-H. Donnard, *Le Théâtre de Carmontelle* (1967), 22–5. Cf. E. S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), vi. 128–31.
 25. A. P. Moore, *The Genre Poissard and the French Stage of the 18th Century* (1935), 3, 8.
 26. Victor du Bled, *La Comédie de société au XVIII^e siècle* (1893), 57.
 27. So H. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre et le public à Paris de 1715 à 1750* (1972), 564. However, for verses purporting to be by one of her lovers about a rival, see H. d'Alméras (ed.), *Mémoires de Jean Monnet, directeur du Théâtre de la Foire* (n.d.), 86 n. For the routine fashion in which a *danseuse* of the Opéra sold herself, see Manon Lecler's letters to Grimm (A. Sauvy, 'Théâtre et société au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann.* (1961), 541–3).
 28. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 222, 250–1.
 29. P. Larthomas, *Le Théâtre en France au XVIII^e siècle* (1980), 106–11.
 30. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 623.
 31. She was awful, but there was, in the convent, a shy modest girl . . . (P. Ginisty, *Mlle Gogo: Mlle Beauménard de la Comédie Française, 1730–99* (1913), 238–9).
 32. P. A. C. de Beaumarchais, *Théâtre*, ed. M. Allem (1934), 243–5.
 33. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 206.
 34. For the indirect fashion in which the connection of ideas was formed, see P. Tort, 'La Partition intérieure. Origine du *Paradoxe sur le Comédien*. Étude comparée . . . de Rémond de Sainte-Albine et de François Riccoboni', *Rev. hist. théâtre* (1976), 5–73.
 35. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 566–8; Larthomas, *Le Théâtre en France*, 31.
 36. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 571.
 37. Montaigne, *Essais*, 26, ed. A. Thibaudet (1950), 213.
 38. M. Fuchs, *La Vie théâtrale en province au XVIII^e siècle* (1934), 45–6, 50, 52–3, 105–6.
 39. G. Mongrédien, 'La Querelle du théâtre à la fin du règne de Louis XIV', *Rev. hist. théâtre* (1978), 116–17.
 40. C. Lenient, *La Comédie-Française au 18^e siècle* (1888), 103–4. Only later in the century does Dancourt become the hero of this story.

41. A. Villiers, *Le Cloître et la scène* (1961), 49–60.
42. A. Jullien, *L'Église et l'Opéra en 1735. Mlle Lemaure et l'évêque de Saint-Papoul* (1877), 1–23. Cf. the case of the innkeeper Ramponeau, who signed a contract to appear as a comic, then changed his mind using the excuse that he had been converted (Voltaire, *Le Plaidoyer de Ramponeau, prononcé par lui-même*, in *Œuvres*, xxiv. 115–20).
43. G. Bengesco, *Les Comédiennes de Voltaire* (1912), 133.
44. M. Dubait, *Étude sur la vie et le théâtre de Crébillon, 1674–1762* (1895), 155–60; C. E. Engel, *Histoire de l'Ordre de Malte* (1968), 297.
45. Letter to Damilaville, 5 Aug. 1762, in *Corresp.* rev. edn., xxv (1973), 152.
46. G. Maugras, *Les Comédiens hors la loi* (1887), 272.
47. To Lekain and to Mlle Clairon, Aug. 1761, in *Corresp.* rev. edn., xxiii. 367, 363 (D 9936 and D 9933).
48. Voltaire, *Conversation de M. l'intendant des Menus en exercice avec M. l'abbé Grizel*, in *Œuvres*, xxiv. 248. Cf. the joke current when the curé of Saint-Sulpice applied to have the Comédie-Française moved out of his parish—'Il ne veut pas qu'il y ait un plus grand comédien que lui dans sa paroisse' (Marais, iv. 42 (17 July 1729)).
49. Voltaire, 'À Monseigneur le maréchal duc de Richelieu', ép. déd. *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, in *Œuvres*, v. 297. Cf. *Lettres philosophiques*, 23, *ibid.* xii. 180–1. The Voltairian device of comparing Church and theatre is anticipated in Fr. Gaçon, *Le Poète sans fard* (1696)—the display of bishops more corrupting than theatrical pomp; and in Chavigné de Saint-Martin, *Le Triomphe de la comédie* (1706)—stories of lust and cruelty in the Bible worse than any plot of a play.
50. E. P. Kostoroski-Kadish, 'Molière and Voltaire', in R. Johnson, S. T. Trail and E. Neumann (eds.), *Molière and the Commonwealth of Letters* (1975), 93.
51. Voltaire, *Le Monde comme il va* (1746), in *Œuvres*, ed. Moland, xxi. 8.
52. B. Guy, 'Towards an Appreciation of the Abbé de Cour', *Yale Fr. St.* (1968), 86.
53. Simon-Joseph Pellegrin, *Cantiques spirituels sur les points les plus importants de la religion et de la morale chrétienne* (1701); *idem*, *Chansons spirituelles propres pour le temps du Jubilé sur les airs d'opéra et vaudevilles très connus* (1706); *idem*, *Jephté* (1732, music by Montéclair); *idem*, *Hippolyte et Aricie* (1733); *idem*, *Le Jugement de Paris, Médée et Jason*, etc.
54. G. Desnoiresterres, *La Comédie satirique au XVIII^e siècle* (1885), 20.
55. Claude Henri de Fusée de Voisenon, *Œuvres* (5 vols., 1781), including *L'Amant déguisé, ou le jardinier supposé*, *La Coquette fixée*, *Les Fureurs de Saül*, and *Les Israélites à la montagne d'Oreb* (music for these latter two by Mondonville). He was elected to the Academy in 1763. According to W. d'Ormesson, *Le Clergé et l'Académie* (1965), 201, he had left the army because he wounded an adversary in a duel, and had been vicar-general to his uncle, the bishop of Boulogne, for a time. His dubious career was somewhat redeemed by his secret charities.
56. For these, see ch. 21 above.
57. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 223–5.
58. L. Sterne, *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768; repr. 1927), 75.
59. M. Barras, *The Stage Controversy in France from Corneille to Rousseau* (1933), 134–5, 149–50, 317.

60. I am quoting, because of its agreeable flavour, the contemporary English translation, *A Critical Dissertation upon Homer's Iliad* (2 vols., 1722), i. 160.
61. *Ibid.* i. 178.
62. *Ibid.* bk. II, chs. 3 and 4.
63. J.-B. du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (2 vols., 1740; 1st edn. 1719), i. 123–30, ch. 17.
64. A. Lombard, *L'Abbé Du Bos, un initiateur de la pensée moderne, 1660–1742* (1913), 61–2.
65. L. Yart, 'Observations sur la comédie', *Mercure de France*, Mar. 1743, 442.
66. L'Abbé de Saint-Pierre, 'Projet pour rendre les spectacles plus utiles à L'État', *Mercure de France*, Apr. 1726, with use of the manuscript version in J. Drouet, *L'Abbé de Saint-Pierre: l'homme et l'œuvre* (1912), 289–93.
67. P. Lallemand, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'ancien Oratoire de France* (1888), 321–40.
68. A. Bachelier, *Essai sur l'Oratoire à Nantes aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1934), 104–7.
69. J. de Viguierie, *Une Œuvre d'éducation sous l'ancien régime. Les Pères de la doctrine chrétienne en France et en Italie, 1592–1792* (1976), 488–93.
70. E. Poupé, 'Histoire du collège de Draguignan', *Bull. Soc. Draguignan* (1899), 498–9. Cf. V. Fournel, 'Fabre d'Églantine', *Reu. quest. hist.* (1893), 168.
71. A. Sicard, *Les Études classiques avant la Révolution* (1887), 470.
72. *Mémoires de l'Abbé Baston, Chanoine de Rouen*, ed. J. Loth and Ch. Verger (3 vols., 1897–9), i. 65–7.
73. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 97.
74. G. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire et la société française au XVIII^e siècle* (8 vols., 1867–76), iii. 191–4.
75. P. Piron, *Lettres*, ed. E. Lavaquery (1920), 104–5.
76. Viguierie, *Une Œuvre*, 488–9.
77. E. Boyse, *Le Théâtre des Jésuites* (1880), 59–63.
78. J. de la Servière, *Un Professeur d'ancien régime: le Père Charles Porée, S.J., 1676–1741* (1899), 337. See also for the details of Porée's plays that follow.
79. P. Du Cerceau, *Les Incommodités de la grandeur, ou le duc de Bourgogne*, in *Œuvres de du Cerceau* (2 vols., 1828), i. 74–145.
80. F. Charmot, SJ., *La Pédagogie des Jésuites* (1951), 242.
81. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire et la société*, iii. 191.
82. Baston, *Mémoires*, i. 67.
83. Rollin's severe words, cited G. Snyders, *La Pédagogie en France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1965), 144.
84. Du Cerceau, *L'Enfant prodigue*, in *Œuvres*, ed. [A. Péricaud] (2 vols., 1828), i. 6–8.
85. [G.-H. Bougeant], *Voyage merveilleux du prince Fan-Férédin dans la Romancie* (1735); idem, *Amusement philosophique sur le langage des bêtes* (ed. 'Pekin', 1783; 1st edn. 1739)—contains a life of the author, 1690–1743, pp. 2–6.
86. [Bougeant], *Les Quakres françois ou les nouveaux trembleurs, comédie* (1732), 16.
87. [Bougeant], *La Femme docteur* (1732). See also idem, *Triologue sur les miracles de M. Paris* and *Relation des miracles de M. Paris* (1732), which include 'extracts' from the parish registers of Saint-Médard showing payments to witnesses

- of miracles. See also idem, *Le Saint déniché ou la banqueroute des marchands de miracles, comédie* (1732).
88. Desnoiresterres, *La Comédie satirique*, 54.
 89. H. M. C. Purkis, 'Quelques observations sur les intermèdes dans le théâtre des Jésuites en France', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1966), 182–98.
 90. A. Bossuet, 'Le Théâtre à Clermont-Ferrand aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1961), 112.
 91. R. Lebegue, 'Les Jésuites et le théâtre', in *Études sur le théâtre français* (2 vols., 1978), ii. 165–208.
 92. The ballet *Thésée et Hippolyte* (1725) had fourteen female characters, goddesses or allegories (R. W. Love, 'Les Représentations en musique au collège de Louis-le-Grand, 1650–1688', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1958), 26).
 93. J. Lejeaux, 'Les Décors de théâtre dans les collèges des Jésuites', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1955), 305–15; C. J. Gossip, 'Le Décor de théâtre au collège des Jésuites à Paris au XVII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1981), 26–38.
 94. See the Jesuits' own arguments in J. Hennequin, 'Le Théâtre des pères Jésuites en France de 1670 à 1700 d'après 40 programmes de la bibliothèque municipale de Châlons-sur-Marne', *Méms. Acad. Nat. Metz*, 6^e Sér. 3 (1975), 143.
 95. Servièrre, *Un Professeur*, 41.
 96. In 1721, when mothers were competing to have their sons play royal parts, the entire succession of Japanese kings had to be written in to win their contributions (F. de Dainville, 'Décoration théâtrale dans les collèges des Jésuites au XVIII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. théâtre* (1951), 371–2).
 97. e.g. *Le Plaisir sage et réglé*, a ballet at Rouen in 1750, *Méms. Trévoux* (Sept. 1750), 2098–2100. Discussion in R. Mercier, *La Réhabilitation de la nature humaine, 1700–1750* (1960), 357–8.
 98. P. Brumoy, *Discours sur les spectacles traduit du latin du P. Charles Porée* (1733). For Brumoy's own scriptural plays on Isaac and on Jonathan, his pastoral on the crowning of the young David, his comedies on Pandora's box and on Plutus, see *Pièces de Théâtre*, in *Recueil de divers ouvrages par le P. Brumoy* (4 vols., 1741), iv.
 99. Porée, *Discours*, 6, 11–13, 15, 21, 37, 32–6, 47 (the points in order).
 100. P. Le Brun, *Discours sur la comédie* (1731, 1st edn. 1694).
 101. *Méms. Trévoux* (Mar. 1732), in Barras, 204–6.
 102. Barras, *Stage Controversy*, 194–5.
 103. *Ibid.* 197–9.
 104. L. Riccoboni, *De la réformation théâtrale*. See X. de Courville, *Un Apôtre de l'art du théâtre au XVIII^e. Luigi Riccoboni, dit Lelio* (2 vols., 1942–4).
 105. A. Clerc, *Barthélemy-Christophe Fagan, auteur comique, 1702–1755* (1933), 91–123.
 106. Th. E. Braun, 'Le Franc de Pompignan et la moralité du théâtre', *S.V.E.C.* (1970), 128–31.
 107. Though he approved of *Iphigénie*, where love is decked in 'toutes les grâces de l'innocence et de la pudeur'.
 108. Le Franc de Pompignan, *Prométhée*, published in full by Th. E. Braun and C. R. Culley in 'Aeschylus, Voltaire and Le Franc de Pompignan's *Prométhée*', *S.V.E.C.* (1970). In fact, his *Enée et Didon* was one of the two most successful plays of 1734 (F. Moureau, in P. Rétat and J. Sgard (eds.), *Presse et histoire au XVIII^e siècle: l'année 1734* (1978), 283).

109. Meslé le Jeune, *Essai sur la comédie moderne* (1752), cited by Clerc, *Fagan*, 125–6.
110. Cited by Bourquin, ‘La Controverse’, *Reu. hist. litt. Fr.* (1919), 85; (1920), 554.
111. Gros de Besplas, *Des causes du bonheur public* (1768), 367–75.
112. J.-J. Rousseau, *Lettre à Mr d’Alembert sur les spectacles*, ed. M. Fuchs (1948).
113. For an attempt to distinguish and to reconcile Rousseau’s ideal for himself and his ideal for the rest of us, see J. McManners, *The Social Contract and Rousseau’s Revolt against Society*, Lecture (1968).
114. Cl. Alasseur, *La Comédie-Française au 18^e siècle, étude économique* (1969), 60, 78.
115. L. Péricaud, *Théâtre des Petits Comédiens de S.A.S. Monseigneur le comte de Beaujolais* (1909), 5, 62. The children mimed and adults behind scenes put in the songs and verses, while an orchestra of twenty played.
116. 1771, cited by L. Oláh, *Une Grande Dame auteur dramatique et poète au XVIII^e siècle: Mme de Montesson* (1928), 17–18. The Orléans’ theatres at Bagnolet, Villers-Cotterets, and in the hôtel Montesson are referred to. For Bagnolet see especially G. Collé, *Journal historique, 1761–2*, ed. A. Van Bev (1911), 16, 30, 54, 74, 209, 219.
117. E. Vingtrinier, *Le Théâtre à Lyon au XVIII^e siècle* (1879), 104.
118. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 380–1.
119. J. Stern, *Mesdemoiselles Colombe de la Comédie Italienne, 1751–1841* (1923), 14–16.
120. A. Babeau, *La Ville sous l’ancien régime* (2 vols., 1884), i. 232–3.
121. P. Girault de Coursac, *L’Éducation d’un roi, Louis XVI* (1972), 228–30.
122. Bachaumont, xi. 172 (30 Mar. 1778). And eight prelates were there on 9 Apr. (xi. 186). In March they saw *L’Amant romanesque* and the comic opera the *Jugement de Midas*, and in April *La Belle Arsène* with dancing.
123. D. Roche, *Le Siècle des lumières en province: académies et académiciens provinciaux, 1680–1789* (2 vols., 1978), ii. 274, 105.
124. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 244–87. For the provinces, Fuchs, *La Vie théâtrale*, 150–2, and Lagrave, ‘Les Structures du théâtre dans la province française: le cas exemplaire de Bordeaux’, in *Transactions of the Fifth International Conference on the Enlightenment III*, *S.V.E.C.* (1980), 1428.
125. Fuchs, *La Vie théâtrale*, 156.
126. Comments on the annual closure—‘Pénitence pendant quinze jours . . . pas l’ombre de spectacles, de mauvais prédicateurs et tout fermé’ (Métra, xi. 192 (15 Apr. 1781)). Cf. Grimm, iii. 3 (1 Apr. 1755), and Bachaumont, ix. 83 (14 Apr. 1776).
127. Favot, cited by Fuchs, *La Vie théâtrale*, 155.
128. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 271–2.
129. Péricaud, *Théâtre des Petits Comédiens*, 70.
130. J. Brengues, *Duclos* (1971), 29.
131. [J. Clément], *Anecdotes dramatiques* (4 vols., 1775), i. 11–12.
132. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 273–4. Fashionable Paris crowded in at the last show of the season on the eve of Passion Sunday (A. de Maricourt, ‘Lettres de l’abbé Le Gouz’, *Reu. quest. hist.* (1914), 114).
133. The old authorities are V. Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France* (1864), and L. Fontaine, *La Censure dramatique sous l’ancien régime* (1892). See W. Hanley, ‘The Policing of Thought: Censorship in 18th-century France’, *S.V.E.C.* (1980), 265–95. Robert Darnton is engaged in

- renewing the whole history of the censorship.
134. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 59–65.
 135. J.-L. Godechot, *Les Institutions de la France sous la Révolution et l'Empire* (1951), 62.
 136. L. de Loménie, *Beaumarchais et son temps* (2 vols., 1866), ii. 304–6.
 137. 'Cueillir la rose' was used of taking a girl's virginity. The lieutenant of police called in another censor and banned the play.
 138. Lagrave, *Le Théâtre*, 63–9.
 139. Larthomas, *Le Théâtre en France*, 37.
 140. Reyval, *L'Église*, 19.
 141. L. Fontaine, *Le Théâtre et la philosophie au XVIII^e siècle* (thesis, Paris, 1878), 86; Desnoiresterres, *La Comédie satirique*, 170–3.
 142. In Jean-Gaspard de Fontanelle's *Ericie ou la vestale*, the vestal virgin entertains her lover in the temple, and is condemned to die—by her father, the high priest. The censor was not sure, so the archbishop named a commission of doctors of theology and curés to investigate, and it was banned (Reyval, *L'Église*, 24). For its staging in 1789 and its failure, see M. Carlson, *The Theatre of the French Revolution* (1966), 21.
 143. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 190.
 144. *Ibid.* 186–7.
 145. Barras, *Stage Controversy*, 318–20; Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 193.
 146. Guyot, xii. 261–3. These are penalties, he says, that refer only to the 'farceurs publics et les baladins' of long ago.
 147. Péricaud, *Théâtre des Petits Comédiens*, 43–4.
 148. Grimm, viii. 347 (Oct. 1769).
 149. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 213–21.
 150. The fairground theatres remained under the lieutenant of police.
 151. As the Capuchin Héliodore of Paris pointed out in his moderate defence of the theatre (*Discours sur les sujets les plus ordinaires des désordres du monde* (4 vols., 1684), cited by Phillips, *Theatre*, 212–13).
 152. Bossuet's point in secular dress. The dramatic theorists encouraged the actor to draw on his own experience of passion—'Consultez votre cœur, c'est là qu'il faut chercher le secret de nous plaire et l'art de nous toucher' (C.-J. Dorat, *La Déclamation Théâtrale, poème* (1766), in A. Raitière, *L'Art de l'acteur selon Dorat et Samson, 1766–1863* (1959), 322).
 153. Collé, cited by Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 244.
 154. Chevrier, *Observations sur le théâtre dans lesquelles on examine avec impartialité l'état actuel des spectacles de Paris* (1755, repr. 1977), 20.
 155. D. de Boissy, *Lettres sur les spectacles* (1756), cited by Barras, *Stage Controversy*, 244–5.
 156. The *Rituel* of Châlons was the first to insert actors into the paragraph, derived from Paul V's model, refusing communion to public sinners. The dioceses of Amiens (1607), Meaux (1617), Reims (1621), and Beauvais (1637) had excluded *bistriones* from ecclesiastical sepulchre by local rulings without amending the paragraph. Though Châlons had chronological priority, the Jansenist *Rituel* which had most effect on other dioceses was that of Alet (1668, 1677)—it was probably drawn up at Port-Royal (J. Dubu, 'De quelques rituels des diocèses de France au XVII^e siècle et du théâtre', *L'Année canonique*, 6 (1959), 104–5).

157. Dubu, 'De quelques rituels', 104–5.
158. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 155. It is generally said (e.g. p. 114) that Brécourt had to abjure in the presence of notaries. It is worth noting, however, that his declaration (15 Mar. 1685) is witnessed by three *ecclesiastics* (published by G. Mongrédien, *Les Grands Comédiens du XVII^e siècle* (1927), 290).
159. M. Fuchs, 'L'Itinéraire de la troupe Delacroix en 1779', *Reu. hist. Theater* (1950), 441.
160. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 207.
161. *Ibid.* 106–7.
162. J.-E. Gueullette (ed.), *Notes et souvenirs sur le Théâtre Italien au XVIII^e siècle* (1938), 45–8. The notes are by the eighteenth-century *avocat* T.-S. Gueullette who was a witness to the marriage.
163. H. and A. Le Roux, *La Dugazon* (1926), 20–3, 37.
164. L. Jacob, *Fabre d'Églantine, chef des 'fripons'* (1946), 38–9.
165. J. Debauve, *Théâtre et spectacles à Lorient au XVIII^e siècle* (1966), 56.
166. P. Tisseau, *Une Comédienne sous la Révolution, Marie-Élisabeth Joly, 1761–1798* (n.d.), 22, 32, 129.
167. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 203.
168. Voltaire to Mme la presidente de Bernières, c.8 Oct. 1724, in *Corresp.*, rev. edn. (1968), 231 (D. 215). There is a study of Dufresny by F. Moureau (1979).
169. Marais, iv. 84.
170. Grimm, ix. 19 (19 May 1770).
171. E. H. Polinger, *Pierre Charles Roy, Playwright and Satirist, 1683–1764* (1930), 90.
172. Bachaumont, vi. 132 (25 Apr. 1772). Possibly Voisenon shared her favours with her husband. The main biographers do not mention Bachaumont's story about the death scene (M. Dumoulin, *Favart et Mme Favart; un ménage d'artistes au XVIII^e siècle* (n.d.), 147; A. Font, *Essai sur Favart et les origines de la comédie mêlée de chant* (1894), 174; A. Pougin, *Mme Favart, étude théâtrale, 1727–1772* (1912), 55).
173. C. Rivollet, *Adrienne Lecouvreur* (1925), 114–16.
174. Voltaire, 'La Mort de Mlle Lecouvreur' (1730), in *Œuvres*, ix. 370. Voltaire was always bitter about the attempt of the clergy to refuse religious burial to Molière (W. H. Barber, 'Voltaire and Molière', in W. D. Howarth and M. Thomas (eds.), *Molière: Stage and Study* (1973), 211).
175. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 410–11.
176. M. Fuchs, in his edn. of Rousseau's *Lettre à Mr d'Alembert*, p. x.
177. M. Marion, *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (2 vols., 1923), i. 113.
178. Barras, *Stage Controversy*, 182–3, 319.
179. Maugras, *Les Comédiens*, 414–21.
180. Talma's bride, older than he was, had amassed a fortune as mistress to the great. He could not find a priest to perform the ceremony until April 1791.

Chapter 35

1. Though a friend of Jansenius, Saint-Cyran was not enthusiastic about the *Augustinus* (J. Orcibal, *La Spiritualité de Saint-Cyran* (1962), 81). Arnould derived his theology from Saint-Cyran and Augustine directly, not from Jansenius (J. Laporte, *La Doctrine de Port-Royal* (2 vols., 1927), 1, p. xv), and Arnould's *Apologie de M. Jansenius* (1644) was more read in France than the *Augustinus* itself (N. Abercrombie, *The Origins of Jansenism* (1936), 214). The bishop of Ypres was far from being the dominant theological inspiration of the party going by his name.
2. See J. Orcibal, *Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, abbé de Saint-Cyran, 1581–1638* (2 vols., 1947).
3. In his *Du Mysticisme à la révolte: les Jansénistes du XVII^e siècle* (1968), A. Adam heads his chapter at this point, 'The Birth of a Party'. For the communion issue, see J. Gallerand, 'Le Jansénisme en Blésois', *Rev. hist. Église Fr.* (1969), 30–45; for casuistry, L. Cagnet's edition of the *Provinciales* (1965), pp. viii–x.
4. Jansenius over-systematized St Augustine, as St Augustine had over-systematized St Paul. Thus Jansenius was wrong as Augustine was wrong before him, which neither side could admit in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (J.-F. Thomas, *Le Problème moral à Port-Royal* (1962), 166–7, 175).
5. B. Neveu, *Érudition et religion aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1994), 385–433.
6. L. Ceysens, *Le Cardinal François Albizzi, 1593–1684* (1977), a man ruled by ambition and self-interest, ignorant of theology (pp. 245, 257, 262).
7. L. Ceysens, 'Les Cinq Propositions de Jansénius à Rome', *Rev. hist. ecclés.* (1971), 449–501.
8. P. Jansen, *Le Cardinal Mazarin et le Jansénisme* (1967), 45–53.
9. Cited in Neveu, *Érudition*, 438, 469.
10. L. Ceysens, 'Le Fait dans la condamnation de Jansénius et le serment anti-janséniste', *Rev. hist. ecclés.* (1974), 697–733.
11. C. B. Moss, *The Old Catholic Movement* (1948), 78.
12. J. A. G. Tans, 'Les Idées politiques des Jansénistes', *Neophilologus* (1956), 1–8.
13. R. Clark, *Strangers and Sojourners at Port-Royal* (1932), 131.
14. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), iii. 391.
15. H. Bremond, *Histoire littéraire du sentiment religieux en France* (6 vols., 1920), iv. 244. On Bremond see A. Blanchet, 'Henri Bremond, 1865–1933', in *Actes du Colloque d'Aix, 1966*, Fac. Lettres Aix-en-Provence (1967), 206 ff.
16. A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement janséniste* (2 vols., 1922–4).
17. Mme de Sévigné, 9 June, 31 July 1680, in *Lettres*, ed. Gérard-Gailly (3 vols., Pléiade, 1955), ii. 734, 805. Cf. the maréchal d'Harcourt's observation: 'Un Janséniste n'est souvent autre chose qu'un homme qu'on veut perdre à la cour', in G. Frêche, *Un Chancelier gallican: D'Aguesseau* (1969), 40.
18. L. Kolakowski, *Chrétiens sans Église* (Fr. trans. from Polish, 1969), 350–62.
19. See L. Goldmann, *Le Dieu caché: étude sur la vision tragique dans les Pensées de Pascal et le théâtre de Racine* (1959).
20. J. Orcibal, *Louis XIV contre Innocent XI: les appels au futur concile de 1688* (1949), 81. An example of the refinement of definition needed in B. Neveu, *Sébastien-Joseph du Cambout de Pontchâteau, 1634–1690, et ses missions à Rome* (1969), 46: 'Plutôt que Janséniste, nous qualifierons . . . Pontchâteau de port-royaliste'.

- For Louvain see M. Nuttinck, *La Vie et l'œuvre de Zeger-Bernard van Espen, un canoniste janséniste, gallican et régalien à l'Université de Louvain, 1646–1728* (1969).
21. C. A. Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal* (7 vols., 1912 edn.), v. 483, vi. 242.
 22. L. Marin, 'Philippe de Champaigne et Port-Royal', *Ann.* (1970), 9 ff.
 23. R. Clark, *Lettres de Germain Vuillart, ami de Port-Royal, à M. Louis de Pré-fontaine, 1694–1700* (1951), 162.
 24. G. Namer, *L'Abbé Le Roy et ses amis: essai sur le Jansénisme extrémiste intramondain* (1964), 59. Among other nuances in Arnauld's Gallicanism, Jacques Gres-Gayer emphasizes the crucial importance of standing for the 'truth'. The doctors of the Church must lead in expressing their opinion and even the 'simple faithful' must do so. The Christian's obedience is 'reasonable', he has the 'droit à la liberté' ('Le Gallicanisme d'Antoine Arnauld', in *Antoine Arnauld (1612–94), philosophe, écrivain, théologien*, Chroniques de Port-Royal (1995), 34, 40, 42).
 25. Namer, *L'Abbé Le Roy*, 102.
 26. *Ibid.* 44–52.

Chapter 36

1. The definitive work, L. Ceysens and J. A. G. Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus: recherches sur la genèse de la Constitution* (1987). The pioneering interpretive work was A. Le Roy, *Le Gallicanisme au 18^e siècle: la France et Rome de 1700 à 1715* (1892).
2. For Quesnel's theology, J. A. G. Tans, 'Quesnel et Jansénius', in E. J. M. van Eijl (ed.), *L'Image de C. Jansénius jusqu'à la fin du XVIII^e siècle*, Colloque, Louvain, 1985 (1987), 137–49.
3. Ceysens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 625.
4. J. Parguez, *La Bulle Unigenitus et le Jansénisme politique* (1936), 25.
5. J. F. Thomas, *La Querelle de l'Unigenitus* (1949), 52–3.
6. For Le Tellier, see G. Minois, *Le Confesseur du roi* (1988), 469–88; I. de Récalde (ed.), *L'Abbé de Margon: lettres sur le confessorat de P. Le Tellier* (1922), 249–59.
7. For Lallemand and Doucin, see Ceysens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 403–55, 456–81.
8. See H. Hillenaar, *Fénelon et les Jésuites* (1967), and 'Fénelon et Quesnel', *Rev. sc. philos. théol.* (1977), 33 ff.
9. A. Adam, *Du mysticisme à la révolte* (1968), 316.
10. *Ibid.* 322.
11. Fénelon, *Œuvres* (10 vols., 1848–52), vii. 627–8 (Ceysens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 271).
12. V. Thullier, *Rome et la France: la seconde phase du Jansénisme* (1901), 146–7.
13. P. Timothée de la Flèche, *Mémoires et lettres, 1703–30*, ed. P. Ubald d'Alençon (1907), 70 ff.
14. Le Roy, *Le Gallicanisme*, 180.

Chapter 37

1. J. Wesley, *Journals*, ed. N. Curnock (8 vols., 1906–16), ii. 45.
2. J. F. Thomas, *La Querelle de l'Unigenitus* (1949).
3. The bull in French as prepared by the Assembly of the Clergy of France is given in L. Ceyskens and J. A. G. Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus* (1987), 789–805.
4. J. A. G. Tans, 'Quesnel et Jansénius', in J. M. van Eijl (ed.), *L'Image de Jansénius jusqu'à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (1987), 137–49.
5. *Correspondance de Benoît XIV*, ed. A. de Heeckeren (2 vols., 1912), i. 781–2.
6. J. Parguez, *La Bulle Unigenitus et le Jansénisme politique* (1936), 38–9.
7. Père Timothée de la Flèche, *Mémoires et lettres, 1703–30*, ed. P. Ubald d'Alençon (1907), 81–2.
8. List of scriptural parallels in Thomas, *La Querelle*, 24 ff.
9. P. Blet, SJ, *Le Clergé de France, Louis XIV et le Saint-Siège de 1695 à 1715* (1989), 46. For the Roman theologians' discomfiture faced with Jansenist mastery of fundamentalist exegesis see B. Neveu, 'Augustinisme janséniste et magistère Romain', *XVII^e Siècle* (1982), 191 ff. For Saint Fulgentius, A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement janséniste* (2 vols., 1922–4), i. 244–6, ii. 315.
10. Dom H. Leclercq, *Histoire de la Régence* (3 vols., 1921), i. 159.
11. The theological judgements in Ceyskens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 21–114.
12. *Ibid.* 118.
13. The theologians say 'scandalosa', as do four out of five cardinals and the Pope. The chief other description is 'male sonans' (94).
14. J. Godart, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon: Benoît Fourgon, 1687–1773* (1934), 199–206.
15. Blet, *Le Clergé de France*, 388–9.
16. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), i. 3.
17. Blet, *Le Clergé de France*, 463–73.
18. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 5–6. For bishops accepting, see L. Ceyskens, 'Autour de la bulle *Unigenitus*, son acceptation par l'Assemblée du Clergé', *Reu. hist. ecclés.* (1985), 369.
19. J. M. Gres-Gayer, *Théologie et pouvoir en Sorbonne: la Faculté de Théologie de Paris et la Bulle Unigenitus, 1714–21* (1991), 25–35.
20. M. Fosseyeux, 'Le Cardinal de Noailles et l'administration du diocèse de Paris', *Reu. hist.* (1913), 271–2.
21. Ceyskens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 384.
22. Blet, *Le Clergé de France*, 534–50, 589.
23. *Ibid.* 605–9.
24. Leclercq, *Histoire*, i. 72.
25. Duclos, in Marais, i. 178.
26. Leclercq, *Histoire*, i. 78–9.
27. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 141–2.
28. Dom P. Denis, 'Dom Charles de l'Hostellerie', *Reu. Mabillon* (1909), 376.
29. Gres-Gayer, *Théologie*, 35–49.
30. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 49.
31. Dom Pierre Chastelain, *Journal*, ed. M. Jadert (1902), 44–50.
32. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 56–71.

33. Guyot, i. 139–47. The *appel comme d'abus* could not be used directly against the Pope, only against those obeying his orders.
34. L. M. Raison, 'Le Jansénisme à Rennes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1941), 9–15; A. Le Moy, *Le Parlement de Bretagne et le pouvoir royal au XVIII^e siècle* (1909), 105–6.
35. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 39–40, 104–14.
36. *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs de France (Rome)*, ed. G. Hanoteau (1911), 485–505.
37. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 105.
38. E. Préclin and E. Jarry, *Les Lutttes politiques et doctrinales aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles*, *Histoire de L'Église*, ed. A. Fliche and V. Martin, 19 (1956), i. 239.
39. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 142.
40. See J. Orcibal, *Louis XIV contre Innocent XI: les appels au futur concile de 1688* (1949).
41. For some doubts about the bishops of Lectoure and Mâcon, see E. Préclin, *Les Jansénistes au XVIII^e siècle et la Constitution civile du Clergé* (1929), 71–7. On 18 Oct. 1717, the Faculty of Theology of Paris adhered officially as an institution, 260 doctors making individual signatures (Gres-Gayer, *Théologie*, 63).
42. R. Clark, *Lettres de Germain Vuillart, ami de Port-Royal, à M. Louis de Préfontaine, 1694–1700* (1951), 72, 77, 82.
43. See V. Durand, *Le Jansénisme au XVIII^e siècle et Joachim Colbert* (1907).
44. P. Ardoin, *Le Jansénisme en basse Provence au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1936), i. 147.
45. Orcibal, *Louis XIV*, 83.
46. Durand, *Colbert*, 19–20.
47. P. Ordioni, *La Résistance gallicane et janséniste dans le diocèse d'Auxerre* (1932).
48. A. Degaert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 362.
49. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne au XVIII^e siècle* (1976), 95–8, and L. Mahieu, 'Jansénisme et anti-jansénisme dans les diocèses de Boulogne-sur-Mer et de Tournai', *Méms. Trav. Fac. cath. Lille* (1948); and C. Landrin, *Un Prélat gallican, Pierre de Langle, 1644–1724* (1905).
50. R. Taveneaux, *Le Jansénisme en Lorraine, 1640–1789* (1960), 297, 305, 316.
51. See P. Clair, *Louis Thomassin, 1628–1718* (1964).
52. M. Virieux, 'Jansénisme et Molinisme dans le clergé du diocèse de Grenoble au début du XVIII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. Église Fr.* (1974), 311; J. Emery and J. Sole, *Grenoble*, *Histoire des diocèses de France* (1979), 191–3.
53. J. Lestocquoy, *La Vie religieuse d'une province: le diocèse d'Arras* (1948), 145–50.
54. Taveneaux, *Lorraine*, 308, 350–3, 361–6.
55. E. Appolis, 'Un Prélat philojanséniste?', in A. Viala and M. Labriolle (eds.), *La Régence*, Colloque Centre Aixois d'Études 1968 (1970), 240.
56. E. Appolis, *Le Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Montpellier* (1952), 18–28.
57. Ceysens and Tans, *Autour de l'Unigenitus*, 784.
58. Dom René-Prosper Tassin, *Histoire littéraire de la congrégation de Saint-Maur* (1777), 301–6.
59. Denis, 'Dom Charles', 366–400.
60. L. M. Raison, *Le Mouvement janséniste au diocèse de Dol* (1931), 63–5, 67–70.
61. Taveneaux, *Lorraine*, 163, 403, 422, 446.
62. L. Séché, *Les Derniers Jansénistes, 1710–1870* (3 vols., 1891–3), i. 17–22.
63. Andrieu, *Le Jansénisme dans les diocèses d'Aix, de Marseille et de Fréjus* (1945); O. Marcault, *Histoire du diocèse de Tours* (3 vols., 1918), i. pp. clxxxv–ccii;

- A. Bachelier, *Le Jansénisme à Nantes* (1943).
64. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. 150.
 65. J. Guérol, 'Une Erreur Judiciaire sous la Régence—la mort de l'abbé Fleury à la Bastille', in J. Imbert (ed.), *Quelques Procès criminels des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1962), 129–38.
 66. Chastelain, *Journal*, 50.
 67. J. D. Hardy, *Judicial Politics in the Old Régime: The Parlement of Paris during the Regency* (1967), 57–60.
 68. D. Julia and P. D. McKee, 'Les Confrères de Jean Meslier, culture et spiritualité du clergé Champenois au XVII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. Église Fr.* (1983), 84.
 69. Virieux, 'Grenoble', 299–320.
 70. F. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun, 1650–1790* (1957).
 71. L. M. Raison, 'Le Mouvement Janséniste au diocèse de Dol', *Ann. Bretagne* (1930–1), 553, (1932–3), 258.
 72. L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 353–75.
 73. Ardoin, *Provence*, i. 130, 51–83, 88.
 74. *Ibid.* i. 49–50, 55–60.
 75. J. Charrier, *Histoire du Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Nevers* (1920), 33–8.
 76. For Grasse, A. Aubert, *Histoire civile et religieuse d'Antibes* (1869), 197; for Clermont, P. Lallemand, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'ancien Oratoire de France* (2 vols., 1888), i. 178; for Dol, Raison, 'Dol', 38–85.
 77. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 97–106, 132–3.
 78. Ardoin, *Provence*, i. 90–3, 156–60.
 79. L. Le Gendre, *Mémoires*, ed. M. Roux (1803), 303, 344–5.
 80. Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*, ed. R. Gross (2 vols., 1959), ii. 213.
 81. Marais, i. 461–2.
 82. G. Doublet, *Le Jansénisme dans l'ancien diocèse de Vence* (1901), 117–18, 109, 267, 297, 333.
 83. Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*, ed. Gross, ii. 216.

Chapter 38

1. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), ii. 33–6.
2. J. Buvat, *Journal de la Régence*, ed. E. Campardon (2 vols., 1909), i. 333.
3. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 38.
4. For his changing role in events, G. Frèche, *Un Chancelier Gallican: Daguesseau* (1969).
5. J. H. Shennan, 'The Political Role of the Parlement of Paris, 1715–23', *Hist. J.* (1964), 186–200; J. Egret, *Louis XV et l'opposition parlementaire, 1715–1774* (1970), 35–9.
6. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, i. pp. xiii–xiv.
7. Marais, i. 351, 369; E. de Broglie, *Bernard de Montfaucon* (1891), 16–17.
8. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 271, 273–4, 277.
9. Marais, i. 267.
10. *Ibid.* i. 247, 249, 252, 268, 310–11.

11. E. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes et Zélanti: le Tiers Parti catholique au XVIII^e siècle* (1960), 73–4.
12. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii^{xx}. 43.
13. Marais, ii. 21.
14. J. Parguez, *La Bulle Unigenitus et le Jansénisme politique* (1936), 162.
15. Marais, ii. 5.
16. *Ibid.* ii. 113.
17. E. Préclin and E. Jarry, *Les Luittes politiques et doctrinales aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (2 vols., 1956), i. 243.
18. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 98, 123–6, 140; L. Pastor, *History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages* (Eng. trans., 40 vols., 1891–1954), xxxiv. 12–26, 41; *Recueil des instructions aux ambassadeurs . . . de France, Rome 1688–1723*, ed. G. Hanotaux, xvii (1911), 564, 574.
19. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, iii. 367–8.
20. See M. Boutry, *Intrigues et mission du Cardinal de Tencin* (1902), 59.
21. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 55.
22. J.-F. Thomas, *La Querelle de l'Unigenitus* (1949), 153–5, 163.
23. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 356.
24. A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement Janséniste* (2 vols., 1922–4), i. 209.
25. R. Taveneaux, *Le Jansénisme en Lorraine, 1640–1789* (1960), 514.
26. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme*, ii. 239–47.
27. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 56–62, 109; Pastor, *History of Popes*, xxxiv. 107–22, 205–30.
28. Marais, iii. 177–8.
29. G. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury et le mouvement Janséniste* (1925), 43–4.
30. P. Ardoin, *Le Jansénisme en basse Provence au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1936), i. 90 ff.
31. Barbier, i. 413–14 for the accusation.
32. Gazier, *Histoire générale*, i. 300.
33. A. Dorsanne, *Journal qui contient tout ce qui s'est passé à Rome et en France au sujet de la Constitution Unigenitus*, ed. Du Pac de Bellegarde (6 vols., 1757), ii. 61.
34. Hardy, *Cardinal de Fleury*, 48. For what follows, *ibid.* 9–18.
35. *Ibid.* 102.
36. *Ibid.* 49.
37. *Ibid.* 52.
38. *Ibid.* 40.
39. V. Durand, *Le Jansénisme au XVIII^e siècle et Joachim Colbert, évêque de Mont-pellier* (1907), 177–8.
40. J. Sareil, *Les Tencin* (1969), 160.
41. Hardy, *Cardinal de Fleury*, 77–8.
42. G. Doublet, *Le Jansénisme dans l'ancien diocèse de Vence* (1901), 238–9.
43. Dom B. Dassac, 'La Congrégation de Saint-Maur d'après le journal et les lettres de Dom Benoist Dassac, 1752–1826', *Rev. monde cath.* 113 (1893), 52.
44. Marais, iii. 254.
45. Barbier, ii. 21 (cf. 54, 76).
46. M. Fitzsimmons, *The Parisian Order of Barristers and the French Revolution* (1987), 5–6, 12.
47. D. A. Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens: The Making of a Political Elite in Old Régime France* (1994), 72 ff.

48. C. Maire, 'L'Église et la nation: du dépôt de la vérité au dépôt des lois', *Ann.* (1991), 1184.
49. S. Maza, 'Le Tribunal de la nation: les mémoires judiciaires et l'opinion publique', *Ann.* (1987), 75–98.
50. Parguez, *La Bulle Unigenitus*, 71.
51. Barbier, ii. 45.
52. *Lettre des . . . évêques au Roy au sujet du jugement rendu à Ambrun contre M. l'évêque de Senes* (1728) (Bodl. 3Δ 524, 5–8).
53. Marais, iii. 562–3.
54. Durand, *Le Jansénisme . . . Colbert*, 243–5.
55. Ibid.

Chapter 39

1. P. Feret, *La Faculté de théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres* (7 vols., 1900–10), vii. 271.
2. A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement Janséniste* (2 vols., 1922), i. 313.
3. Voltaire, *Commentaire sur l'Esprit des Lois*, in *Œuvres*, xxx. 406.
4. Cited by L. Séché, *Les Derniers Jansénistes, 1710–1870* (3 vols., 1891–3), i. 75–6.
5. See E. Dammig, *Il movimento Giansenista a Roma nella secondametá del secolo XVIII* (1943).
6. E. Appolis, *Le Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Lodève au 18^e siècle* (1952).
7. M. Haillant, 'Jansénius et ses défenseurs dans l'instruction pastorale de Fénelon', in E. J. M. van Eijl (ed.), *L'Image de C. Jansénius jusqu'à la fin du XVIII^e siècle*, Colloque, Louvain, 1985 (1987), 119–36.
8. A. Bachelier, *Le Jansénisme à Nantes* (1934), 193.
9. E. Préclin, *L'Union des Églises gallicane et anglicane. Une tentative: P. F. Le Courayer et Guillaume Wake* (1928), 27–8.
10. C. H. Hamel, *Histoire de l'église de Saint-Sulpice* (1900), 165–6.
11. R. Taveneaux, *La Vie quotidienne des Jansénistes, 17^e–18^e siècles* (1973), 123–4.
12. Séché, *Les Derniers Jansénistes*, i. 47.
13. Taveneaux, *La Vie quotidienne*, 197, 3, 81.
14. A. Gazier, 'Les Écoles de charité du faubourg Saint-Antoine', *Reu. internat. enseign.* (1906), 217–37, 314–26. But for an example of partisan teaching, A. Bachelier, 'Le Jansénisme paroissial dans le diocèse de Nantes', *Bull. Soc. Nantes* (1933), 146 ff.
15. Ch. Bost, 'La Conversion de Pierre de Claris, abbé de Florians', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1924), 33–42. See more generally, B. Chedozeau, 'Aux sources de la publication de la Bible catholique en France', in van Eijl (ed.), *L'Image*, 93–103.
16. Taveneaux, *La Vie quotidienne*, 129–30.
17. G. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury et le mouvement Janséniste* (1925), 327.
18. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), ii^{ss}. 56.
19. See his *Le Saint déniché ou la banqueroute des marchands de miracles, comédie* (1732) and *La Femme docteur, ou la théologie tombée en quenouille* of the same year.
20. L. Froger, 'Les Camaldules du Maine', *Reu. Maine* (1877), 192–5.

21. E. Appolis, 'L'Histoire provinciale du Jansénisme au 18^e siècle', *Ann.* (1952), 874. For Jobel, Taveneaux, *La Vie quotidienne*, 142–3.
22. P. Lefebvre, 'Jansénistes et catholiques contre Rousseau', *Ann. Soc. Rousseau* (1970).
23. F. de Dainville, 'La Carte du Jansénisme à Paris en 1739 d'après les papiers de la Nonciature', *Bull. Soc. Paris* (1969), 133–42; M.-J. Michel, 'Clergé et pastorale janséniste à Paris, 1669–1730', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1979), 179–97.
24. Barbier, ii. 266 (cf. ii. 397–8).
25. S. Pillorget, *Claude-Henri Feydeau de Marville, lieutenant général de police de Paris, 1740–7* (1978), 167–8.
26. L. Brochard, *Saint-Gervais: histoire de la paroisse* (1950), 155–6.
27. C.-L. Maire, *Les Convulsionnaires de Saint-Médard*, Collection Archives (1981), 44.
28. See M. Brongniart, *La Paroisse Saint-Médard au faubourg Saint-Marceau* (1951).
29. D. Roche, *The People of Paris: An Essay in Popular Culture*, trans. E. T. M. Evans (1987), 199–215.
30. From here on the basic authority is R. B. Kreiser, *Miracles, Convulsions & Ecclesiastical Politics in early 18th-Century France* (1978). I regret that when reviewing this volume when it first appeared I did less than justice to its well-nigh definitive scholarship and incisive presentation.
31. *Ibid.* 74–5.
32. L. Paris, *Histoire de l'abbaye d'Avenay* (1879), 491–6; V. Durand, *Le Jansénisme au XVIII^e siècle et Joachim Colbert, évêque de Montpellier* (1907), 315–16.
33. P. Deyon, *Amiens, capitale provinciale: étude sur la société urbaine du XVII^e siècle* (1969), 425.
34. J. Godart, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon: Benoît Fourgon, 1687–1773* (1934), 111–17.
35. Kreiser, *Miracles*, 125.
36. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury*, 47.
37. Barbier, ii. 177.
38. P. Gagnol, *Le Jansénisme convulsionnaire et l'affaire de la Planchette* (1911), 13–14.
39. Cited by Durand, *Le Jansénisme*, 339.
40. Séché, *Les Derniers Jansénistes*, i. 59.
41. Barbier, ii. 199; A. Mousset, *L'Étrange Histoire des convulsionnaires de Saint-Médard* (1953), 63.
42. Godefroy, 'Le Chevalier de Folard', *Reu. Mabillon* (1936), 158–62.
43. Barbier, ii. 242–4. Le Paige, the most learned of the Jansenist canonists, was also a believer in convulsion (J. Rogister, 'Louis-Adrien Le Paige and the Attack on *L'Esprit* and the *Encyclopédie* in 1759', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* (1977), 522–3).
44. Gagnol, *Le Jansénisme*, 28, 31.
45. Kreiser, *Miracles*, 259 n.
46. Maire, *Les Convulsionnaires*, 54–5.
47. P. Ordioni, *La Résistance gallicane et janséniste dans le diocèse d'Auxerre, 1704–60* (1932).
48. Durand, *Le Jansénisme*, 317, 327–9.
49. Cited by Ph. de Félice, *Foules en délire* (1947), 247–8.
50. For Etamare, B. Neveu, 'Port-Royal à l'âge des Lumières: les *Pensées* et les *Anecdotes* de l'abbé d'Etamare, 1682–1770', in *Érudition et religion aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1994), 277–331.

51. Gagnol, *Le Jansénisme*, 120–6.
52. Maire, *Les Convulsionnaires*, 201. What follows is from the documents, 185–98.
53. Mousset, *Saint-Médard*, 129, 147–52.
54. Kreiser, *Miracles*, 305–7.
55. Appolis, ‘L’Histoire provinciale’, 91.
56. Kreiser, *Miracles*, 325–36.
57. Analysis of the letter in B. Lacombe, *La Résistance janséniste et parlementaire au temps de Louis XV: l’abbé Nigon de Berty, 1701–73* (1948). Berty, as *promoteur*, was the writer.
58. See J.-R. Armogathe, ‘A propos des miracles de Saint-Médard: les preuves de Carré de Montgeron et le positivisme des Lumières’, *Reu. hist. religions* (1971), 135–60.
59. H. Pensa, *Sorcellerie et religion . . . aux 17^e et 18^e siècles* (1935), 317, 326, 295.
60. P. Pinseau, *Gien sous l’ancien régime* (1922), 166–7.
61. Cited by E. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes et Zélanti: le Tiers-Parti catholique au 18^e siècle* (1960), 457–8. Voltaire said the same (*Siècle de Louis XIV*, ed. R. Gross (1959), 220). Contemporary views of the damage, Barbier, ii. 501, and Diderot, *Pensées philosophiques*, liii, ed. R. Niklaus (1950), 38–9.

Chapter 40

1. Barbier, ii. 128–9.
2. P. Lallemand, *Histoire de l’éducation dans l’ancien Oratoire* (1889), 170–95; A. Bachelier, *Le Jansénisme à Nantes* (1934), 79–118.
3. R. Taveneaux, *Le Jansénisme en Lorraine, 1640–1789* (1960), 657.
4. L. Froger, ‘Les Camaldules du Maine’, *Reu. Maine* (1881), 168–74.
5. P. Feret, *L’Abbaye de Sainte-Geneviève et la Congrégation de France* (2 vols., 1883), ii. 152–60.
6. A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement Janséniste* (2 vols., 1922), i. 329.
7. M. Lecomte, ‘L’Histoire littéraire de la France par Dom Rivet et autres’, *Reu. Mabillon* (1906–7), 217–22.
8. A. Gazier, ‘La Bastille en 1745’, *Méms. Soc. Paris* (1882), 11 ff.
9. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d’Orléans de la Motte, évêque d’Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 97–100.
10. J. M. Alliot, *Notre-Dame du Val de Gif* (1892), 267–75.
11. L. M. Raison, ‘Le Mouvement janséniste au diocèse de Rennes’, *Ann. Bretagne* (1942), 6–97; Gazier, *Histoire générale*, i. 328–9.
12. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 371–5.
13. Barbier, iii. 10–11; Alliot, *Val de Gif*, 255, 262.
14. E. Appolis, ‘Un Prélat philojanséniste?’, in A. Viala and M. Labriolle (eds.), *La Régence*, Colloque, Centre Aixois d’Études, 1968 (1970), 71–2; idem, *Entre Jansénistes et Zélanti: le Tiers-Parti catholique au 18^e siècle* (1960), 11–12; L. Remacle, *Ultramontains et gallicans au 18^e siècle: Honoré de Quiqueran de Beaujeu, évêque de Castres, et Jacques de Forbin-Janson, archevêque d’Arles* (1872), 168–9.
15. V. Durand, *Le Jansénisme au 18^e siècle et Joachim Colbert, évêque de Montpellier* (1907), 105, 348–9.

16. E. Jaloustre, 'Un Janséniste en exil, Jean Soanen, évêque de Senez, à l'abbaye de la Chaise-Dieu', *Bull. Auvergne* (1902), 234–5.
17. J. Charrier, *Histoire du Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Nevers* (1920), 42, 44–6, 56–7.
18. P. Ordioni, *La Résistance gallicane et janséniste dans le diocèse d'Auxerre, 1704–60* (1932), 90–100.
19. L. Pingaud, *Les Saulx-Tavannes* (1876), 264.
20. A. Playoust-Chaussis, *La Vie religieuse dans le diocèse de Boulogne, 1725–90* (1976), 95–120.
21. For this paragraph see E. Sévestre, *La Vie religieuse en Normandie au 18^e siècle* (2 vols., 1943), i. 137; O. Hufton, *Bayeux in the Late 18th Century* (1967), 26; R. Taveneaux, *Lorraine, passim*; Degert, *Dax*, 380–6.
22. S. Pillorget, *Feydeau de Marville, lieutenant-général de police de Paris, 1740–7* (1978), 156–8.
23. Charrier, *Nevers*, 62–5.
24. F. Tuloup, *Saint-Malo, histoire religieuse* (1975), 86.
25. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 39 ff.
26. E. Appolis, *Le Jansénisme dans le diocèse de Lodève au 18^e siècle* (1952), 39–94, 235–6.
27. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 217.
28. J. Blampignon, *L'Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 50–78; François-Joachim de Pierre, cardinal de Bernis, *Mémoires et lettres, 1715–58*, ed. F. Masson (2 vols., 1878), i. 76.
29. L. Brochard, *Saint-Gervais: histoire de la paroisse* (1950), 155–6; M. Brongniart, *La Paroisse Saint-Médard au faubourg Saint-Marceau* (1951), 70–8.
30. Gazier, *Histoire générale*, ii. 8–9.
31. J. Sareil, *Les Tencin, histoire d'une famille au 18^e siècle* (1969), 212, 245–50. But when it came to his fortune, Tencin left it to his family (G. Armigon, *Banquiers des pauvres* (n.d.), 83–8).
32. M. Antoine, *Le Conseil du roi sous le règne de Louis XV* (1970), 50–6. The figures for imprisonments in the Bastille were: the regent and Fleury, 242, most concerning publications, and a further 125 convulsionaries. After 1743, Louis XV imprisoned 43 in the first category, and 47 in the second. See C. Quétel, *De par le Roi: essai sur les Lettres de cachet* (1981), 69.
33. Barbier, ii. 115–16.
34. G. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury et le mouvement janséniste* (1925), 151–4.
35. Président Hénault, *Mémoires*, ed. F. Rousseau (1911), 319–20.
36. A. Floquet, *Histoire du parlement de Normandie* (7 vols., 1840), v. 254–5; A. Le Moy, *Le Parlement de Bretagne et le pouvoir royal au XVIII^e siècle* (1909), 155–9.
37. Hardy, *Le Cardinal de Fleury*, 224–6.
38. Marais, iv. 210–14, 278–80.
39. Barbier, ii. 297.
40. Marais, iv. 447.
41. P. R. Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Régime France, 1720–1745* (1996), 249. I regret that this study came out too late for me to profit by its new insights on this topic and on the influence of Court factions at Versailles.
42. Barbier, ii. 373–4.

Chapter 41

1. François-Joachim de Pierre, cardinal de Bernis, *Mémoires et lettres, 1715–58*, ed. F. Masson (2 vols., 1878), i. 83.
2. According to A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement Janséniste* (2 vols., 1922), ii. 10, he was a Jansenist. But the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* (Jan. 1747) does not remark on this as would be expected.
3. J. Rogister, *Louis XV and the Parlement of Paris, 1737–55* (1995), 77, cites letters of Maurepas, 25 July, 1 Aug. This is the definitive work on the subject.
4. E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1703–81* (2 vols., 1882), i. 80.
5. E. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes et Zélanti: le Tiers-Parti catholique au 18^e siècle* (1960), 72–94, indispensable for this chapter.
6. S. Pillorget, *Claude-Henri Feydeau de Marville, lieutenant-général de police de Paris, 1740–7* (1978), 181–2.
7. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 292.
8. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 222.
9. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 5 June 1749, 8 May 1750.
10. *Ibid.* 9 July, 28 Dec. 1748.
11. M. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique à la fin de l'ancien régime: le cardinal de Luynes, archevêque de Sens, 1753–1788* (1966), 56–8.
12. Rogister establishes the genuineness of this letter (*Louis XV*, 80).
13. Marais, ii. 177 (8 July 1721).
14. L. Paris, *Histoire de l'abbaye d'Avenay* (1879), 491–2.
15. P. Guillaume, *Essai sur la vie religieuse dans l'Orléanais* (3 fasc. dupl. 1959), 425–7.
16. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, Sept. 1730–Mar. 1731.
17. L. M. Raison, 'Le Mouvement Janséniste au diocèse de Rennes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1941), 244.
18. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 391.
19. L. Remacle, *Ultramontains et Gallicans au 18^e siècle: Honoré de Quiqueron de Beaujeu, évêque de Castres, et Jacques de Forbin-Janson, archevêque d'Arles* (1872), 161.
20. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 1 May, 12 June 1746.
21. *Ibid.* 20 Feb. 1746.
22. *Ibid.* 29 May 1746.
23. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d'Orléans de la Motte, évêque d'Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 101–4.
24. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 4 Sept. 1746.
25. See J. McManners, *Death and the Enlightenment* (1981), chs. 7 and 8.
26. Le Franc de Pompignan, *Le Vritable Usage de l'autorité séculaire dans les matières qui concernent la Religion* (1753), 15, 84–6, 141–54.
27. Guyot, lvii. 126–31 ('Sacrement').
28. Gazier, *Histoire générale*, ii. 59.
29. Luynes, ix. 439 (July 1749).
30. Regnault, *Beaumont*, i. 163–8.
31. Rogister, *Louis XV*, 102.
32. Barbier, iii. 129.

33. A. P. Herlaut, 'Les Enlèvements d'enfants à Paris en 1720 et 1750', *Reu hist.* (1922), 203–25; Ch. Romon, 'L'Affaire des enlèvements d'enfants dans les archives du Châtelet, 1749–50', *Reu hist.* (1983), 55–94; A. Farges and J. Revel, 'Les Règles de l'émeute', in J. Nicolas (ed.), *Mouvements populaires et sociaux, 16^e–19^e siècles* (1985), 635.
34. Regnault, *Beaumont*, i. 184–5, 196–201.
35. J. Egret, *Louis XV et l'opposition parlementaire, 1715–74* (1970), so far as Paris is concerned, is supplanted by Rogister, *Louis XV*.
36. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 221; Gazier, *Histoire générale*, ii. 61–2.
37. D'Argenson, vii. 184.
38. F. Roquain, 'Les Refus de sacrements, 1752–4', *Reu hist.* (1877), 247, 250, 253.
39. D'Argenson, vii. 168.
40. Rogister, *Louis XV*, 115.
41. *Ibid.*, 116–20; Regnault, *Beaumont*, i. 220–2.
42. Rogister, *Louis XV*, 136.
43. Vallery-Radot, *Un Administrateur ecclésiastique*, 60–6.
44. Rogister, *Louis XV*, 156.
45. But the king could not rescue the curé of Saint-Médard (H. Brongniart, *La Paroisse Saint-Médard* (1951), 86–8).
46. Important new discussion in Rogister, *Louis XV*, 176 ff. The clique of Jansenists in the parlement was small, say 18 with 10 of them totally committed. See Gazier, *Histoire générale*, i. 104–5; Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France* (1975), 35–59; and J. Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754–74* (1995). I regret that this important study was not available when this chapter was drafted.
47. Rogister, *Louis XV*, 222–6.
48. Egret, *Louis XV*, 64–6; A. Le Moy, *Le Parlement de Bretagne et le pouvoir royal au XVIII^e siècle* (1909), 186–8; L. M. Raison, 'Le Mouvement janséniste au diocèse de Dol', *Ann. Bretagne* (1943), 3–9, 12–25; J. Parguez, *La Bulle Unigenitus et le Jansénisme politique* (1936), 184–6.
49. D'Argenson, v. 443–4 (Apr. 1749). Cf. Bernis (*Mémoires*, i. 338): 'le Parlement n'a de force que par celle de la voix publique'.
50. The complex negotiations are treated for the first time by Rogister, *Louis XV*, 222–40.
51. Bernis, *Mémoires*, i. 201.
52. *Relation de ce qui s'est passé au sujet du refus de sacrements fait par le chapitre d'Orléans en France* (n.d.); 'P. C.' (ed.), 'Le Journal de guerre de M. Nicolas Segretier, curé de Saint-Pierre de Meung-sur-Loire', *Bull. Soc. Orléanais* (1959), 170–6.
53. Luynes, xiv. 11; D'Argenson, viii. 425–8.
54. D'Argenson, viii. 453.
55. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 235–7; Gazier, *Histoire générale*, ii. 92–4.
56. P. Nau, 'À l'origine des encycliques modernes: un épisode de la lutte des évêques et des parlements, 1755–6', *Reu hist. droit fr.* (1956), 225–67. Negotiations at Rome covered in M. Boutry, *Choiseul à Rome, 1754–57* (1895).
57. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes*, 243–4.
58. A. Britsch, *La Jeunesse de Philippe Égalité* (1926), 136.

59. J. G. Flammermont, *Les Remontrances du Parlement de Paris au XVIII^e siècle* (3 vols., 1888–98), ii. 138.
60. Barbier, vii. 264.
61. D'Argenson, ix. 350.
62. *Lettres du président de Bosses*, ed. Y. Bézard (1929), 25 (21 July 1753). Bosses was of the parlement of Dijon.
63. Egret, *Louis XV*, 81; D. Van Kley, *The Damians Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750–70* (1984), 102–4.
64. His policy was to ‘manage’ the parlement behind the scenes (Bernis, *Mémoires*, i. 310–48).
65. Gazier, *Histoire générale*, ii. 110–12.

Chapter 42

1. P. Delattre, *Les Établissements des jésuites en France . . . répertoire topobibliographique* (5 vols., 1949–57), i, pp. iii–vi.
2. See E. Durtelle de Saint-Sauveur, *Le Collège de Rennes depuis sa fondation jusqu'au départ des jésuites, 1536–1762* (1918).
3. J. Allanic, ‘Histoire du collège de Vannes’, *Ann. Bretagne* (1902–3), 67–73.
4. See S. Canel, *La C^{te} de Jésus au diocèse de Nantes, 1663–1762* (1946).
5. J. Pra, *Les Jésuites à Grenoble* (1901), 136, 282.
6. Barbier, ii. 75–6 (Aug. 1729).
7. G. Dupont-Ferrier, *Du Collège de Clermont au lycée Louis-le-Grand, 1563–1920* (2 vols., 1921–3), i. 43–60.
8. F. de Dainville, SJ, *Les Jésuites et l'éducation* (2 vols., 1940), i. 368.
9. Pra, *Grenoble*, 299–301.
10. G. Rochemonteix, SJ, *Un Collège des Jésuites aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles: le collège Henri IV à La Flèche* (4 vols., 1889), iii. 201.
11. F. Charmot, *La Pédagogie des jésuites* (1991), 367.
12. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, iii. 51; P. Pinard, ‘Les Élèves des collèges des jésuites du XVI^e siècle au XVIII^e siècle’, *L'Information hist.* (1979), 737.
13. Dainville, *Les Jésuites*, 369–70.
14. H. Dehérain, *La Vie de Pierre Ruffin orientaliste et diplomate, 1742–1824* (2 vols., 1929–30), i. 4–7.
15. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, iv. 21.
16. *Ibid.* iii. 4–15, 26–34. There is a brilliant and astonishingly learned study of rhetoric by Marc Fumaroli of the Académie Française, *L'Âge de l'éloquence: rhétorique et 'res literaria', de la Renaissance au seuil de l'époque classique* (1980).
17. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, iii. 136–94.
18. C. Daniel, *Les Jésuites instituteurs de la jeunesse française au XVII^e et XVIII^e siècle* (1880), 13.
19. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, iv. 131.
20. F. K. Montgomery, *La Vie et l'œuvre du Père Buffier* (1930), 72–125; see also F. de Dainville, *La Géographie des humanistes* (1940).
21. Dupont-Ferrier, *Clermont*, i. 153–4.
22. Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*. Discussion of his attitude in J. McManners, ‘Voltaire and the Monks’, in *Studies in Church History* (1985), 319–42.
23. L. Le Gendre, *Mémoires*, ed. M. Roux (1863), 220–1.

24. A. M. Chouillet-Roche, 'Le Clavecin oculaire du P. Castel', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1930), 141–57.
25. D'Argenson, i. 18; J. de la Servière, *Un Professeur d'ancien régime, Le Père Charles Porée S.J., 1676–1741* (1899), 60.
26. G. Guitton, *Les Jésuites à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV* (1953), 150–7.
27. R. Grimley, *Jean d'Alembert, 1717–83* (1963), 34–5.
28. J. F. Marmontel, *Mémoires*, ed. J. Renwick (2 vols., 1972), i. 8 ff.
29. Dupont-Ferrier, *Clermont*, i. 67–74.
30. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, ii. 274–332.
31. R. W. Love, 'Les Représentations en musique au collège de Louis-le-Grand, 1650–88', *Rev. hist. théâtre* (1958), 26. Other articles on Jesuit ballet in the same journal in 1951 (Dainville), 1955 (Lejeaux), 1961 (Bossuet), 1966 (Purkis).
32. L. Blond, SJ, *La Maison Professe des jésuites de la rue Saint-Antoine à Paris* (1956), 76. For the *scriptores*, C. Northeast, *The Parisian Jesuits and the Enlightenment 1700–62* (1991)—a masterly study.
33. See A. R. Desautels, SJ, *Les 'Mémoires de Trévoux' et le mouvement des idées au XVIII^e siècle* (1956).
34. Bernis, *Mémoires et lettres, 1715–58*, ed. F. Masson (2 vols., 1878), i. 18–19.
35. Marais, iv. 331 (31 Jan. 1731).
36. Blond, *La Maison Professe*, 88–9.
37. G. Debien, *Les Esclaves aux Antilles françaises* (1974), 258–84.
38. A. Gisle, *L'Esclavage aux Antilles françaises, XVII^e–XIX^e siècles* (1905), 178; C. Frostin, 'Méthodologie missionnaire et sentiment religieux en Amérique française aux 17^e et 18^e siècles: le cas de Saint-Domingue', *Cahiers hist.* (1979), 19–55.
39. L. Podiot, *Études sur les 'Relations' des jésuites de la Nouvelle France* (1900), 23.
40. J. H. Kennedy, *Jesuits and Savages in New France* (1950), 178–9.
41. *Mém. Trévoux*, Oct. 1741, Nov. 1744.
42. J. Davy, 'La Condamnation en Sorbonne des *Nouveaux mémoires de la Chine*', in *Recherches des sciences religieuses* (1950), 366–97. A. Brou, SJ, and Du Halde, 'Les Jésuites sinologues de Pékin et leurs éditeurs de Paris', *Rev. hist. missions* (1934), 555–66.
43. G. Minois, *Le Confesseur du roi: les directeurs de conscience sous la monarchie française* (1988), 531–2.
44. G. Maugras, *La Cour de Lunéville au XVIII^e siècle* (1906), 23–4, 37, 153–9.
45. J. L. Soulavie, *Mémoires et anecdotes de la Cour de France* (1802), 108.
46. Bernis, *Mémoires*, ii. 74.
47. A. Delahante, *Une Famille de finance au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1880), i. 291–2.
48. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–88* (1901), 114.
49. Blond, *La Maison Professe*, 81.
50. Delattre, *Les Établissements*, i. 65–6, 75; ii. 676; iv. 1226, 2146, 2342, 947.
51. L. Châtellier, *Tradition chrétienne et renouveau catholique dans l'ancien diocèse de Strasbourg, 1650–1770* (1981), 239–42.
52. Delattre, *Les Établissements*, iii. 948–9.
53. See Père Jean Crasset, *Histoire abrégée des congrégations de la Très Sainte Vierge*, ed. P. A. Carayon (1863), and Blond, *La Maison Professe*, 125–36.
54. Pra, *Grenoble*, 302–41.
55. Guitton, *Lyon*, 60–2.

56. Rochemonteix, *La Flèche*, iv. 256–7.
57. *Vie de Marquis-Ducastel, curé de Sainte-Suzanne*, ed. F. Pichon (1873), 7–8.
58. J.-B.-L. Gresset, *Œuvres* (2 vols., 1811), ii. 280–1. Perceptive study of Gresset in C. M. Northeast, *The Parisian Jesuits and the Enlightenment, 1700–1762* (1991), esp. 209–11.

Chapter 43

1. The story is supposed to come from Arnauld d'Andilly, but I have not found it in his journals. On the end of the Jesuits generally see P. Dudon, 'De la suppression de la C^{ie} de Jésus', *Rev. quest. hist.* (1938), 1–55.
2. C.-F.-X. Millot, *Mémoires*, ed. L. Pingaud, *Nouvelle revue rétrospective*, 8 (1893), 73–120, 145–92, 217–35.
3. Cl. Langlois, 'Les Jésuites en France vers 1750', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1976), 83–5.
4. A. Kleinclausz, *Histoire de Lyon* (2 vols., 1948), ii. 205.
5. C. Desplat, 'Le Parlement de Navarre et l'expulsion des Jésuites', *Ann. Midi* (1971), 381.
6. J. Blampignon, *L'Épiscopat de Massillon* (1884), 22.
7. *Mémoires de l'Abbé Baston*, ed. J. Loth and C. Verger (3 vols., 1897), i. 22–5. (There were the inevitable anticlerical jokes about homosexuality, e.g. Barbier, i. 426 (May 1726); J.-N. Billaud-Varenne, 'Mémoires', *Rév. fr.* (1888), 929.)
8. J. Allanic, 'Histoire du collège de Vannes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1902–3), 78–9.
9. J. M. F. Faucillon, *Le Collège des Jésuites à Montpellier, 1629–1762* (1857), 8–14, 64–6, 79, 112–13.
10. L. Blond, *La Maison Professe des Jésuites de la rue Saint-Antoine à Paris* (1956), 94; J. Godart, *Le Jansénisme à Lyon* (1934), 65; E.-G. Léonard, *Mon Village sous Louis XV* (1941), 110. At Lyon, profits of 50,000 livres a year. At Rodez, a cancer cure at 3 livres, 12 sous a time.
11. A. Bernard, 'La Municipalité de Brest de 1750 à 1790', *Ann. Bretagne* (1918–19), 342–3.
12. P. Delattre, *Les Établissements des jésuites en France . . . répertoire topobibliographique* (5 vols., 1949–57), i. p. xiii (over 200 such annexations in the century).
13. C. Jourdain, *Histoire de l'Université de Paris aux 17^e et 18^e siècles* (2 vols., 1862–6), i. 196.
14. *Ibid.* i. 255; G. Dupont-Ferrier, *Du Collège de Clermont au lycée Louis-le-Grand, 1563–1920* (2 vols., 1921–3), i. 24, 93; A. Douarche, *L'Université de Paris et les jésuites* (1888), 66–70, 294–300.
15. G. Boussinesq and G. Laurent, *Histoire de Reims* (2 vols., 1933), i. 211–13.
16. P. Ardoin, *La Bulle Unigenitus dans les diocèses d'Aix, Arles, Marseille, Fréjus et Toulon* (2 vols., 1936), i. 40, 66–7.
17. M. Bordes, *Contribution à l'étude de l'enseignement et de la vie intellectuelle dans les pays de l'intendance d'Auch au XVIII^e siècle* (1958), 14; Marais, i. 356–8 (Sept. 1722).
18. *Lettres de M. de Senex* (5 vols., 1750), i. 161–2.
19. R. Lançon, 'Le Collège des jésuites de Rodez', *Rev. Rouergue* (1980), 332.
20. L. Pastor, *History of the Popes* (Eng. trans., 40 vols., 1891–1953), xxiv. 80.

21. Blond, *La Maison Professe*, 114.
22. See K. M. Baker (ed.), *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, i: *The Old Regime* (1987), and D. Echeverria, *The Maupeou Revolution, 1770–4* (1985).
23. For Le Paige see J. Rogister, 'Louis-Adrien Le Paige and the Attack on *L'Esprit* and the *Encyclopédie* in 1759', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* (1977), 522–38.
24. For all this paragraph see Catherine Northeast's masterly study, *The Parisian Jesuits and the Enlightenment, 1700–62* (1991). See also A. R. Desautels, *Les 'Mémoires de Trévoux' et le mouvement des idées au XVIII^e siècle* (1956).
25. J. McManners, 'Voltaire and the Monks', *Studies in Church History* (1985), 319–42; J. N. Pappas, 'La Rupture entre Voltaire et les jésuites', *Lettres romanes* (1959), 251–70.
26. G. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire et la société française au 18^e siècle*, 2nd edn. (8 vols., 1867–76), v. 415; cf. vi, 57–63. The *Relation de la maladie, de la mort et de l'apparition du jésuite Berthier* is in *Œuvres*, xxiv. 95–101.
27. Saint-Simon, viii. 413.
28. Cited by R. Pomeau, *La Religion de Voltaire* (1956), 40–2. The novel is the chevalier d'Arcq's *Le Roman du jour*.
29. J. F. Marmontel, *Mémoires*, ed. J. Renwick (2 vols., 1972), i. 63.
30. Marais, iii. 181–3.
31. D. Van Kley, *The Jansenists and the Expulsion of the Jesuits from France* (1975), 34–5; Voltaire and the more sophisticated thinkers were not moved by the 'despotism' argument (Northeast, *Parisian Jesuits*, 191–3).
32. D'Argenson, ix. 121–2 (Oct. 1755).
33. R. Etiemble, *Les Jésuites en Chine, 1552–1733: la querelle des rites* (1966); R. Gernet, *China and the Christian Impact: A Conflict of Cultures*, trans. J. Lloyd (1985).
34. Pastor, *Popes*, xxxiv. 76–81, 195.
35. J. Brucker, 'La Mission de Chine de 1722 à 1735', *Reu. quest. hist.* (1881), 491 ff., see also *Reu. quest. hist.* (1885), 504–5.
36. Marais, i. 406, 310–11.
37. J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence* (3 vols., 1929–33), ii. 99.
38. A. Gazier, *Histoire générale du mouvement janséniste* (2 vols., 1922), ii. 83–91.
39. (Fitz-James), *Mandement et instruction pastorale de Mgr L'Évêque de Soissons* (2 vols., 1760), i. 10.
40. There was a great deal more to Hardouin's far-ranging scholarship (see Northeast, *Parisian Jesuits*, esp. 81–8).
41. The indispensable source is D. Van Kley, *The Damiens Affair and the Unraveling of the Ancien Régime, 1750–70* (1984); see also P. Rétat, *L'Attentat de Damiens: discours sur l'événement au XVIII^e siècle* (1979).
42. E. Regnault, *Christophe de Beaumont, archevêque de Paris, 1734–81* (2 vols., 1882), i. 373.
43. J. Brengues, *Ch. Duclos* (1971), 424.
44. See P. Blet, 'Jésuites gallicans au XVII^e siècle?', *Arch. Hist. Soc. Jesu* (1960), 59–84.
45. The baron A. de Maricourt, 'Lettres de l'abbé de Gouz', *Reu. quest. hist.* (1914), 119–20.
46. A. Bachelier, *Le Jansénisme à Nantes* (1934), 300 ff.
47. Dupont-Ferrier, *Clermont*, i. 32.

48. Regnault, *Beaumont*, i. 327, 329; D'Argenson, ix. 385.
49. Van Kley, *Expulsion*, 71.
50. See C. de Rochemonteix, *Le Père Antoine Lavalette à la Martinique* (1908).
51. D. G. Thompson, 'The Fate of the French Jesuits' creditors under the *Ancien Régime*', *Eng. hist. rev.* (1976), 257. For Cazotte, E. P. Shaw, *Jacques Cazotte* (1942), 18–20.
52. Bernis, *Mémoires*, ii. 103.
53. G. Guitton, *Les Jésuites à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV* (1953), 183.
54. Full account in Van Kley, *Expulsion*, 98 ff. See also J. Egret, 'Le Procès des jésuites devant les parlements de France, 1761–70', *Rev. hist.* (1950), 3–4.
55. Forceful argument for the involvement of Choiseul—the Jansenists 'were puppets on Choiseul's string', in J. Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754–74* (1995), 206–13.
56. *P.V. Ass.* viii 2, pièces just. 330. For the six dissentients, J. H. Lacroix de Ravignan, *Clément XIII et Clément XIV* (2 vols. 1854), ii. 259.
57. Cited by M. Marion, *Histoire financière de la France depuis 1715* (2 vols., 1914–19), i. 207. Two months earlier the parlement of Normandy suppressed a pamphlet defending Père Malagrida, so cruelly condemned in Portugal (C. L. Livet, 'Un Épisode de l'histoire des jésuites: l'autodafé du P. Malagrida', *Rev. hist.* (1882), 334).
58. Regnault, *Beaumont*, ii. 30–3.
59. J. Egret, 'Le Procès des jésuites', *Rev. hist.* (1950), 8.
60. A. Le Moy, *Le Parlement de Bretagne et le pouvoir royal au XVIII^e siècle* (1909), 231–7; L. M. Raison, 'Le Jansénisme à Rennes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1965), 49.
61. 'Lettres le Gouz', *Rev. quest. hist.* (1914), 128.
62. F. G. Pariset (ed.), *Bordeaux au XVIII^e siècle* (1968), 43; Egret, 'Le Procès', 12.
63. J. Leflon, *Eugène de Mazenod, évêque de Marseille, 1757–1801* (3 vols., 1957–65), i. 35–6.
64. A. Bouyala d'Amand, 'Le Marquis d'Eguilles', *Rev. hist. mod. contemp.* (1955), 60–6; Van Kley, *Expulsion*, 193–4; Egret, 'Le Procès', 14–16.
65. Van Kley, *Expulsion*, 20.
66. J. Egret, *Le Parlement de Dauphiné et les affaires publiques dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1941), i. 138, 144; F. Vermale, 'La Jeunesse de Mounier', *Ann. hist. Réu. fr.* (1939), 4–5.
67. For the disappointment of the philosophes at the continuing clerical control of education, see Grell, *Le 18^e Siècle et l'antiquité en France, 1680–1789* (2 vols., 1995), i. 77 ff.
68. Thompson, 'Fate', 259–77.
69. D'Alembert, letter to Voltaire, 31 Mar. 1762, Voltaire, *Corresp.* xxiv. 361.

Chapter 44

1. P. Bolle, 'Le Protestantisme français à la veille de la Révocation', *Bull. hist. prot. fr.* (1985), 23–4; J. Orcibal, 'L'État présent des recherches sur la répartition géographique des *nouveaux catholiques* à la fin du XVII^e siècle', *Rev. hist. Église Fr.* (1947), 63–4; S. Mours, *Essai sommaire de géographie du Protestantisme réformé français au XVII^e siècle* (1966).

2. Odile Martin, 'Prosélytisme et tolérance à Lyon au XVII^e siècle', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1978), 306–8.
3. G. Dubois, 'Les Protestants en Haute-Normandie à la fin du XVII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1934), 261–7; M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen sous Louis XIV', *Ann. Normandie* (1953), 273.
4. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1957), 223–4.
5. L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724: sociologie et pastorale* (1964), 130.
6. J. Godet, 'Le Cardinal des montagnes, Le Camus, évêque de Grenoble, 1671–1707', in *Actes Colloque Le Camus, Grenoble* (1972), 145–6; M. Sauvan-Richou, 'La Révocation de l'édit de Nantes à Grenoble', *Cahiers hist.* (1956), 147–71.
7. P. F. Geisendorf, 'Recherches sur les conséquences démographiques de la révocation de l'édit de Nantes en Dauphiné', *Cahiers hist.* (1961), 245 ff.
8. D. Ligou, *Le Protestantisme en France de 1598 à 1715* (1968), 193–203. An example of nobles replaced by bourgeois leaders given by P. Romane-Musculus, 'L'Église réformée de Pouzauges', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1982), 626–7.
9. E.-G. Léonard, 'Le Protestantisme français au XVII^e siècle', *Reu. hist.* (1945), 153 ff.
10. A. Gounelle, 'Force et faiblesse du Protestantisme en 1684', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1985), 131–3.
11. R. Richard and D. Vatinel, 'Le Consistoire de l'église réformée du Havre au XVII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1981), 4 ff.
12. Ch. Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants des Cévennes et du Bas-Languedoc, 1684–1710* (2 vols., 1912), i. 48 ff.
13. *Ibid.* i. 51.
14. Pierre Chaunu (in 'Les Crises au XVII^e siècle de l'Europe réformée', *Reu. hist.* (1965), 23–60) was mistaken in using it as a pointer to decline.
15. J. Orcibal, *Louis XIV et les Protestants* (1951), 102.
16. In 1689 he was popularizing and giving a contractual basis to the idea of the right to revolt he had already stated in theory (R. Howells, introduction to Jurieu's *Lettres Pastorales* (1988), pp. xxix–xliv).
17. Orcibal, *Louis XIV*, 13–15.
18. A. Rébelliau, *Bossuet, historien du protestantisme* (1909 edn., original 1891), 52 ff.
19. S. Mours, *Le Protestantisme en France au XVIII^e siècle* (1969), 146–7.
20. J.-R. Armogathe, *Croire en liberté: L'Église catholique et la révocation de l'édit de Nantes* (1985), 76–9, 86.
21. Bost, *Les Prédicants*, i. 249–50.
22. E. Labrousse, 'The Political Ideas of the Huguenot Diaspora', in *Church and State under the Bourbons* (1982), 224.
23. See Solange Deyon, *Du Loyalisme au refus: les protestants français et leur député général entre la Fronde et la Révolution* (n.d.).
24. R. J. Bonney, 'The Intendants of Richelieu and Mazarin, 1624–61' (Oxford D.Phil. thesis), 133–4.
25. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 302–3.
26. S. Cadier-Sabatier, 'Sur le chemin de la Révocation: la communauté protestante

- de Pont-de-Veyle, 1661–85', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1974), 33–6.
27. Mours, *Le Protestantisme*, 159.
 28. E. Labrousse, *Une Foi, une loi, un roi? la révocation de l'édit de Nantes* (1985), 130–7.
 29. D. McKee, 'Les Protestants de Sedan et la révocation de l'édit de Nantes', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1981), 219–26.
 30. This happened at Bergerac and Montpellier (Labrousse, *Révocation*, 176).
 31. Deyon, *Du Loyalisme*, 151.
 32. J. Vinatier, *Histoire générale de Treignac-sur-Vézère* (2 vols., 1974), ii. 24–7.
 33. M. Vénard, 'Les Écoles clandestines à Rouen à la veille de la Révocation', *Bull. hist. prot. fr.* (1982), 189–92.
 34. A. Lods, 'Les Donations et les legs aux consistoires sous l'ancienne monarchie, 1593–1688', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1927), 75–7.
 35. L. Châtellier, *Tradition chrétienne et renouveau catholique dans les cadres de l'ancien diocèse de Strasbourg, 1650–1770* (1981), 40–8, 146–50, 270–87, 291–341, 348.
 36. The details in C. Rousset, *Histoire de Louvois et de son administration politique et militaire* (4 vols., 1862–6). For Foucault in Béarn, N.-J. Foucault, *Mémoires*, ed. F. Baudry (1862), 147 ff.
 37. P. Romane-Musculus, 'L'Église réformée de Pouzauges', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1982), 57 ff.
 38. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 320–1.
 39. T. F. Shepperd, *Lourmarin in the 18th Century: A Study of a French Village* (1971), 156–7.
 40. Martin, 'Lyon', 318.
 41. Mours, *Le Protestantisme*, 363–9.
 42. F. Gonin and F. Delteil, 'La Révocation de l'édit de Nantes vue par les informateurs du Grand Condé', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1972–3), 133–6, 155–63, 365–9.
 43. P. Romane-Musculus, 'L'Église réformée de Pouzauges de L'Édit de Nantes à sa révocation', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1979), 43–5; Mours, *Le Protestantisme*, 137, 206.
 44. Armogathe, *Croire en liberté*, 85–6.
 45. Labrousse, *Révocation*, 29, 32, 56, 99.
 46. The king personally signed *lettres de cachet* imprisoning Protestants (N. Weiss, 'Chronique littéraire', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1916), 332–3).
 47. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 321–3.
 48. McKee, 'Sedan', 234.
 49. *Mémoires de L'Abbé le Gendre, chanoine de Notre-Dame*, ed. M. Roux (1863), 61–3.
 50. A. Cochin, 'Les Églises calvinistes: le cardinal Mazarin et Cromwell', *Reu. quest. hist.* (1904), 129.
 51. H. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante en France, de la révocation de l'édit de Nantes à la Révolution* (2 vols., 1961), i. 17.
 52. Orcibal, *Louis XIV*, makes the point of foreign policy in detail.
 53. Le Gendre, *Mémoires*, 63.
 54. F. Puaux, 'La Responsabilité de la Révocation', *Reu. hist.* (1885), 277.
 55. Orcibal, *Louis XIV*, 91.
 56. G. Minois, *Le Confesseur du roi: les directeurs de conscience sous la monarchie française* (1988), 491, 453–5, 467.

57. Cited by Ph. Sagnac, *La Formation de la société française moderne* (2 vols., 1945), i. 93.
58. E. Esmonin, 'Louis XIV et l'archevêque Harlay', in his *Études sur la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (1964), 359.
59. In Mours, *Le Protestantisme*, 163. Severe comment in J. Garrison, *L'Édit de Nantes et sa révocation: histoire d'une intolérance* (1985).
60. Armogathe, *Croire en liberté*, 69.
61. Châtellier, *Strasbourg*, 263–4.
62. Rébelliau, *Bossuet*, 304–7.
63. *Ibid.* 357.
64. A. Krailsheimer, 'L'Abbé de Rancé et les protestants', *Coll. Cist.* (1986), 299–300.
65. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 297.
66. Romane-Musculus, 'Pouzauges', 36.
67. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 317, 324.
68. J. Charay (ed.), *Petite histoire de L'Église diocésaine de Viviers* (1977), 150.
69. Godet, 'Le Camus', 155; Sauvon-Richou, 'Grenoble', 156–7; J. Sahuc, *Un Ami de Port-Royal, Mgr Pierre-Jean-François de Montgaillard, évêque de Saint-Pons* (1909), 100–6; X. Azéma, *Un Prélat janséniste: Louis Fouquet, évêque et comte d'Agde, 1656–1702* (1963), 174.
70. B. Neveu, *Sébastien Joseph de Cambout de Pont-Château, 1634–1690 et ses missions à Rome* (1969), 296.
71. J.-F. Soulet, *Traditions et réformes religieuses dans les Pyrénées centrales au XVII^e siècle* (1974), 293, 306.
72. A. Bernard, 'Les Abjurations dans le Prêche d'Imécourt', *Trau Acad. nat. Reims* (1913), 222–3.
73. Sauvon-Richou, 'Grenoble', 153.
74. Martin, 'Lyon', 318.
75. At Dieppe and Rouen, as the informants of the prince de Condé report, Gonin and Delteil, 'La Révocation', 145, 366.
76. L. M. Raison, 'Le Jansénisme à Rennes', *Ann. Bretagne* (1932–3), 235.
77. Mours, *Le Protestantisme*, 186.
78. A. Petel, 'Le Temple protestant de Landreville', *Méms. Soc. Aube*, 3^e sér. 71 (1907), 165.
79. Bost, *Les Prédicants*, i. 64.
80. Details in Sauvon-Richou, 'Grenoble', and Godet, 'Le Camus'.
81. Labrousse, *Révocation*, 195–203.
82. 'Un Mémoire inédit de l'archevêque de Rouen en 1698', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1916), 110–24; P. Gachon, 'Le Conseil royal et les protestants en 1698', *Reu. hist.* (1964), 36 ff., idem, 'Rapport du gouverneur de la Guadeloupe 1687', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1981), 363.
83. V. L. Bourilly, 'Les Protestants de Provence et d'Orange sous Louis XIV', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1920), 365–6.
84. P. Bayle, *Ce que c'est que la France toute catholique*, publ. 22 Mar. 1686, ed. E. Labrousse (1973).
85. P. Gaillard, 'Vauban et la révocation de l'édit de Nantes', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1975), 354–64.
86. The curé of Garnay, cited by P. Feret, *L'Abbaye de Sainte-Geneviève* (2 vols., 1853), ii. 268.

87. Foucault, *Mémoires*, 210.
88. J.-R. Armogathe and Ph. Joutard, 'Bâville et la guerre des Camisards', *Rev. hist. mod. contemp.* (1972), 66.
89. Saint-Simon, *Parallèle des trois premiers rois Bourbon*, in *Traité politiques* ed. I. Coirault (1996), 1179–82.
90. S. C. Scoville, *The Persecution of the Huguenots and French Economic Development* (1960), 102–4.
91. Sauvon-Richou, 'Grenoble', 161–5.
92. P. Waksman, 'Surveillance des religionnaires de Languedoc et de la vallée du Rhône de 1658 à 1705', *Actes 86^e Congrès national des Sociétés Savantes, Mont-pellier, 1961* (1962), 40–1. The other details are from the letters to Condé, *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1972), 134, 169; (1973), 402–11.
93. McKee, 'Sedan', 234–5; Geisendorf, 'Dauphiné', 255–6.
94. Puaux, 'La Responsabilité', 241–2.
95. Ch. Weiss, *Histoire des réfugiés protestants de France* (2 vols., 1852), i. 333–4.
96. Scoville, *Persecution*, 443–4.
97. F. Delteil, 'Résistance et ralliement dans la bourgeoisie à Saint-Antonin-de-Rouergue', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1982), 540–2.
98. Bayle, *Ce que c'est que la France toute catholique*, 61.
99. Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 325–6; letters to Condé, 358.
100. Godet, 'Le Camus', 157.
101. Dom H. Leclercq, *Histoire de la Régence* (3 vols., 1921), i. p. xxvii; Pérouas, *La Rochelle*, 336.
102. Bossuet, *Correspondance*, ed. Ch. Urbain and E. Levesque (15 vols., 1909–26), iii. 199–200.

Chapter 45

1. E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Les Paysans de Languedoc* (1966), 618–19, 622; L. Mazoyer, 'Les Origines du prophétisme cévenol', *Rev. hist.* (1947), 16–27.
2. Ph. Joutard, *Les Camisards*, Coll. Archives (1976), 64–5. See also his *La Légende des Camisards. Une sensibilité au passé* (1977).
3. D. Vidal, 'Prédication et discours calvinistes en Languedoc après la Révocation de L'Édit de Nantes', *Rev. hist.* (1984), 271, 286–7.
4. Ph. Joutard, *Journaux Camisards, 1700–1715* (1965), 30–70.
5. Ch. Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants des Cévennes et du Bas-Languedoc, 1684–1710* (2 vols., 1912), ii. 301.
6. *Ibid.* ii. 373.
7. By Bruey, an ex-Protestant who became a Catholic propagandist.
8. F. Puaux, 'Origines . . . de la guerre des Camisards', *Rev. hist.* (1918), 3, 5–6; R. Poujol, *L'Abbé du Chaila, 1648–1702, bourreau ou martyr?* (1986), 22–3, 159.
9. Poujol, *L'Abbé du Chaila*, 121, 148–65, 176–204. At the place where he was murdered, he had taken away six Protestant children (P.-L.-R. Higonet, *Pont-de-Montvert: Social Structure and Politics, 1700–1914* (1971), 32–42).
10. Cavalier's *Mémoires*, originally written in French, were first published in an English translation as *Memoirs of the Wars of the Cévennes* (Dublin, 1726). A French translation with scholarly notes was published by F. Puaux in 1918.
11. Ch. Bost, 'Les deux premiers synodes du Désert', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1916), 10–52.

12. Ph. Félix, *Les Foules en délire* (1947), 235.
13. J.-C. Grosdens, *Les Institutions et le règne juridique des cultes protestants* (1957), 49–50.
14. Ch. Bost, 'Les Sceaux des églises du Désert', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1925), 479–82.
15. See E.-G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du Protestantisme* (3 vols., 1964), ii. ch. 3.
16. e.g. his letters to Pierre Morin in Normandy, in A. Galland, 'Les Pasteurs du Désert en Basse-Normandie, 1743–86', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1922), 71 ff.
17. For Conti's secret meetings with Paul Rabaut and his dabbling in treason, see J. Woodbridge, *Revolt in Prerevolutionary France: the Prince de Conti's Conspiracy against Louis XV, 1755–7* (1994), 50–62.
18. Cited by Ch. Pouthas, *Une Famille de bourgeoisie française de Louis XIV à Napoléon* (1954), 22.
19. A. Monod, *Les Sermons de Paul Rabaut, pasteur du Désert, 1738–85* (n.d.), 11.
20. C. Dardier, *La Vie des étudiants au Désert d'après la correspondance de l'un, Simon Lombard, 1756–63* (1893). See review in *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1914–15), 15–16.
21. Guyot, liii. 296 (1782).
22. E.-G. Léonard, 'La Vie des Protestants au XVIII^e siècle dans le marquisat d'Aubais', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1922), 215.
23. L. Malzac, 'L'Arrestation du prédicant François Bénézet en 1752', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1928), 144–6.
24. H. Manen and Ph. Joutard, *Une Foi enracinée: La Pervenche, 1688–1820* (1978), 122.
25. P. Grenier de Latour, 'Deux documents inédits sur Rochette', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1936), 184–8.
26. Monod, *Paul Rabaut*, 9 ff.
27. Pouthas, *Une Famille*, 23 ff.
28. Galland, 'Les Pasteurs du Désert', 67–82.
29. His journal is in *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1938), 68–73. See n. 47 below.
30. L. Malzac, 'Une Sentence arbitrale entre deux pasteurs du Désert', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 356–62.
31. Pouthas, *Une Famille*, 23–4.
32. Ch. Pouthas, 'Guizot et la tradition du Désert', *Reu. hist.* (1931), 64–6.
33. 'Une Prophétie attribuée à Paul Rabaut', ed. 'F. P.', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1922), 55–7.
34. Monod, *Paul Rabaut*, 29.
35. Léonard, *Protestantisme*, iii. 60.
36. Monod, *Paul Rabaut*, 12–13; Pouthas, 'Guizot', 50; A. Salomon, 'Le Pasteur alsacien C.-F. Baer', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1925), 439; H. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante en France de la Révocation . . . à la Révolution* (2 vols., 1959–61), i. 26.
37. 'F. P.', 'Statistique des opinions religieuses du diocèse d'Alais', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 185.
38. M. Naert, 'Les Huguenots du Calais au XVIII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1914–15), 523–8.
39. F. Le Lay, *Histoire de la ville et de la communauté de Pontivy* (1911), 13; B. Robert, 'La Maison des Nouveaux Catholiques à Alençon, 1686–1755', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1941), 371–402.

40. Ch. Schnetzler, 'Évolution religieuse d'une communauté cévenole', *Cahiers hist.* (1966), 41–2.
41. A. Babeau, 'L'Intervention de L'État et l'instruction primaire en Provence sous l'ancien régime', *Reu. hist.* (1891), 303.
42. A. Lajusan, 'La Carte des opinions françaises', *Ann.* (1949), 408–9.
43. *L'État du Christianisme en France* (1725), cited by A. Monod, *De Pascal à Chateaubriand: les défenseurs français du Christianisme de 1670 à 1802* (1916), 213.
44. L. Pérouas, *Le Diocèse de La Rochelle de 1648 à 1724* (1964), 420–2.
45. Naert, 'Calaisis', 526–8.
46. See M. Berard, *Une Famille de Dauphiné: Les Berard* (1931).
47. P. Bosc, 'Journal', ed. J. Lindeboom, *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1938), 85.
48. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante*, i. 29–31, 50–1.
49. Pouthas, *Une Famille*, 5–6.
50. J. Dedieu, *Histoire politique des Protestants français, 1715–94* (2 vols., 1925), i. 388 (letter of 1724).
51. e.g. as late as 1786—see L. Trénard, 'La Crise sociale lyonnaise à la veille de la Révolution', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1955), 5.
52. Basic is A. Th. Van Deursen, *Professions et métiers interdits: un aspect de l'histoire de la révocation de L'Édit de Nantes* (1960).
53. *Ibid.* 351.
54. N. R. Gelbart, 'The *Journal des dames* and its female editors', in J. R. Censor and J. D. Popkin (eds.), *Press and Politics in Pre-revolutionary France* (1987), 29–34.
55. L. de Loménie, *Beaumarchais et son temps* (2 vols., 1880), i. 23–4.
56. Van Deursen, *Professions*, 232.
57. L. Lévy, 'Quelques recherches sur Jeanbon Saint-André', *Rév. fr.* (1893), 410–17, and 'Documents inédits: Correspondance de Jeanbon Saint-André avec Lasource', *Rév. fr.* (1891), 338–9.
58. P. Dufay, *Journaux . . . de Jean Desnoyers, chirurgien de l'Hôtel-Dieu de Blois . . . et d'Isaac Girard* (see *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1914–15), 275–6).
59. The instructions issued by synods insist on this obligation.
60. J. Fabre, 'Les Processions et les Protestants sous la Restauration', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1920), 11–13.
61. e.g. M.-G. Guibert, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de la ville de Dieppe*, ed. M. Hardy (2 vols., 1878), i. 232.
62. J. Marcadé, 'Les Protestants poitevins au XVIII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1983), 316. Cf. M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique religieuse dans le diocèse de Rouen sous Louis XIV', *Ann. Normandie* (1953), 253, and Schnetzler, next note.
63. J. Schnetzler, 'L'Évolution religieuse d'une communauté cévenole', *Cahiers hist.* (1960), 40; E.-G. Léonard, 'Aubais', *Bull. hist. prot. fr.* (1923), 20–2; E. Goiffon, *Monographies paroissiales: paroisses de l'archiprêtré de Nîmes* (1898), 236.
64. Bosc, 'Journal', 29–83.
65. Marcadé, 'Les Protestants poitevins', 316.
66. L. Spiro, 'Saujon, une église protestante saintongeaise', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1975), 193–5. See also *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1932), 320.
67. e.g. G. Hubrecht, 'La Région Sedannaise à la veille de la Révolution', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1936), 325; L. Greib, 'Rapports des Réformés du Pays Messin et

- de la Champagne avec les paroisses de Diedendorf et de Rauwiller, 1689–1776', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1932), 170–1.
68. Léonard, 'Aubais' (part II), *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1923), 16–18; cf. Manen and Joutard, *La Pervenche*.
69. For a pastor's certificate, *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1927), 478.
70. Van der Brande, 'Voyage de Languedoc, Provence', in *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1920), 99–101; D. Bien, 'Catholic Magistrates and Protestant Marriages in the French Enlightenment', *Fr. Hist. St.* (1962), 412; Guyot, xxxix. 231.
71. Bien, 'Catholic Magistrates', 409.
72. See *Rév. fr.* (1904), 90–1, review of M. G. Charrin, *Les Jurades de la ville de Bergerac*, xii (1903).
73. A case of confiscation in 1740, G. Gillier, 'Les Protestants de la sénéchaussée de Forcalquier', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1983), 187.
74. Guyot, liii. 291–3.
75. Marcadé, 'Les Protestants poitevins', 328–9.
76. e.g. M. L. Fracard, *La Fin de l'ancien régime à Niort* (1956), 297.
77. A. Feugère, *Un Précurseur de la Révolution: l'abbé Raynal* (1922), 26; Bachaumont, xiv. 221.
78. Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, 'Night Third, Narcissa', lines 160–92.
79. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante*, ii. 234.
80. G. Tournier, 'Une Grave Émeute à Lavaur', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. Fr.* (1926), 48–57.
81. Guibert, *Dieppe*, ii. 232; P. Beuzart, 'Encore quelques notes sur Annois et Flavy-le-Martel', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1926), 29–30.
82. Marcadé, 'Les Protestants poitevins', 317; Schnetzler, 'L'Évolution', 40.
83. J. Chevalier, *Essai historique sur l'église et la ville de Dié* (3 vols., 1888–1908), iii. 600; E. Furet and M. Ozouf, *Lire et écrire: l'alphabétisation des Français* (2 vols., 1979), ii. 16; M. Join-Lambert, 'La Pratique . . . Rouen', *Ann. Normandie* (1955), 46; R. Chartier, M. M. Compère, and D. Julia, *L'Éducation en France du XVI^e au XVIII^e siècle* (1976), 80.
84. P. Chevallier, *Loménie de Brienne et l'Ordre monastique* (2 vols., 1959), i. 214.
85. D. J. Barbot and L. Costecalde, 'Contribution à l'histoire de l'enseignement . . . diocèse de Mende', in *Archives Gévaudanaises*, ii. 186.
86. e.g. Manen and Joutard, *La Pervenche*, 117–18.
87. An outrageous case—a 2-year-old child taken from a Protestant noble-woman in 1754, with her having to pay 1,000 livres a year maintenance (Beuzart, 'Encore quelques notes', 15–17).
88. G. Dubois, 'La Maison des Nouvelles Catholiques de Rouen', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1935), 343–66; *idem*, 'Les Enlèvements d'enfants protestants et la Communauté des Nouvelles Catholiques de Rouen', *Bull. hist. prot. fr.* (1936), 280–327.
89. Louis Phelypeux, comte de Saint-Florentin, 1705–77; secrétaire d'état au département de la Maison du Roi from 1725, duc de la Vrillière from 1770; left office in 1775.
90. A. Galland, 'Le Protestantisme à Condé-sur-Noireau et dans le bocage normand, 1685–1812', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 122–3.
91. B. Robert, 'La Famille d'Ocagne', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1936), 333–4.
92. L. Duval, 'Hébert chez lui', *Rév. fr.* (1887), 961–76.
93. Bosc, *Journal*, 82.

94. L. Duval, 'Hébert', 969–70.
95. Dubois, 'Les Enlèvements', 291. P. Fonbrune-Berbineau, 'Aux Nouvelles Catholiques de Lyon en 1747', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 148–55. Cf. absurdities in government pensions to converts—in the 1770s a man of 84 is drawing 500 livres a year because his mother had been converted (S. T. McCloy, *Government Assistance in 18th-Century France* (1946), 325–7).
96. e.g. A. Galland, 'Le Protestantisme à Condé-sur-Noireau et dans le bocage normand, 1685–1812', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 123–4; B. Robert, 'La Famille d'Ocagne . . . au XVIII^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1936), 335. See also the intendant of Dauphiné in 1727 in J. Chevalier, *Essai historique sur . . . la ville de Dié*, iii. 600.
97. Dubois, 'Les Enlèvements', 284.
98. *Ibid.* 299–300.
99. Case of Marie Lemercier, aged 10, in 1737 (G. Priestley, 'Un Procès à Dieppe', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1928), 275). In 1789 there were said to be forty-two Protestants in La Rochelle who had been educated abroad (L. Mazoyer, 'La Question protestante dans les cahiers', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1931), 59).
100. Galland, 'Les Pasteurs du Désert', 70–82.
101. Guyot, liii. 308–9. The government was alarmed by Catholic assemblies as well as Protestant ones. In January 1744 in the comté de Foix, 900 Catholic peasants came down from the mountains to disrupt Protestant assemblies with ridicule and play musical instruments during the sermon. 'The king judges that the gathering of Catholics to trouble the assemblies of the *nouveaux-convertis* can have unfortunate consequences and end in open war,' wrote Saint-Florentin (A. Wemyss, *Les Protestants du Mas-D'Azil: histoire d'une résistance, 1680–1830* (1961), 148).
102. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, i. 10–17, 131. For the regent's views, Charlotte-Elisabeth de Bavière, duchesse d'Orléans, *Correspondance*, trans. E. Jaeglé (2 vols., 1890), ii. 254.
103. Léonard, *Protestantisme*, iii. 22–4.
104. A. Lods, 'Documents: Paul Rabaut et le duc de Mirepoix', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1924), 212.
105. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 144; D'Argenson, vi. 156–7; vii. 216; viii. 125.
106. J. Egret, *Le Parlement de Dauphiné et les affaires publiques dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1941), i. 159.
107. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 120–36.
108. For the rest of this paragraph, Ch. Raison-Dadre, 'L'Église réformée d'Avèze', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1934), 460; Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 126; J. Franc de Ferrière, 'Une Émigration tardive', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1936), 179; A.-B. Henry, 'Le ministère Combes', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 490–7 and (1914–15), 97–100; A. Salmon, 'Pierre-Conrad Fries, émissaire Morave', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1932), 30.
109. A. Fabre, 'Une Assemblée du Désert à Dions', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1938), 134–43.
110. A. Lods, 'Paul Rabaut et le duc de Mirepoix', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1924), 210–12.
111. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 158–63.
112. *Ibid.* ii. 203.

113. *Lettres de Turgot à la duchesse d'Enville, 1764–75 et 1777–80*, ed. J. Ruwet (1976), 28–9 (3 and 29 Nov. 1768).
114. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 50.
115. Léonard, *Protestantisme*, iii. 11; G. Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685–1789* (1991), 89–90.
116. K. Baër, *Mémoire théologique et politique au sujet des mariages clandestins des Protestants de France*, 2nd edn. (1761), 8–12. For the powerful Jansenist follow-up in 1768 with Maultrot and Tailhé's *Questions sur la tolérance*, see C. H. O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration in Mid-18th-Century France', *Theol. Zeitschrift* (1981), 71–9.
117. Luynes, xiv. 310–12.
118. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 402.
119. *Ibid.* ii. 406–8.
120. Guyot, liii. 332 (1782)—cases of 1756, 1758, 1770; Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 55–6. In 1764 the parlement of Toulouse had allowed an ex-Protestant to leave his Protestant wife and marry again; but by 1769 the lesson of the Calas scandal had struck home.
121. P. Vial, 'L'Église de France vue par le nonce en 1766', *Cahiers hist.* (1966), 117.
122. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 61–83, 124–5.
123. G. Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion! The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration, 1685–1787* (1991), 87–94, 107–12.
124. 'Liberté de conscience', 'Cruauté', 'Christianisme'.
125. R. Pomeau, *La Religion de Voltaire* (1956), 320. For Voltaire's attitude to Protestant beliefs ('the Enlightenment would supersede, not complete the Reformation'), see G. Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism* (1980).
126. Case of Sirven, see E. Galland, *L'Affaire Sirven* (1910), and G. Desnoiresterres, *Voltaire et la société française au XVIII^e siècle*, 2nd edn. (8 vols., 1867–76), vi. 428–53, 463–6.
127. [J. Clément], *Anecdotes dramatiques* (4 vols., 1775), i. 151.
128. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, i. 151–4.
129. Adams, *Huguenots*, 184–6.
130. Ch. Bost, 'Les Prisonniers d'Aigues-Mortes et les notaires', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1923), 143–4. See also J. W. Marmelstein, 'Les Dernières Pages d'un livre de douleur', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1923), 51, and idem, 'A la maison de Marie Durand', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1935), 456–7.
131. G. Tournier, *Les Galères de France et les galériens protestants des XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (3 vols., 1943), i. 213. For the release of a *galérien* in mid-century by the intervention of the duchess of Richmond and the English ambassador to Versailles, see Wemyss, *Les Protestants*, 165.
132. Tournier's three volumes are essential. He says there were more than 2,000, Léonard says 3,000, while A. Coquerel, *Les Forçats pour la foi* (1866), gives 1,550 actual names from 1685 to 1774.
133. La Croix, in *Encyclopédie méthodique*, cited by H. Marion, *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles* (2 vols., 1923), i. 252.
134. For this and the following see J. Martelle, *The Memoirs of a Protestant Condemned to the Gallies of France for his Religion*, trans. 'James Willington' = Oliver Goldsmith (1757), ed. A. Dobson (2 vols., 1858), i. 144; ii. 9–10, 234. For the *chaîne*, i. 110–23; ii. 66–76.

135. *Relation des tourments qu'on fait souffrir aux protestants qui sont sur les galères de France* (1768), in P. M. Conlon, *Jean-François Bion* (1960).
136. Tournier, *Les Galères*, i. 171–6, 261–5.
137. Letter of 1703 in Conlon, *Bion*, 21; letter of 1686 in *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1973), 406.
138. Basic—Ch. Sagnier and A. Chamson, *La Tour de Constance* (1970).
139. Ch. Bost, 'Les Prisonnières d'Aigues-Mortes et les notaires', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1922), 225.
140. Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, 19.
141. Léonard, 'Aubais', 207 ff.; (1923), 27 ff. For Lourmarin see T. F. Shepperd, *Lourmarin in the 18th Century: A Study of a French Village* (1971), 53–7, 123–4, 165–7, 172, 193.
142. Tournier, *Les Galères*, i. 207 (auction); F. Baudry, *La Révocation de L'Édit de Nantes et le Protestantisme en Bas-Poitou au XVIII^e siècle* (1924), 169 (date 1719); J.-F.-H. Richeprey, *Journal des voyages en Haute-Guienne*, ed. H. Guilhamon, (1952), 25 (capitation tax).
143. Savage statement in Oct. 1777 in the *Correspondance littéraire de Suard*, ed. G. Bonno (1934), 226.
144. D'Argenson, viii. 107 (3 Sept. 1753).

Chapter 46

1. Ch. Pfister, 'Extrait d'un mémoire sur l'Alsace', *Rev. hist.* (1916), 54–69.
2. J. Halt, 'Le Loyalisme des Alsaciens', *Rev. hist.* (1930), 100.
3. F. L. Ford, *Strasbourg in Transition, 1648–1789* (1958), 114–15.
4. A. Schaer, *Le Clergé paroissial en Haute-Alsace sous l'ancien régime, 1648–1789* (1960), 184.
5. L. Châtellier, *Tradition chrétienne et renouveau catholique dans les cadres de l'ancien diocèse de Strasbourg, 1650–1770* (1981), 281, 297, 324, 349.
6. Ch. Pfister, 'L'Alsace et L'Édit de Nantes', *Rev. hist.* (1929), 234–5; R. Reuss, *Histoire de Strasbourg*, new edn. (1920), 334; J. Breval, *Remarks on Several Parts of Europe* (2 vols., 1726), ii. 80–1.
7. Pfister, 'L'Alsace', 236.
8. Ford, *Strasbourg*, 127.
9. H. Strohl, *Le Protestantisme en Alsace* (1950), 229.
10. Châtellier, *Tradition chrétienne*, 357–8, 324–495; Ford, *Strasbourg*, 115–16.
11. Pfister, 'L'Alsace', 219.
12. G. Cirot, *Recherches sur les Juifs espagnols et portugais à Bordeaux* (1920).
13. *Ibid.* 13–14.
14. R. Neker Bernheim, 'Un Pionnier dans l'art de faire parler les sourds-muets: Jacob Rodrigue Péreire', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1981), 47–86.
15. See J. Rochette, *Histoire des Juifs d'Alsace* (1939).
16. S. Schwarzfuchs, 'Les Nations juives de France', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1981), 129–33.
17. F. Job, 'Les Juifs dans les cahiers de Lunéville', *Arch. juives* (1975), 11–14.
18. A. Clément, *La Condition des Juifs de Metz dans l'ancien régime* (1903), 11–14.
19. Echoes at Nancy, 1760—a Jew executed for desecrating Hosts (J. Godechot, 'Deux procès de sorcellerie et sacrilège à Nancy au XVIII^e siècle', *Rev. études juives* (1930), 86–97).

20. Marais, iii. 362 (20 Sept. 1725).
21. See R. Moulinas, *Les Juifs du Pape en France* (1981).
22. R. Moulinas, 'Le Conseil du Roi et le commerce des Juifs en France', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1981), 169–77. Cf. how the few Anabaptists got established in Alsace because they were outstandingly good tenant farmers, J. Séguy, *Les Assemblées Anabaptistes-Mennonites de France* (1977), 139, 148–9, 151, 153. 'They multiply like the Jews', said an official.
23. F. Delpech, 'La Seconde Communauté juive de Lyon', *Cahiers hist.* (1968), 53.
24. See L. Kahn, *Les Juifs à Paris au 18^e siècle* (1894).
25. L.-S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), ii. 50.
26. M. Yardeni, 'New Concepts of . . . Jewish History in the Early Enlightenment: Bayle and Basnage', *Eur. St. Rev.* (1977), 245–58.
27. Basic for all that follows in this chapter is A. Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews* (1968).
28. Montesquieu, *L'Esprit des Lois*, xxv (13), ed. R. Caillois (2 vols., 1951), ii. 746–9.
29. B. E. Schwarzbach, *Voltaire's Old Testament Criticism* (1971), and A. Ages, *Voltaire, Calmet and the Old Testament* (1963).
30. A. Ages, 'Voltaire and the Old Testament', *S.V.E.C.* (1967), 43–63.
31. R. H. Popkin, 'Les Caraïtes et l'émancipation des Juifs', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1981), 137–8. But in 1684 he repented of being friendly: 'I said too much good of this miserable nation' (L. Poliakov, *Histoire de l'antisémitisme, du Christ aux Juifs de Cour* (1955), 200).
32. Hertzberg, *French Enlightenment*, 62–4.
33. M. Liber, 'Les Juifs et la convocation des États Généraux', *Rev. études juives*, 63 (1912), 185–210; 64 (1912), 89–108, 244–77; 65 (1913), 89–133; 66 (1913), 161–212.
34. R. F. Necheles, 'The Abbé Grégoire's Work on Behalf of the Jews, 1788–91', *Fr. Hist. St.* (1969), 172–84.
35. S. Lacroix, 'Ce qu'on pensait des Juifs à Paris en 1790', *Rév. fr.* (1898), 97–104.
36. B. Blumenkranz and A. Soboul, *Les Juifs et la Révolution française* (1970).

Chapter 47

1. L. Mazoyer, 'Essai sur l'histoire du Protestantisme à la fin du 18^e siècle', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1930), 39–46.
2. A. Galland, 'Les Protestants à Condé-sur-Noireau et dans le Bocage Normand', *Bull. hist. Prot. fr.* (1912), 128; *ibid.* (1928), 277; 'Synode provincial tenu en Septembre 1770 à La Rochelle' (1926), 65.
3. A preacher from Holland touring Picardy earned 6,000 livres, 'Trois colloques Saintongeais', 1779–80 ('Documents', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1926), 275–80).
4. G. Dez (ed.), 'Le Synode d'Aunis de 1770', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1926), 67–8.
5. G. Diény, *Essai sur la prédication de Rabaut Saint-Etienne* (1907), 45, 55, 63–4, 70, 79–80.

6. G. Dez (ed.), 'Le Synode d'Aunis de 1777', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1926), 147–8.
7. H. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante en France de la Révocation de L'Édit de Nantes à la Révolution* (2 vols., 1959–61).
8. G. Dez, 'Pourquoi et comment un édit de tolérance a été accordé en 1787', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1937), 516.
9. J. Bouchary, *Les Manieurs d'argent à Paris à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (1939), 8–9, 23, 58–9.
10. M. Villard, 'La Vie religieuse des Protestants à Marseilles, 1770–1820', in *Pratiques religieuses, Mentalités, Spiritualité. Colloque, Chantilly, 1986* (1988), 255–60.
11. Lüthy, *La Banque Protestante*, ii. 85–92.
12. L. Desgraves and J.-P. Poussou in F.-G. Pariset (ed.), *Bordeaux au XVIII^e siècle* (1968), 148, 338, 341–2, 351; J. Cavignac, *Jean Pellet, commerçant de gros, 1694–1772: contribution à l'étude du négoce bordelais* (1967); E. Bonnaffé, *Bordeaux il y a cent ans, un armateur* (1887).
13. L. Lévy, 'Quelques recherches sur Jeanbon Saint-André', *Réu. fr.* (1893), 418–23.
14. N. Wraxall, *A Tour through the Western, Southern and Interior Provinces of France* (3 vols., 1777), ii. 251. The king had issued the order to reward the Protestants who had rallied to the defence of the city when an English invasion fleet had drawn near in the autumn of 1757 (J. D. Woodbridge, *Revolt in Prerevolutionary France. The Prince de Conti's Conspiracy against Louis XV, 1755–57* (1995), 115, 151).
15. L. Pouthas, *Une Famille de bourgeoisie française de Louis XIV à Napoléon* (1954), 72–3, 56–7, 89; E.-G. Léonard, 'La Vie des Protestants dans la marquisat d'Aubais', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1923), 31.
16. P. Rascol, *Les Paysans de l'Albigeois à la fin de l'ancien régime* (1961), 304–5.
17. L. Merle, 'La Vie religieuse des Protestants de Bas-Poitou à la fin de l'ancien régime', *Reu. Bas-Poitou* (1959), 113–27.
18. L. Mazoyer, 'L'Affaire du curé de Saint-André, 1787', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1928), 51–5.
19. F. Baudry, 'Le Protestantisme en Bas-Poitou . . . l'abbé Dillon', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1914–15), 351–9.
20. P. Bouguin, *Histoire d'Asnières* (2 vols., duplicated typescript), cited in *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1988), 149–55.
21. M. Luthard, *Le Protestantisme dans quelques communautés de Bas-Languedoc* (1913), 124–8.
22. A. Chérel, *Fénelon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–1820* (1917), 437, citing a poem of 1787, and C.-C. de Rulhière, *Eclaircissements sur les causes de la Révocation de L'Édit de Nantes* (1788).
23. 12 April 1790, in A. Mathiez, *Rome et le clergé français sous la Constituante* (1911), 183–5.
24. N. Aston, *The End of an Elite: The French Bishops and the Coming of the Revolution, 1786–90* (1992), 91.
25. M. de Lescure, *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 89 (Dec. 1786); L.-S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), iii. 54.
26. See I. Bourlon, *Les Assemblées du Clergé et le Protestantisme* (1909).
27. Ch. Robert, *Urbain de Hercé, dernier évêque de Dol* (1900), 162–3, 183, 195.

28. Essential for what follows: G. Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion: The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration, 1685–1787* (1991), and G. Dez, 'Pourquoi et comment un édit de tolérance a été accordé en 1787', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1937), 506–13.
29. P. Schmidt, 'Les Étapes de la tolérance à la fin du 18^e siècle d'après trois lettres inédites', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1919), 215–17; J. Dedieu, *Histoire politique des Protestants français, 1715–94* (2 vols., 1925), ii. 190–207.
30. J. Albert, 'Un Projet d'Édit de tolérance, 1776', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1937), 60–9.
31. *Ann. Malte* (1960), 14; P.Th. Fiel and A. Serrière, *Apostolat d'un prêtre lorrain: Gustave III et la rentrée du catholicisme en Suède* (1914); P.-F. Geisdorf, 'Un Exemple de tolérance des rois de Sardaigne', in *Actes 85^e Congrès national des Sociétés Savantes, 1960* (1961), 49–65.
32. M. Girodie, 'Lafayette et les Protestants français', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1973), 245–9; B. Fay, *L'Esprit révolutionnaire en France et aux États Unis à la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (1925), 60; L.-Ph. comte de Ségur, *Mémoires* (3 vols., 1829), i. 365–7.
33. See Bardoux and Read, *Lafayette, Washington et les Protestants français* (1893).
34. G. Favre, *Trois manuscrits de Rabaut de Saint-Etienne* (1894); Dedieu, *Histoire politique*, ii. 265.
35. Adams, *Huguenots*, 285–8.
36. E.-G. Léonard, 'L'Institution du Mérite Militaire', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1933), 297–316.
37. P. Bosc, 'Journal', ed. J. Lindeboom, *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1938), 83–4.
38. A banker of Lyon gave this as the essential cause (A. Monod, *Reu. Lyon* (1906), 412).
39. Bachaumont, xxxvi. 191–2, 235; Lescure, *Correspondance secrète*, ii. 210–11.
40. L. Mazoyer, 'L'Application de L'Édit de 1787 dans le Midi', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1925), 151–9; L. Lévy, 'Mariage entre Protestants, 1791', *Rév. fr.* (1911), 97–8.
41. L. Merle, 'L'Édit de 1787 dans le Bas-Poitou', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1932), 135–9, 145–50.
42. G. Dubois, 'Un Épisode de l'application de L'Édit de Tolération. l'établissement des cimetières protestants en Haute-Normandie', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1937), 481–95.
43. A. Galland, 'Les Protestants à Condé-sur-Noireau, et dans le bocage normand', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1912), 126–7.
44. A. Lods, 'Rabaut Saint-Étienne et sa correspondance pendant la Révolution', *Rév. fr.* (1898), 78–160. For religion in the embassies see N. Weiss, 'Une Dénonciation contre Marc Guitton, chapelain de l'ambassade de Hollande, 1725', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1916), 305–12; Mlle Salomon, 'Le Pasteur alsacien C.-F. Baer, chapelain de l'ambassade de Suède à Paris, 1719–97', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1925), 423–45; J. Driancourt-Girod, 'Vie religieuse . . . d'une communauté luthérienne à Paris aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles d'après les registres paroissiaux de la Chapelle Royale de l'ambassade du Suède', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1973), 1–33; J. Gres-Gayer, 'Le Culte de l'ambassade de Grande-Bretagne à Paris, 1715–1720', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.* (1984), 29–44.
45. L. Mazoyer, 'La Question protestante dans les cahiers', *Bull. Soc. hist. prot. fr.*

(1931), 42–50. See also A. Lods, 'L'Attitude du clergé', *Rév. fr.* (1897), 130–5; E. Champion, *La France d'après les cahiers de 1789* (1921, orig. edn. 1904), 46–8, 21; H. Carré, *La Noblesse de France et l'opinion publique au XVIII^e siècle* (1920), 34, 52–3, 55.

Chapter 48

1. *P.V. Ass.* viii 2 (1765), 223–5, 1426–9.
2. P. Grosclaude, *Malesherbes, témoin et interprète de son temps* (1961), 416.
3. P. Vial, 'L'Église de France vue par le nonce en 1766', *Cahiers hist.* (1963), 111–18.
4. J.-M. Alliot, *Histoire de l'abbaye de Notre-Dame du Val de Gif* (1892), 299; J.-F. Lasserre, *Recherches historiques sur la ville d'Alet et son ancien diocèse* (1877), 348–50.
5. E. Appolis, *Entre Jansénistes et Zélanti: le Tiers-Parti catholique au XVIII^e siècle* (1960), 217, 442 ff. See J. Leflon, *M. Emery* (2 vols., 1947), i, 21–2;
6. J. Ledré, *Le Culte caché sous la Révolution: les missions de l'abbé Linsolas* (1949).
7. P. Pinseau, *Gien sous l'ancien régime et la Révolution* (1922), 156–64; J. Charrier, *Histoire du jansénisme dans le diocèse de Nevers* (1920), 120–3.
8. M. Brongniart, *La Paroisse Saint-Médard* (1951), 88–91; M. Vimont, *Histoire de l'église et de la paroisse Saint-Leu-Saint-Gilles à Paris* (1932), 30–2.
9. W. Doyle, 'The Parlements of France and the Breakdown of the Old Régime', *Fr. Hist. St.* (1976), 415 ff.
10. J. Flammermont, *Remontrances du parlement de Paris* (3 vols., 1888–98), iii, 501–14 (4 Sept. 1783), 525–31 (15 Feb. 1784), 531–42 (10–15 Feb. 1784).
11. J. Egret, *Le Parlement de Dauphiné et les affaires publiques dans la deuxième moitié du XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1941), ii, 89–93. For what follows on the decline of the Jansenist group see J. Swann, *Politics and the Parlement of Paris under Louis XV, 1754–74* (1995), 241, 297–300, 364.
12. See K. M. Baker, 'Politics and Public Opinion under the Old Régime', in J. R. Censer and J. D. Popkin, *Press and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary France* (1987), 204–46.
13. C. H. O'Brien, 'Jansenists on Civil Toleration in Mid-18th-Century France', *Theol. Zeitschrift* (1981), 79–80.
14. D. Echeverria, *The Maupeou Revolution, France 1770–4* (1985), 45–6.
15. D. Van Kley, *The Religious Origins of the French Revolution: From Calvin to the Civil Constitution, 1560–1791* (1996), 274–81. This masterly analysis of Jansenist political thought from 1774 is the basis of all that follows.
16. D. A. Bell, *Lanymers and Citizens: The Making of a Political Élite in Old Régime France* (1994), 139; M. P. Fitzsimmons, *The Parisian Order of Barristers and the French Revolution* (1987), 5–6.
17. Van Kley, *Religious Origins*, 268–73.
18. M. Coffret, 'Aux origines du républicanisme janséniste: le mythe de L'Église primitive et le primitivisme des Lumières', *Reu. hist. mod. contemp.* (1984), 99–115.
19. For Jansenism producing leadership in the lower middle class in three parishes see D. Garrioch, 'Jansenism and the Parisian Middle Class in the 18th Century', *Fr. Hist.* (1994), 403–19.

20. A. Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in 18th-Century France* (1994), Eng. trans. of *Dire et mal dire* (1992), 36.
21. D. Van Kley, 'The Jansenist Constitutional Legacy in the French Pre-revolution', in K. M. Baker (ed.), *The Political Culture of the Old Régime* (1987), 184.
22. Bell, *Lawyers and Citizens*, 148.
23. (3 vols., 1789). Y. Fauchois, 'Jansénisme et politique au XVIII^e siècle: légitimation de L'État et délégitimation de la monarchie chez G. N. Maultrot', *Rev. hist. mod. contemp.* (1987), 482–4.
24. E. Préclin, *Les Jansénistes du XVIII^e siècle et la Constitution civile du Clergé* (1929), 438–9. Préclin was sceptical about a Jansenist challenge to monarchical power. Van Kley has renewed the subject. For the *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* in 1789—vaguely for the Revolution, but chiefly concerned to defeat 'despotism' in the Church, strict on ecclesiastical discipline but indifferent to the fate of the monasteries and Church property—see R. Favre, 'Les *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* au seuil de la Révolution', *XVIII^e Siècle* (1989), 277 ff.

Chapter 49

1. The indispensable authority is Nigel Aston's masterly monograph, *The End of an Élite: The French Bishops and the Coming of the Revolution, 1786–1790* (1992).
2. J. Egret, *Le Parlement de Dauphiné* (2 vols., 1942), ii. 136–7.
3. M. C. Péronnet, 'Les Assemblées du Clergé de France sous le règne de Louis XVI, 1775–88', *Ann. hist. Rén. fr.* (1962), 8–35; and idem, *Les Évêques de l'ancienne France* (2 vols., 1977), ii. 1075 ff.
4. A. Goodwin, 'Calonne, the Assembly of French Notables of 1787 and the Origins of the Révolte Nobiliaire', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* (1946), 202–34, 329–77.
5. Curious details on some of them in Bachaumont, xxxiv (1787), 159–62. For the reasons for excluding Bateau de Girac see Munro Price, *Preserving the Monarchy: The Comte de Vergennes, 1774–87* (1995), 139–42.
6. L. de Loménie, *Les Mirabeau* (5 vols., 1889–91), iv. 148.
7. R. Lacour-Gayet, *Calonne, 1734–1802* (1963), 180–1.
8. J. Egret, *La Pré-Révolution française, 1787–8* (1962), 6.
9. Bachaumont, xxxv. 31, 36–7 (28 Mar., 26 Apr.).
10. M. V. Malouet, *Mémoires* (2 vols., 1874), i. 287.
11. Lacour-Gayet, *Calonne*, 238–9.
12. P. Chevallier, *Journal de l'Assemblée des Notables de 1787 par le comte de Brienne et . . . Loménie de Brienne archevêque de Toulouse* (1960), 58.
13. Ibid. 59.
14. Aston, *End of an Élite*, 98 ff.
15. M. M. Bouloiseau, *Notables ruraux et élections municipales dans la région rouennaise en 1787* (1958), 7–17.
16. P. M. Jones, *Reform and Revolution in France: The Politics of Transition, 1774–91* (1995), 117–19.
17. J. Egret, 'La Dernière Assemblée du Clergé de France, 5 mai–5 août, 1788', *Rev. hist.* (1958), 1–15; P. Mautouchet, 'Les Questions politiques à l'Assemblée du Clergé de 1788', *Rén. fr.* (1902), 5–44.
18. E. Lavaquery, *Le Cardinal de Boisgelin, 1732–1804* (2 vols., 1920), i. 338–9.

19. J. Weber, *Mémoires concernant Marie-Antoinette* (5 vols., 1804–9), i. 225.
20. Bibl. Nat. Lb 39/1720, read to the Assembly before publication (A. Brette, *Recueil des documents relatifs à la convocation des États-Généraux de 1789* (4 vols., 1894–1915), i. pp. vii–viii).
21. J. Hardman, *Louis XVI* (1993), 138.
22. L. Dutil, 'D'où est venue l'idée du doublement du Tiers?', *Rév. fr.* (1928), 51–2.
23. J. Egret, 'La Seconde Assemblée des Notables', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1949), 193–228. Some corrections in Egret, *Pré-Révolution*, 339–45.
24. M. J. marquis de La Fayette, *Mémoires, correspondance et manuscrits* (6 vols., 1837), ii. 184.
25. Lavaquery, *Boisgelin*, i. 361–77.

Chapter 50

1. In 1749. A. Bernard, *Le Sermon au XVIII^e siècle, 1715–89* (1901), 78–81, 296–8.
2. Bossuet, *Sermon sur Jésus Christ objet de scandale*, cited by J. Truchet, *La Prédication de Bossuet* (2 vols., 1960), ii. 165–8.
3. Martial-Levé, *Louis-François-Gabriel d'Orléans de la Motte, évêque d'Amiens, 1683–1774* (1962), 80–1, 139.
4. P. Féret, *La Faculté de théologie de Paris et ses docteurs les plus célèbres* (7 vols., 1909), vii. 247–8.
5. C. Bloch, *L'Assistance et L'État en France à la veille de la Révolution* (1908), 148.
6. L. Trénard, 'La Crise sociale lyonnaise', *Rev. hist. mod. contemp.* (1953), 26. Cf. the bishop of Glandève in 1717, in S. Pillorget, 'Une Manifestation populaire à Entrevaux', *Provence hist.* (1967), 253–5.
7. A. Sicard, *L'Ancien Clergé de France: les évêques avant la Révolution* (1912), 72.
8. Père Jean Croisset, cited by G. Guittou, *Les Jésuites à Lyon sous Louis XIV et Louis XV* (1953), 232–4; O. Hufton, *The Poor of 18th-Century France, 1750–89* (1974), 39.
9. *Conférences ecclésiastiques du diocèse d'Angers sur les états* (3 vols., 1776), iii. 503; J. Charrier, *Claude Fauchet* (1909), 54; [Mangin], *Science des confesseurs* (1757), 208; P. Collet, *Traité des devoirs des gens du monde* (1763).
10. F. de Dainville, SJ, *Les Jésuites et l'éducation* (2 vols., 1940), i. 370; P. Lallemand, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'ancien Oratoire de France* (1888), 194.
11. J. de Viguierie, 'Les Missions intérieures des Doctrinaires toulousains au XVIII^e siècle', *Rev. hist.* (1969), 59.
12. A. Viala, 'Les Idées de l'abbé Pluche sur la société', in A. Viala and M. Labriolle (eds.), *La Régence; Colloque Aix-en-Provence 1968* (1970), 307–16.
13. R. Darnton, *Mesmerism and the end of the Enlightenment in France* (1968), 103–4.
14. A. Dupuy, 'Les Épidémies en Bretagne au XVIII^e siècle', *Ann. Bretagne* (1886–7), 26–7, 305.
15. E. Dupont, 'La Condition des paysans dans la Sénéchaussée de Rennes, d'après les cahiers des paroisses', *Ann. Bretagne* (1889–90), 15; J. Meyer, *La Noblesse bretonne au XVIII^e siècle* (2 vols., 1966), ii. 861.
16. Dupuy, 'Les Épidémies', 297.

17. A. Babeau, *La Vie rurale dans l'ancienne France*, 2nd edn. (1885), 113.
18. M. de Sarran, 'Un Poète libournais', *Reu Libournais* (1962), 115.
19. D'Argenson, viii. 111 (Feb. 1752).
20. A. Dupuy, 'Journal d'un curé de campagne', *Ann. Bretagne* (1889–90), 408, 412, 417.
21. J. Marchand, 'Journal d'un curé de campagne au 18^e siècle', *Bull. méms. Soc. Côtes-du-Nord* (1960), 56.
22. H. Hausser, 'Le Serment à la Constitution civile dans deux paroisses bourguignonnes', *Rév. fr.* (1908), 41–2.
23. Babeau, *La Vie rurale*, 300.
24. Life by M. Dommanget, *Le Curé Meslier* (1965).
25. The general strike, as Meslier sees it, is directed against nobles, not factory owners (M. Dommanget, 'L'Idée de grève générale au 18^e siècle', *Reu hist. écon. sociale* (1963), 34–9).
26. M. Kovalevsky, *La France économique et sociale à la veille de la Révolution* (2 vols., 1909–11), i. 243.
27. G. Lizerand, *Le Régime rural de l'ancienne France* (1942), 176.
28. M. Sée, *La Vie économique et les classes sociales* (1924), 47; Meyer, *La Noblesse bretonne*, i. 535–7.
29. J. Charrier, *Histoire religieuse du département de la Nièvre pendant la Révolution* (2 vols., 1926), i. 28–9.
30. J.-J. Gautier, *Essai sur les mœurs champêtres* (1787), ed. X. Rousseau (1935), p. viii; J. Richard, 'L'Élaboration d'un cahier', *Ann. Bourgogne* (1960), 8–17.
31. The abbé P.-F. Boncerf, *Les Inconvénients des droits féodaux* (1776); curé P. Clerget, *Coup d'œil philosophique et politique sur la mainmorte* (1785); and *idem*, *Cri de la raison* (1789).
32. J. Salvini, 'Clergé rural en Haut-Poitou à la veille de la Révolution', *Bull. Soc. Ouest*, 4^e sér. 4 (1957–8), 243–4 (in 1780).
33. H. Hausser, 'Les Idées agronomiques d'un curé bourguignon, 1788–9', *Rév. fr.* (1907), 481–96.
34. In the register of a curé (G. Hermann, 'La Grande Peur à Reillac', *Rév. fr.* (1895), 60).
35. M. Hutt, 'The Curés and the Third Estate', *J. Eccles. Hist.* (1957), 87; cf. the curés of Toul in A. Lefebvre, *L'Esprit public dans le 'Toulois' de 1776 à 1790*, cited in *Rév. fr.* (1935), 200, in a review by 'P.S.'.
36. Richard, 'L'Élaboration', 5–34.
37. 'Litanies du Tiers État', ed. R. Gandilhon, *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1938), 367.
38. E. Deveris, 'L'Auteur du *Parfait luthier*, l'abbé Sibire', *Reu. mus.* (1930), 141–6.
39. Bibl. Nat. Lb 39/1423; see A. Aulard, 'La Féodalité sous Louis XVI', *Rév. fr.* (1913), 101.
40. M. Jusselin, *Recherches sur les cahiers de 1789 en Eure-et-Loir* (1934), 21, 51–4. For a curé's retrospect on feudalism in 1791 see N. Bossut, 'Aux origines de la déchristianisation dans la Nièvre', *Ann. hist. Rév. fr.* (1986), 194–5.
41. E. Champion, *La France d'après les cahiers de 1789* (1897, ed. 1921), 157, 218–20, 112, 140, 150–1, 153, 380.
42. Review by 'P.S.', *Rév. fr.* (1935), 200.
43. Charrier, *Histoire religieuse*, i. 30–2.
44. Jusselin, *Eure-et-Loir*, 25, 68–9.

45. G. Lefebvre, *Questions agraires au temps de la Terreur* (1932), 105.
46. G. Lefebvre, *La Grande Peur* (1932), 104, 106.
47. H. Diné, *La Grande Peur dans la généralité de Poitiers* (1951), 174.
48. H. Carré, *La Noblesse de France et l'opinion publique au XVIII^e siècle* (1920), 386–7.
49. P. Montarlot, *Un Essai de commune autonome . . . Issy L'Évêque, 1789–94* (1898), 7–8.
50. A. Lichtenberger, *Le Socialisme et la Révolution française* (1899), 23–5, 69–72.
51. Lefebvre, *Questions agraires*, 193–4.
52. *Ibid.* 136, 201.
53. E. Compagnac, 'Un Prêtre communiste . . . le curé Petit-Jean', *Rév. fr.* (1903), 425–9. A proposal for the share-out of the land (7 arpents to each citizen) is in the Oratorian Cournaud's *De la Propriété, ou la cause du pauvre* (1791).
54. M. Dommanget, *Jacques Roux, le curé rouge*, is superseded by R. B. Rose, *The Enragés: Socialists of the French Revolution?* (1965).
55. J. Jaurès, *Histoire socialiste de la Révolution française* (8 vols., 1924), iii. 390–5; viii. 211–18.
56. For all this section see E. Préclin, *Les Jansénistes du XVIII^e siècle et la Constitution civile du Clergé* (1929).
57. *Seconde lettre d'un théologien* (1722), in J. Carreyre, *Le Jansénisme durant la Régence*, 3 vols., (1929–33), ii^{xx}. 258.
58. M. Montecler, 'Un Essai de paroisse laïque au 18^e siècle', *Rév. fr.* (1906), 458–60.
59. P. Deyon, *Amiens capitale provinciale* (1969), 425.
60. T. J. Schmitt, *L'Organisation ecclésiastique et la pratique religieuse dans l'archidiaconé d'Autun de 1650 à 1750* (1952), 235–8.
61. J. McManners, *French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers* (1960), 175, 180.
62. *Ibid.* ch. 8.
63. Préclin, *Les Jansénistes*, 212.
64. R. Taveneaux, *Le Jansénisme en Lorraine 1640–1789* (1960), 700.
65. Préclin, *Les Jansénistes*, 261–2.
66. T. Tackett, 'The Citizen-Priest. Politics and Ideology among the Parish Clergy of 18th-Century Dauphiné'. *St. 18th c. Culture*, (1975), 307–14.
67. T. Tackett, *Priest and Parish in 18th-Century France: A Social and Political Study of the Curés in a Diocese of Dauphiné, 1750–91* (1977), 241–8.
68. P.-J. Chatizel, *Traité sur les pouvoirs des évêques sur les empêchements de mariage* (1780); M.-F. Thiébault, *Dissertation sur la juridiction respective des évêques et des curés* (2 vols., 1786).
69. G. N. Maulrot, *Traité des cas réservés au Pape: traité des cas réservés aux évêques* (1785); see also *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 22 Dec. 1785, 20–8; 3 Apr. 1785, 53–6.
70. G. N. Maulrot, *Discipline de L'Église sur le mariage des Prêtres* (1790), 15.
71. Cotellet de la Blandinière, *Conférences ecclésiastiques pour servir de suite et d'appui aux Conférences d'Angers*, iii (1785); G. N. Maulrot, *Défense du Second Ordre contre les Conférences d'Angers* (3 vols., 1787).
72. Cotellet de la Blandinière, *Conférences ecclésiastiques sur les synods . . . le quatrième volume de celles sur la hiérarchie* (n.d.).

73. *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques*, 30 Oct. 1789, 173–8; 6 Nov. 1789, 177–8.
74. Jusselin, *Eure-et-Loir*, 67–8.
75. L.-S. Mercier, *Tableau de Paris*, new edn. (12 vols., 1782–8), iv. 145.
76. H. Grégoire, *Nouvelle lettre* (10 June 1789), in *Œuvres*, ed. A. Soboul (14 vols., 1977), i. 10–18.
77. Tackett, *Priest and Parish*, 260–5.
78. McManners, *Angers*, 200–1.
79. L. Chassin, *Les Cahiers des curés* (1882); Champion, *La France d'après les cahiers*; M. C. Desdevises du Dezert, *L'Église et L'État en France* (2 vols., 1907), i. 243 ff.; A. Denys-Buirette, *Les Questions religieuses dans les cahiers de 1789* (1919); B. Hyslop, *Répertoire critique des cahiers* (1933); V. Taylor, 'Les Cahiers de 1789', *Ann.* (1974); M. C. Péronnet, *Les Évêques de l'ancienne France* (2 vols., 1977), ii. 1126–49 (gives statistical analysis).
80. N. Bergasse, *Observations sur le préjugé de la noblesse héréditaire* (1789); Tellier, *Jugement du Champ de Mars* (1789); C. Brottier, *La Réforme du Clergé à proposer aux États Généraux* (1789). For comment Carré, *La Noblesse*, 21, 242; P. Pisani, *L'Église de Paris et la Révolution* (4 vols., 1908), i. 69; B. Schaefer, 'Quelques jugements des pamphlétaires sur le clergé à la veille de la Révolution', *Ann. hist. Réu. fr.* (1959), 116 ff.
81. Cl. Laurent, *Essai sur la réforme du clergé* (1789).
82. [P. Brugière], 'Relation sommaire, fidèle et véritable de ce qui s'est passé dans l'Assemblée du clergé de Paris intra muros', *Réu. fr.* (1894), 58–80. See also A. Brette, 'Les Délibérations des paroisses et communautés de Paris en 1789 et 1790', *Réu. fr.* (1901), 33–6.
83. N. Aston, *The End of an Élite: The French Bishops and the Coming of the Revolution, 1786–1790* (1992), 144, 179.
84. J. Egret, *Les Derniers États de Dauphiné* (1942), 380; M. Bernard, 'Revendications et aspirations du bas clergé dauphinois à la veille de la Révolution', *Cahiers hist.* (1956), 334.
85. J. Chétail, 'Pierre Louis de Leyssin', *Bull. Acad. delph.* (1958–9), 101.
86. N. Aston, 'The Politics of the French Episcopate, 1786–90' (D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1985), 197.
87. H. Sée, 'Le Rôle de la bourgeoisie bretonne à la veille de la Révolution', *Ann. Bretagne* (1919–20), 408–19; F. Le Lay, 'Lettres des députés . . . de Pontivy aux États de 1788–9', *Ann. Bretagne* (1912–13), 7.
88. For all that follows, see the masterly analysis of Aston, *End of an Elite*, and his article, 'Survival against the Odds? The French Bishops Elected to the Estates General in 1789', *Hist. J.* (1989), 607–26.
89. P. Guillaume, *Essai sur la vie religieuse dans l'Orléanais de 1789 à 1801* (3 fasc. dupl. 1958), i. 30–2; F. Clérembourg, 'Le Comté d'Eu au moment de la convocation des États-Généraux de 1789', *Réu. fr.* (1894), 141–4.
90. Charrier, *Histoire religieuse*, i. 37.
91. McManners, *Angers*, 221–9.
92. A. Babeau, *Histoire de Troyes pendant la Révolution* (2 vols., 1873–4), i. 156–61.
93. A. Mathieu, *La Convocation des États-Généraux de 1789 en Languedoc* (1917), 93–4, 173.
94. A. Degert, *Histoire des évêques de Dax* (1903), 421–4.
95. P. de la Gorce, *Histoire religieuse de la Révolution française* (5 vols., 1919–23), i. 95–6.

96. G. Bussière, *La Révolution en Périgord* (3 vols., 1885), ii. 191–3; L. Ampoulange, *Le Clergé et la convocation aux États-Généraux de 1789 dans la sénéchaussée principale de Périgord* (1912), 133–51; correspondence of curé Lastorde in *Reu. quest. hist.* (1895), 103–7.
97. G. Martin, 'Les Élections aux États-Généraux dans le sud-ouest: documents', *Reu. fr.* (1928), 235–9.
98. Aston, *End of an Elite*, 150–1.
99. G. Martin, 'Les Élections', 233–4.
100. *Œuvres de l'abbé Grégoire*, ed. A. Soboul (14 vols., 1977), i. 1–3.
101. J. Eich, *Histoire religieuse du département de la Moselle pendant la Révolution* (2 vols., 1964), i. 67 ff.; M. Tribout de Morembert, *Un Adversaire de la Constitution civile du clergé: Martin-François Thiébault, curé de Sainte-Croix de Metz* (1953), 148.
102. C. Constantin, 'La Campagne électorale du clergé dans le bailliage de Nancy en 1789', *Ann. hist. Reu. fr.* (1927), 254 ff.
103. See R. F. Necheles, *The Abbé Grégoire, 1787–1831* (1971).
104. Guillaume, *Essai*, i. 7–30.
105. Aston, *End of an Elite*, 143.
106. C. Lataud, *Convocation de la sénéchaussée de Nîmes aux États-Généraux de 1789* (1923), 111–14; J. Viguiier, 'La Lutte électorale de 1789 en Languedoc', *Reu. fr.* (1891), 16.
107. J. Loth, *Histoire du cardinal de la Rochefoucauld et du diocèse de Rouen* (1893), 135–58.
108. See B. de Lacombe, *Talleyrand évêque d'Autun* (1903).
109. P.-J.-B. Delon, *Les Élections de 1789 en Gévaudan* (1922), 13, 31–8, 75–7.
110. A. Brette, 'La Vérification des pouvoirs à l'Assemblée Constituante', *Reu. fr.* (1893), 504–19; *idem*, 'La Collection Camus', *Reu. fr.* (1889), 219–20.
111. E. Lavaquery, *Le Cardinal de Boisgelin, 1732–1804* (2 vols., 1920), i. 338–96; J. Lévy-Schneider, *L'Application du Concordat par un prélat d'ancien régime: Mgr Champion de Cicé, archevêque d'Aix et d'Arles* (1921), 20–9.
112. G. Laurent, *Reims et la région rémoise à la veille de la Révolution* (1930), pp. cccxxvi–vii; H. Jadert, *Nicolas Dumont, curé de Villers-devant-le-Thour, Ardennes* (1885), 15–16.
113. L'Abbé G. A. R. Baston, *Mémoires*, ed. J. Loth and C. Verger (3 vols., 1897), i. 319.
114. J. Bindet, *L'Évêque constitutionnel de La Manche, François Bécherel* (1934), 25–32; *Vie de M. Marquis Ducastel, doyen rural d'Ervon et du Sonnois*, ed. E. Pichon (1873), 164–5.
115. P. de Vaissière, *Lettres d'aristocrates, 1789–91* (1907), 4, 14.
116. Beugnot, *Mémoires*, i. 109, cited by L. Sciout, *Histoire de la Constitution civile du clergé, 1790–1801* (4 vols., 1872), i. 52.
117. Brette, 'La Collection Camus', 202.
118. Bibl. Nat., Joly de Fleury, 1049, fo.A 228, cited by Guillaume, *Essai*, i. 35.
119. *Catéchisme des curés auvergnats* (1789). Cf. J. Mathiez, 'Pontarlier sous la Révolution', *Reu. fr.* (1888), 166–8, and L. A. Hunt, *Revolution and Politics in Provincial France: Troyes and Reims, 1786–90* (1978), 63–4, 78, 87.

General Index

- 'Aa' secret confraternity 181–4
abbés, literary 320–3, 328–9
absolution; conditional 34; deferred 251–3, 524; episcopal 202; general 57, 252; and Jansenism 85, 102, 432, 470, 490–1; papal 141, 142, 247; and philosophes 258; refusal 9–10, 43, 226, 249, 252, 311, 663
absolutism; and French society 156, 162–3, 422, 613, 672; and Louis XIV 364, 397, 474, 570, 573, 576–9, 585, 591, 609–10; and Louis XV 499, 551, 552; and Louis XVI 679, 694, 700; and Regency 383, 414
Académie française; and sermons 75–6, 526; and the theatre 318–19, 327
acting; and the Church 336–41; and deathbed renunciation 339; and the law 335–6; and prudery 318; respectability 318–20, 328; and scandal 317–18; as sinful 277, 312, 314–17, 334–7; standards 318–19 *see also* theatre
Ad sanctam (papal bull) 348, 351
adultery 21, 23, 281, 310, 449 *see also* mistresses
Advent; and liturgical reform 49; sermons 59–60, 83, 526
affinity, spiritual 4, 19
Agde diocese; and Jansenism 402, 467, 663; and Protestants 581
Agen diocese; and catechism 10, 12; and prostitutes 286; and representation of clergy 736, 742; and *Unigenitus* 388, 389
Aire diocese 86, 182, 183
Aix archidiocese; and baptism 4–5; and confraternities 160, 177; and Jesuits 526, 532, 556–7; and processions 123; and *Unigenitus* 395, 396
Alacoque, Ste Marguerite-Marie 207
Alais diocese 597, 663
Albert, Père, and sermons 61, 63, 69–70, 71, 73, 90
Albi diocese 15, 647
alchemy 234–5
Alembert, Jean le Rond d' 329, 499; and Jesuits 535, 560–1
Alet diocese 25, 254, 662, 791 n. 156
Alexander VII, Pope 45, 348, 353, 363
almanacs, popular 195, 197
almsgiving, *see* charity
Alphonsus of Liguori 252, 282, 301, 309, 311
Alsace; and hermits 133, 135, 139; and Jesuits 557, 627; and Jews 630–1, 632–3, 636, 641–3; and Lutherans 573, 626–30, 657; and pilgrimage 15; and preaching 81; and religious practice 104; and witchcraft 232
Amelote, Denys 44, 199, 200
Amiens diocese; and actors 791 n. 156; and Jansenism 438, 489; and Jesuit *collège* 513; and liturgical reform 44, 56; and miracle 213; and missions

- 86; and preaching 78, 81; and Protestants 565; and religious practice 95, 99, 102, 105; and representation of clergy 742; and the supernatural 774 n. 58
- Angers diocese; and catechism 11, 12; and confraternities 162–3; and liturgical reform 47; and marriage 26; and preaching 82–3; and processions 121–4; and relics 124–5; and representation of clergy 718, 725, 727, 736–7; and *Unigenitus* 393; and usury 264–5
- Angoulême diocese, and *Unigenitus* 388, 419
- animals 218, 243
- Anne of Austria, Regent, and the theatre 313
- anointing 6, 14, 32, 34, 35, 252
- anti-Semitism 633, 634, 638–9, 642
- anticlericalism; and confession 258–60; and death 32; and hermits 136; and Jesuits 530, 544–5, 807 n. 7; and liturgy 46–7, 55; and miracle 128, 130, 214; and persecution of Protestants 598–9; and the theatre 319–20, 326, 337, 340; and *Unigenitus* 396–7, 416, 490–502, 667
- antiquity, in Jesuit education 513, 514
- Antoine, M. 472
- apologetics; and *bonnêteté* 242; Jesuit 541, 627; and Jews 637–40; and miracle 213–14; Protestant 569; and sermons 70–1, 77; and the supernatural 230
- appel comme d'abus*; and church and parlement 5, 259, 474, 477, 480, 491, 551–2, 616, 670–1; and Jansenism 385, 422, 438–9, 452, 457, 466, 474–5, 488, 661; and Jesuits 556
- appellants, *see* General Council; *Unigenitus*
- Aquinas, St Thomas 6, 20, 266, 286; and Benedict XIV 483; and Jansenism 386, 391, 409, 663; and relics 124, 127; and the theatre 312–13, 329
- Arboucave, Bernard d'Abbadie d', and Jansenism 390, 460, 465
- architecture, and liturgy 57
- Argenson, R.-L. de Voyer d'; and Jansenism 351, 361, 493–4, 496, 500, 502; and Jesuits 516, 538; and parlement of Paris 501, 506, 507; and Protestants 611, 625; and the supernatural 229–30, 236–7
- aristocracy; and the clergy 11, 115, 117, 416, 471, 482, 690, 700, 709–10, 713; and contraception 303–4; and education 517–18; and foundation masses 113; and hermits 139–40; and the *bonnête homme* 242; and Jansenism 350; and Jesuits 540; and marriage 21, 303–4; and mistresses 290; and names 105; and parlement of Paris 505; and Pénitents 173–4; and privilege 706–8, 727, 738; and Protestantism 566, 613, 621, 657; and provincial assemblies 680, 688, 691–2, 694–5; and the theatre 326; and usury 271, 272, 275–6
- Arles archidiocese 489; and *Unigenitus* 218, 385, 395
- army; and church attendance 100; and persecution of Protestants 44, 572–6, 581–4, 589, 591, 594, 624–5; and Protestant soldiers 654–5
- Arnauld, Angélique 345, 351, 423
- Arnauld, Antoine 45, 102, 665; and confession 251, 432; and Jansenism 350, 352, 426, 483, 664, 792 n. 1; and Jansenius 346, 423; and Jesuits 346, 355, 360, 363, 423, 533; and Protestants 585; and usury 266–7
- Arras diocese; and actors 340; and hermits 132, 134; and miracle 212; and religious observance 8,

- 12; and *Unigenitus* 390
- artisans 21, 57, 112, 149, 713; and confraternities 165, 184–6, 510, 527–8; and hermits 133, 137; and Protestantism 568, 590, 594, 610, 645–6; and trade guilds 159–64; and usury 272 *see also* religion, popular
- Asfeld, Jacques Vincent Bidal de, abbé de 403, 442, 450, 452
- assemblies, political; electoral 174, 728–9, 732–44; of notables 79, 656, 684–94, 698, 702–3, 727; provincial 679–82, 688, 691, 692, 694–7, 701–2
- assemblies, religious; Catholic 613, 817 n. 101; Protestant 569–70, 583, 622, 647, 650, 655 and prophetism 589–90 and use of troops 573, 609–13, 624
- Assumption of the Virgin 120, 185
- astrology 196, 225–6
- attrition, and confession 249–50
- Auch archdiocese; and confraternities 183; and liturgical reform 52–3; and missions 90; and pilgrimage 151; and Protestants 611
- Augustine of Hippo, St 49, 124, 196, 200, 213, 663; and free will 345, 348, 353, 354, 386, 391, 396, 409, 427, 483, 485, 793 n. 4; and miracle 213, 214, 216; and sexuality 281, 302, 316
- Augustinistes 449, 451, 454
- Austrian Succession War 139, 543, 611, 626
- Autun diocese; and clergy 9, 115, 718; and confraternities 165, 180; and hermits 134; and Jansenism 395; and liturgical reform 50; and parish missions 85; and popular religion 205, 207, 218; and Protestants 565–6; and relics 129–30; and religious observance 3, 8, 9, 94, 103; and the theatre 331
- Auxerre diocese; and Jansenism 661, 721; and liturgical reform 49; and miracle and superstition 213, 218; and parish missions 85; and religious observance 8, 15, 96, 331; and representation of clergy 730, 736; and *Unigenitus* 388, 389–90, 405–6, 419, 462–3, 474; and witchcraft 232
- Avignon, papal enclave 22, 337, 559; and Jews 631, 634–5, 636–7, 641, 643; and missions 88–9
- avocats*; and confraternities 167; Jansenist 418–20, 444, 480, 487, 489; Protestant 566, 600, 612, 646, 654; strikes 476–9, 494, 507, 673–4
- Avranches diocese 10, 115, 663
- Bachaumont, Louis Petit de 330–1, 339
- Baillet, A. 771 n. 100
- Bakhtin, M. 189
- ballet; in Jesuit education 278, 313, 324–5, 514, 518; and sexual desire 278–9
- baptism 3–6, 14; and conformity 97, 105; emergency 3–4; and illegitimacy 295, 296; and Jansenism 15; of Jews 3, 635; of Protestants 3, 5, 408, 602, 646–7, 650, 683, 699; and unbaptized children 4, 15, 135, 346, 666 *see also* godparents
- Barbier, E.-J.-F.; and Council of Embrun 418; and Jansenism 433, 480, 494, 543; and Jesuit *colleges* 511; and miracle 214, 439, 443; and processions 120; and royal mistresses 290; and *Unigenitus* 474, 479, 505
- Barral, C. M. J. de, bishop of Troyes 693, 734
- Barrow, Isaac 348
- Baston, Canon 61–2, 63, 742

- Bayeux diocese; and Jansenism 460, 465, 661; and liturgical reform 44, 49; and marriage 304, 310; and the supernatural 230–1
- Bayle, Pierre; and Jesuits 520, 522, 535; and Jews 638, 639; and marriage 300–1; and Protestants 585, 588, 617, 619
- Bayonne diocese 53, 85, 151, 388, 631
- Bazas diocese, and liturgical reform 53, 54
- Beaujeu, Honoré de Quiqueron de, bishop of Castres, and Jansenism 391, 461
- Beaumarchais, Pierre Augustin Caron de 247, 318, 601
- Beaumont, Christophe de, archbishop of Paris 4, 56, 173; and Jansenists 34, 486–7, 489–90, 492–5, 497–9, 663–4; and Jesuits 545, 670, 673; and Louis XV 334, 481–2, 502, 507; and secular courts 504, 543, 673
- Beauteville, Buisson de 502–3
- Beauvais, J.-B.-C.-M., abbé de, bishop of Senes 59, 67, 76, 743
- Beauvais diocese 8, 290, 394, 791 n. 156
- beggars/begging; and confraternities 166; and hermits 132, 133–4, 138; and pilgrims 141
- Bellarmino, St Robert Francis Romulus 10, 14, 15, 36, 544
- Belley diocese 53, 86, 186
- Belloy, J.-B. de, bishop of Marseille 503, 734
- bells/bellringers 6, 36, 101, 151, 219
- Belsunce, H.-F.-X. de Castelmoran de, bishop of Marseille; and frequency of communion 432; and miracle 215, 438; and Pénitents 178–9; and *Unigenitus* 395, 416; and usury 273
- Benedict XIII, Pope; and Jansenism 52, 408–10, 413, 415–16, 661; and Jesuits 539; and miracle 127
- Benedict XIV, Pope 52, 147, 185, 273; death 508; and Jansenism 468, 470, 482–5, 665; and Jesuits 541; and Quesnel 372, 482; and restraint 482–5, 503–4, 506; and vernacular Bible 200
- Benedictines; and the theatre 323; and *Unigenitus* 403, 407, 412, 444, 460 *see also* Maurists; Saint-Vanne Congregation
- Benediction, and Holy Sacrament 41, 170
- benefice; obtaining 114, 661–2, 713; unions 723
- Bercé, Y. M. 191
- Bergier, N. S., and death 30; and relics 128–9; and superstition 210–11, 216; and the theatre 334; and usury 273–4
- Bernis, Card. François-Joachim de Pierre de 15, 234, 242, 507, 775 n. 25; and Jansenism 481, 502, 667–8; and Jesuits 520, 524–5, 530, 547; and political role 706, 734
- Berry, provincial assembly 680, 681, 686
- Besançon archdiocese; and Jesuits 557–8; and popular religion 85, 132, 144, 208
- Besplas, Gros de 65, 69–70, 329
- Béthune, Hippolyte de, bishop of Verdun 389, 390, 427
- betrothal (*fiançailles*) 25, 298
- Béziers diocese 182, 290–1, 391
- Bezons, Armand Bazin de, bishop of Carcassonne, and Jansenism 467, 468, 485
- Bible; and popular stories 196, 199–201; and Protestants 567–8, 572; and sermons 69–70, 75, 80; and *Unigenitus* 373–5, 377, 379–80, 391; and usury 265–6; vernacular 42–4, 45–6, 199–200, 350–1, 360, 423, 428–30, 483, 675; Vulgate 44, 47–8, 200, 360, 371, 523
- Bibliothèque bleue* 18, 194–9, 201
- Bicêtre, Paris 289
- bienfaisance* 113
- billet de confession* 486–7, 496, 497, 504–5, 508
- bishops; and absenteeism 482, 731, 740; and aristocracy 721, 725–6, 727, 732, 739; and catechism 11–13; and confession 121, 246–7, 251,

- 256–7; and confirmation 7, 724; and confraternities 158–60, 162, 164, 182, 186–8; and Council of Embrun 415–19; and festivals 202–8; and Gallicanism 576, 581, 662, 741, 744; and hermits 131–2, 134, 136–8; and Jansenism 361–3, 365, 409, 423–4, 661–3, 666 and authority 716–19 and episcopal appointments 406, 460–71, 481, 485–6 Jansenist 11, 25, 253, 256–7, 278, 350, 364, 414 see also *Unigenitus*; and Jesuits 552, 553, 558, 559; and Jews 631–2; and marriage 25, 26, 615; and miracle and superstition 211–13, 218–19; and parish clergy 683, 709, 712, 716–22, 724–6, 727–9, 731; and parish missions 85–6, 92; and pastoral letters 79, 99, 205, 251, 365, 671; and Pénitents 174–5, 177, 178–80; and pilgrimage 140, 144–5, 152, 153, 154; political role 679–704, 727–44; and popular religion 119, 121, 124; and preaching 59, 63, 78; and Protestantism and intolerance 580–3, 590, 603, 607–9, 611, 623–5, 646, 650–1, 652–3 and outward conformity 581–3, 600–1, 613–14 and schism 579–80 and tolerance 582–3, 650–2, 654; and relics 128, 129; and secular courts 497–9; and the supernatural 221, 230–1; and the theatre 337; *Tiers parti* 391, 399, 402, 408, 467–8, 481, 484–5, 497, 503–4, 662; and vernacular Bible 43–4 see also *Unigenitus*; visitation
- Bissy, Card. H. de Thiard de, bishop of Meaux 42, 470; and papacy 404, 410; and *Unigenitus* 381–2, 398, 401, 413, 415, 419, 466
- blasphemy 73, 585, 590, 597, 730
- Blois diocese 49, 419, 601, 663
- Boileau, Nicolas 139, 260
- Boisgelin, Jean-de-Dieu-Raymond de, archbishop of Aix 698, 705, 741; and assembly of notables 685, 687, 689–91
- Boismont, abbé de 58, 67, 76
- Bollandists, and holidays 206
- Bon Pasteur houses 288, 291
- books, see *bibliothèque bleue*; literature
- Bordeaux diocese; and catechism 10, 12; and confraternities 15, 177; and Easter communions 96; and *fêtes chômées* 205, 207; and hermits 135, 136, 140; and Jesuits 555–6, 557, 560; and Jews 630, 631, 634, 636, 638, 641, 653; and ordinations 114, 115; and pilgrimage 146, 152; and preaching 59–60, 81; and Protestants 604, 645–6; and representation of clergy 541–2, 728; and witchcraft 232
- Borromeo, St Charles; and confession 241, 248, 254, 484, 486; and duties of clergy 198; and flagellants 172; and marriage 299; and orthodoxy 649; and rhetoric 513
- Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne; and catechism 10–11, 16, 17, 20; and confession 251; and Fénelon 361; and Gallicanism 357, 363, 462; and Jansenism 459; and Jews 637, 639; and marriage 20, 21, 300, 301–2; and mass 42; and Protestants 569, 580, 585; and Quesnel 370; and sermons 67, 69–70, 73, 705; and the theatre 314–17, 318, 322, 328–30, 334, 336; Bossuet, Jacques Bénigne (nephew), and Jansenism 462, 466, 468
- Boucher, François 51, 470
- Bouettin, curé 486, 493, 495–6
- Boulogne diocese; and catechism 12; and confession 253, 257; and confraternities

- 186; and hermits 132, 134, 197–8; and prostitutes 290; and sermons 60, 78; and sexuality 293, 297; and *Unigenitus* 388, 390, 405–6, 407, 460, 463–5
- Bourbon, Louis Henri, duc de 408, 410–14
- Bourdaloue, Louis 21, 63, 67, 284
- bourgeoisie; and charity 706–7; and confraternities 184–5, 510, 527; and Easter communion 96; and education 510–11, 517; and French Revolution 727; and marriage 21; and Pénitents 173–4, 180; and processions 120; and Protestantism 566–7, 594, 606–7, 610, 645, 647; and usury 272
- Bourges archdiocese; and liturgical reform 50, 485; and popular religion 8, 131, 158; and *Unigenitus* 401
- Boursier, Dr 418, 492–3
- Bonteville, Hay de, bishop of Saint-Flour 681–2
- Boyer, Claude; and *fenille* 481, 485–6, 502; and Jansenism 444, 451, 503, 662; and preaching 68; and the theatre 322
- Bremond, H. 349
- Breteil, Le Tonnelier de, minister for Maison du Roi 653, 654, 691
- Breval, John 130
- breviary; Jansenist 462, 485; and papacy 474, 476, 477; reforms 47–51, 52–7, 470, 493; vernacular 44, 45
- Bridaine, Jacques, and missions 85, 89–90, 91–2, 93
- Brienne, Étienne Charles Loménie de, archbishop of Toulouse; as diocesan bishop 54, 86, 136, 154, 218; and fiscal reform 676, 685–98, 701–2; as Ministre principal 692–8, 700–2, 734; and representation of clergy 723–4; and toleration 619, 649–50, 652, 654
- Brittany; and clergy 115, 192, 385, 732; and confession 256; and confraternities 157, 159, 165; and contraception 306; and death 29; illegitimacy rates 294–5; and Jesuits 530–1, 536, 555, 557; and liturgical reform 53, 55–6; and marriage 23, 27; and pilgrimage 151; and preaching 80–1, 84, 85; and Protestants 650; and religious practice 98, 104, 113; and the supernatural 237; and superstition 209–10; and *Unigenitus* 393, 475–6, 488
- brothels 281–2, 287, 289, 291, 293
- Buffier, Père Claude 242, 514–15, 534
- Burgundy 101, 222; and Protestants 566, 571, 657
- burial; of actors 314, 334, 337, 339–40; of criminals 176–7, 178; in *fosse commune* 28, 37; of Jansenists 465, 488–9, 492–3; of Jews 631, 637; of paupers 176, 180; of Protestants 605, 647, 653, 656–7; of unbaptized infants 4; of the unshriven 31
- Burnet, Gilbert 568
- Cadière, Catherine 231, 258–60, 540
- Caffaro, Père, and the theatre 312–14, 315, 317
- cabiers* of 1789 154, 712–14, 726–32, 735–6, 740, 742; and toleration 649, 657
- Caisse des conversions* 571–2, 576
- Calas affair 180, 595, 604, 618–19, 672
- calendar, liturgical 48, 49, 51, 53, 207–8, 282
- Calmet, Dom A. 200, 282, 637–8; and the supernatural 214, 227–8
- Calonne, Charles Alexandre de 79, 682, 683–92, 698
- Calvairiennes, and Jansenism 459–60
- Calvin, John; and marriage 300, 307; and predestination 346; and usury 263, 272
- Calvinism, *see* Protestants
- Camaldolese 136–7; and *Unigenitus* 421, 431, 457
- Cambrai diocese; and liturgical reform 50, 52,

- 54; and miracle 212; and sexuality 291, 296
 Camisards 139, 589–92, 609
 Campbell, P. R. 480
 Canada, French, and the supernatural 235–6
 canon law, and marriage 18, 25
 capitation tax 184, 527, 624, 692
 Capuchins; and confraternities 157, 184, 186; and missions 73, 84, 85, 89, 92; and the theatre 323; and *Unigenitus* 421; and usury 273
 Carcassone diocese 8, 49, 467, 468
 Carreyre, J. 349
 Cartesianism, and Jansenism 351, 352, 393, 661
 Carvalho e Mello, S. J. de (later marquis of Pombal) 545–6
cas réservés; and clerical sins 292; and confession 33, 121, 247, 249, 490, 720, 724; and sexuality 297, 310
 Castres diocese 90, 306, 601; and confraternities 159–60; and *Unigenitus* 391, 419, 421
 casuistry; and baptism 3; and confession 249, 250, 254, 540; and gambling 269, 270–1; and Jesuits 272, 524, 540; and sexuality 277–8, 280–2, 286, 297, 301–2, 307–11; and spiritual directors 241; and usury 264, 268, 271–3
 catechism 9–18, 196, 198; compulsory attendance 9–10, 606; and confirmation 7; Jansenist 11–12, 14–15, 426–7, 663, 717; Jesuit 531; manuals 10–13, 20, 46; and marriage 20; and mass 101; and missions 88; and patois 81; Protestant 567, 596, 606; and sexual desire 277; teaching methods 17–18; and theology 12–15; and *veillée* 204
 cathedrals, and liturgy 57
 Catholicity, certificates 600–1, 606–7, 644, 646, 655
 Caulet, Jean de, bishop of Grenoble, and Jansenism 479–80, 503
 Caylus, Charles de, bishop of Auxerre; and Jansenism 85, 445, 459, 474, 483; and *Unigenitus* 389–90, 406, 462–3, 468
 celibacy, clerical 292, 299–300, 724–5
 cemeteries; Protestant 656–7; siting 37–8
Cène, and Protestants 567–8, 593
 censorship 730; and Jansenism 422, 451, 456, 480; of plays 313, 327–8
 Cévennes 565, 569–70, 594–5, 598; and Camisards 139, 589–92, 609, 617; and use of troops 610–12, 617, 625, 647; and visionaries 9, 214, 448, 450, 452, 622
 Ceysens, Lucien 347
 Châlons-sur-Marne diocese and actors 337; and Easter communions 95; and Jansenism 460, 463; and relics 129; and representation of clergy 739
 Champion de Cicé, J. B. M., bishop of Auxerre 699, 740
 Champion de Cicé, Jérôme-Marie, archbishop of Bordeaux 649, 681, 685, 690, 695–6, 741–2
 chapels, Protestant 5, 565, 575, 645, 653–7; destruction 570, 571–2, 581, 614, 648, 652
 chaplains, army and navy 31, 252, 621–2, 670
 charity; and confraternities 164, 165–8, 177, 528; and curés 707–8, 726; and decline in piety 113; and gambling 269–70; and poverty 112, 258, 706–8; and prostitutes 288–9; and the rich 705–7, 739, 741–2; royal 8; and wills 32, 112–13
 Charlemagne, and usury 265
 Chartres diocese; and catechism 10; and marriage 27, 304; and miracle 211; and pilgrimage 143; and representation of clergy 740

- chastity, and marriage 20–1
- Chateaubriand, François-René de, and confirmation 8
- Chaunu, P. 110
- Chauvelin, H. P., abbé 420, 549, 550–1, 669
- Chelles, Mlle de Chartres, abbess 383, 400, 410, 430
- childbirth; dangers 301, 308; and premarital conception 297–8; and superstition 216–17
- children; abandonment 307; and age of responsibility 246; in church 99–100; and confession 8–9; illegitimate 26; and infant mortality 3, 6; Jewish 635; Lutheran 627–9; Protestant 3, 572, 574, 583, 584, 586, 591, 605–9, 648, 651; and *sensibilité* 309; and sexual experience 293; unbaptized 4, 15, 135, 346, 666 *see also* baptism; catechism; confirmation; First Communion
- choirs 40, 91
- Choiseul-Beaupré, Claude-Antoine de, bishop of Châlons 468, 485, 504
- Choiseul, Etienne François, duc de 126, 550–1, 595, 628–9, 668–9, 721
- Christmas 121, 185
- Church; authority 14, 15, 341, 352, 379, 503, 542, 569; authority within 616–19, 724–6, 730–1; infallibility 12, 385, 449
- Church–State relations 341–2, 705; and Jansenism 348–9, 353, 364, 366–8, 377, 378–81, 412, 672; and Jews 631; and liturgy 52, 57; and marriage 18, 21, 22–3, 25, 341; and persecution of Protestants 565–88, 617–18, 624–5, 672; and role of bishops 679–704; and secular courts 491–504, 505–8, 542–3; and sermons 73–4; and *Unigenitus* 471–80
- churches; collegiate 40, 57, 83, 121; and confraternities 164–5, 186; maintenance 105; and patronal festivals 204–5, 255
- churchwardens; and confraternities 165, 187; and Jansenism 434–5, 440
- cities, *see* urbanization
- Civil Constitution of the Clergy, oath 117, 118, 667, 702, 724
- Claville, Le Maître de 242, 245, 270, 327, 328
- Clément, abbé, sermons 59–60, 74, 77, 484
- Clement IX, Pope 313, 468
- Clement XI, Pope; and appeals to General Council 391, 398, 404, 405–6; and *Unigenitus* 353, 362–4, 366–9, 373–4, 385–6, 663
- Clement XIII, Pope 508, 541
- clergy; and contraception 306–10; delinquent 291–3, 385, 464, 716; and Jansenism 377–8, 385, 387–8, 393–4, 403, 413, 469, 472, 474–7, 661–2, 666, 668, 716; and Jews 642; Lutheran 628, 629; and miracle and superstition 210–13, 217–19; and Pénitents 173; and pilgrimage 145–6, 148–54, 216; and popular religion 189–91, 201, 202, 205, 220; and prostitutes 288–92; Protestant 79, 589–90, 644, 654–6and church discipline 567, 592–3, 594and intellectualism 567, 580and marriage 603, 682persecution 584, 586, 594–6, 610; and provincial assemblies 680, 691, 694–5; and reform 119, 120, 189–220; and saying of mass 41–2; and sexuality 280–1, 297–8; social origins 114–17; and the supernatural 221; and the theatre 321, 337–42 *see also* aristocracy; bishops; celibacy; confraternities; curés; General Assemblies; *Unigenitus*
- Clermont diocese; and confraternities 165,

- 170; and liturgical reform 49; and parish missions 86, 89–90, 93; and prostitutes 286; and *Unigenitus* 395
- Clermont-Tonnere, A.-J.-C., bishop of Châlons-sur-Marne 693, 739
- Cluniacs, and liturgical reform 48, 49, 55
- Coffin, Charles 493–4
- Coislin, Henri-Charles du Cambout de, bishop of Metz, and Jansenism 390–1, 465
- coitus interruptus 108, 297, 303, 305, 309–11
- Colbert de Croissy, Joachim, bishop of Montpellier; and catechism 11, 12, 15, 16, 427; and Council of Embrun 419, 421; death 461, 465, 467; and Jansenism 390, 391, 401, 406, 410–12, 414, 459; and Jansenist miracles 437, 441–2, 445; and Jesuits 431; and liturgical reform 51, 474; and Quesnel 365–6, 387–9; and usury 273
- Colbert, Jean Baptiste 204–5, 275, 388, 587
- collections 105
- collèges*; Jansenist 456, 467; Jesuit 275, 509–18, 522, 526, 531–2, 535, 548, 707closure 114, 551–2, 555–6, 557, 559–60and confraternities 184–5, 528and gambling 270and the theatre 192–3, 323–4; and Protestants 646
- Collet, P. 41–2, 252, 309
- Comédie-Française 317, 318–20, 332–3, 335, 340
- Comédie-Italienne 318, 332, 335, 338
- comedies 320, 321, 322, 327, 329; Jesuit 324, 326, 516, 518
- commerce; and Jews 631, 633, 635–6, 641, 643; and loans 263, 266–8, 272–5, 341; and Protestants 566–7, 590, 599, 644–6
- Commission des réguliers 98, 114, 137
- Compagnie du Saint-Sacrament 181, 314, 570
- conception; Lenten 109; premarital 297–8
- concubinage 291, 602–3
- concupiscence, as sinful 20, 299–300
- Condom diocese 233–4, 388
- Conférences ecclésiastiques* 306, 427, 721, 723, 725; and marriage 302, 309; and usury and lotteries 264–5, 270
- confession 14, 241–62; and assurance 30; and *cas de conscience* 248, 309; and conformity 97; and confraternities 182, 187–8; and contraception 306–7, 308–11; and death 31–4, 252, 256, 490, 504–5; and Easter communion 95–6, 109, 246, 253–4, 496; and First Communion 8, 246; and Jansenism 249, 251–2, 253, 259, 431–3, 486–7, 489, 663–4, 717; and laxism 249, 358, 540, 541; manuals 33, 233, 247–52, 254, 281, 307–9, 431, 490; and marriage 18, 25, 301; and mass 102, 246; obligatory 40; and parish missions 85, 90, 92, 93; and penance and absolution 246–54, 256, 431–2; and pilgrimage 149, 150, 151; and prostitutes 289; and reparation 32–3; and royal confessors 331, 384, 387, 523–5, 537, 540, 558, 577–8; and scandals 258–60; and secrecy of the confessional 247–8, 253; and self-examination 249; and sexuality 249, 260, 281, 297; and social control 251, 254–8, 341, 537; and spiritual direction 241–6, 260–1; and usury 273, 275 *see also* absolution; *cas réservés*; casuistry; curés
- ‘confidence’ 417, 425
- confirmation 6–8, 14, 16–17, 724
- conformity; and baptism 97, 105; and Jansenism 662; and Jews 635; and marginal religion 119–55; and Protestants 580, 581–2, 601–4, 609, 628, 644, 647; and urbanization 96–7

- see also* Easter communion; mass, Sunday attendance
- confraternities 156–88, 191, 220; authorization 156–9; charitable 164, 165–8, 177; for clergy 181–4; and community 163, 192; and death 31, 35, 37, 164, 168–71; and frivolity 175, 187, 202–3, 467; and ordination 116; and parish churches 164–5, 186; and Pénitents 35, 171–81, 449; and subscriptions 158, 170, 178, 180; and trade guilds 157, 159–64, 168 *see also* Holy Sacrament; Jesuits; Pénitents
- congrue* 683, 720–1, 722–4, 728, 730
- conseiller-clerc* 383, 475, 551, 732
- consent; and Gallicanism 363–4, 373, 402, 422, 717; and marriage 18–19, 21, 22, 298, 301; and monarchy and parlement 700; universal 522
- consolation, in sermons 72–3
- Constitutional Church, and ex-Jesuits 558–9
- Conti, Louis Armand de Bourbon, prince de 91, 314, 594, 601, 674
- contraception; ban on 20, 108, 306–10; increased use 108–9, 119, 302–6, 309; and premarital sex 297
- contract, ‘triple’ 263, 272
- contrition 42, 93, 249
- control, social; and the clergy 147, 181, 186–8, 202; and the confessional 251, 254–8, 341, 537
- conventicles; Jansenist 443–51, 663; Protestant 573, 584
- convents; and erring wives 23; Jansenist 443, 454, 458–60, 465; and Protestant children 598, 606, 648–9, 651; and Protestant women 574, 586, 610, 614, 619; and the supernatural 221; and the theatre 323, 324
- convulsionist movement 214, 229, 325, 351, 431, 434, 441–55, 485, 674; and persecution 446–9, 454, 502
- Conzié, François de, bishop of Tours 696, 740
- Conzié, Louis de, bishop of Arras 684, 695, 702–3
- Cordeliers 136, 260, 275, 457
- Corneille, Pierre 323
- Corpus Christi; and exposition of the Holy Sacrament 41, 122, 123; and processions 41, 97, 121, 122–3, 175, 179, 214, 602; and sermons 60, 123; and trade guilds 161
- corvée* 632, 681, 708–9, 711; reform 687–8, 697, 698
- Coudrette, Christophe, abbé 270, 534, 536, 538, 546, 549–50
- Counter-Reformation; and ban on usury 263; and confraternities 157; and intellectualism 189–90, 191, 193, 202; and sermons 77
- Court, *see* Versailles
- Court, Antoine 592–4, 595–7, 602–3, 609, 610, 617
- courts, ecclesiastical; and actors 338; and illegitimacy 296; and miracle 212; and religious practice 94; and sexuality and marriage 291, 301; and the State 477–8, 506; and the supernatural 226, 231, 235, 237–8, 259
- courts, secular; and confession 259, 496; and confraternities 159, 164, 167; and Council of Embrun 418–20; and Gallicanism 376, 504; and holidays 206; and Jansenism 464, 471–80, 487–9, 493–4; and marriage 23–4, 614–16; and pilgrimage 140; and the sacraments 376, 491–2, 493–502, 504, 506–7, 543, 663–4, 668; and the supernatural 222–4, 226, 231–2, 234, 238; and usury 274
- courts, sovereign; and Jesuits 554, 556, 557; and Protestants ,

- 604; and rights of clergy 385; and royal edicts 472–3, 554; and taxation 505; and witchcraft 223 *see also* parlements
- Couserans diocese 53, 742
- Coutances diocese 10, 311; and clergy 114, 115–16; and hermits 136–7; and liturgical reform 44, 54; and popular religion 108, 233
- Cox, Harvey 190
- Crébillon, Prosper Jolyot de 319–20, 334, 513
- crime 97, 98, 100, 257, 542
- Croisset, Père J. 514, 517, 527; and sexuality 277, 278–9
- Croÿ, duc de 3–4, 32, 113
- crucifixes, personal 104–5, 108, 145
- culture; literate 193–201; rural 189–91; urban 190, 194
- Cum occasione* (papal bull) 347–8, 351
- curés; and actors 337–41; appellant, *see Unigenitus*; and authority in the Church 716–19, 724–6; and baptism 3, 5; and *bon curé* 726–7; *cardinaux* 718; and catechism 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 606; and charity 707–8; and confession 247, 250, 253, 254–8, 261–2, 310–11, 720; and confirmation 7–8, 724; and confraternities 158, 164, 165, 169, 171, 174, 179, 185–8, 192; and contraception 306–7; and death 33, 34–5, 38–9, 502; and hermits 132, 136; Jansenist 406, 429, 433–6, 438–40, 451–3, 455, 462, 661, 668, 720; and Jesuits 533; and libraries 199; and liturgical reform 40, 53, 54; and marriage 20, 22, 26–7, 109, 308, 310, 603–4, 614–16, 724; and miracle and superstition 211, 213, 217–20; and parish 16, 94–5, 192, 198, 204–6, 254–8, 502, 708–20, 723; and parish missions 84–5, 87, 92–3; and parlements 671; and pilgrimage 146, 148–55; political representation 694–5, 703, 727–9, 731–44; and popular religion 119, 201, 202–6, 211; *prieurs* 735, 738; *primitifs* 719, 731; and *prône* 78–83, 94, 99, 709; and prostitution 290–1; and Protestants 582–3, 585, 590, 600, 602–5, 623–4, 629, 647–9, 652; and public announcements 79, 257, 295; revolt 351, 413, 683, 704, 705–44; *royaux* 627; and sexuality 295; and the supernatural 221; and tenure 385, 716 *see also* bishops; *cabiers*; clergy; taxation; *Unigenitus*
- Custines, vicomte de 137
- Daguesseau, Henri François 380, 383, 399, 401, 406, 473, 475
- Dainville, F. de 511
- Damiens, Robert François 507, 542–5, 549
- dancing; banned 154, 162, 202, 432, 467; and the confessional 241; encouraged 151, 204, 313; and sexuality 278–9 *see also* ballet
- Daon, Père Roger 245, 309–10, 775 n. 22
- Daubenton, Guillaume 348, 353, 358–9, 363, 368–9, 523
- Dauphiné; and Jesuits 557; and parish clergy 671, 720, 722–3, 726, 732–3; and Pénitents 172; and Protestants 565–6, 569–70, 573, 586, 589, 594–6, 598, 606, 611, 614, 647; and provincial assemblies 680–2
- Dax diocese; and curés 720; and Jansenism 388, 460, 465, 663; and liturgical reform 53; and missions 85, 86–7; and pilgrimage 151; and the supernatural 226
- death 28–39; and actors 314, 337, >

- 339–40; ceremonies 34–9, 242; and conditional absolution 34; and confession 31–4, 252, 256, 432, 504–5; and confraternities 31, 35, 37, 164, 168–81, 185, 187; and extreme unction 14, 32, 34, 35, 252, 487–9; in mission preaching 91; preparation for 28–30, 31, 111, 199, 490, 528; and Protestants 584–5, 590, 604–5; and retreats 30–1; and sexuality 281 *see also* burial; cemeteries; funerals; viaticum
- deism; and death 32; and Jesuits 541; and Protestants 596, 629; and Rousseau 618; and the theatre 322, 516; urban 96, 110
- Delumeau, Jean 190
- Demissas preces* (papal brief) 409
- demon possession 196, 221–2, 452
- desire, sexual 277–81, 299; and the theatre 312, 315, 316–17, 322, 324, 328–9, 336–7
- devins* 233, 774 n. 64
- dévo*t party 525, 543, 550, 677
- devotion, *see* spirituality
- dialect, and preaching 80–1
- Diderot, Denis; and acting 318; and catechisms 13; and Hell 73; and Jesuit education 518; and religious practice 96; and sermons 64, 76–7; and sexuality 280, 293
- Digne diocese 100, 736
- Dijon diocese 163, 186, 331, 557, 750 n. 44
- Dillon, Arthur-Richard, archbishop of Narbonne; and assembly of notables 684–6, 688, 690–1, 698–9, 703; and provincial assemblies 683, 695, 704; and toleration 650, 651
- directeur*, spiritual 30, 102, 241–6; and élites 254, 259; and hermits 132, 140; and Jesuits 245–6, 365, 387, 407, 525; and religious Orders 246; and *sensibilité* 244–5, 261, 309; and sexual misconduct 260
- Discipline, Edict of 506–7
- dissent; and Jansenism 428, 436, 455, 456–8, 467–8; and *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* 424–6 *see also* Protestants
- divorce, legalization 24
- Doctrinaires; and education 323, 556, 559–60; and missions 46, 87–8; and the theatre 323, 324; and *Unigenitus* 421, 457, 467–8, 662
- doctrine; and catechism 11, 12–13; and Jansenism 353–69, 386, 427–8, 664, 666; and Protestantism 568, 575, 579–80, 644; in sermons 70
- Dol diocese 53, 86, 211; and *Unigenitus* 393, 395
- Dominicans; and confraternities 157, 184, 186; and education 663; and Jesuits 533; and Protestants 622; and *Unigenitus* 409, 457, 661
- dowry, marital 21, 23, 308, 616
- dress; female 101, 277; of hermits 132
- droit d'amortissement* 113
- droit coutumier* 23
- droit de pelote* 26
- drought 151, 175
- drunkenness 162, 187, 205–6, 255, 257
- Du Bos, J.-B., and the theatre 322, 329
- Dubois, Card. Guillaume 411, 416–17, 469; and papacy 404–5; and Protestants 610; and *Unigenitus* 400–1, 403–8
- Duguet, J.-J., abbé 40, 244, 435, 442, 450, 640
- Easter communions 40, 101, 103, 104, 116–18; and confession 95–6, 109, 246, 253–4, 496; and confraternities 174–5, 179, 185; non-compliance 94–6, 97, 524; and Protestants 597, 612; refusal 494
- Echeverria, D. 534

- economy; and commercial loans 263–8, 272–4; and the Jews 630, 641; and persecution of Protestants 575, 585, 587, 599, 614, 617
- education; of clergy 114, 116, 663; and Jansenism 429, 513; Jesuit 278, 323, 528, 537; methods 11, 16–17, 323, 511–12; and Protestants 572, 605–6; single-sex 278; and the theatre 323–4; for women 301 *see also* catechism; *colleges*; universities
- egalitarianism; and curés 711, 714–16, 731; and education 517–18, 522, 535, 707; and Jansenism 74, 443–5, 449
- Elisée, Père, and sermons 65, 74, 76–7, 781 n. 39
- Embrun, Council of 407, 415–20, 423–5, 461, 470, 474
- Embrun diocese 115, 116
- emigration of Protestants 572, 586, 591, 597, 598, 599, 609
- Encyclopédie* 268, 535, 617
- Enlightenment; and charity 113; and confession 261, 306–7; and crime 542; and doctrine 16; and Jansenism 667; and Jesuits 520, 521–2, 534–6, 538–9, 560–1; and Jews 638–40, 642–3; and liturgical reform 46–7; and lotteries 269; and Lutheranism 629; and marriage 302, 306; and Pénitents 180; and pilgrimage 145, 154; and Protestants 586, 596, 613–14, 619, 644, 649, 652; and relics 129; and religious allegiance 110, 188; and reward and punishment 288–9; and *sensibilité* 243, 261; and sermons 74–7, 83; and the supernatural 225–6, 228, 235, 237; and superstition 208, 214, 218–19; and the theatre 320–3, 327–8, 341; and *Unigenitus* 376–7, 424; and usury 267, 276
- Epiphany, celebration 48, 121
- Estates General; calls for 675–6, 678, 693, 695, 698, 700–1; and representation 174, 733–44; summoning 701–4, 727–33
- Eucharist; central importance 6, 14, 40, 101–2, 112, 186, 191, 207, 219–20, 251; and Real Presence 12, 437, 486, 582 *see also* *Cène*; Holy Sacrament; mass
- Eudes, Jean d' 84, 207
- Eudists 84, 86, 303, 666
- evangelism, *see* missions, parish
- evocation (*évocation*) 259, 471, 489, 493, 499–500, 550, 670–1; and Fleury 472, 473, 476–7, 480
- Evreux diocese 221–2, 736
- Ex omnibus* (papal encyclical) 504
- ex votos* 106–7, 117, 147
- excommunication; and actors 334–5, 337; and extra-marital sex 291; and failure of religious practice 94, 467; of Jansenists 378, 385, 394, 399–400, 403, 464; and secular courts 491–2, 504; and *Unigenitus* 375–6, 379–80, 409, 474, 476
- exorcism 6, 218, 230–1; and the supernatural 221–2, 226–9
- fabriques* 165
- famine; and charity 708; and contraception 305, 307
- fanaticism, religious 171, 345, 618, 648, 667–8
- fashion, and sexual desire 277
- fassenottes* 208
- Fauchet, Claude 59, 74, 76, 714
- fear; and confession 249; and death 29–30, 33, 490; and missions 87, 91–2; in sermons 72–3, 525; and superstition 210, 216; and *Unigenitus* 354, 359
- feast days, *see* saints Fénelon,
- François de Salignac de la Mothe; and Jansenism 427–8; and Louis XIV 579, 585, 588,

- 649; and marriage 301; and *Maximes des Saints* 356–7, 361; and Noailles 361–2, 365–6; and royal confessor 524; and sermons 65, 67, 68, 70; and spirituality 30, 245, 649; and the theatre 326, 331
- festivals, parish 204–5, 255, 261
- Fête-Dieu, *see* Corpus Christi
- fêtes chômées* 204–8
- Feu, François II 469, 502
- Feugières, Philibert-Charles de Pas de, bishop of Agde 402–3
- Feuillants, and *Unigenitus* 403
- feuille des bénéfices*; and Boyer 481, 485–6, 502; and delinquent clergy 292; and La Rochefoucauld 502–3, 662; and Marbeuf 59, 734; and Noailles 383, 386; and royal confessor 524
- fiançailles* (betrothal) 25, 298
- finance; and Jews 631, 635, 640, 643; and Protestants 566–7, 599, 645
- First Communion 8–9, 16–17, 90, 96, 196; and confession 8, 246; and confirmation 6
- Fitz-James, François de, bishop of Soissons 468, 485, 503, 541, 552, 663, 665
- flagellants; and clergy confraternities 183; and Pénitents 157, 171–2, 175, 179–80, 449
- Flanders; and illegitimacy rates 295; and Jesuits 557; and Protestants 657; and witchcraft 232
- Fleury, Card. André Hercule de; and Alsatian Lutherans 628; and confraternities 165; and Council of Embrun 415–16, 420, 423, 425; and Jansenism 434–5, 451–2, 456–80, 543and episcopal appointments 460–70and miracle 439, 442–3, 450, 454–5persecution 408, 412–13, 420–2, 430, 436, 718and power of State 471–80and religious Orders 456–60, 661; and liturgy 42; and Louis XV 61; and marriage 615; and Noailles 412–13; and Quesnel 411; and *Unigenitus* 396, 410, 451, 484, 492
- Fleury, Claude 394; and catechisms 11, 13, 17, 637; and Church history 488; and Jews 637, 639, 640; as royal confessor 387, 523
- Fontenelle, Bernard 59, 407, 470, 520, 585
- Forbin-Janson, J., bishop of Arles, and Jansenism 396, 409, 461, 479
- forgiveness; and death 28, 31, 36; and Mary Magdalen 284–5
- fornication 281, 291, 308, 310
- Franche Comté; and confraternities 169; and hermits 138; and Jesuits 557; and poverty 712; and preaching 84; and Protestants 657; and religious practice 104
- Franciscans 60, 136
- free will, *see* grace and free will
- freemasonry 106, 180, 188, 645
- Fréjus diocese 13, 53, 86; and confraternities 165, 179, 187; and *Unigenitus* 395, 396
- French language; in education 513; in theatre 514; in worship 42–6, 54
- French Revolution; and confraternities 163, 188; and contraception 108–9, 304–5; and iconoclasm 209; and Jansenism 667, 676–7; and Jesuits 534; and Jewish emancipation 643; and laicization 117–18; and parish clergy 712, 713–15; and pensions to monks 138; and pilgrimage 145; and the theatre 341; and use of French 46
- Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes 444, 513, 606
- friars, *see* mendicant Orders
- frivolity; in popular religion 175, 187, 202–8, 219, 271, 390; and the theatre 328, 341

- Froeschlé-Chopard, M. H. 152
 Fumel, Jean-Felix, bishop of Lodève 204, 468
 funerals 36–9; orations 59, 61; processions 37, 38, 133, 161, 168–9, 176, 179
gabelle (salt tax) 257, 340, 687–8, 697
 Gaiches, abbé, and sermons 61, 62, 64, 69, 71–2
 galleys 23, 141, 232, 707, 730; and Jansenists 673; and Jesuit missions 84, 88, 526–7; and Protestants 584, 586, 591, 594, 602–4, 610–13, 620–2
 Gallican Church; and consent 363–4, 373, 402; and Jansenism 387–9, 403, 412, 420, 422, 468, 500, 662–4, 667; and Jesuits 347, 537–8, 549–50, 553–4, 555, 558, 670; ‘new Catholics’ 597–606; and papacy 15, 30, 55, 357–8, 377, 378–80, 397, 428, 581 and Benedict XIII 410, 414 and Benedict XIV 469, 503 and Clement XI 363–4, 366, 373, 406 infallibility 367, 419, 476, 503, 717 and Innocent X 348; and parlements 383, 385, 451, 473–4, 479; and Protestantism 576, 577; and the theatre 314–15; and *Unigenitus* 367, 379–81, 387, 389, 392, 419–22, 492, 668; and use of the vernacular 43, 44–5
 Galpern, A. 766 n. 49
 gambling 269–76, 730
 Gap diocese 10, 144, 275, 722, 723
 Gazier, A. 349
 General Assemblies of the clergy; and appellant bishops 407, 414; and confession 249, 251; and Jansenism 349, 357, 414, 503, 661; and Jesuits 358, 552; and liturgy 41, 45, 47, 56; and ordinations 114; and papacy 581; and parish clergy 683, 720–1, 724, 726, 727–8; and parlements 476, 699–700; and Protestants 569, 577, 579, 580–1, 600, 611, 624–5, 650–2, 655, 698–9; and sermons 73; and taxation 113, 414, 682, 683–4, 689–91, 697–8, 701, 720; ‘Théatins’ and ‘Feuillants’ 503; and usury 263–4, 272
 General Councils; and Gallicanism 363, 455, 717; and Louis XIV 388; and the theatre 335; and *Unigenitus* 378, 386, 388–97, 398–409, 412–22, 423, 428, 450; and usury 266
 generosity, and *sensibilité* 243–4
 Genlis, Stéphanie-Félicité du Crest, Mme de 244, 261
 Genovéfains; and Jansenism 428, 435, 444, 457, 661; and liturgical reform 55
 geography, and Jesuits 514–15, 521, 531
 Gerson, J. le Charlier de 215
 Girac, F. Bateau de, bishop of Rennes 684, 704
 Girard, Jean-Baptist 231, 258–9, 540
 Godeau, bishop of Vence, and sexuality 297, 300
 godparents; and baptism 4–5, 6, 105; and illegitimacy 296; and spiritual affinity 4, 19
 Goldmann, Lucien 350
 grace and free will; and Arnould 346; and conversion 580; and Fénelon 361; and Fleury 411; and Jansenism 391, 483, 484, 485, 488; and Jansenius 345–9, 354; and Jesuits 345, 358, 411, 533, 541; and papacy 409, 428, 483; and Quesnel 354, 358, 371–4 *see also* predestination
 Grand Conseil, and ecclesiastical affairs 505
 Grasse diocese; and confraternities 165, 172–3, 177, 178; and popular religion 206; and *Unigenitus* 395
 Grégoire, Henri; and *colportage* literature 195, 197; and Jews 634, 640, 643; and revolt of the curés 726, 737–8
 Gregory VII, Pope 52, 474, 476, 477
 Grenoble diocese; and catechism 12, 15,

- 17; and confraternities 162, 184; and Jesuits 510, 527, 560; and Protestants 566, 581–3, 586, 588, 595, 604; and representation of clergy 723; and *Unigenitus* 390, 394, 460
- Gres-Geyer, Jacques 793 n. 24
- Grimm, F.-M., baron de 335
- Guerber, J. 776 n. 45
- guilds, trade; and confraternities 157, 159–64, 168, 713; and Jews 632, 633, 636, 641; and processions 122; and Protestants 600–1
- Habert, Louis 309–10, 365, 379–80, 425
- Hardy, G. 413
- Haute-Guyenne, provincial assembly 680, 681, 685, 740
- healing; and hermits 135; and Jansenism 214, 434, 436–46, 452–5; and pilgrimage 127–8, 147–8, 153–4; in popular religion 191, 211–12, 216–18; and relics 101, 127, 211
- Hell; in catechisms 14–16; and death 29; in sermons 72–4, 82, 87, 91, 169
- Henri IV 52, 376, 474, 543–4, 575
- Henriau, Jean-Marie, bishop of Boulogne, and Jansenism 414, 424, 425, 463–5
- Hérault de Fontaine, René, (lieutenant of police) 420, 421, 424, 456
- Hercé, Urbain de, bishop of Dol 86, 650, 698
- heresy; and Jansenism 348–50, 360, 363, 371, 374–5, 396; and Protestantism 577–8, 579, 581, 584, 624–5, 650, 651
- hermits 131–40, 197, 220; and communities 136–8; and local community 134–5; and rules 131–3, 136; and shrines 135; social origins 133, 137, 139
- historiography; and Jansenism 423, 426, 665; and Jesuits 519–20, 531; and popular religion 189–93, 201, 224–5; and Protestantism 577
- history, in Jesuit education 513, 514
- holidays 202–8, 617, 628; *fêtes chômées* 204–8
- Holy Sacrament; and confraternities 41, 157, 169, 183, 186–7, 207, 570; devotion to 88, 90, 92, 191; exposition 41, 122, 123; and Jansenism 41, 101–2, 112; and miracle 437; and superstition 219
- Holy Week, liturgy 56–7
- bonnêteté* 242, 244, 270, 327
- hôpital général*; and Jansenism 494–5; and prostitutes 287; and Protestants 584, 606, 648; and usury 274
- hospitality, and pilgrims 141–2
- hôtel-Dieu* 274, 601
- Huguenots, *see* Protestants
- hymns, in liturgical reform 45, 49, 51, 53, 55
- hysteria, and the supernatural 221, 223–4, 230–1, 439
- illegitimacy 294–7, 298, 307, 602–3
- impotence, and witchcraft 232–3
- individualism, religious 87, 90, 117, 119, 149, 190, 192, 195, 201, 248
- indulgence; and confraternities 167; and pilgrimages 147, 149; plenary 121, 147, 149, 236
- infallibility; of the Church 12, 385, 449; papal and *Cum occasione* 347–8 and Fleury 476 and Gallicanism 363–4, 373, 389, 402–3, 419, 428, 469, 476, 569 and Jansenism 423, 479 and Jesuits 537, 627 and Noailles 357, 402 and *Unigenitus* 363–4, 368, 373, 386, 503–4
- infanticide 296, 307
- Innocent X, Pope, and Jansenism 347–8
- Innocent XI, Pope 363, 583–4
- Innocent XIII, Pope 404–5, 417, 539
- inoculation 306
- insurance 264
- intellectualism; and the Church 189–90, 191, 193, 202; and Protestantism 567

- intercessions; for the dead 27, 34, 112, 176, 185; and miracle 216–17, 218–19; for the monarch 125; and pilgrimage 147–9, 151; and relics 125
- interest, and insurance 264
- Irish priests 115
- Jacobins, *see* Dominicans
- jacqueries*, and Sunday mass 99
- Jansen (Jansenius), Cornelius, bishop of Ypres 503; and Arnauld 346, 423; and *Augustinus* 345, 347–9, 352, 353, 371, 423, 426–7; and *Unigenitus* 353, 365, 371, 373, 409, 483, 664
- Jansenism; and appeal to General Council 378, 386, 388–97, 398–409, 412–19 *see also Unigenitus* (papal bull), appellants; and bishops 716–19; and catechisms 11–12, 14–15, 426–7, 717; changes 423–55; and Church of Utrecht 425; and confession 249, 251–2, 253, 259, 431–3, 717, 720; and conventicles 443; and curés 718; and dancing 278; and death 32, 34; and divisions 401, 442, 450–4, 482, 485–6; and gambling 270; and historiography 423, 426, 665; and Jesuits, *see* Jesuit–Jansenist quarrel; and liturgical reform 49–51, 52–3, 55–6, 429–30, 485; and masses for the dead 112; and non-Christian faiths 358, 372, 523, 539; and parish missions 85, 434–5; persecution and clerical appointments 114, 406, 435–6, 474–5, 481–2, 483–4, 716 and convulsionism 446–9, 454, 502 and episcopal appointments 406, 460–71, 481, 485–6 and refusal of sacraments 34, 465, 478, 479, 486–90, 492–504, 506–7, 543, 663–4, 668, 672 and religious Orders 55, 391–4, 456–60 and secular courts 471–80, 663 *see also* Embrun, Council of; and Protestants 450, 617, 672; and Regency 383–7, 398–413, 519–20; and Sacred Heart cult 207, 666, 670; and sermons 68–70, 74, 81; and sexuality 109; and spiritual direction 245; and the supernatural 228; and the theatre 314, 316, 324–6, 337; and toleration 662; twilight 661–78; and use of the vernacular 44–5, 200, 360, 423, 428–30, 483; and usury 266–7, 272, 273 *see also* baptism; convulsionist movement; Gallican Church; grace; Holy Sacrament; Jesuit–Jansenist quarrel; laity; marriage; miracle; Paris, parlement; parlements; politics; Port-Royal Abbey; predestination; republicanism; rigorism; *Unigenitus*; women
- Jerome, St, and relics 124, 129
- Jesuit–Jansenist quarrel 390, 408, 470, 509, 560–1, 667; and apologetics 360–1, 665; and attack on Louis XV 543–6, 549; and ‘Chinese rites’ 358, 523, 533, 539–40; and convulsionists 325; and Jansenius 346–8, 423; and Noailles 356–8, 360, 365–7; and *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* 423–6, 432, 482, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 545–6, 548, 560; and parlements 548, 549–53, 556, 558, 560, 672–3; as phantom heresy 349–51, 361, 667; and Quesnel 354–6, 360–1, 366, 519; and rigorism and laxity 248–9, 423, 431–2 *see also* infallibility; *Mémoires de Trévoux*; papacy;
- Unigenitus*
Jesuits 509–29; and Alsatian Lutherans 627–9; and appellants 466; and confession 252, 258–60, 431, 461, 525–6 and casuistry 272, 524, 540 and laxism 249, 358, 540, 541

- royal confessors 523–5, 537, 540, 558, 577–8; and confraternities 157, 159, 184–6, 245–6, 510, 527 and Aa 181–3 and *collèges* 184–5, 528 and missions 158, 169; *Constitutions* 549, 551, 554; and death 29; and discipline 511, 537–8, 548, 549; and education, see *collèges*; education; and fashion 277; and foreign missions 515, 519–23, 533, 538–9, 546–7, 559; and frequency of communion 102, 346, 390, 432, 528; and gambling 269–70; and inoculation 306; and litigation 231, 536, 546–8, 549; and liturgical reform 50, 52; and Maurists 392, 425; and Noailles 372, 378, 387, 407, 420, 486, 519, 523, 526; and non-Christian faiths 358, 372, 522–3, 533, 539–40; and *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* 424, 432, 482, 536, 538; numbers 509; opposition to 231, 531–3, 534–9, 554; and papacy 362–3, 367–8, 509, 522–3, 537, 539–42, 549, 553; and parish missions 84, 85, 86, 88, 93, 526–7, 663; and parlements 346, 347, 531, 536, 543–4, 547–60; and preaching 68–9, 70, 75, 552–6; and Protestants 88, 527, 571, 578, 585, 654; and public opinion 534–42, 555; and recruitment 530–1; reforms proposed 550, 553–4; and Regency 384, 540; and *scriptores librorum* 360–1, 363, 519–20, 530; and social control 537, 549, 550; and the supernatural 227, 230–1; suppression 114, 508, 539, 552, 556–61, 667–8, 670, 742; and universities 532–3; and usury 272, 273, 274, 540; and vernacular Bible 199–200; and will to power 536–8 see also ballet; *collèges*; *directeur*; spiritual; grace; Jesuit–Jansenist quarrel; property; theatre; *Unigenitus*
- Jews 3, 83, 630–43; Ashkenazim 630–1, 632–4, 636–7, 641–3; conversion 630, 635, 640; emancipation 641–3, 653; Sephardim 630, 631, 632, 634, 636, 638, 641–3
- Joly de Fleury, Guillaume-François 380, 383, 497–8
- jouvines de Carême* 202
- jubilee years 121, 122, 412, 494
- Juigné, Le Clerc de, archbishop of Paris 56, 671, 685
- Kierkegaard, Søren 193
- Kolakowski, L. 350
- La Bruyère, Jean de 71, 227, 242
- La Chaize, François de, Père de 370, 524, 577–8
- La Chalotais, L.-R. de Caradeuc de 536, 555, 560
- La Chaussée, Nivelles de 243, 318, 327
- La Condamine, C. M. de 269
- La Fare, A.-L.-H. de, bishop of Nancy 643, 738, 740–1
- La Flèche, Timothée de 363, 366–7, 373
- La Luzerne, C. G. de, bishop of Langres 655, 686, 690, 729
- La Motte, Louis François Gabriel d'Orléans de, bishop of Amiens 41, 86, 458, 705
- La Rivière, Poncet de, bishop of Troyes 73, 466
- La Rochefoucauld, and *amour propre* 245
- La Rochefoucauld, Frédéric-Jerôme de Roye de, archbishop of Bourges 481–2, 485, 497; and *feuille* 502–3
- La Rochefoucauld, Pierre-Louis de, bishop of Saintes, and baptism 5, 662
- La Rochelle diocese; and catechism 11, 12, 15; and clergy 116; and confraternities 171; and Easter communions 95; and Jansenism 395; and Protestants 566, 568, 570–2, 574, 576, 581, 588, 598, 611, 645–7, 650, 652
- La Trémoille, Joseph Emmanuel, Card. de 364, 367, 381, 400
- Lafayette, M. J. P. Y. R. G. Motier de 79, 654, 655

- laicization; and the Church 106–11, 116–17; and confraternities 164, 178
- laity; autonomy 117; as catechists 17, 88; and confessors 30, 246–7, 252; and convulsionist movement 444–5; Jansenist 42, 376, 377, 385, 424 and Bible reading 375, 380, 423 enhanced status 351, 372, 374, 412, 430, 433, 675, 678, 717–18; and Jesuits 531, 549–50; and liturgy 40–2; and piety 131, 245–6; and precedence 38, 100–1; Protestant 567, 568, 576, 580, 592–4, 644–5; and reforms 724; and representation of clergy 726–7; and secret confraternities 181, 184–6; and *Unigenitus* 374–6, 424–6, 444–5, 503; and use of the vernacular 42–6, 199–200, 423, 428–9, 434 *see also* practice, religious; secularization
- landownership, and curés 711–12, 714–16
- Langle, Pierre de, bishop of Boulogne, and Jansenism 388, 390, 401, 414, 463–5
- Langres diocese 131, 138, 183, 729, 736
- Languedoc; and Easter communions 95; and illegitimacy 294, 295–6; and Pénitents 172; and preaching 81; and Protestants 569–70, 573, 578, 585, 589–94, 597, 602, 611, 613, 652; and sorcery 222
- Languet de Villeneuve de Gergy, Joseph 11, 395–6; and desire 277, 401; and Jansenism 430, 432, 437, 450, 452, 462, 467, 483; and secular courts 498; and the theatre 327, 328
- Laon diocese 10, 145, 232, 388
- Latin; in education 513–14, 516, 531; in liturgy 48, 54, 428
- Law's Scheme 87, 286, 399, 708
- Lazarists; and galley slaves 620; and pilgrimage 152; and preaching 75, 84, 86–7; and *Unigenitus* 421, 463–4
- Le Bras, G. 95
- Le Brun, P. 42, 226, 230, 327
- Le Camus, Étienne, archbishop of Grenoble; and catechism 12; and confession 252–3; and frivolity 202; and Protestants 581–3, 588; and usury 275
- Le Chapelain, C.-J.-B., and preaching 68, 76, 77, 559
- Le Franc de Pompignan, J.-G., archbishop of Vienne and Church and State 491, 681, 732; and Jansenism 503; and Jesuit education 518
- Le Franc de Pompignan, J.-J. Lefranc, marquis de, magistrate, and the theatre 328, 329, 333, 334
- Le Gendre, L. 360, 396, 525
- Le Gros, Nicolas 288, 675, 717
- Le Mans diocese 57, 114, 742–3
- Le Paige, Adrien; and Jesuits 534, 536, 538, 546, 548, 549–50, 554, 557; and Maupeou 673–5; and parlements 500, 505, 507, 676
- Le Tellier, Charles-Maurice, bishop of Reims, and hermits 131, 138
- Le Tellier, Michel; and Noailles 362, 365, 381, 383; and Protestants 575; as royal confessor 359, 382, 384, 464; and *Unigenitus* 360, 368, 393, 519
- Lecsynska, Marie (wife of Louis XV) 31, 56, 143, 411, 525
- Lectoure diocese 278, 388, 736
- Lecsynski, Stanislas 479–80, 524
- legacies; charitable 87, 134; for masses 111–13, 117; Protestant 572
- Lent; dispensations 135, 571
- lay observance 109, 730; and liturgical reform 49; sermons 59–60, 62, 63, 66, 83, 526, 559
- Lescar diocese 151, 663
- lettre de cachet*; and clergy 230–1, 291, 504, 716; and disciplining of Jansenists 392, 414,

- 420, 456–61, 464–6, 472–3, 476, 493, 661, 717; and marriage 23; and parlements 478–80, 488, 499, 549–50, 558; and Protestants 608–9, 651, 653, 811 n. 46; and Sorbonne 379–80, 384, 421
- liberty, and Jansenism 352, 378, 433, 676–7
- Lignières, Bertrand Claude de 523, 524
- Limoges diocese; and confraternities 170, 172–3, 175–7, 182; and Protestants 572
- Limousin; and Pénitents 172, 179; and religious practice 95, 101
- lit de justice* 473, 674; and Louis XIV 382; and Louis XV 475, 479, 480, 506, 543, 551; and Louis XVI 693
- literacy 108, 193–8, 429, 435–6
- literature; *colportage* 194–7, 201; mission 197–8; and novels 277, 785 n. 20; religious 80, 107, 197–9
- liturgy 40–57; funeral 36; Holy Week 56–7; and Jansenism 49–51, 52–3, 55–6, 429–30, 485; and Protestants 568–9; reforms 40, 46–51, 52–5, 351, 470, 671; and relics 129; and Roman rite 47, 50–1, 52–6; and saints' days 124; and use of the vernacular 42–5, 429–30, 434, 665, 675 *see also* mass
- loans, commercial 263–8, 341, 540
- Locke, John 125
- Lodève diocese 86, 94; and Jansenism 391, 427, 467–8, 485
- Lombes diocese 13, 86
- Lorraine; and confraternities 167; and hermits 133; and Jews 633, 642; and provincial estates 737, 741, 743; and religious practice 104
- Lorraine, Armand de, bishop of Bayeux 42; and Jansenism 414, 419–21, 465
- Loterie royale* 270
- lotteries 269–76
- Loudon, and demon possession 196, 221–2
- Louis IX (St Louis), panegyric 59, 63, 75–6
- Louis-le-Grand, Jesuit college 363, 510–12, 519, 521, 528; curriculum 514–17; and Damiens 543, 545; and Le Tellier 359, 360; and theatre 325, 326; and university 532, 663
- Louis XIV; and Alsatian Lutherans 626–8, 629–30; and confessor 524, 577–8; death 32–3, 382, 629, 708; and General Councils 388; and holidays 204–5; and Jansenism 348–9, 351, 364–5, 389, 408, 423, 437, 519; and Jesuits 510, 521; and La Voisin affair 234; and Noailles 364–6, 381–2; and papacy 357–8, 364–7, 577, 581, 583–4; and Protestant Europe 576–7, 584, 590, 591; and Protestants 44, 305, 565, 569–70, 587, 591, 597, 609, 620–1, 623–4, 649 *see also* Nantes, Edict of; and the theatre 314–15, 486, 785 n. 8; and *Unigenitus* 353, 366–8, 377, 378–82, 387, 390–2, 397, 411–12, 421, 492; and use of the vernacular 45 *see also* absolutism
- Louis XV; assassination attempt 56, 507, 542–3, 549; and confessors 523, 524, 540; daughters 4; death 33, 61; intercessions for 125; and Jansenism 451, 453–4, 478–9, 499, 661, 668; and Jesuits 524–5, 549–53, 556–8; and parlement of Paris 492, 496, 497–502, 505–6, 534, 551–3, 672; and Protestants 597, 601, 621; and sexual immorality 279–80, 287, 289–90; and spirituality 243; and taxation 709; and *Unigenitus* 502, 504, 506

- Louis XVI; and clergy 682, 699–701, 709; and coronation oath 651; and Estates General 700–1, 703–4, 728; and gambling 271; and Jansenists 661–2, 669, 671–2; and Jesuits 543, 550–2, 558, 670, 677; and Jews 634, 641–2; and liberalization 679; and prostitutes 287; and Protestants 644–5, 650, 651, 653, 655–6, 699; and religious observance 103; and revenues 684, 685, 691–2; and sermons 75
- Louise, Mme 334
- Louvain University; and Jansenism 350, 409, 425, 484; and use of the vernacular 43
- Louvois, François Michel Le Tellier de 131, 573, 575–8, 580–1, 627
- love, and sexuality 280, 316
- Loyola, St Ignatius 537, 538
- Luçon diocese; and catechism 10, 11; and *Unigenitus* 395, 468
- lust, *see* desire
- Lutherans; in Alsace 79, 573, 626–30; conversion to Catholicism 627–8, 629–30; numbers 627, 630; and toleration 628–9
- Luynes, C.-P. d'Albert, duc de 4, 64–5, 126, 465, 615
- Luynes, Paul-Albert, archbishop of Sens 15, 58, 486
- Lyon archdiocese; and catechism 10, 12, 17; and chapter 482, 706; and clergy 115–16; and confraternities 162, 166, 172, 181–6; and demon possession 222; and *fêtes chômées* 205; and Jansenism 127, 438, 663; and Jesuits 88, 517, 528, 531, 532, 560, 670; and liturgical reform 41, 53–4; and preaching 85, 88; and Protestants 565, 574, 582, 605, 608; and the supernatural 238; and *Unigenitus* 377–8; and usury 267–8, 273
- Mâcon diocese 158, 738; and *Unigenitus* 388, 406, 419
- magic, and popular religion 189–90, 191, 192–3, 196–7, 232–4, 235–8
- Mailly, François de, archbishop of Reims, and *Unigenitus* 384, 385, 394
- Maintenon, Françoise Scarron de; and Noailles 358, 365, 381–2; and Protestants 577–8, 580; and the theatre 314, 785 n. 8
- maisons de force* 283, 285–6
- Maisons des Nouvelles Catholiques* 606–8
- Maistre, Joseph de 189
- Malebranche, Nicolas, and witchcraft 223–4
- Malesherbes, C. G. de Lamoignon de; and Jansenists 661; and Jews 642; and political reforms 679; and Protestants 651–2, 653–4
- Malleus maleficarum* 196, 225
- Marais, M. 136, 214, 760 n. 5, 771 n. 114; and *Unigenitus* 402, 403
- Marbeuf, Yves-Alexandre de, bishop of Autun, and *feuille des bénéfices* 59, 734
- Marie Antoinette 148, 233, 674, 685, 691, 709
- Marivaux, Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de 101, 260, 470, 777 n. 87
- Marmontel, Jean François 70, 123, 620, 693; and Jesuits 517, 518, 537
- Marquis-Ducastel, abbé 57, 96
- marriage 18–27; and actors 334, 337–9, 341; age 19, 21, 23, 232, 293, 295, 303–4, 308; arranged 21–2, 24–5; banns 10, 18, 25, 79, 615, 656; ceremonies 25–7, 203; and consent 18–19, 21, 22, 298, 301; as contract 25, 614–15; and Jansenism 25, 27, 299, 614; Jewish 637, 643; and Lent 109; and Protestants 572, 580, 583, 602–4, 614–16, 619, 637, 644, 650, 682–3 attitudes to 300–1 civil 616–17, 652–4, 656, 699 mixed 22, 624, 627, 628–9, 645–8, 652; and separation 21, 23–4, 95, 301, 604; and sexuality 6, 14, 19–20, 25, 109, 280–1,

- 299–309; and spiritual affinity 4, 19; and the State 341 *see also* contraception
- Marseille diocese; and confraternities 172–4, 176, 179–80; and hermits 134, 136; and Jansenism 663; and missions 91; and pilgrimage 144; and Protestants 645; and religious allegiance 110; and *Unigenitus* 385, 393, 395, 409; and usury 273–4
- Mary Magdalen, and prostitutes 189, 282–5
- mass; black mass 234, 236–7; as central to liturgy 40–1; and clergy 41–2; foundation 41, 111–13, 117; and frequency of communion 102, 346, 390, 432; of intention 235–6; requiem 36, 161, 167, 170; and secular celebration 104; Sunday attendance 98–103, 132, 185, 467, 682, 729–30; vernacular missal 44–6, 428, 429–30, 434, 582 *see also* confession; Easter communions; Eucharist; Holy Sacrament
- Massillon, Jean-Baptiste, bishop of Clermont; and frequency of communion 102, 103; and Jansenism 430, 469–70; and liturgical reform 49; and parish missions 86, 93; and Protestants 585; and relics 128; and sermons 62, 65, 67, 72, 705
- masturbation 297
- Maultrot, G. N.; and curés 723, 724–5; and parlement of Paris 673, 675–7; and toleration 617, 672
- Maundy Thursday; and Pénitents 175, 178; and relics 127, 130
- Maupeou, R.-N.-C.-A. de 518, 676; and Louis XV 497, 551; and parlement of Paris 493, 495, 499, 534, 669–70, 672–4, 694
- Maurepas, Jean Frédéric Phélippeux 492
- Maurists; and holidays 206; and Jansenism 443, 457–8, 670; and liturgical reform 55; and papacy 367, 391; and *Unigenitus* 391–3, 400, 409, 421, 425
- Maury, Jean Siffrein, abbé; and Jews 643; and sermons 65, 75, 76, 284
- Mazarin, Jules 347–8, 570
- Meaux diocese 10, 19, 791 n. 156
- meditation 188, 428–9; and conduct 244–5; and use of a skull 31, 243, 283–4
- Mémoires de Trévoux* 75, 306, 519–20, 521–2, 534–6, 559; and the supernatural 226, 230; and the theatre 326, 327
- mendicant Orders; and Jansenism 45, 463; and parish missions 6, 169; and political representation 728; and popular religion 190; and preaching 60, 84
- Menestrier, Claude-François 269–70, 313, 517
- mental illness; and the supernatural 228, 230–1, 232; and witchcraft accusations 223–4, 225
- Mercier, E. S.; and bishops 726; and confraternities 162; and death 34–5; and education 559; and Jews 637; and literacy 436; and relics 128; and religious practice 96–7, 256, 650; and sermon trade 64; and superstition 209
- Mésenguy, 50–1, 57, 200, 665
- Meslier, Jean 709–11
- Mesmerism 243
- Metz diocese; and actors 337; and confraternities 162; and curés 720, 738; and Jesuits 556, 557; and Jews 633, 634, 639, 642, 652; and ordinations 114; and pilgrimage 145, 154; and popular religion 131; and Protestants 586; and *Unigenitus* 390–1, 460, 466
- millenarianism 589, 596, 640, 643

- minorities, religious, *see* Jews; Lutherans; Protestants
 Mirabeau, Honoré Gabriel Riqueti 472, 642
 Mirabeau, Victor Riqueti, marquis de 255, 268
 miracle 208–20; Jansenist 214–15, 325, 411, 425, 431, 434, 436–55, 458 of suffering 446–50, 454–5; and pilgrimage 146, 147–8, 153–4; and relics 127–9; and unbaptized infants 4, 135; verification 211–12, 215–16 *see also* healing; shrines
 Mirepoix diocese 53, 390, 468
 missal; reforms 47, 48, 49–50, 51, 52–4, 57, 470, 485; vernacular 44–6, 429–30
 Missions Étrangères seminary 181, 183
 missions, parish 6, 46, 83–93; and bishops 85–6, 92; and confraternities 187; frequency 87, 88–9; funding for 86–7, 88; and individual commitment 90–1, 92; and Jesuits 84, 85, 86, 88, 93, 526–7, 578, 663; and popular tracts 197–8; and preaching 73, 83–5, 169, 666
 mistresses 23, 277; aristocratic 290; episcopal 391, 416; royal 33, 279, 290, 524
mobatra 263
 Molière (Jean Baptiste Poquelin) 315–16, 320, 322–3, 327, 331, 520, 792 n. 174
 Molina, Luis de, and free will 345, 346, 360, 428, 483
 Molinists 394, 436, 438, 439, 501, 552, 672–3; and Noailles 378, 411
 monarchy; and anarchy 470; and Jansenism 677; and the law 472–3, 495–6; and parlement 505–6, 549–52; and revenues 264–5, 270, 275, 382, 684 *see also* absolutism; *lettre de cachet*; Versailles
 monasteries, suppression of 125
 money, moral neutrality 267–8
monitoires 237, 257, 618
 Mont-Saint-Michel, and pilgrimages 140, 143
 Montaigne, Michel Eyquem de 21, 319
 Montauban diocese; and liturgical reform 54; and Protestants 565, 566–7, 568, 571, 574, 601; and *Unigenitus* 419
 Montauban, Louis La Tour-du-Pin 395, 696
 Montazet, A. Malvin de, archbishop of Lyon; bishop of Autun 503; and catechism 12, 17; and Jansenism 663; and liturgical reform 53–4; and provincial estates 696–7
 Montespan, Athénaïs de 234
 Montesquieu, Charles de Secondat; and baptism 5; and confession 258, 260–1; and death 33; and *Esprit des Lois* 470; and Jews 638; and Protestants 587; and the theatre 784 n. 2; and usury 267
 Montgaillard, Pierre J. F. Percin de, bishop of Saint-Pons 364, 581
 Montgeron, L.-B. Carré de 453–4, 494
 Montmorency-Laval, L.-J. de, bishop of Metz 684, 737
 Montpellier diocese; and catechism 12, 15, 18; and Easter communions 95; and Jesuits 532; and missions 85; and processions 124; and Protestants 574; and *Unigenitus* 387–9, 390, 394, 401, 405–6, 410–12, 414, 461, 467, 482
 morality; in catechisms 15–16; civil 322–3; and clerical control 181, 202, 254–8, 341; and *honnête homme* 242, 244; and Jansenism 431, 433; and Jesuits 552; and Judaism 639–40; and risk-taking 268–9; and *sensibilité* 243–4; in sermons 70–2, 77

- see also* confession; gambling; lotteries; sexuality; theatre; usury
 mortmain 113, 712
 Moulins, provincial assembly 680, 681
 Muchembled, R. 190
 Mulotins, and preaching 84, 85, 89, 93, 666
 music; liturgical 57; and missions 90; and processions 122; and sexual desire 278
 name; and baptism 4, 5–6, 105–6; of ships 106, 117
 Nancy diocese; and confraternities 162, 163; and representation of clergy 728, 737–8, 740–1; and the supernatural 221
 Nantes diocese; and catechism 12, 13, 101; and clergy 115; and confraternities 159; and illegitimacy 294; and Jansenism 489, 670; and Jesuit *collège* 510, 512; and liturgical reform 53; and preaching 75; and religious practice 100; and *Unigenitus* 384, 385, 387–8, 393, 428
 Nantes, Edict of 350, 397, 565, 571–2; revocation of 569, 575–9, 583–5, 589, 596, 617, 644, 653
 National Assembly, and curés 79, 727, 744
 Necker, Jacques 46, 275, 534, 645, 657; and financial reforms 690, 692, 701–2, 713; and parlement of Paris 669; and provincial assemblies 679–82, 686, 687–8, 694; and representation of clergy 727–8, 736, 742–3
 Nevers diocese; and liturgical reform 49; and *Unigenitus* 394, 395, 462, 466
 Neveu, Bruno 347
 Nicole, P. 245, 299, 352; and the Eucharist 102; and the social order 705; and the theatre 314, 316, 328
 Nîmes diocese; and missions 85, 87, 527; and Protestants 574, 601, 603, 612–13, 623–4, 645, 646–7; and representation of clergy 728, 738; and sermons 60
 Noailles, Louis-Antoine de, archbishop of Paris; and appellants 398–9, 401–3, 409, 413, 460, 487, 519; and Council of Embrun 419–20; and demon possession 229; and Fénelon 361–2, 365–6; and *feuille des bénéfices* 383, 386; and Jansenist miracles 436–7, 439, 453; and Jesuits 357–8, 360, 378, 387, 407, 420, 486, 519, 523, 526; and marriage 614; and papacy 357–8, 359, 362, 364–5, 367, 372–3, 377, 381–2, 386–7, 409–10; and popular reading 198–9; and Quesnel 355–7, 362, 365–6, 372, 378, 381, 389, 411; and Regency 383, 399–400, 412–13; and the theatre 337; and *Unigenitus* 372–3, 377, 378–82, 387, 402–3, 412–13, 420
noblesse de robe 5, 350, 473, 480
 Normandy; and clergy 115, 116; and confession 254, 438; and contraception 303–5; and death 29; illegitimacy rates 294; and Jesuits 531, 554–5, 557; and liberty 552–3; and marriage 23; and Protestants 565, 573, 587, 594, 607–9, 647, 657; and religious practice 95, 104, 187; and sorcery 222, 230; and tithes 683; and *Unigenitus* 475–6
 Notre-Dame of Paris; and church attendance 100; and liturgy 671; and processions 120–1, 494; and *Unigenitus* 421, 663
Nouvelles ecclésiastiques 430, 436, 666–7; and accommodants 485; and de Beaumont 482, 486, 495; and Church of Utrecht 425; and Council of Embrun 424; and curés 718, 723; and Jesuits 424–6, 432, 534, 536, 538, 540, 542, 545–6, 548,

- 560; and laity 675; and liturgy 56; and miracles 438, 450; and papacy 504; and persecution of Jansenists 436, 486–9, 495, 500, 663–5; and politics 663–4, 677; and preaching 81; and sexual desire 278; and the theatre 324, 326; and usury 273
- nuns, *see* convents
- objects, devotional 107–8, 117
- office-holding, Protestant exclusion 600, 627, 629, 646, 652, 654–6, 699
- Oloron diocese 11, 151, 582
- Opéra 317, 320, 326, 335–6, 340
- Oratorians; and education 11, 323, 510, 560, 646, 663; and Jansenism 428, 444, 456–8, 461, 462–4, 487, 661, 666, 717; and missions 88–9; and preaching 68, 84, 526; and Protestants 646; and the theatre 323; and *Unigenitus* 387, 390, 391, 393–4, 395, 412–13, 418, 421, 425, 484; and usury 274
- Orcibal, J. 354
- order, social; and the clergy 710, 744; and public opinion 671–2, 693, 698, 726–7; and religion 103–5, 116, 238, 296–7, 705; and tradition 209–10
- orders, minor 116, 292
- Orders, religious; and liturgical reform 53, 55; and miracle 211–12; and political representation 728, 737, 743; and processions 120; and relics 125; and *Unigenitus*, *see* Camaldolese; Cordeliers; Doctrinaires; Dominicans; Genovéfains; Maurists; Oratorians; Récollets; Saint-Vanne Congregation; wealth 730
- ordinations 113–17
- Orléans diocese; and chapter 502; and confraternities 182, 187; and *fêtes chômées* 207; and Jansenism 394, 474–8, 487, 499, 502, 662; and liturgical reform 49; and Protestants 581; and representation of clergy 738
- Orléans, Louis, duc d' 495–6
- Orléans, Philippe, duc d' 230, 307, 330, 709, 712; funeral oration 61, 63; and Protestants 610; and *Unigenitus* 382–4, 385–7, 398–408 *see also* Regency
- Orléans, Philippe d' ('Egalité') 8, 234; and parlement of Paris 505
- paganism, and popular religion 189, 193
- pageants 122–3, 161
- pain bénit* 8, 97, 111, 161, 339
- Pamiers diocese 25, 254; and *Unigenitus* 388–9, 390, 405–6, 460
- pamphleteers; and bishops 502, 731; and curés 712, 713, 726–7, 732; and Jansenism 12, 15, 673–5; and *lits de justice* 473; and popular culture 194–6
- papacy; and catechisms 15; and Jansenism 347–50, 352, 353–4, 362–3, 367–9, 409, 662; and Jesuits 362–3, 367–8, 509, 522–3, 537, 539–42, 549, 553; and Jews 634–5, 637; and liturgical reform 52; and marriage 616–17; and Protestantism 577, 583–4, 596; and Quesnel 354–5, 361–3, 367; and relics 126 *see also* Avignon; Gallican Church; infallibility; liturgy, Roman rite; *Unigenitus* and under individual popes
- parents; and catechism 9–10, 17; and marriage 21–2, 23
- Paris, archdiocese; and actors 337–8; and baptism 105; and catechism 10; and clergy 115, 718,

- 732; and confraternities 156–7, 160, 161–2, 166, 167, 184–5; and *fêtes chômées* 207; and hermits 137; and Jansenism 429, 433–5, 438–44, 469, 489–90; and Jesuits 519–29, 532; and liturgical reform 47–9, 51–4, 56–7; and lotteries 270; and marriage 299, 302; and miracle 212, 218, 438–55; and pilgrimage 147–8, 150, 154; and relics 125, 128, 130; and the supernatural 235; and *Unigenitus* 389–90, 394, 403, 412, 413, 419, 421
- Paris, city; and illegitimacy 294, 295; and Jews 636–7; and processions 119–21, 122, 123–4, 130; and prostitution 285–6, 287–9, 290, 291; and Protestants 565, 574, 605, 657; and religious observance 96, 97, 107, 108, 110–11, 113, 256
- Pâris, François de 436–7, 438, 439–42, 444–6, 450–2, 455, 673
- Pâris, Jérôme-Nicolas de 455
- Paris, parlement; and cemeteries 37–8; and Church and State 477–8, 492–502, 504, 505–8, 668–9, 671–3, 700; and confraternities 159, 185; and curés 720; and excommunication 334–5, 380; exile 472, 479, 500–2, 693, 700, 669–70; and Fleury 473, 475; and Gallicanism 403, 473–4; and Grand' Chambre 451, 473, 474–5, 478–9, 499–500, 506–7, 545, 548, 549, 554; and holidays 206, 207; and Jansenism 457, 474–80, 543, 663, 668–70, 674and convulsionists 451–4and denial of sacraments 334, 433, 478–9, 489, 493–9, 501–2, 506and healings 438–9and *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* 424; and Jesuit–Jansenist quarrel 347, 350, 367, 553; and Jesuits 52, 159, 346, 537, 555–7, 670and attack on Louis XV 543–5, 549and debts 547–8and education 531, 548and monarchy 549–52; and liturgical reform 47, 52; and monarchy 382–3, 471–80, 488, 504, 534, 542–3, 549–53, 668–9, 672; and Protestants 648, 652–3, 655–6; and provincial assemblies 680; and Regent 399; and the supernatural 222–3, 232, 236; and superstition 219; and taxation 693, 701; and *Unigenitus* 367, 373, 378–81, 387, 403, 474, 502, 668, 673; and usury 265
- Paris, University; and Jansenism 456, 493; and Jesuits 532, 663; and witchcraft 223 *see also* Sorbonne
- parishes; and confraternities 156, 159, 163, 164–5, 168, 186; and liturgical reform 57; and pilgrimages 149–52, 163–4; and vestry guilds 164–5 *see also* curés; missions, parish
- parlements; and clergy 414, 501, 670–1; and confessional secrecy 248; and confraternities 159; and gambling 270; and Jansenism 350–1, 488, 504, 668, 669, 672–6; and Jesuits 554–60; and Jews 634, 635–6; and liturgical reform 47, 52; and marriage 26, 615–16; and monarchy 351, 471–80, 493, 505–6, 534, 542–3; and Protestants 585–6, 603–4, 611, 613, 615–16, 618–19, 655; and provincial assemblies 680–1; and the supernatural 222–3, 231, 232, 234, 238; and *Unigenitus* 385, 387, 393, 422, 451, 466, 475–9; and usury 265, 275 *see also* Paris, parlement
- Pascal, Blaise; and confession 249, 540; and Jansenism 349, 351, 423, 446, 531; and Jews 637, 639
- pastimes, and temptation 278–9, 328
- Pastor, L. 539

- pastoralia, advice 112–13
Pastoralis Officii 398–9, 504
 patois 10–11, 80–1, 198
 patriot party 672, 676
 patriotism; and Estates General 46, 740–1; and Jesuits 324, 514, 537–8, 553; and Jews 632, 634; and Lutherans 626; and Protestants 590, 597, 611
 patronage; Crown 292, 481, 524, 680; and Jansenism 435, 456
 peasants; and confraternities 160, 174; and contraception 304–5; and curés 192, 703, 708–15; and drunkenness 205–6, 255; and hermits 133, 139; and holidays 204–8; and Jews 633; and legacies 112; and marriage 21–2; and pilgrimage 141–2, 148, 149; and Protestantism 589–92, 610–12, 628, 647; and recruitment of clergy 115; and religious allegiance 104–5, 108, 117–18; and usury 272, 275 *see also* religion, popular; superstition
 Pellegrin, Simon-Joseph 321
 penance; and confession 250–1, 256; public 431–2
 Pénitents 35, 149, 157, 171–81, 242, 449
pensionnats 510, 512, 517–18, 545
 pensions; at Revolution 138; to ex-Jesuits 557, 558, 560
 Périgord diocese 151, 391
 Périgueux diocese 115, 144, 736
 Petitpied, Nicolas 42, 377, 420, 451, 452, 718
 Phélypeaux, bishop of Lodève 391, 465
 philosophes; and confession 258; and Jesuits 521, 535–6, 541, 560–1; and popular religion 119, 121, 207, 726; and preachers 74–7; and Protestants 617; and the theatre 319–20, 329, 334, 340
 physiocrats 268, 712
 Pichon, Père, and frequency of communion 102, 103, 432
 pictures; religious 107–8; and sexual desire 277
 piety; decline in 111–13; Jansenist 354, 426, 428–9; ostentatious 107–8, 110–11, 117, 147, 242–3 *see also directeur*; religion, popular; spirituality
 pilgrimages 107, 140–55, 191; and confraternities 185; French sites 143–7; and healing 101, 127–8, 147–8, 216, 220; of intercession 147–9, 151; Jansenist 437–8, 440–1, 443, 455; and Lutherans 629; motivation for 148–9, 153–4; *romérages* 149–52, 163–4; of thanksgiving 147, 150–1 *see also* Rome; Santiago de Compostella; shrines
 Piron, Alexis 323
 plague 120, 144, 150–1, 169, 186, 395
 plainchant 40
 plaques, votive 106–7, 117, 147
 playwrights; and the Church 280, 315, 327, 334; and literary abbés 320–2, 328–9 *see also* Molière
 Poitiers diocese 10, 182
 police; and confessional secrecy 248; and delinquent clergy 291–3; and illegitimacy 295; and Jansenism 443–4, 450–1, 454, 456–8, 462, 494; and prostitutes 286–8, 290, 291–2
 Polish Succession War 479
 politics; and Jansenism 351, 364, 422, 470–80, 490–508, 668–78; and Jesuits 53–4, 518, 525; and Protestants 568; and role of bishops 679–704
 Pompadour, Jeanne Antoinette Poisson, marquise de 317, 524–5, 618
 Porée, Père Charles; and cemeteries 37, 277; and education 512, 516, 531, 535; and sexuality 277; and the theatre 236, 324–7, 328, 329

- Port-Royal Abbey; and communion 102; and education 513; and Jansenism 44–5, 345–7, 350–2, 423, 443, 483, 665; and miracle 437; and piety 429, 667
- Portugal, and Jesuits 545–6, 558
- poverty, and the Church 112, 258, 302, 705–6, 711–14, 722, 731–2
- practice, religious 94–118; and confraternities 156–88; and Easter communion 94–7, 101, 103, 104, 116–18, 185; and hermits 131–40; and indicators of allegiance 105–18; and marginal religion 119–55; and pilgrimages 140–55; and processions 119–24; and Protestants 567; and relics 124–30; and Sunday mass 98–103, 185, 467; urban 96–7, 305–6
- prayer; and conduct 244–5; for the dead 27, 34, 112, 176, 185; and Jansenism 428–9
- preaching, *see* sermons
- predestination; and convulsionist movement 449; and death 30, 667; and Jansenism 11, 14–15, 70, 379, 389, 410, 422, 484, 535, 717; and Jansenius 345–50, 426–7; and Jesuits 541; and Noailles 378; and papacy 347–9, 409, 483; and Protestants 346, 596; and Quesnel 356, 371–3 *see also* grace and free will
- Pressy, F.-J.-G. Partz de, bishop of Boulogne; and Jansenism 465; and popular religion 132, 207–8; and sexual desire 278
- prêtres habitués* 114
- Prêtres de la Mission, *see* Lazarists
- prisoners, and confraternities 166, 177–8, 180, 183
- probabilism, and confession 249
- processions 119–24, 258; and confraternities 167, 168, 179; Corpus Christi 41, 97, 121, 122–3, 175, 179, 214, 602; funeral 37, 38, 133, 161, 168–9, 176, 179; intercessory 204, 220; and liturgical reform 53, 54, 120; marriage 25–6; and missions 89–90, 93; and Protestants 602, 628; and relics 120, 125; secular 120; to shrines 149; of the viaticum 34, 168, 602
- professions; and Jews 633, 643; and Protestants 600–1, 617, 646, 656
- prône* 78–83, 94, 99, 709
- property; ecclesiastical and French Revolution 117–18, 128, 188, 714–15, 730, 740 and Jansenists 662, 675 Jesuit 555, 557, 560 Protestant 657 and taxation 689, 692–3, 695; personal Jewish 633, 641 Protestant 584, 586–7, 599–600, 604, 614–15, 624, 630, 653, 656–7
- prophetic movements, Protestant 214, 448, 450, 452, 589–90, 592–3, 596, 622
- prostitution 250, 281–93, 303; and the Church 288–9; and delinquent clergy 291–2; and the law 285–8; and *maisons de force* 283, 285–6; and Mary Magdalen 282–5, 289; rural 290; urban 285–90, 291
- Protestants 83, 565–88; and Bible 567–8; and Catholicism 210, 350, 569, 572–3, 579–80, 596, 601–2, 729; and certificate of Catholicity 600–1, 644, 646, 655; charismatic movement, *see* prophetic movements; and contraception 108, 304–5, 307; conversion 12, 84, 571–86, 622 and clergy 579–83 forced 94–5, 568, 569–70, 573–8, 581, 584–6, 590–1 and missions 88, 527 and ‘new Catholics’ 486, 584–6, 597–9, 616 and use of the vernacular 44, 45,

- 200; discipline and organization 568, 592–4, 601–2, 622, 644; European 348, 576–7, 584, 590, 591–2, 620; and Jansenism 349–50, 450, 617, 672; and Jesuits 88, 527, 571, 653; and Jews 639–40; and liturgy 568–9; and non-resistance 568–9, 592, 597; numbers 565–6, 568, 571, 573, 586–7, 590, 597–9, 615, 645–6, 650; persecution 305, 397, 590–5, 605–9, 616, 621, 652–5 and Church–State relations 565–88, 617–18, 624–5, 672 and restitution 620–1, 623 and support 623–5 and war 590, 603, 611, 614, 626; as schismatic 579–80; and theology 568, 575, 596; and toleration 361, 613, 616–19, 644–57, 697, 698–9, 739, 742; and wealth 644–6 *see also* assemblies; baptism; Calvin, John; Camisards; clergy; death; emigration; Lutherans; marriage; property; prophetic movements; sermons
- Provence; and confraternities 156, 160, 165, 171–2, 176; and illegitimacy 295; and parish clergy 720, 723; and pilgrimage 152; and Protestants 594, 611, 623; and religious allegiance 110, 111, 206
- prudery 280, 318, 431
- Pucelle, René, abbé 383, 475, 478–9
- Purgatory 112, 582, 596 *see also* indulgence
- Puy diocese, and catechism 10
- Quesnay, François, and usury 268
- Quesnel, Pasquier 251, 350, 411, 443, 463, 664, 668, 674; and Benedict XIV 372, 482; and the Eucharist 102; exile 355, 392; and Jesuits 354–6, 360–1, 365, 519; and Noailles 355–7, 362, 365–6, 372, 378, 381, 411; and *Unigenitus* 354–5, 358–9, 361–4, 367–9, 370–6, 377, 381, 387–91, 396, 484, 490–1; and usury 272; and vernacular Bible 428; and women 430, 459
- Rabaut, Paul 594, 595–6, 610, 613, 619, 655, 813 n. 17
- Racine, Jean 45, 323, 328, 329, 336
- Racine, Louis, and Jansenism 349, 351–2, 436, 520
- ransoming of slaves 122, 167, 178
- Récollets; and confraternities 161; and education 606; and missions 87; and pilgrimage 146; and *Unigenitus* 390, 457, 462, 464
- reform, and popular religion 119, 120, 189–220
- Reformed Church, *see* Protestants
- Regency; and debauchery 279; and Protestantism 610; and *Unigenitus* 382–97, 398–413, 519–20 *see also* Orléans, Philippe, duc d'
- regicide; and Jesuits 543–6, 549–50, 552–3; and Protestants 568
- register, parish; and baptism 295, 296, 298, 602–3, 629, 652; and marriage 26, 644
- Reims archdiocese; and actors 791 n. 156; and confession 255; and confirmation 7; and hermits 138; and Jansenism 401, 407, 414, 437–8, 487, 489; and Jesuits 532; and marriage 19; and miracle 211; and pilgrimage 148; and popular religion 128, 131; and preaching 60; and Protestants 572, 582; and representation of clergy 727–8, 742; and *Unigenitus* 384–5, 388, 394
- relevailles* (purification after childbirth) 6, 217, 308
- relics 124–30, 142, 150, 183, 191; authenticity 128–30; Jansenist 444, 446; and miracles 10, 127–9, 211, 220

- religion, popular; and clerical reformers 119, 120, 189–220; and death 31; and hermits 131–40; and historiography 189–93; and holidays 202–8; and miracle 208–20; and pilgrimages 140–55; and processions 119–24; and relics 124–30; and religious practice 94–118; and rural culture 193–201 *see also* confraternities; supernatural, the; superstition; *veillée*
- remonstrance, right of; and General Assemblies 699–700; and Jansenism 472–3, 478–80, 494, 499–502; and power of parlement 382–3, 505–6, 552–3, 669–70, 693
- Rennes diocese; and actors 340; and clergy 114, 115, 116; and confession 248; and confraternities 156, 170; and *fêtes chômées* 205; and Jansenism 395, 460, 475–6, 488; and Jesuit *collège* 509–10, 555; and liturgical reform 53; and parlement 492, 501; and popular religion 206; and preaching 78; and Protestants 582; and religious practice 98, 100
- rente perpétuelle* 264, 265, 272, 274
- rentes de l'Hôtel de Ville de Paris* 269
- republicanism; and Jansenism 42, 348, 364, 394, 412, 668, 676–7; and Protestantism 576
- Restif de la Bretonne, Nicolas-Edme; and the Bible 200–1; and catechism 18; and land-ownership 714; and pilgrimage 143; and *prône* 80; and prostitutes 286, 289, 290; and *sensibilité* 243, 261; and sexuality 280, 293
- restitution, and confession 250–1, 257
- retreat; for children 9; for clergy 390; and confraternities 185, 246; in final years of life 30–1; and missions 89; for women 277
- rhetoric; in education 68, 513–15; in preaching 68, 77, 83
- Riccoboni, Luigi, and the theatre 327–8
- Richelieu, Card. Armand Jean Duplessis; and Brienne 693–4, 702; and catechism 10; and hermits 137; and Jansenism 345–6; and Protestants 570, 646; and the supernatural 222, 236; and the theatre 313, 337; and vernacular Bible 43
- Rieux diocese 54, 86, 568
- rigorism; and baptism 4; and confession 8, 248–9, 251–4, 779 n. 58; and dancing 279; and eastern religions 358; Jansenist 20, 102, 248–9, 251–2, 431–3, 467; and sexuality 310–11; and the theatre 314–17, 334–5, 337–40; and usury 263, 266–8
- Rituels*; and actors 335, 337; and baptism 3; and blessing of animals 218; and conversion 582; and hermits 132; and liturgical reform 53, 54, 56, 485; and marriage 26; and preaching 78, 79
- Robertins, and the theatre 323, 324
- Robin, Claude 143
- Rodez diocese 90, 115–16; and *Unigenitus* 419, 421, 460, 720
- Rogationtide processions 122, 136, 150
- Rohan, Louis de 683, 686, 698, 741; and papacy 404, 410; and *Unigenitus* 379, 381–2, 398–9, 401, 413
- Rome, pilgrimage to 140, 142–3
- romérages* (parish pilgrimages) 149–52, 163–4
- rosary 46, 145, 184, 186, 204
- Rouen archdiocese; and catechism 10, 12, 17; and clergy 114,

- 115; and Easter communions 94, 96, 97; and *fêtes chômées* 205, 207; and liturgical reform 49; and pilgrimage 150–1; and Protestants 565, 572, 574, 582, 607–8; and representation of clergy 739, 743; and sexuality 298; and the supernatural 221, 230, 231–2; and *Unigenitus* 394, 475–6
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques; and catechisms 13; and death 32; and hermits 137; and Jansenism 433; and land-ownership 714; and Protestants 618; and *sensibilité* 243–4, 309; and sermons 64; and the theatre 329–31, 336
- Royal Council; and *arrêts* 496–8, 499; and cemeteries 38; and *évocations* 259, 471, 480, 489, 493, 499–500, 670–1; and Jansenism 410, 438, 451–2, 464, 471, 475–8, 487, 498–9, 720; and Jesuits 537, 549, 551–3, 554; and papacy 357; and parlement of Paris 472, 473, 476, 478, 496–8; and Protestants 572, 575, 654; and witchcraft accusations 222–3, 259
- sacraments; and catechisms 14; jurisdiction over 491; refused by Protestants 584–5, 590, 604; refused to actors 314, 334–5, 337; refused to Jansenists 34, 334–5, 465, 478, 479, 486–90, 492–504, 506–7, 543, 663, 668, 673 *see also* baptism; confirmation; marriage
- Sacred Heart cult 56, 183, 186, 207, 666, 670
- sacrilege, and the supernatural 223, 224, 232, 237–8
- sacristans 187, 434
- St Anthony, Institute (hermits) 132, 139
- Saint-Brieuc diocese 53, 114
- Saint-Cyran, Jean Duvergier de Hauranne, abbé de 251, 345–6, 350, 428, 483, 792 n.1
- Saint-Etienne, Rabaut 644, 647, 654, 656–7
- Saint-Florentin, Louis Phelypeux, comte de 614, 619–20, 625, 817 n. 101; and Protestant assemblies 610–11, 613; and Protestant children 607–9, 652; and Protestant marriages 615, 616–17, 624
- St John the Baptist, Institute (hermits) 131–2, 139
- Saint-Malo diocese 8, 159, 388–9, 466
- Saint-Omer diocese, and Jansenism 463, 663
- Saint-Papoul diocese, and Jansenism 460–1, 466
- Saint-Pierre, C. I. C., abbé de 214, 322–3
- Saint-Pons diocese 581, 663
- Saint-Simon, Louis de Rouvroy, duc de; and bishops 391, 464; and Dubois 407–8; and Jesuits 359–60, 365, 516, 523, 536–7; and Louis XIV 348, 358, 359, 364, 577–8, 585–6; and relics 127; and *Unigenitus* 368–9
- Saint-Sulpice; and orthodoxy 428
- seminary 323, 324
- Saint-Vanne Congregation; and liturgical reform 55; and *Unigenitus* 391, 393, 407, 457
- Saint-Vincent, Robert 499–500, 551, 655, 670–2
- Sainte-Ampoule* 128
- Sainte-Beuve, Jacques de, and Jansenism 266, 346, 351, 352, 437
- Sainte-Geneviève Abbey; and processions 57, 120–1; and relics 125, 128, 130
- Saintes diocese 10, 44, 54, 409
- saints; feast days 101, 124, 204–8, 769 n. 50; Jansenist 436–7, 444; and miracle 216; patron 160–1, 163, 171, 187; and Protestants 568, 582 *see also* relics
- Sales, St François de; and frequency of communion 102, 103, 199; and Holy Family 206–7; and marriage 20, 280, 301, 302; and Mary Magdalen 283; and sermons

- 67; and spiritual direction 241, 242, 244–5
- Salpêtrière, Paris; and convulsionists 454; and processions 120; and prostitutes 287–8
- salut* service 41, 56, 132
- salvation, collective 14, 31, 149, 190, 192, 195, 201
- Sanchez, Thomas, and marriage 20, 308–9, 310–11
- Santiago de Compostella, pilgrimage to 140–2, 144, 157
- Sarlat diocese 10, 173, 391
- Satanism, *see* supernatural, the
- Saulx-Tavannes, Nicolas de, archbishop of Rouen 497, 504; bishop of Châlons 463, 468
- Schmitt, J. C. 193
- scrofula, and royal touch 524
- scrupulosity, and confession 250
- secours*, and Jansenism 448
- secularization; and confraternities 167–8; and morality 431; and religious allegiance 106–11, 116–17; and trade guilds 162–3
- Séguiran, Pierre de, bishop of Nevers 681, 686, 688–9, 692–3, 734
- Séguir, Jean-Charles de, bishop of Saint-Papoul 460–1, 466, 486
- seminaries; and confraternities 181–3; and delinquent clergy 385, 716; and Jansenism 456, 464; and Jesuits 527, 553; and preaching 80; Protestant 593, 594, 595–6
- Senez diocese, and *Unigenitus* 405–6, 414–15, 466
- Sens diocese; and catechism 15; and liturgical reform 40, 49, 50; and representation of clergy 736; and *Unigenitus* 419
- sensibilité*, and acting 318; and children 309; and conduct 243–4, 261–2; and death 35; and Protestants 616; and sermons 67–8, 73
- sermons; Advent and Lent 59–60, 62, 63, 66, 83, 526, 559; content 58–9, 69–77; and emotions 67–9, 73, 77, 91–2; Jesuit 68–9, 70, 75, 525–6; and missions 73, 83–5, 666; preparation 61–3; presentation 64–6, 67; and *prône* 78–83, 99; Protestant 69, 79, 567, 571, 596, 610, 644; and simplicity 67, 68; trade in 63–4, 80
- servants; and charity 113, 706–7; and confraternities 184; and hermits 134, 137; and illegitimacy 294, 296; and Jansenism 436; and Jesuits 88, 526
- servers, altar 42
- Seven Years War 611, 614, 626
- Sévigné, Marie de Rabutin-Chantal, marquise de 102, 123, 250, 308, 349–50, 395, 585
- sexuality 277–312; and confession 249, 260, 281; and desire 277–81, 299; and magic 232–3; and marriage 6, 14, 19–20, 25, 109, 280–1, 299–309; and premarital sex 293–8, 467, 710; and prostitution 281–93, 303; and the theatre 312, 316–17, 322, 324, 327, 328–9, 336–7; and the unmarried 291
- ships, naming 106, 117
- shrines 135, 191; and miracles 4, 101, 128, 129, 135, 146, 216, 220; and pilgrimages 140–53
- Shrove Tuesday processions 121–2
- sin; *cas réservés* 33, 121, 247, 249, 292, 297, 310; habitual 251–2; mortal 42, 188, 246, 249; in sermons 71–2, 82, 92; and sexuality 249, 285, 300, 302; venial 20, 102, 246, 302, 310–11 *see also* confession
- Sisteron diocese 54, 145, 390
- slaves; emancipation 712; and Jesuit missions 521; ransoming 122, 167, 178

- smuggling 133, 257
- Soanen, Jean, bishop of Senez; and confession 256–7; and Council of Embrun 415–21, 424, 461, 469; death 462; and Jansenism 382, 388, 414–15, 459, 468; and Jesuits 532–3; and preaching 74; and usury 273
- sociability; and confraternities 156, 168, 171, 181, 187–8; and dissent 436; and popular religion 121, 189–90, 201, 707
- Soissons diocese 131, 162, 485; and *Unigenitus* 395–6, 468
- soldiers; billeted on Protestants 44, 572, 573–6, 581–4, 591, 624; as hermits 139; and illegitimacy rates 296; and missions 526–7; and prostitutes 285
- soothsayers 234
- Sorbonne; and exorcism 222, 231; and Gallicanism 357, 363, 367, 373; and inoculation 306; and Jansenism 350, 421, 434, 452–3, 665; and Jesuits 358, 522; and Mary Magdalen 282; and Protestants 585, 620; and the theatre 313; and *Unigenitus* 378, 379–80, 381, 384, 386–8, 403, 421, 456appellants 388, 398–9, 407, 434; and use of the vernacular 43, 44, 45, 199; and usury 263, 266, 275, 778 n. 14
- sorcery, *see* supernatural, the; witchcraft
- Souillac, Jean-George de, bishop of Lodève; and Jansenism 427, 467–8, 485; and missions 86
- sovereignty, popular 568, 653, 675–7
- Spanish Succession War 591
- spirituality 30; anchorite 131, 132; Christo-centric 14, 40, 106, 110, 186, 191, 206–7, 219–20; and conduct 244–5; and devotional objects 107–8, 142, 145; Jansenist 351–2, 665; popular 119–55; and wills 109–10
- statues, and sexual desire 277
- Stewart, James Edward 404, 415, 468
- stigmata 259
- Strasbourg (diocese); and liturgical reform 53; and Lutherans 628–9
- Strasbourg town; and catechism 12; and confraternities 163; and illegitimacy 294; and Jesuits 527, 628, 629; and Jews 633; and Lutherans 79, 573, 626, 630
- subdiaconate, and celibacy 292
- suffering, and Jansenism 446–50
- Sundays; and mass attendance 98–103, 132, 185, 467, 682, 729–30; and Protestants 567; and saints' days 207; and work 250, 253, 257
- supernatural, the 221–38; and alchemy 234–5; and the Church 226–31, 236–8; and demon possession 221–2, 229–31; and Enlightenment 225–6, 228, 235, 237; in popular literature 196; and soothsayers 234; and treasure-hunting 235–8, 248; and witchcraft 222–5, 231–2
- superstition 221–38, 485, 709–10; and miracle 208–20; and pilgrimages 152–3, 216; and popular religion 14, 24, 28, 192, 197, 560; and the supernatural 228, 232–3, 236–7; and tradition 208–11
- surplice fees 39
- synagogues 632, 633, 634, 635
- synods; diocesan 94, 671, 718, 723–5, 731; Jansenist 665; Protestant 567, 592–4, 595, 644
- Tackett, T. 759 n. 100
- Talleyrand-Périgord, Charles Maurice de 685, 702, 724, 740–2
- Tarbes diocese; and catechism 10, 11; and pilgrimage

- 143–4; and preaching 84; and Protestants 581; and representation of clergy 720; and *Unigenitus* 390
- taxation; of the Church 414, 497, 675, 682–3, 688–91, 692, 697–9, 704, 730, 740; and curés 708–9, 711, 720–2, 737–8; and foundation masses 113; and Jews 632, 635, 641; and parlements 505, 552, 554, 558, 675–6, 693–6; and the poor 708–9, 713; and Protestants 566–7, 624; and reforms 679–80, 681–2, 687–98, 729, 739, 741
- Tencin, Mme Claudine-Alexandrine de 416–17, 470–1
- Tencin, Pierre Guérin de, archbishop of Lyon 275, 404–5, 466, 470–1, 482; and Council of Embrun 415–19, 425
- Terrasson, Gaspard 322, 462–3; and preaching 68, 71, 74, 705
- theatre 312–42; arguments for 272–3, 313–14, 319–20, 322–3, 327–8; and censorship 313, 327–8; and the Church 336–42; and education 323–4, 514; and Jesuits 192–3, 313, 315, 323–7, 328, 430, 514, 516, 518, 540; and literary abbés 320–3, 328–9; popularity 319, 330; and prudery 318; and reform 328–9, 341; and scandal 317–18, 339–40; as sinful 277, 312, 314–17 *see also* acting; sexuality
- Thémines, A. Lauzières de, bishop of Blois 685, 699
- Thiers, J.-B. 41, 128–9, 278; and the supernatural 227, 233
- Third Estate; and curés 726–7, 730, 738, 744; and Estates General 701, 702–4, 733, 739, 741; and Jesuits 555; and Jews 642; and Protestants 658; and provincial assemblies 680, 688, 694, 702
- tithe 81, 105, 628, 683, 688, 730, 736; and curés 721–3
- Tocqueville, Alexis de 156, 276, 613, 720
- toleration; and indifference 97; and Jansenists 662; and Jesuits 535; and Jews 630, 637, 638–9, 640–2; and Lutherans 628–9; and Protestants 361, 613, 616–20, 644–57, 697, 698–9, 739, 742
- tonsure, and ordination 114
- torture 223, 225, 238, 543, 574, 611, 697
- touch, royal 524
- Toul diocese; and catechism 9, 10; and confirmation 7; and confraternities 162; and liturgical reform 50, 54; and marriage 26; and popular religion 132, 139, 203–4, 208; and religious practice 99; and representation of clergy 721, 731, 738; and *Unigenitus* 425
- Toulon diocese, and *Unigenitus* 385, 395
- Toulouse archdiocese; and Calas affair 180, 595, 604, 618–19; and catechism 12; and confession 248, 259; and confraternities 161, 172–3, 178, 179, 180, 181–3; and illegitimacy 294; and Jansenism 466, 720; and Jesuits 557; and liturgical reform 54; and marriage 23; and missions 86; and pilgrimage 151
- Tour de Constance 620, 622–3
- Tournai diocese; and confraternities 171, 186; and miracle 211–12; and *Unigenitus* 406, 419
- Tournemine, René-Joseph, Père 519–20, 522–3, 534–5, 542
- Tours archbishopric 53, 85, 565
- towns; and processions 121–2 *see also* culture, urban; urbanization
- tradition; and Protestants 568–9; and superstition 209–10
- tragedy 320, 321, 324, 327, 329; Jesuit 324–6, 514, 516, 518
- Trappists, and death 35

- treasure-hunting, and the supernatural 235–8, 248
- Tréguier diocese 95, 114, 116
- Trent, Council; and bishops 463, 464; and confession 248; and Jansenism 485, 503; and Jews 637; and miracle 211; and relics 124, 128–9; and sacraments 3, 6, 14, 16, 18, 22, 101; and vernacular Bible 43–4, 200
- Trinitaires, and ransoming of captives 167
- Tronson, Louis, superior of Saint-Sulpice 6–7, 229, 250, 361, 725
- Troyes diocese; and clergy 79, 736; and liturgical reform 49–50; seminary 429; and *Unigenitus* 419, 462, 466
- Trublet, Charles-Joseph, abbé 317, 470; and sermons 62, 65, 67, 71, 77
- Turgot, Anne Robert Jacques; and parlement of Paris 669; and political reforms 679, 723; and Protestants 614, 620, 651–2; and religious observance 103; and trade guilds 163; and usury 268, 274, 275
- tyrannicide, and Jesuits 543–4
- ultramontanism; and liturgy 44, 52, 56; and papacy 357, 410; and parlement of Paris 498, 668, 670; and *Unigenitus* 384, 474
- unction, extreme, *see* anointing
- Unigenitus* (papal bull); acceptants 362–7, 369, 379–80, 408, 487; bishops 251, 378–9, 384–8, 390–1, 394–6, 398, 462–3, 467–70, 481, 486; clergy 377–8, 385, 387–9, 393–4, 403, 413, 421, 462–3, 468–9; religious Orders 409, 456–7, 484; and accommodants 401–3, 406, 483–6, 662; appellants 378, 386, 398–409, 450, 717; bishops 388–97, 398–403, 405–7, 412–22, 428, 460–7, 470, 482; clergy 393–6, 402, 413, 423–5, 434–7, 455, 487, 489–90, 509, 673; religious Orders 391–4, 412, 418, 421; and Council of Embrun 414–19, 423–4; and effects on preaching 69; and Fleury 411–12, 421, 456, 492; as French law 421–2, 451, 457, 467, 471, 475–6, 484, 506; and Innocent XIII 405; and Jansenist miracle 439, 444–6; and Jesuits 384, 406–7, 425, 539, 540; and laity 424–6, 444–5; and Louis XIV 353, 366–8, 411–12, 421, 492; and Noailles 372–3, 377, 378–82, 387, 402–3, 412–13, 420; opposition to 218, 373–7, 382–94, 435, 718; and parlement of Paris 367, 373, 378–81, 387, 474, 502, 668; purpose 353–4, 358–9; and Quesnel 354–5, 358–9, 361–4, 367–9, 370–6, 377, 387–91, 396, 484, 490–1; and reconciliation attempts 408, 503–4, 507–8, 519 *see also* bishops, *Tiers parti*; excommunication; infallibility
- universities; and Jesuits 532–3; and *Unigenitus* 384, 385, 388, 406–7 *see also* Louvain; Paris; Sorbonne
- urbanization; and decline in religious observance 96–7, 99, 305–6; social effects 285–6, 289–90, 294, 304–5, 712
- Ursulines; and frequency of communion 102; and Jansenism 443, 454; of Loudon 221–2; and Protestants 598, 649–50; and the theatre 323; and *Unigenitus* 395
- usury; and anti-Semitism 633, 640–1; ban on 263–76, 540; and financial needs of State 264–5; and liberalization 272–6; and lotteries 268–76; and moral neutrality of money 267–8; and *periculum sortis* 263–4, 272; and *rente perpétuelle* 264, 265, 272, 274
- Utrecht, Jansenist Church 273, 425
- Uzès diocese 738–9
- Van Kley, Dale 545, 561, 674, 823 n. 24

- Vannes diocese; and clergy 114, 116; and Jansenism 462; and Jesuit *collège* 510, 528, 531, 555, 560; and parish missions 84–5, 86; and patois 198; and the supernatural 237
- Vauban, Sébastien le Prestre de 255, 585, 586–7
- Vauchez, A. 189–90
- veillées* 36–7, 203–4
- Vence diocese 133, 156, 295
- Verdun diocese 131, 304; and *Unigenitus* 388, 389, 390
- vergers 100, 161
- Véri, abbé J.-A. de 652, 702
- Versailles; and Court sermons 59, 64–5; and dancing 279; and First Communion 8; and gambling 269, 271; and Jesuits 549–52; and sinecures 697; and the theatre 313, 314, 317, 326; and *Unigenitus* 377
- Verthamon, J.-B. de, bishop of Pamiers, and Jansenism 389, 460
- Viaixnes, Dom Thierry de 393
- Vialart, Félix, bishop of Châlons 46, 355
- viaticum 32, 34–5, 168, 175, 697; and actors 314, 334–5; and Jansenists 334, 432, 465, 486–9, 664; and Protestants 602
- vicares; and catechism 17; recruitment 114, 115, 720, 731
- Vienne archbishopric 47–8, 723
- villages, and processions 121
- Villiers, Pierre de 322, 329, 617
- Vincent de Paul, St; and catechism 10, 17; and liturgy 47; and Prêtres de la Mission 84
- Vineam Domini* (papal bull) 349, 352, 353, 357, 359, 363, 369, 407
- vingtième* (tax) 683, 694–5, 697–8
- Vintimille du Luc, C.-G.-G. de, archbishop of Paris; death 481; and Jansenism 434–5, 438–42, 452–3, 459, 469–70; and Jesuits 526; and liturgical reform 51, 52, 53, 57, 470, 493; and *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* 424, 433; and sermons 63; and *Unigenitus* 396, 421, 439, 478
- violence, rural 255, 256
- Virgin Mary; and confraternities 157–8, 169, 183–5, 527; devotion to 52, 106–7, 108, 110, 206; and feast of the Assumption 120, 185; and Lutherans 629; and pilgrimage sites 143–5, 151; and respect for women 301; and white magic 235
- Visitandines; and frequency of communion 102; and Jansenism 443, 459; and the theatre 323, 324
- visitation, episcopal 467; and church services 41; and confession 256–7; and confirmation 7; and confraternities 158–60, 162, 164, 187; and Easter communions 94; and festivity 202–3; and hermits 131, 132, 133, 138; and pilgrimages 153; and preaching 81; and relics 128, 129; and saints' days 206
- Voisenon, Claude Henri de Fusée de 321, 339
- Voltaire, François-Marie Arouet de; banned book 682, 683; and baptism 4; and charity 113, 706; and death 32, 37; and education 513, 514–16, 518, 521, 531; and gambling
- 269; and hell 73; and inoculation 306; and Jansenism 370, 396, 397, 425, 667, 669; and Jesuits 535–6, 537, 544, 559, 808 n. 31; and Jews 638–9, 640; and miracle 214, 437; and Pénitents 180; and pilgrimage 145, 148–9, 154; and Protestants 586, 607, 618–19, 625; and relics 126; and sermons 58, 63–4, 75, 76–7; and the supernatural

- 228; and the theatre 320, 323, 324, 328, 334, 339–40; and toleration 389, 482, 619–20; and usury 265–6, 275
- Vovelle, M. 110, 111, 118
- vows; anchorite 131, 134; baptismal 86, 90, 92, 187; coerced 416; Jesuit 535, 537, 555
- Wars of Religion 131, 157, 543
- Watt, Lewis 779 n. 56
- wealth; episcopal 731–2; monastic 730; and poverty 705–6; and Protestants 566, 615, 644–6
- Wesley, John 370, 374
- Westphalia, Treaty of 576, 626
- wet-nurses 304, 307, 308–9
- wills; as evidence of literacy 435–6; as evidence of usury 275; as indicators of religious allegiance 32, 109–13, 117, 242
- witchcraft 190; and the Church 226–8; and edict of 1682 224, 231–2, 238; and Enlightenment 225–6; origins 189; and secular courts 222–5, 231–2
- women; and altar servers 42; and behaviour in church 101; changing views of 301–2, 307–8; and confraternities 166–7, 177, 180, 187; and convulsionist movement 431, 444–5, 450; as hermits 138; and Jansenism 351, 372, 375, 412, 430–1, 433, 448, 458–60, 488; and lust 277; and marriage 23–4; and pilgrimage 140; and property 23; Protestant 574, 583, 586, 593, 610, 614, 620, 622–3; and religious practice 97; and sexuality 19–20, 300, 301; and spiritual directors 241, 260–1; and the supernatural 221, 237; and the theatre 324, 326 *see also* convents; prostitution; *relevailles*
- worldliness 316, 424; and spiritual direction 241–3, 245, 260–1
- Wraxall, Sir Nathanael William 134, 140, 143