

room, lighted by the rows upon rows of electric lights, breathes with the living spirit of justice. The bench and the audience are one.

'The employers were allowed only a slight control over the workers, and see what they are doing already!'

'Just like old times — they want to jump upon our backs again.'

'An effective warning is needed to frighten them away from such behavior!'

These are the comments heard among the audience.

## THE STUPID NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY LEON DAUDET

*[The article which we print below is the author's summary of a longer article published in La Revue Universelle of December 15. That in turn was the introduction of a book by this able, but obstreperous, Royalist editor and deputy, which is announced to appear in the near future.]*

From *L'Action Française*, December 19  
(JINGO ROYALIST DAILY)

DURING the Middle Ages the intellect of France expressed itself in an incomparable scholasticism — to which we are just beginning to get back — whose great master was Thomas Aquinas; its architecture expressed itself in our cathedrals; its public movements in the Crusades, whose personal incarnation was Jeanne d'Arc. For the heroic Maid of Orléans was truly the child of that great upwelling of martial and religious idealism.

Then came the Renaissance, personified in France by three names: Francis I, with his retinue of artists, poets, and scholars, Rabelais, and Montaigne. Though this epoch is more familiar to us than the Middle Ages, it is far from having revealed to us its secrets and heredity. For was not the rediscovery of Aristotle by Saint Thomas Aquinas the source of the Renaissance?

Then came the Reformation, with Luther and Calvin — the stultifying of

European intellect by the denial of miracles, and finally the deification of instinct and brute greed. The Reformation gave birth to Rousseau at Geneva, and Kant at Königsberg. The latter wrecked Western reason by depriving it of its realist foundations through what is called transcendental criticism, and by denying a necessary correspondence between the thing and the idea, between the objective and the subjective world.

Following the Reformation came the French Revolution, inspired directly by Rousseau and the Encyclopædists. This episode covered the end of the eighteenth century and the bloody dawn of the nineteenth. Let us now examine this latter century. Its infancy and youth were between 1806 and 1815; its prime of life came in 1848; it began to show signs of age in 1870, and it was moribund from 1900 to 1914. For we must include in our sur-

vey the interval between the gloomy and ominous Exposition of 1900 and the World War, as well as its period of incubation between the Directory and the Empire. Centuries are like people; they have both an inherited and an original element in them, an *I* and a *they*.

What did the nineteenth century in France inherit from the Middle Ages? Absolutely nothing. The nineteenth century pursued a philosophy of knowledge — that is to say, a metaphysics — without finding it. For Kantism is the enemy of knowledge, since it denies its essential mechanism, *adaequatio rei et intellectus*. The nineteenth century had no architecture, which was visible proof of its poverty of mind and of profound social discord between the creative designer and the craftsman. The nineteenth century had no popular movement, in the sense in which we use that word in speaking of the Crusades and Jeanne d'Arc. It merely had slaughter. I shall tell you why. Bonaparte was a sort of blasphemous parody of the Crusades. He symbolized a crusade for nothing.

What did the nineteenth century in France inherit from the Renaissance? Almost nothing. Ignorance was propagated by democracy until it corrupted even the teaching staff. For the primary school to dictate to the university, is an unmistakable sign of decay. When the lower rule the higher, the hierarchy of mind and matter is reversed. I say 'almost' nothing, because this century did give us a few scholars and thinkers, — notably, Auguste Comte, Fustel de Coulanges, Quicherat, Longnon, and Luchaire, — heirs of that sublime spirit which seeks the causes of things, and which during the sixteenth century cultivated itself by communion with the ancients. It also gave us a few painters, like the school of Fontainebleau, and such

sculptors as Rude, Puget, Carpeaux, and Rodin, who were filled with the divine fire of Rome and of Athens.

What did the nineteenth century in France inherit from the Reformation and from its bloodthirsty daughter, the Revolution? Much. Better said, everything. I would compare the Reformation and Revolution to an immense barrier of rock, obstructing the entrance of the nineteenth century in France and cutting off the light of the past; so that our later generations have been forced to grope about by the sense of touch. What robs thought of its discipline, and language of its richness and precision, more than romanticism — unless it be revolution? Its jingling is not the jingling of gold, as Boileau well said.

Yes, but there is Science, with a capital S. The nineteenth century has built for science, laboratories and factories, the two great instruments of progress.

I shall show on another occasion how fragile much of our science is, — as ephemeral as the insects which breed and die on the surface of a pool, — and how harmful is the remainder. I do not mean to proclaim the insolvency, the bankruptcy of science, as mad Brunetière does in his heavy, contradictory, dogmatic works. I do not propose to deny that certain stable and positive benefits have ensued from the scientific effervescence between 1860 and 1914. But I propose to show the obverse of the medal — the turning of the laboratory and factory, in the hands of political madmen, against the very human race which these institutions were supposed to serve. True science, which transcends the laboratory and the factory, is not the child of yesterday, as the fools and intellectual perverses who encumber the ways and passages of the nineteenth century so fondly believe. Higher mathematics,

and the astronomical laws which they express, were known to the Egyptians, whose monuments proved their possession also of an extraordinary knowledge of mechanics. But a knowledge of mechanics implies a knowledge of physics and biology.

The navigation of a sailing vessel is a science. The manufacture of bread is a science, which involved a knowledge of fermentation and its laws long prior to Pasteur. The manufacture of wine is a science, which likewise utilizes a knowledge of ferments.

These discoveries were not the work of a group of men, any more than were our proverbs and songs and popular legends. They were given us by men of genius, whose names and whose other discoveries have been lost or forgotten. The same applies to the extraction of metals, the weaving of fabrics, the drafting of laws, the building of roads and aqueducts, and the thousand other arts which have become part and parcel of our civilization. None of the discoveries of which the nineteenth century is so proud possesses the character of being perennial and consubstantial with civilized life. We know that the science of electricity may be lost and disappear by a mental short circuit. Our present-day chemistry — in constant transformation — is encoiled by an agonizing torture of mutually destructive hypotheses regarding atoms and ether. The very foundation of

Pasteur's theory is crumbling; and our serum cookers and antitoxin compounders are asking if the microbes have become immune to the methods of the past. In a word, it appears that the stability of discoveries is inversely proportional to their frequency and facility, and that nature demands time and deliberation.

Now overhaste is the characteristic of the nineteenth century, as are likewise timidity and prepossession. This haste, as prejudicial to the labors of the mind as to those of the body, has been increasing constantly from that century's fiftieth to its one hundred and fourteenth year — assuming that the following, or twentieth century, really began with the first Battle of the Marne. This overhaste has a good side. It gave us railways, steamships, telegraphs, automobiles, telephones, and all other agencies of speed. But these were mere physical things. In the mental world precipitation has been pernicious. It makes us assume that problems still in the first stages of solution are settled and decided; that detestable and faulty institutions are perfect and immutable; that usurped reputations are immortal. In these degenerate times, the manufacture of false glory has become a regular industry, as we have abundant testimony in the silly monuments that cumber our parks and public squares, and the foolish names with which our streets are christened.

# THOUGHTS UPON GOETHE AND TOLSTOI

BY THOMAS MANN

[Last autumn Thomas Mann, perhaps the most distinguished critic and man of letters in Germany, delivered a lecture upon Goethe and Tolstoi, which attracted wide attention. The principal paragraphs of this lecture, including his rather original definition of great literary schools, are printed below.]

From *Berliner Tageblatt*, December 25  
(LIBERAL DAILY)

WEIMAR and Yasnaya Polyana. To-day there is no place in the world from which such forces radiate as formerly from those. There is no salvation-bringing pilgrims' shrine to which men journey with the longing, hope, and reverence with which they thronged to those places in the beginning of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. We have descriptions of the court which Goethe held at Weimar, in those elder years when he had become more than a poet, more than the author of this or that masterpiece; when he had become a prince of life, the highest representative of European culture, morals, and humanity. He had his secretaries, his higher officials, and helpful friends. He was clothed with the dignity and honor of the high post which the world had conferred upon him. He sheltered behind these courtly formalities the vast secret reaches of his greatness, and thus withstood the influx of cultivated gentlemen, of princes, artists, and ardent youths, whose memory of their pilgrimage to his presence would throw a golden glow over the remainder of their lives — notwithstanding the chilling disillusion that the great moment of their audience often brought them. Again, about 1900, a little Russian village became the pivot and centre, the holy shrine, toward which the whole world

seemed to face. Its unending procession of pilgrims was even more varied, more international, than the one which visited Weimar; for during the interval, communication had become easier and the world had grown wider. South Africans, Americans, Japanese, Australians, sons of the Malay Archipelago, Siberian refugees, Indian Brahmans, members of every European nation, scholars, poets, artists, statesmen, governors, senators, students, generals, laborers, peasants, French politicians, journalists of every land and school, and young men — again young men from all quarters of the globe — were drawn there by some compelling influence. A Russian writer exclaimed: 'Who has not sought him with heartfelt greetings, with sympathetic encouragement, with tormenting questions?' His biographer, Birukov, says: 'These all visited that village, and returned home marveling at the words and wisdom of the great seer who dwelt there.'

Great words! Great thoughts! Yes, yes. But the words and wisdom which the seer bestowed were not invariably remarkable; nor were the conventional remarks of courtesy with which Goethe often received the people who waited upon him. The question is, did these pilgrims come to Weimar and to 'Bright Wood-Meadow' for great words and