

X39Y  
.C39  
YR83

[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-7, 357-75, 437-48]

**Supernaturalism and Satanism  
in Chateaubriand**

by

**Maximilian Rudwin**

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty  
of Philosophy, Columbia University

LIBRARY OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
MADISON

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY

Digitized by Google

::

::

1922 Original from  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

::

LONDON

**Library**  
of the  
**University of Wisconsin**





[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: :: 1922 :: :: :: LONDON

Copyright by the Open Court Publishing Company, 1922

370857  
MAY 13 1931

X39Y  
.C39  
YR83

MONSIEUR ANATOLE LE BRAZ  
Officier de la Légion d'Honneur  
Témoignage  
de  
Profond Dévouement





## PREFATORY NOTE

This study, "Supernaturalism and Satanism in Chateaubriand," is to form the opening chapter of a book which is to appear under the title, *The Devil in Modern French Literature*. It is with this understanding that the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures of Columbia University has accepted the present portion of the work as a doctoral dissertation. Two minor essays, "The Satanism of Huysmans" and "The Satanism of Barbey d'Aurevilly," have already appeared in *The Open Court* for 1920 and 1921.

The writer is happy to express in this Prefatory Note his warm appreciation of the courtesy and consideration which he received at the hands of his Columbia University professors. Association with them has continued to be an inspiration. His special thanks go to M. Anatole Le Braz, of the University of Rennes, who, as Visiting Professor at Columbia University in 1919-1920, had charge of the writer's major subject. The companionship of M. Le Braz has been one of the most stimulating influences in the writer's life. The dedication to Professor Le Braz of this study on his great fellow-Breton is but a very slight expression of the writer's wholehearted devotion.

The writer is further under a deep obligation to Professor Henry Alfred Todd, who has given his attention particularly to the form and presentation of the material, and to M. Henri Chamard, of the University of Paris, who, as Visiting Professor at Columbia University in 1921-1922, so graciously presided at the writer's oral examination. An acknowledgement for helpful counsel and suggestion should also go to Professors Raymond Weeks and John Lawrence Gerig. This occasion is availed of to thank Professor Gerig cordially for his kind commiseration with the writer in the illness, which overtook him during his preparation of this thesis.

Among his other professors, who have stimulated his interest in this field of investigation, the writer recalls with pleasure Professor Gilbert Chinard, of Johns Hopkins University, and Professor Earle Brownell Babcock, of New York University.

PREFATORY NOTE.

Tribute is here feelingly paid to the memory of Professor John E. Matzke, who, together with Professor Oliver M. Johnston, of Stanford University, was the writer's first Romance teacher in this country.

The writer also wishes to thank his friend, Professor Roy P. Lingle, who has considerably aided him in reading the proofs.

M. R.

“MILTON has converted many a man to Diabolism,” says Max Beerbohm in his recent story, “Enoch Soames.”<sup>1</sup> Among these converts must be counted François René, Vicomte de Chateaubriand. His return to Catholicism was not inspired by his mother’s death, but incited by Milton’s Devil. Chateaubriand himself, as is well known, attributed his religious conversion to his mother’s death-bed appeal to him to return to her faith. “Ma conviction,” said he, “est sortie du cœur. J’ai pleuré et j’ai cru.” This story, however, is the purest of his fictions. It is truthful only to the extent that he inherited from his mother the tendency towards Catholicism. The abruptness of his transition from the scepticism of his *Essai sur les Révolutions* (1797)—“a book of doubt and sorrow,” as he himself called it—to the certainty of his *Génie du Christianisme* (1799-1802) is a suspicious circumstance. The interval between “Quelle sera la religion qui remplacera le Christianisme?” (the title of the last chapter of the *Essai*) and his panegyric of the genius of Christianity was too brief. The fanatical Voltairian was too suddenly transitioned into a fervent votary of the Catholic faith.

As a matter of fact, Chateaubriand remained the sceptic even after writing his *Génie du Christianisme*. This is shown by marginal notes to the *Essai* in the author’s own handwriting found by Sainte-Beuve in a copy which had belonged to Chateaubriand himself.<sup>2</sup> On the basis of this discovery alone our author’s sincerity in

<sup>1</sup> Enoch Soames is the most recent imitator of Theophilus, the ambitious priest of Adana, who, as is well known, was the first to discover that man could enter into a bond with Beelzebub. The story “Enoch Soames” first appeared in the *Century Magazine* for May, 1916, and was reprinted in Max Beerbohm’s book, *Seven Men* (London, 1919; New York, 1920).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Augustin de Sainte-Beuve, *Chateaubriand et son groupe littéraire*. Nouv. éd. (2 vols., 1872), i. p. 183; cf. also, i. 297; see also Georg Brandes, *Main Currents in Nineteenth Century Literature* (English translation, 6 vols., London, 1901-5), iii. 78.

matters of faith may well be called into question.<sup>3</sup> This inaugurator of the religious reaction in France believed in nothing, as he himself repeatedly asserted, adding the words, however, when he recollected himself, "except in religion."<sup>4</sup> But this position is an impossibility. One cannot be a believer in religion and a disbeliever in everything else. Faith in God implies faith in man; disbelief in man cannot be reconciled with belief in God.

No, this "restaurateur de la religion," as Chateaubriand was pleased to call himself, had no religion. Honored as he was as the latter-day apologist of the Christian religion, no man of genius of his day, Byron not excepted, had less of the Christian spirit. His Catholicism, if the hackneyed simile may be pardoned, was much like the play of *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out; it was a religion with the religious element wanting. Our defender of the faith remained virtually a pagan at heart—"an epicurean with a Catholic imagination," as Sainte-Beuve calls him. It was Chateaubriand's imagination rather than his heart that was touched by Catholicism. His creed was esthetical rather than ethical. His religion consisted in symbol and ceremonial rather than in faith and philosophy. He was attracted by the decorative shell of Christianity, by the pomp of its ritual, by the poetry of its legends, rather than by the truth of its dogmas and the power of its precepts. His argument and appeal in behalf of the Christian religion was not based on right and reason, but on sentiment and imagination. It was not the truth but the beauty of Christianity that our apostle proclaimed to his irreligious generation. His Christian apologetics did not spring from any religious convictions, but resulted from his esthetical sympathies. He viewed esthetically everything that had to do with Christianity—even Hell, as Professor Irving Babbitt has incisively remarked.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See, on the other hand, Georges Bertrin, *la Sincérité religieuse de Chateaubriand* (1900), and F. Saulnier, *Chateaubriand et sa foi religieuse* (1900) Reprinted from the *Revue de Bretagne, de Vendée et d'Anjou*, t. XXIII, pp. 325-40, 422-31. The abbé Bertrin's efforts to defend the sincerity of our author's Catholic convictions have been aptly called *bertrinades*. See also J. Croubois, "la Religion de Chateaubriand," *Revue d'histoire littéraire religieuse* for 1901, and V. Giraud, *Chateaubriand*, 2e éd. (1912).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Georg Brandes, *op. cit.*, i. 124.

<sup>5</sup> *The Masters of Modern French Criticism* (Boston, 1912), p. 68.

## I

Chateaubriand's advocacy of the Supernatural is no indication of his Christian beliefs, and far from being the consequence was rather the cause of his vindication of Christianity. Throughout his discussion he demands the substitution of *le merveilleux chrétien* for *le merveilleux païen* not on ethical but on esthetical, not on philosophical but on psychological, grounds. Chateaubriand follows Boileau in considering the marvellous machinery an essential element in epic poetry.<sup>6</sup> He differs from him, however, in advocating the employment of the mysteries of the Christian faith, which this "lawgiver of Parnassus" has put under ban.<sup>7</sup> Modern poetry and art must build, he argues, upon Christian theology, as the ancients built upon Greco-Roman mythology. A poet, according to his view, should draw his material from the religion of his own country and of his own period. Moreover, Christianity is richer, he holds, than Paganism in rhetorical means and machines. Our religion, with its great diversity of spirits—deific, angelic, beatific and demonic—is better qualified, he maintains, as an instrument of poetry. The Christian Heaven has a larger population than the classical Pantheon, and the Christian Hell is larger than the heathen Tartarus inasmuch as it has absorbed the Olympus also. The angels and demons offer an especially fruitful field to the poet, who at will can populate with them the earth as well as Heaven and Hell. The ranks of the supernal and infernal powers, moreover, can be endlessly extended by angelicizing and diabolizing our various virtues and vices. It should, furthermore, be remembered that with Chateaubriand as with Boileau the marvellous element is but an artificial embellishment, a rhetorical adornment, of an epic.<sup>8</sup> The truth of the mysteries of the Christian religion is not involved in this discussion at all. Neither was Chateaubriand the first to rebel against the classical creed. Boileau did not have it all his own way even in his own lifetime.

<sup>6</sup> The classicism of Chateaubriand has been well pointed out by Louis Bertrand in his Paris dissertation, *la Fin du classicisme et le retour à l'antique* (1897).

<sup>7</sup> "De la foi d'un chrétien les mystères terribles  
D'ornements égayés ne sont point susceptibles."

(Boileau, *Art poétique*, chant. iii.)

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of Chateaubriand's theory of *le merveilleux chrétien* the reader is referred to Hubert Matthéy's *Essai sur le merveilleux dans la littérature française depuis 1800* (1915). Many details in our present discussion of Chateaubriand's esthetical theories have been drawn from this brief but brilliant survey of the Supernatural in modern French literature.

Already as far back as the seventeenth century the authority of this dictator of the French classical school was not left unchallenged. Many poets believed that an epic poem should "renfermer la théologie de la nation pour laquelle il est écrit." Chapelain, the formulator of the theory of the *épopée pacifique*, advocated what he called "poétiser à la chrétienne."<sup>9</sup> It is now evident that Chateaubriand had but revived the two hundred years' quarrel between the "Ancients" and the "Moderns."

That Chateaubriand's appreciation of the poetic possibilities of Christianity had really nothing to do with his religious beliefs is proved by the fact that even in his earlier sceptical *Essai*, where the story of Christ is treated as a variant of the pagan myth of the death and resurrection of vegetation,<sup>10</sup> he could see in the *Messiah* the sublimity of Klopstock's poetic tableau of the passion of Christ (*Essai*, chap. lviii). It was in the work of the great Christian poets of foreign lands,—Dante, Camoens, Tasso, Klopstock, Pope and Milton,—whom Chateaubriand studied in his exile, that he realized the beauties of Christianity and was struck by its literary availability. Our author was first attracted to the German poet, in whom he found the combination of sensibility with some measure of epic instinct,<sup>11</sup> but he soon transferred his interest to Milton, of whom he speaks, as M. Dupuy expresses it, "avec une vraie dévotion." Chateaubriand himself says that he lived for thirty years with Milton under the influence of his poetic inspiration, of his poetic vision. Milton above all others fired our poet with that great enthusiasm for Christian Supernaturalism which he expresses in his *Génie du Christianisme*. Throughout his argument for the superiority of *le merveilleux chrétien* to *le merveilleux païen*, Chateaubriand refers again and again to Milton. He had an unbounded admiration for *Paradise Lost*, that greatest of modern epics, finally translated it into French prose and published it with a preliminary *Essai sur la littérature anglaise* (1836).

<sup>9</sup> In his own epic, *la Pucelle* (1656), Chapelain represents Satan as the inventor of gunpowder and owner of a cannon foundry. According to a plate in Iohanness Brantzius' *Artifices de feu* (Strasbourg, 1604), the Devil instructed Schwartz in the art of making gunpowder.

<sup>10</sup> "La persécution, le martyre et la résurrection du Christ ne sont que le dogme allégorique versant concernant le Bon et le Mauvais Principe, dans lequel le Méchant triomphe et détruit d'abord le Bon; ensuite le Bon renaît et subjugué à son tour le Méchant." (*Essai*, chap. xlv.) A reconstruction of the ancient fertility ritual has been attempted by the present writer in his *Origin of the German Carnival Comedy* (New York, 1920).

<sup>11</sup> The reader will recall that when somebody once called Klopstock the "German Milton," Coleridge promptly retorted that Klopstock was a very German Milton.

"The finest thing in connection with this [Milton's] Paradise," says Taine, in his *Histoire de la littérature anglaise* (1863), "is Hell: and in this history of God the chief part is taken by the Devil." What fascinated Chateaubriand also in Milton poem was the character of Satan. Our author praises the poetic personifications of evil in all Christian poems, but finds Milton's Satan the finest conception of all. He considers this irreconcilable and irremediable archangel an incomparable creation—a mighty angel fallen! The reader cannot but be affected by a sense of sorrow for this fall. Some of the most eloquent passages in the *Génie du Christianisme* treat of the emperor-an rebel in Milton. In Chateaubriand's opinion there is no poetic character, ancient or modern, that equals this Devil. Contrasting Milton with Homer, he finds nothing in the *Odyssey* that can be compared with Satan's address to the sun in *Paradise Lost* (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. vi, chap. 9). "What is Juno," Chateaubriand asks, "repairing to the limits of the earth in Ethiopia, compared to Satan, speeding his course from the depths of chaos up to the frontiers of nature?" (*ibid.*, Pt. II, bk. iv, chap. 12). "What is Ajax," he exclaims, "compared with Satan?" "What is Pluto," echoes Victor Hugo, "as compared with the Christian Devil?" It was the Satan of Milton who revealed to Chateaubriand the poetic beauties of Christianity. Of all Christian supernatural beings it is the Devil who, as a poetic figure, is superior to all pagan divinities. The poetry of the Christian religion is mainly manifested in the Prince of Demons. The genius of Christianity is finally reduced, in its poetical aspect, to the Adversary. Chateaubriand, who throughout the book takes issue at every turn with Voltaire, seems to agree with his erstwhile master that the Fiend was the fount and foundation of the Christian faith. ("Cette doctrine [du diable] devient depuis le fondement de la religion chrétienne." *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, chap. iii).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Voltaire must have meant that from the old orthodox point of view Christianity was inconceivable without Satan. What need would there be for salvation through Christ if there were no Satan constantly plotting against man?

## II

The unique position of Chateaubriand consists not in the restoration of Supernaturalism but of Satanism. In his advocacy of *le merveilleux chrétien* he had a rival in Mme. de Staël; both he and she turned the eyes of their countrymen to Christian legend. Mme. de Staël also protested against the ban which Boileau had put on Christian Supernaturalism. But he differed from his brilliant contemporary and co-precursor of Romanticism in regard to the place of the Devil in French literature. Mme. de Staël, who borrowed much that was germinal from Germany; was unwilling to bring Mephistopheles over to her country. In contrast to Chateaubriand she believed that the Fiend would not fit exactly into French literature. In her essay on Goethe's *Faust*, she writes:

"La croyance aux mauvais esprits se retrouve dans un grand nombre de poésies allemandes; la nature du Nord s'accorde assez bien avec cette terreur; il est donc beaucoup moins ridicule en Allemagne, que cela ne le serait en France, de se servir du diable dans les fictions" (*De l'Allemagne*, 1810).<sup>13</sup>

The rehabilitation of the Devil as a puissant personage in poetry constitutes Chateaubriand's greatest contribution to posterity. It is the most striking literary phenomenon of the nineteenth century. Victor Hugo tells of the famous and indisputable apparition of the Devil in the rue des Bernardins in the last year of the eighteenth century (*les Misérables*, 1862). This marks the Devil's return to literary glory through the kind offices of our Christian poet. But although introduced from across the Channel, Diabolus seems to have taken out naturalization papers in France. He was made over by the writers of that country into their own image and likeness, and dominated the literary movement of that period to such an extent that the terms, "demonic" and "Romantic" came very soon to be wellnigh synonymous expressions.<sup>14</sup>

*Les Martyrs*, Chateaubriand's great Christian epic, was also written primarily in behalf of the Devil. The Preface maintains

<sup>13</sup> "The belief in evil spirits is to be met with in many pieces of German poetry; the nature of the north agrees very well with this description of terror; it is therefore, much less ridiculous in Germany than it would be in France to make use of the Devil in works of fiction."

<sup>14</sup> On Satan as the patron of Romantic poetry and the ideal Romantic hero see the Introduction to the present writer's *Devil Stories: An Anthology* (New York, 1921).



that the book is the result of the author's efforts to mold into poetical form his theories in regard to *le merveilleux chrétien* already advanced in his *Génie du Christianisme*. The book is offered, Chateaubriand claims, as the first illustration of his contention that "the marvellous of this religion might well contend for the palm of interest with the marvellous borrowed from mythology." This, however, seems not to be correct, as an earlier work, *les Natchez*, written prior to his theoretical book, already contains in part the Christian scheme of the Supernatural. *Les Natchez*, although published long after *les Martyrs*, is now generally conceded to have been written much earlier.<sup>15</sup> The truth of the matter is that neither of the two was primarily composed as an illustration of the availability of Christian Supernaturalism for poetical and fictional narration. They represent Chateaubriand's two attempts at writing an epic poem. In Milton's England he caught the epic mania and became obsessed, as Jules Lemaitre has put it, by "le préjugé de l'épopée."<sup>16</sup> Chateaubriand would show that Voltaire was wrong in maintaining that "les Français n'ont pas la tête épique." Our author wished to give to the France of the nineteenth century what Voltaire, in his *Henriade* (1728), had attempted to give to the France of the eighteenth century—a great national epic. In further confutation of Voltaire, who had denounced the theory that Christianity was as much opposed to poetry as Paganism was favorable to it, Chateaubriand's poem was projected as a Christian epic. He first attempted to transform into such an epic *les Natchez* (originally a romance of American life, written under his American impressions in the manner of Rousseau and Saint-Pierre), by interspersing in it several passages of supernatural interferences in the manner of Virgil and Tasso. This attempt, however, turned out to be unsuccessful and was abandoned at the end of the first part of the book. He then extracted from it the two short stories *Atala* and *René*, which he sent out as feelers, and published also his great work, *le Génie du Christianisme*, in which he elaborated and defended his esthetic theories.

During a stay in Rome, Chateaubriand conceived the idea of making a second attempt at composing an epic. In conformity with the literary tendency of his day, of which he himself was the foremost exponent, he avoided contemporary events. Undoubtedly

<sup>15</sup> The composition of *les Natchez* is mainly attributed to the author's second stay in London (1797-1800), although parts of this work may already have been written in Suffolk, as M. Anatole LeBraz, *Au pays d'exil de Chateaubriand* (1908), has shown plausibly enough. The book was left, its writer maintains, in a trunk in London, and did not appear until 1826.

<sup>16</sup> Chateaubriand (1912), p. 177.

there was in this procedure also a great deal of caution. The subject which he selected for his epic was, however, not without bearing on the political situation of that period. As a matter of fact, the book was almost as much of a political pamphlet as his *De Buonaparte et des Bourbons* (1814). It is no exaggeration to say that *les Martyrs* is a *roman à clef*. The persecution of the Christians under Diocletian, which forms the historical background of this book, was a symbol of the sufferings of the royalists and Romanists under the Revolution. Rome stood for Paris and Hiéroclès for Voltaire,—the bugbear of our Bourbonist.<sup>17</sup> The infernal council represented the Convention. Just as Dante consigned personal enemies to his *Inferno*, so Chateaubriand placed his political opponents in his equivalent for Hell. The philosophers of the eighteenth century and the leaders of the Revolution figured in his book as the spirits of darkness. Chateaubriand hated the philosophy of the preceding century with its levelling tendencies and its belief in human equality. He was also full of contempt for everything connected with the French Revolution. We shall not go very far amiss then if we say that *les Martyrs* was primarily written to credit the Devil with the rebellion against the Lord's anointed.

### III

It is an interesting fact that the Devil generally comes into vogue after a war or a revolution. Each of the great poetic personifications of evil has appeared after a critical moment in the world's history, when the old order was disappearing to make room for the new. Periodical upheavals in the social and political world give men a renewed realization of the fact that a power of evil is always at work in the midst of them. This unifying, growing, begetting life-force has been personified in the human mind and is called the Devil. It is, indeed, strange that, at the very moment when we

<sup>17</sup> Voltaire, the great champion of justice and tolerance, was conventionalized by the Catholic Church into Mephistopheles. The Jesuit Patouillet, a victim of Voltaire's scathing sarcasm, was of the opinion that his enemy was of diabolical descent. Joseph de Maistre, Chateaubriand's fellow-reactionary, called Voltaire the man "into whose hands Hell has given all its power"—"the ambassador plenipotentiary of his Majesty the Devil" (Albert Guérard, *French Prophets of Yesterday* (1913), p. 101.

cease to believe in the existence of the Devil, we have borne in upon us a new and appalling sense that all the attributes which go to form his personality are more rampant in the world than we in our former blindness had ever dreamed. Just when we have consigned Lucifer to Limbo and have lulled ourselves into the fond conviction that all is for the best in this best of all worlds, we awaken to a new and sudden realization of a unity in all the various forms and elements of evil, which seems to point to a personality if not to a person. "We may not believe in a personal Devil," says Mr. Stanton Coit, "but we must believe in a Devil who acts very much like a person." Victor Hugo, who, like most modern thinkers, was a Manichean, said: "It is certain that evil at one end proves the Evil One at the other" (*les Travailleurs de la mer*, 1866). It was the lesson that the French Revolution and its attendant Reign of Terror taught the sceptics of the eighteenth century, and it was again the lesson that the devil-doubters of our own day learned from the recent war and its deplorable aftermath. This new realization of the Devil as the controlling power in the world's affairs takes form in the imagination of a Dante, a Luther, a Vondel, a Milton, a Goethe, a Chateaubriand, a Flaubert, a Victor Hugo.

It may also be noted in passing, that most of the re-creators of the Devil were exiled from their country or ostracized from the society of their class. We need but refer to Dante, Luther, Vondel, Milton, Byron, Heine, Lermontov and Hugo. Vigny voluntarily withdrew from his fellow-men into his "ivory-tower." Chateaubriand, in writing *les Martyrs* under the Empire, still retained the point of view of an *émigré*, that point of view from which his first romance, *les Natchez*, was written. These men, suffering banishment or imprisonment for their opposition to a tyrannical government, were naturally attracted to "le grand banni," who, in the words of Milton, "opposed the tyranny of Heaven" (*Par. Lost*, i, 124).<sup>18</sup>

"Pour comprendre un écrivain," said J. J. Ampère, "il faut comprendre son ciel," and, we might add, "son enfer." Chateaubriand's political views may best be inferred from his Heaven and Hell. In the administration of his celestial and infernal worlds the most outstanding feature, according to our author is order. The Lord per-

<sup>18</sup> Moncure Daniel Conway, the well-known American demonologist, was an outcast from Southern society, into which he was born, on account of his anti-slavery propaganda. Paul Carus, author of *The History of the Devil* (Chicago, 1900), and former editor of *The Open Court*, was not American born. He had to turn his back on the country of conservatism and kaiserism as a consequence of his liberal religious views.

mits no disorder or discord even in Hell. No insubordination is tolerated in either the upper or the lower regions. The sin of the most profoundly corrupt spirit of the Abyss consists in nothing more than wishing to establish a different order of precedence in the court of Heaven. Chateaubriand pictures a disturbance during the session of the infernal council and calls upon the Lord to restore harmony among the spirits of darkness. "A terrible conflict would have resulted," he tells us, "if God, who maintains justice and is the author of all order, even in Hell, had not ended the turmoil" (*Martyrs*, VIII).<sup>19</sup> In upsetting discipline in Hell and employing Heaven to re-establish it, our author lays himself open to an accusation of unfairness. The Devil is no Lord of Misrule. Hell may be a region of disorder as far as Heaven is concerned, but it is very apparent that some sort of order must prevail among the infernal spirits. Milton also says:

"Devil with Devil damn'd  
Firm concord holds."

(*Par. Lost*, ii. 496-7.)

If the demons cannot always control themselves in council let us not be too harsh with them; let us rather recall what Byron said: "Even saints forget themselves at times in council." The idea of a Tartarean tumult, by the way, is not so new as Chateaubriand would have us believe. Lucian set the infernal gods to quarrelling over the ferry hire in Hades. Moreover, the tumult in *les Martyrs* was really caused not by the devils but by the damned. The demons in council conduct themselves as gentlemen and reason like *encyclopédistes*.

Another characteristic of our royalist author is the fact that his Heaven and Hell contain many throned, crowned and sceptered spirits. Not only the monarch of Hell sits upon a throne and holds the scepter of Hell in his right hand, but his daughters, as the princesses of Hell, also have marks of royalty. The demon Rumor sits upon a throne, the demon Death wears on her head a sparkling crown, and the demon Night holds a scepter in her hand.<sup>20</sup> Royalty is highly respected in Chateaubriand's Heaven. Saint Louis is king

<sup>19</sup> Cf. also Georg Brandes, *op. cit.*, iii. 149.

<sup>20</sup> It is interesting to contrast the despotic monarch of Hell in *les Martyrs* with the Devil who boastfully says, "I am a constitutional, democratic king," in a recent book, *De kleine Johannes*. The author of this new "Pilgrim's Progress," the Dutch folk-lorist and novelist, Dr. Frederik Willem van Eeden, who expressed in this book strong anti-Catholic views (cf. *The Open Court* vol. XXXV (1921), p. 527), has just announced himself in his new book, *Significant Broodings* (1921), a convert to Catholicism.

in Heaven as he was on earth, and Queen Esther at the court of Heaven enjoys all the privileges of a royal visitor.

Chateaubriand's anti-revolutionary views may also be seen in that he places the poor man in Hell. He is proud of his achievement, and admits that the idea would never have occurred to him prior to the Revolution (*Martyrs*, VIII, n. 16e). "Here," says Jules Lemaitre, "is frankness with a rather Nietzschean hardness."<sup>21</sup> Our author must have remembered well the frightful conduct of the Paris mob in the days of the Revolution and during the Reign of Terror.

It may also be noted in passing that when this religionist employs the Jew as an agent of Hell, he represents him as an unbeliever. He is a Jew who has renounced the faith of his fathers. In the Theophilus legend, from which this tradition may be traced, the intermediary between man and the Devil is a believing Jew. The zealot in one religion prefers a zealot to a liberal even in an opposing religion. In his eagerness to point out the infernal connection of the unbeliever, our author resorts to magic, a method which was already condemned by Chapelain as "la vieille mode."

#### IV

Following the lead of Milton, Chateaubriand represents the Arch-enemy of mankind as a fomenter of revolutions. Satan, it must be remembered, is still waging on earth the war he started in Heaven.<sup>22</sup> Our author is deeply impressed by his discovery that Milton's Satan was the personification of the English Revolution. Moreover, Chateaubriand was keen enough to discern under the diabolical masks in the epic of the Puritan poet those energetic rebels, who, although defeated, refused to submit to the royal authority. The Frenchman must also be given credit for his critical acumen in observing that Milton himself was, in the words of Blake, "of the Devil's party."<sup>23</sup>

<sup>21</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 186.

<sup>22</sup> "The Devil," says Anatole France, "is the father of all anarchy."

<sup>23</sup> "The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of angels and God, and at liberty when of devils and hell, is because he was a true poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it." (William Blake.)

"Nous sommes frappé dans ce moment d'une idée que nous ne pouvons taire. Quiconque a quelque critique et un bon sens pour l'histoire pourra reconnaître que Milton a fait entrer dans le caractère de son Satan les perversités de ces hommes qui, vers le commencement du dix-septième siècle, couvrirent l'Angleterre de deuil: on y sent la même obstination, le même enthousiasme, le même orgueil, le même esprit de rébellion et d'indépendance; on retrouve dans le monarque infernal ces fameux niveleurs qui, se séparant de la religion de leur pays, avaient secoué le joug de tout gouvernement légitime, et s'étaient révoltés à la fois contre Dieu et contre les hommes. Milton lui-même avait partagé cet esprit de perdition; et, pour imaginer un Satan aussi détestable, il fallait que le poète en eût vu l'image dans ces réprouvés, qui firent si longtemps de leur patrie le vrai séjour des démons" (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. iv, chap. 9).<sup>24</sup>

Already in his *Essai sur les Révolutions* our author had maintained that a revolution is under no circumstances to be justified. This partisan of potentates and pontiffs believed with the abbé Genoude that "la révolte n'est jamais permise." He shared the viewpoint of the Catholic Church towards the Revolution and all its works. Joseph de Maistre, his fellow-reactionary, also considered the Revolution a Satanic work. In the eyes of the Catholic Church, France was possessed by the Devil of the Revolution. The priests taught the French peasants that the Constitution which confiscated their property was the diabolic masterpiece of the Revolution.<sup>25</sup> Victor Hugo in his royalist days also described the Convention as a creation of the Evil One (*Odes et poésies diverses*, 1822).<sup>26</sup>

Satan in *les Martyrs* is not so much the fallen archangel of Christian tradition as the moving spirit of the French Revolution.<sup>27</sup> He employs many of the expressions of the revolutionary leaders.

<sup>24</sup> "An idea strikes us, which we cannot forbear to communicate. Whoever possesses discernment and a knowledge of history must perceive that Milton has introduced into the character of Satan the perverseness of those men, who, about the middle of the seventeenth century, filled England with mourning and wretchedness. You even discover in him the same obstinacy, the same enthusiasm, the same pride, the same spirit of rebellion and independence; you meet with the principles of those infamous levellers, who, seceding from the religion of their country, shook off the yoke of all legitimate government, revolting at once against God and man. Milton had himself imbibed this spirit of perdition; and the poet could not have imagined a Satan so detestable unless he had seen his image in one of those reprobates who, for such a length of time, transformed their country into a real abode of demons."

<sup>25</sup> The Catholic view of the French Revolution down to the present day may be seen in *le Diable et la Révolution* (1895) by that imposter Léo Taxil, a work dedicated to Pope Leo XIII.

<sup>26</sup> *Livre i, ode 4.*

<sup>27</sup> Perhaps Napoleon, whom he bitterly hated, also reminded our author of the leader of the insurgent hosts of Heaven. Napoleon was considered by many of his contemporaries as a devil in human flesh. Victor Hugo in his Bourbonist days pronounced Napoleon to be an emissary of Hell (see his ode "Bonaparte" in his *Odes et poésies diverses*, 1822). For Marie Louise, Napo-

In his address to the infernal assembly we find echoes of the oratory of the Convention. Chateaubriand even goes so far as to put the revolutionary-patriotic hymn of his country, *la Marseillaise* (1792), one of the world's great martial songs, into the mouth of the Fiend. An anachronism of so conspicuous and disconcerting a sort does not in the least "faze" this reactionary and royalist when venting his hatred on the Revolution and all its works. Perhaps in this respect the self-canonized *père de l'église*, as our author was pleased to call himself in a letter to Mme. de Custine,<sup>28</sup> is following the lead of the other Fathers of the Church in ascribing to the Devil a marvellous sort of prescience. For when the early Christian missionaries discovered that pagan beliefs and practices were similar to their own, they could only explain the fact by assuming that long before the advent of Christianity the Devil had put Christian beliefs and practices into the heads of the pagans in order to confound the faithful. Justin Martyr thought that by overhearing the celestial council the Adversary learned the intentions of the Almighty and anticipated them by a series of blasphemous imitations (*Apol.*, i. 54). In this manner was explained the similarity in creed and cult between Christianity and Paganism. Cortez, it will be remembered, also complained that the Devil had positively taught to the Mexicans the things which the Lord had taught to the Christians. If the Devil had wind of Christian rites and ceremonies centuries ahead, he might easily know in the third century what hymn Rouget de Lisle would compose fifteen hundred years later. And why, pray, not believe that it was the Evil One himself who put the *Marseillaise* into the head of the poet of the Revolution? Diabolus is known to have inspired the brain of many a philosopher and poet. Bruno and Servetus, it was believed, owed their scientific theories to the inspiration of Satan. Beelzebub, wishing to take vengeance on the devil-fighting knights of medieval days, whispered *Don Quixote* into the lion was Antichrist (Letter of July 8, 1809). Mme. de Krüdener believed Napoleon to be the devil himself (cf. Brandes, *op. cit.*, iii. 188). Adam Müller in a letter to Gentz used Bonaparte as a synonym for Satan (*ibid.*, ii. 324). In comparing this world to the Dantean *Inferno*, Schopenhauer finds the only difference in the fact that on our planet man himself is the devil to his fellows ("homo homini diabolus"); and the arch-devils in this philosopher's opinion are those world-conquerors who get hundreds of thousands of men lined up against one another and then call out: "Suffering and death are what you are born to; now fire away at one another with musket and cannon!" "And," says Schopenhauer, "they do it, too."

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Correspondence générale de Chateaubriand*, p. par L. Thomas (1912 seq.).

ears of Cervantes,<sup>29</sup> and Asmodeus avenged himself on the monks by inspiring Boccaccio with his *Decameron*. The Devil might very well have composed the hymn of that Revolution which he himself brought to pass.

The address of Satan to his companions at the infernal council is perhaps the most powerful passage in the supernatural portions of *les Martyrs*. The fame of Satan's oratorical ability renders further comment superfluous. Lord Brougham, as we know, recommended Satan's speeches to barristers and parliamentarians. The Fiend is even famed as a pulpit orator.<sup>30</sup> Satan's address in *les Martyrs* is the one original passage in a book which, by the admission of the author himself, is but a mosaic of quotations. "*Le Génie du Christianisme* est un tissu de citations avoué au grand jour," Chateaubriand admitted in a letter to M. de Marcellus. "Dans *les Martyrs*, c'est un fleuve de citations déguisées et fondues." Chateaubriand's lack of originality in the supernatural parts of *les Martyrs* as well as of *les Natchez* is now generally conceded. His borrowings have formed the subject of several critical studies,<sup>31</sup> but the limits of this study forbid detailed consideration. Our author plucked plumes from all of his predecessors, but particularly from Milton. Satan and the other demons in *les Martyrs* have been conceived in slavish imitation of the English poet, the repeated references to Tasso in the notes to the book in question notwithstanding

<sup>29</sup> Charles Nodier speaks of Cervantes as "l'ingénieux démon qui assiste en riant à l'agonie de l'ancien ordre de choses et qui lui donne le coupe de mort avec sa marotte."

<sup>30</sup> The Devil's speech to St. Guthlac, the Irish St. Anthony, is not, as has been somewhere stated, the only instance extant of a diabolical sermon. Satan is known to have occupied pulpits in many parts of Christendom. He is said to have preached a sermon, among others, in the church of North Berwick. Lord Morley recently told the French story of the monk who was a particular friend of the Devil. One Sunday morning the monk was too ill to preach, and as Diabolus chanced to appear in the sacristy, he asked that obliging personality to occupy his pulpit for the special edification of his congregation. The Devil preached a most masterly sermon, covering himself with shame and confusion. "How now?" said the monk when the Devil came down, "you have pretty nearly ruined yourself with that sermon." "Oh! dear nor," answered the Devil, "no harm done, no harm done; there was no unction in it." (Quoted by John O'London in a recent number of the *New York Times*.)

<sup>31</sup> The first man to make an exhaustive study of Chateaubriand's plagiarisms was the Swiss Ernst Dick in his Basle dissertation: *Plagiats de Chateaubriand* (1905); *idem*, "Chateaubriands Verhältnis zu Milton," in *Festschrift z. 14. Neuphilologentage in Zürich*, 1910; *idem*, "Plagiat, Nachahmung und Originalität bei Chateaubriand," in *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* for 1911. Cf. also W. Wright Roberts, "Chateaubriand and Milton," in *Modern Language Review*, vol. V (1910), pp. 409-29; A. Köhler, *Quellenuntersuchung zu Chateaubriands les Martyrs* (1913); A. T. Baker, "Milton and Chateaubriand," in *The French Quarterly*, vol. I (1919), pp. 87-104; J. M. Telleen, *Milton dans la littérature française* (1904); H. Matthey, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-21.



For Chateaubriand, perhaps unwittingly, always attributed the influence exerted upon him to any but the right person.

The opening speech of Satan to the infernal assembly, though suggested by a study of the Pandemonium in Milton, reveals a modicum of originality on the part of his French follower. The Puritan poet, with all his admiration for the empyrean rebel, would never have thought of putting such beautiful words into his mouth:

"Dieux des nations, trônes, ardeurs, guerriers généreux, milices invincibles, race noble et indépendante, magnanimes enfants de cette forte patrie, le jour de gloire est arrivé; nous allons recueillir le fruit de notre constance et de nos combats. Depuis que j'ai brisé le joug du tyran, j'ai tâché de me rendre digne du pouvoir que vous m'avez confié. Je vous si soumis l'univers; vous entendez ici les plaintes de cet homme qui devait vous remplacer au séjour des béatitudes. . . ."<sup>32</sup>

The other debates among the infernal spirits in council do not differ essentially from their models in Milton.

As an imitator of Milton, Chateaubriand has been most successful in the expression of human emotions which he imparts to his Satan when this fallen angel descends into his doleful domain to summon the infernal council. Satan's pity for the sad plight of the spirits who fell with him and his compassion for man, to whom he must bring destruction, are lines in *Paradise Lost* which our author never tires of praising. The idea of the repentant rebel, to be sure, is not original with Milton. This is common in all forms of medieval literature and may be traced to the apocryphal *Vision of St. Paul*. It is, moreover, of pre-Christian origin and was acquired by the Jews from the Persians from whom we have taken our Satan. The writer of the *Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (written between 30 B. C. and 50 A. D.) already represented the apostatized angels as "weeping unceasingly." In Satan's descent to Hell and in his address to his synod, Chateaubriand almost succeeded in breathing life into his Devil. Satan stands forth from the rest of the supernatural personages, who have not the slightest breath of life in them.

Chateaubriand falls particularly short of his models in the delineation of his supernatural beings. These are not persons but marionettes, manufactured out of the tinsel borrowed from the clas-

<sup>32</sup>"Gods of the nations, thrones, *ardeurs*, generous warriors, invincible armies, noble and independent race, magnanimous children of this powerful country, the day of glory has arrived; we are about to reap the fruit of our constancy and of our combats. Since first I broke the yoke of the tyrant, I have endeavored to render myself worthy of the power which you have entrusted to me. I have reduced the universe to your control; you hear the groans of the posterity of that man who was to have succeeded you in the abode of blessedness. . . ."

sical and Christian poets. Our author is especially unsuccessful in his descriptions of the demons. The illustrious painter of Atala, Chactas, René, Eudorus and Velléda could not paint the portrait of his infernal majesty. The Devil as the Deity in *les Martyrs* is but the grand "machinist" of the poem. Chateaubriand aspired to surpass his models in the creation of Satan. "Dante," he asserted, "has simply made of Satan an atrocious monster, locked up in the center of the earth. Tasso, by giving his Devil horns, has almost rendered him ridiculous. Misd by these authorities, Milton had, for a moment, the bad taste to give the measurements of his Satan" (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. iv, chap. 9). Chateaubriand, for this reason, refrains from detailed description of the figure of his Satan. We learn only that "he no longer resembles the star of the morning, but is like a baleful comet" (*Martyrs*, VIII). Dante, however, meant his Dis to be nothing but a foul and frozen fiend—an object of horror and hatred.<sup>23</sup> Tasso's Pluto fully retains his imposing dignity notwithstanding the traditional horns. Milton describes Satan as a powerful giant, but enters into no details of his physical appearance, leaving them to the imagination of the reader (*Par. Lost*, i. 194ff.). But Chateaubriand's Satan is so far inferior to all of these devils that he can bear no comparison with them. Chateaubriand's Satan is so much below Milton's Satan that we blush to think how he could ever sustain a conversation with him or even appear in his company. It is only after a prolonged sojourn in the dread and dismal darkness that the Devil of Milton has become the Devil of Chateaubriand. The Devil of the latter is, indeed, the Miltonic Devil, "but oh how fallen! how changed!" (*Par. Lost*, i. 84). In Milton's poem, Satan is still full of the memories of Heaven. His recent fall has not deprived him of his celestial beauty. He is a stranger as yet to his new and nebulous surroundings, while in Chateaubriand's book several thousand years of reprobation have passed over his head. The long habit of criminal thought has effaced from his brow every vestige of his past splendor, and he now appears as black as the regions which he inhabits. He has neither the greatness of intellect nor the charm of personality with which he was clothed by Milton. We meet in *les Martyrs* no longer the proud and bold archangel who would rather "reign in Hell than serve in Heaven" (*Par. Lost*, i. 263).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. the present writer's article, "Dante's Devil," in *The Open Court* for September, 1921.

Chateaubriand's Devil answers to both of his biblical names, Satan and Lucifer. Satan was not generally identified with Lucifer before the time of Anselm (1034-93). Among the early Church Fathers, Eusebius was the only one who applied the name Lucifer to the chief rebel. In medieval literature Lucifer and Satan are not blended, though they are thoroughly in agreement. Lucifer is the Prince of the Pit, while Satan is but a second rate devil, as in the Latin apocryphal book *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*, which forms the second part of the *Evangelium Nicodemi* (third century). Satan is Lucifer's chief minister and bosom friend, a "clever rooster," as his master calls him. A sharp line of demarcation is drawn between the characters of these two devils. Lucifer is a weakling, a cowardly despot, and Satan is his strong arm. The arch-regent of Hell is nervous and timorous, sentimental and brutal, vacillating and temporizing, always whimpering and whining for his past glory. Satan, on the other hand, is bold and proud, ever optimistic, never regretful. He submits to his fate without a murmur. He is far manlier than his master and often upbraids him for his womanish manners. After the fall from Heaven, Satan marshals all his powers of oratory to cheer and comfort his crest-fallen and despairing lord.<sup>24</sup>

The worst fault of Chateaubriand's Satan in contrast to Milton's is his lack of freedom of action. The two conceptions of the Devil, the Catholic and the Protestant, are well illustrated by these two authors. In Catholicism the dualism is less pronounced and the Devil less powerful than in Protestantism.<sup>25</sup> Milton's Satan, acting of his own free will, is really an epic, majestic figure, a Promethean character who vainly but valiantly opposes a power which he knows he can never conquer. Chateaubriand's Satan has no will of his own. He belongs, to speak in the language of the Church, not to himself but to God (Anselm, *De casu diaboli*). The Adversary in *les Martyrs* is but a tool in the hands of the Almighty, who knows his plans in advance, overhears the discussions of his council and takes a hand in its deliberations whenever he deems it necessary.

Another weakness in Chateaubriand's diabolistic conception is the representation of Satan and his angels as writhing in physical torments and frightful agonies. Thus Chateaubriand robs them of all

<sup>24</sup> On the differentiation of character and personality between Lucifer and Satan and the lesser demons, see the present writer's monograph on the Devil in the religious plays of medieval Germany (Baltimore, 1915).

<sup>25</sup> The English reformer, John Wycliffe, in his *De dominio divino*, seems to imply that here on earth God must obey the Devil.

dignity. In this respect our author follows Milton, whose devils also suffer from fire (*Par. Lost*, ii. 88). But this material pain is in Milton very insignificant as compared with the spiritual sufferings of the devils. It is the inward torment on which Milton lays chief emphasis, and this inner pain shows itself in the face of his Satan. "Myself am Hell," he cries in the anguish of his soul (*ibid.*, iv. 75). What gnaws at his heart is not a serpent, but

"The thought, both of lost happiness and lasting pain."  
(*Ibid.*, l. 54-5.)

The pain of Milton's Satan is psychical rather than physical. His is the boundless horror and despair of one who has known "eternal joys" and is now condemned to everlasting banishment. Marlowe's Mephistopheles also complains of moral rather than material sufferings. His torment is to be hopelessly bound in the constraint of serfdom to evil. There is a suggestion of peculiar horror in the tortured protest which bursts from his lips when asked as to his condition:

"Thinkest thou that I, who saw the face of God,  
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,  
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells,  
In being deprived of everlasting bliss?  
O, Faustus, leave these frivolous demands,  
Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!"

Chateaubriand, moreover, on this point runs counter to the teachings of the Church. "The everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," is not to be lighted until the Judgment Day. Up to that time the punishment of the devils consists only in the fact that they must torment the souls of the wicked (*Book of Enoch*, x. 37). It is only the chief devil who was laid in everlasting chains by Christ during his descent to Hell, "as a special punishment for his audacity in tempting and persecuting our Lord on earth or for some other unfathomable intention of the Lord for the salvation of his Church and his elect" (Suarez, *De angelis*; cf. also Gregory *Moral lib.*, xxxv). The confinement of Satan, however, has in no way fettered his activity on earth. No matter how often the Devil has been bound and sealed in the lowest pit of Hell, his baleful influence on the affairs of men has never suffered any diminution. Satan apparently directs the work from his dungeon and despatches myriads of myrmidons to effect his will on earth. This conception of the imprisoned rebel, by the way, is a pre-Christian tradition. It may be found in many of the ancient ethnic religions. Ahriman, who fought against Ormuzd, was bound for a thousand years; Prometheus, who

assailed Zeus, was chained to a rock in the Caucasus; and Loki, the calumniator of the northern gods, was strapped down with thongs of iron in his subterranean cavern.

Another serious deviation from tradition in *les Natchez* is Chateaubriand's placing the demon Rumor at the southern extremity of our earth. To be canonically correct he should have domiciled her in the north. The north and not the south was looked upon as the Devil's special domain. It is described as the Devil's dwelling in the passage where the Lucifer legend first finds expression (*Is.* xiv. 13; cf. also *Jer.* i. 14f. and *Par. Lost*, v. 689). "The Lord," says Lactantius, "so divided the world with the Devil that *occidens, septentrio, tenebrae frigus* fall to the sphere of his Adversary." This accords with the saying, "ab aquilone omne malum." The good Goethe also said:

"The further northward one doth go,  
The plentier soot and witches grow."

By taking up his sojourn in the north, Satan is but following his Persian ancestor Ahriman, who, as a winter-demon, had his habitation in the cold north, from whence he sent down hail, snow and devastating floods. The north side of a churchyard is considered unconsecrated ground and is reserved for suicides. As the entrance to a church is at the west end, the north is always to the left. For this reason the left has always been the seat of, and has practically become a synonym for, the Opposition. The Devil, like the traditional Hibernian, is always "agin the government" of Heaven or on earth. As a matter of fact, Dublin was by some demonologists considered to be Satan's earthly capital. The Scandinavian form of this name is Divilina. Burns had this fact in mind when he wrote:

"Is just as true's the deil's in hell  
Or Dublin citv."

Chateaubriand may have been thinking of the *daemonium meridiannu* of the Vulgate for Psalm xc. By this term, however, is meant the demon of noonday and not of the south. It was applied by Joseph de Maistre to Napoleon,<sup>36</sup> and recently served as title for a novel by Paul Bourget (1914).

The greater part of Chateaubriand's demons are but dull and dreary abstractions devoid of body and blood. Our author resorts to the simplest method of personification, in the medieval manner of

<sup>36</sup> *Correspondance diplomatique* (published posthumously in 1860), ii, 65. Cf. K. R. Gallas, "A propos du titre *le Démon de midi*," in *Neophilologus*, vol. IV (1918-19), pp. 371-2. The writer of the note makes no mention of the passage in Joseph de Maistre.

the *Roman de la Rose*, which consists in writing an abstract noun with a capital letter.<sup>37</sup> In vain does he claim scriptural sanction and orthodox authority for his method of diabolizing our various vices. The objections which he raises against the physical allegory of classical mythology (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. i. chap. 2) hold just as well against the moral allegory of Christian theology. A personal devil is a lot more interesting than an abstraction. The Eternity of Sorrows our author considers as "the most daring fiction of *les Martyrs*." But Eternity of Sorrows is the counterpart of the Augustinian "aeternitas felicitatis." From the fact that Chateaubriand counts among his allegorical characters the demon of Labor, it would seem that he believes with the Arabs that Leisure comes from God and Labor from the Evil One.

Allegory as a form of literature has long since passed away. Chateaubriand's allegorical phantasmagoria belongs to the antiquities which pseudo-classicism bequeathed to him. His devils even multiply with synonyms. There are two demons of Death: *la Mort* and *le Trépas*. This duplication is rather unusual. Hell is known for the precision of its distribution of labor. There is in addition an angel of Death. Our author puts an emissary of Heaven and one of Hell in charge of every natural act and of every human emotion;<sup>38</sup> and one must at times be a perfect connoisseur in spirits to know who's who. Uriel, the angel of Love, is supposed to be the antithesis of Astarte, the demon of Love. They are to be as far apart as Heaven is from Hell. In Chateaubriand's descriptions, however, the twain meet rather often. "The birth of Uriel, the angel of Love," we are told, "was coeval with the universe: he sprang into being with Eve, at the very moment when the first woman opened her eyes to the newly created light" (*Martyrs*, XII). According to the rabbis,

<sup>37</sup> Cf. W. Wright Roberts, *loc. cit.*, p. 422.

<sup>38</sup> Contrary to popular belief, but in conformity with his esthetical views (cf. Matthev, *op. cit.*, p. 32), Chateaubriand maintains that, though leaving to Satan the power over most natural processes, the Lord has reserved for himself the storm and the thunder (*Natchez*, X). He admits, however, that Satan often unchains a storm against the will of God (*Martyrs*, XV) and even raises a hurricane (*Natchez*, IX). In the popular mind, however, the wind and the storm have always been identified with the Devil. "We read in the Old Testament that the devil, by the divine permission, afflicted Job; and that among the means which he employed was a tempest which destroyed the house in which the sons of the patriarch were eating. The description in the *Book of Revelation* of the four angels who held the four winds, and to whom it was given to afflict the earth, was also generally associated with this belief: for, as St. Augustine tells us, the word angel is equally applicable to good and bad spirits" (Lecky, *Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*). This is the origin of the belief in the four chiefs of Hell. The medieval expression "faire le diable à quatre" is now easily understood.

however, it was the Devil who entered the world at the same time as woman. He is believed to have issued from the aperture caused by the removal of the rib from Adam.

Chateaubriand's method of attributing sex to his allegorical characters, it must be admitted, bears the charm of novelty. The demon of Voluptuousness is a man, while the demons of Death and of Pride are women. We will not contest the quality of pride with the beautiful sex, but as far as Death is concerned we protest in the name of fairness. In our ignorance of the rules of personification we have always represented the Reaper as a member of the sterner sex.<sup>29</sup>

Chateaubriand falls far short of his model, Milton, in his portrait of Death. In Milton's description of this demon all is vague, shrouded, confused, tremendous, terrible and sublime in the highest degree, while in Chateaubriand this demon is depicted in odious and hideous detail. Our author praises the manner in which Milton represented Death (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. iv, chap. 14). His praise is more apt than his imitation.

Nor has Chateaubriand equalled his master Milton in his delineation of the lesser lights of Hell. In *Paradise Lost* there is a distinct differentiation. The personality of each devil reveals itself. Satan is not merely a devil; he is the particular devil Satan. Beelzebub, we feel, is distinct from Belial, Moloch is not Mammon, nor is Dagon Rimmon. Milton's devils are not metaphysical abstractions. Even his allegorical figures are living symbols. His demons are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails. Nor are they wicked men. But they act in a manner which men can understand. The Devil should not be human, but he must have enough in common with human nature to play a part intelligible to human beings. In the artistic treatment of diabolical material the chief difficulty lies in preserving the just mean between the devil-character and the imparted element of humanity.

<sup>29</sup> It must be admitted, though, that in the Basle *Dance of Death* (15th century), the figure of Death is feminine (cf. W. Vischer, *Ueber die Entstehungszeit und die Meister des Grossbasler Todtentanzes* (Basel, 1849). This may be due to the fact that in the temptation scene of the medieval mystery plays the Tempter usually appeared as a serpent with a woman's head. According to the Venerable Bede, Lucifer chose to tempt Eve through a serpent which had a female head because "like is attracted to like." Peter Comestor in his *Historia Scholastica* concludes from this fact that while the serpent was yet erect, it had a virgin's head. Ruskin shows an unfamiliarity with medieval literature and art when he states that the serpent in Paradise was for many centuries represented with the head of a man. In Grandchamp's painting of the Temptation, however, the serpent has the head of a handsome young man.

Like their author, Chateaubriand's devils—and angels, too, for that matter—are lacking in humor; and humor is a devil's redeeming quality. We cannot warm up to Chateaubriand's demons. They leave us classically cold.

Chateaubriand's devils are like nothing on earth. An exception is the demon of False Wisdom, whose prototype on earth is the eighteenth century *philosophe*. Chateaubriand claims originality for this demon. "It is true," he says, "that he has been better known in our times than in the past and that he has never done so much harm to men" (*Martyrs*, VIII, n. 27). He also boasts that the idea of the demon of False Wisdom as the Father of Atheism was original with him and was well received by the public. (*Ibid.*) In conformity with the orthodox view this reactionary to Romanism calls a deist an atheist. Similarly our great and recent Roosevelt called Tom Paine, "a filthy little atheist."<sup>40</sup> But whatever vices the demon of False Wisdom may have fathered, he is certainly innocent of the vice of atheism. Satan and his satellites are not and cannot be atheists. We know upon the authority of our Evangelists that the devils believe in God and "confess Christ" (*Mark*, i. 24; *Luke*, iv. 34). It would never occur to the Devil to deny the Deity. If he were to reason God out of existence he would have to apply the scalpel of self-obliteration to himself as well. The Lord is as necessary to Lucifer as Lucifer is to the Lord. Though they oppose, they complete each other. They are part and parcel of the great universal system. Wesley's famous cry: "No Devil, no God!" may just as well be reversed: "No God, no Devil!" The words that Chateaubriand has put into the mouth of this father of Atheism were never spoken by any demon in time or in eternity. To apply to this atheistic devil the remark of the cook in regard to Tennyson's parents, "If you raked out Hell with a smaäll-tooth coämb, you weänt find their like."<sup>41</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Dr. Frank Wicks, of Indianapolis, whom the present writer first heard refer to this passage in Roosevelt's *Gouverneur Morris* (1888), is authority for the statement that proofs of Paine's theism had been submitted by the Thomas Paine Association to Roosevelt, but that he refused to make a correction in subsequent editions of his book; see also the present writer's note, "Was Thomas Paine a Quaker?" in *Friends' Intelligencer*, May 27, 1922.

<sup>41</sup> Quoted in *Alfred Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*. By his son (New York, 1905), p. 15.



## VI

Chateaubriand's best and most successful diabolical creation is the demon of Voluptuousness. This demon is described as the most beautiful of the fallen angels after Lucifer. She left Heaven, she informs us, not from any hatred against the Eternal, but solely to follow an angel she loved. At last we find a sympathetic devil in Chateaubriand's Hell. The demon of Voluptuousness is, in the opinion of Jules Lemaitre, the charm and the grace of this insipid and sordid Hell. The author gives us a very sensuous description of this demon of Voluptuousness.<sup>42</sup> He portrays her with such passionate concern that the reader is not at a loss where to find the author's sympathies. With what complacency does Chateaubriand put beautiful words into her mouth! Commenting on the speech of this demon, Jules Lemaitre exclaims: "Ah que le peintre de cet enfer aime visiblement le péché!"<sup>43</sup>

"Dieux de l'Olympe, et vous que je connais moins, divinités du brahmane et du druide, je n'essaierai point de le cacher; oui, l'enfer me pèse! Vous ne l'ignorez pas; je ne nourrissais contre l'Eternel aucun sujet de haine, et j'ai seulement suivi, dans sa rébellion et dans sa chute, un ange que j'aimais. Mais puisque je suis tombé du ciel avec vous, je veux du moins vivre longtemps au milieu des mortels, et je ne me laisserai point bannir de la terre. . . ."<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> A similar sensuous description is given in *les Natchez* of the demon Night, daughter of Satan.

<sup>43</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 186.

<sup>44</sup> "Gods of Olympus, and ye with whom I am less acquainted, divinities of the Brahman and of the Druid, I shall not attempt at all to conceal it; yes, I cannot bear Hell! You well know that I cherished no hatred whatever against the Eternal, and that I only followed an angel whom I loved in his rebellion and in his fall. But since I have fallen with you from Heaven, I wish at least to dwell among mortals, and shall not suffer myself to be banished from the earth. Tyre, Heliopolis, Paphos, Amathus, demand my presence. My star still blazes upon Mount Libanus; there I have enchanted temples, graceful festivals, swans which bear me in the midst of zephyrs, of flowers, of incense, of perfumes, of fresh lawns, of voluptuous dances and of smiling sacrifices. And the Christians would snatch from me this trifling compensation for celestial joys, would transform the myrtle of my groves, which has given so many victims to Hell, into a savage cross in order to multiply the inhabitants of Heaven! No, indeed! I will this day make known my power. Neither violence nor wisdom is necessary to obtain a victory over the disciples of a severe law: I will arm against them the tender passions; this girdle assures to you the victory. My caresses will ere long have softened these austere servants of a chaste god. I will subdue the frigid virgins and will disturb, even in their solitude, those anchorites who think to escape my fascination. . . ."

Chateaubriand tries to conceal his admiration for this demoness by referring to her as a member of the sterner sex. This, however, is an error of judgment on his part. He describes the demon of Voluptuousness as the most dangerous of the spirits of the Abyss. This leads us to suspect that this demon must be a woman if we agree with Daniel Defoe that "a lady d.vil is about as dangerous a creature as one could meet."<sup>45</sup> Her name, Chateaubriand informs us, was Astarte among the Phoenicians and Venus among the Greeks. Now both Astarte and Venus were goddesses. This demon could not have changed sex after entering Chateaubriand's Hell, inasmuch as the demon of Jealousy is represented as the son of this demon and of Satan (*Martyrs*, XIV). Our author is unfair to wish to monopolize voluptuousness for himself and for his sex.

The reason why Chateaubriand succeeded so well with the demon of Voluptuousness is because here he approached Greek mythology. It is rather strange that in this book, supposedly written to show the superiority of the Christian Supernatural, the devils are only interesting in so far as they represent Greek divinities. Our author was far more successful with the gods of the Greek Pantheon than with the spirits of the Christian Heaven or Hell. Whatever touches upon Hellenic mythology in *les Martyrs* is pleasing and charming; whatever relates to Christian Supernaturalism is heavy and laborious. This book, written, as its author claimed, to show the beauties of Christian legend, charms us only in so far as it is permeated with the Hellenic spirit. Chateaubriand pleaded the cause of Christian theology and won the triumph for pagan mythology. "Chateaubriand," as G. Pellissier says, "set out with a pilgrim's staff; this staff changed to a thyrsus in his hand."<sup>46</sup> We may well say of him also what A. Barine remarked in regard to Saint-Pierre: "He desired to open the door for Providence to enter; in fact he opened the door for the great Pan."<sup>47</sup> In *les Martyrs*, Chateaubriand represents Satan in the effort of bringing the old religions back to life. "He carries the fatal spark to all the temples, and lights again the extinguished fires upon the altars of the idols." Well, this is exactly what Chateaubriand himself did.<sup>48</sup> When he believed that he "raised the cross among the ruins of our altars," he placed wreaths of laurels upon the brows of the neglected Greek gods.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Thomas Wright, *The Life of Daniel Defoe* (New York, 1894), p. 336.

<sup>46</sup> *Le Mouvement littéraire au XIXe siècle* (8e éd., 1908), p. 61.

A further point must not be overlooked. In his great efforts to show the originality of his Hell, Chateaubriand maintains that it differs from all the hells of his predecessors by containing the Olympus. This claim stands perhaps unparalleled in the annals of literary history as a case of colossal self-deception. From St. Paul to Savonarola the pagan gods were considered as fallen angels. The Church Fathers were very explicit on this point. Tertullian states unequivocally that all the old gods were demons (*De spectaculis*). The Church regarded the gods of mythology as devils who beguiled men into worshipping them in the form of idols.<sup>47</sup> In literature as far back as the Middle Ages the name of almost every Greek and Roman god was applied to the devils. In the French medieval mysteries the demons often bear the names of classical divinities<sup>48</sup> The *chansons de geste* called the devil Apollin (*Chanson de Roland*, l. 8); hence the line in Victor Hugo's *le Mariage de Roland*

"L'Archange saint Michel attaquant Apollo."

In Huon de Méris *Torneioient Antechrist*, we find among the infernal barons Jupiter and Neptune together with Beelzebub. Dante and Tasso both drew upon Greco-Roman mythology to fill their hells. Milton, Chateaubriand's own master and model, places the "Ionian gods" in his Pandemonium (*Par. Lost*, i. 508; cf. also i. 738ff.). Chateaubriand needed, however, no foreign models for raising classical gods to demonhood. He could plead precedent in the poets of his own land. The pseudo-classicists Godeau and Desmarets already turned the gods of classical antiquity into demons by preserving their names and attributes. But there is yet another consideration. If the Greek gods are devils, and if the Greek gods are beautiful, it must syllogistically follow that the devils, too, are beautiful. If, furthermore, the demons are diabolized vices, it must necessarily follow that vices, too, are beautiful.<sup>49</sup> This amounts to an esthetic appreciation of that which is morally condemned. Thus, we already scent in this first of Romantics Baudelaire's fragrant and flaming *Fleurs du Mal*. But of this later.

<sup>47</sup> *Bernardin de Saint-Pierre* (1891), p. 133.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. also Bertrand, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

<sup>49</sup> "But the fundamental cause (*consummative*) [of idolatry] must be sought in the devils, who cause men to adore them under the form of idols, therein working certain things which excited their wonder and admiration" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II, ii, 94.)

<sup>50</sup> H. Wieck, *Die Teufel auf der mittelalterlichen Mystereibühne Frankreichs* (Leipzig, 1887).

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Jules Lemaitre, *op. cit.*, p. 187.

It must be admitted, however, that in his great eagerness to be original, Chateaubriand tried to outdo his masters and sank the very Olympic rock, together with its inhabitants, into his Christian Hell. But by placing the Olympus as well as the Tartarus in his Hell he robbed it of its terrors.<sup>52</sup> The bright gods of Greece dispersed the gloom of his Gehenna. Chateaubriand followed his masters with a vengeance, indeed, and assembled in his Hell the gods of a goodly number of ethnic religions. To the Oriental and classical divinities that had been consigned to Hell by his predecessors he added characters of northern mythology as well. His demons are a truly cosmopolitan company. We find in his Hell, Belial of the Hebrews, Moloch of the Ammonites, Baal of the Babylonians, Astarte of the Phoenicians, Anubis of the Egyptians, Mithra of the Persians, Brahma of the Hindus, Neptune and Apollo of the Greeks, Teutates and Dis of the Gauls,<sup>53</sup> Odin of the Scandinavians and Erminsul of the Saxons. In *les Natchez* the ranks of Satan are swelled also by the divinities of the North American Indians. This motley assemblage of discarded deities brings chaos into Chateaubriand's descriptions of the infernal hosts.

Even the physical torments of Chateaubriand's Hell hold no great terrors. "Any great modern poet's notion of an everlasting Hell," says Swinburne, "must of course be less merely material than Dante's mechanism of hot and cold circles, fire and ice, ordure and mire." Our author did not feel the need of presenting a Hell less material than that of this medieval poet, whom he followed in this respect, not having found any descriptions of the agonies of the lost souls in Milton. Chateaubriand's Hell, taking it all in all, is indifferent and insipid and not at all to the taste of a modern man.

Still Chateaubriand was more successful with his Hell than with his Heaven. His remark in regard to his predecessors, that they achieved greater success with Hell than with Heaven, holds good of himself also. He himself admitted that it is easier to conceive of eternal unhappiness than of endless happiness (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. iv, chap. 14). We can grasp Hell and even Purgatory but not Heaven. "Our imagination," says Anatole France, "is made up of memories." We can easily form a Hell out of the materials taken from earth, but we lack on our planet the stuff with which to

<sup>52</sup> Cf. François Guizot, *le Temps passé (Mélanges de critique)* (1887), ii. 218.

<sup>53</sup> Teutates (Tuisto in Tacitus) was originally the god of the Teutones. He may even be identical with Dis. The Teutonic god of light became the Gallican god of darkness. In the history of religion the god of one people is the devil of another.

construct a Heaven. It is Hell and not Heaven which is most real in the consciousness of man. We all know what Hell is, but when questioned in regard to Heaven we feel embarrassed to answer. The information is so scanty, as a brilliant French lady once remarked to Sainte-Beuve. It was Hell and not Heaven, which, according to the testimony of his contemporaries, had left deep marks on Dante's face. "There may be Heaven, there must be Hell," is the conclusion reached at the end of Browning's poem, "Time's Revenges." A further illustration of this idea is the legend of the three monks of Mesopotamia, who set out one day on a journey to the departed and who found Hell and Purgatory, but not Heaven.

## VII

When not taken from Milton, Chateaubriand's imagery of Heaven is borrowed from the *Revelation of St. John*, but our author failed to adapt the ecstatic visions of Oriental imagination to the feelings of a modern man of the Occident. Julian Schmidt could get no idea of the Catholic Heaven from Chateaubriand's descriptions.<sup>54</sup> Lady Blennerhasset says truly: "Visions of Heaven have been denied to Chateaubriand."<sup>55</sup> No, our author has not succeeded in making heavenly bliss any too attractive. Chateaubriand is a greater master in the description of an earthly than of a heavenly environment, just as he is a better painter of earthly than of heavenly passions. Of all men, Chateaubriand was least fitted to offer a description of the regions of the blessed. One who claimed that he delighted in speaking of unhappiness ("Je me délectais à parler du malheur") could form no conception at all of Heaven. He was certainly more in his element among the spirits of darkness than among the spirits of light. From his descriptions of the different sorts and degrees of punishment it would seem as if, to speak with Erasmus, he "were very well acquainted with the soil and situation of these infernal regions."<sup>56</sup>

<sup>54</sup> *Geschichte der französischen Literatur seit der Revolution* (Leipzig, 1858).

<sup>55</sup> *Chateaubriand, Romantik und die Restaurationsepoche in Frankreich* (Mainz, 1903); see also her essay on Chateaubriand in *Sidelights* (New York, 1913), pp. 212-45 translated from the German *Streiflichter*, Berlin, 1911).

<sup>56</sup> It may be interesting to note in this connection that after 1839 Chateaubriand bought a "pavilion" situated in the rue d'Enfer.

Chateaubriand lacked the qualities of a poet of the Supernatural. Only a great poet can leave with impunity the solid ground of nature and give solidity to the Supernatural. Our author was less fitted than many another of his day to do justice to his chosen subject. He wanted the soul of a mystic and was no symbolist. He possessed no sense of myth and mystery. "The taste of Chateaubriand," says G. Merlet, "was of a different school from his talent."<sup>57</sup> He had the taste but not the talent for the miraculous and marvellous. He was too much of the earth earthy to portray the Spiritual and the Supernatural.

Chateaubriand achieved the antithesis of his purpose by his interjection of the Supernatural. He not only failed to show the superiority of the Christian to the classical Supernatural, but also spoiled the story. The Supernatural, which was designed to raise *les Martyrs* to a poetic dignity, impaired its value as a work of art. It does not add to the beauty of the book, but detracts from it.<sup>58</sup> Had it not been for *le merveilleux chrétien* this novel of the Christian origins would have been beautiful: A woman gladly abandoned her father and her faith to follow the lord and master of her heart, and after a long separation joins him in the arena of the gladiators, where a common martyrdom seals their virginal union. But Chateaubriand preferred to write an epos, and a Christian epos at that, and needed scenes of divine and diabolic interventions and of celestial and infernal assemblages.

But why call Heaven and Hell to witness? Chateaubriand supposes that the martyrdom of Eudorus and Cymodocée will bring about the triumph of the Christian religion. Consequently Heaven and Hell must be tremendously interested in this pair of lovers. Our author thus distinguishes from the vast number of Christian martyrs two persons whom nothing in the world puts in a class by themselves. Why, we ask, should Eudorus and Cymodocée have been chosen to make up the required Holocaust to the exclusion of all others? Indeed, in what respect do Eudorus and Cymodocée stand out above all other martyrs? Why is it that only through their martyrdom is the Devil to be put in chains? They do nothing that other Christian martyrs before and after them have not done. There is nothing in their characters, in their personal worth, in their suf-

<sup>57</sup> *Tableau de la littérature française de 1800 à 1815* (1878), iii. 157.

<sup>58</sup> The English translator of *les Natchez* (1827) very wisely omitted all supernatural parts. The English translator of *les Martyrs* (1812; new version, 1859), though including the "Christian marvellous," considered it nevertheless "tedious and misplaced and rather diminishing than increasing the interest of the story."

ferings, to explain the striking distinction made by the poet between them and all other martyrs.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, why should the merit of the martyrs be unequal? Within the bounds of human understanding we are not made to see what could fit certain individuals more than others for the work of the salvation of the Church. As a matter of fact, if we followed our reason we should say that Eudorus was less fit to accomplish this aim than most other martyrs. Even admitting that his repentance was sincere, a repentant sinner is not greater than a saint. "Le repentir sincère égale l'innocence," says the French proverb. Sincere repentance equals innocence, but does not surpass it.

Chateaubriand's great and fundamental error, from the theological point of view, is his effort to make of his Eudorus the equivalent of a second Christ. It has already been noted by his contemporary critics that in the colloquy between God the Father and God the Son, the question is of a new Lamb to wash away the sins of the world, of a new Holocaust chosen for the triumph of the Christian religion, of a new Host necessary to hurl Lucifer into the Abyss. It would almost seem, as Sainte-Beuve ironically remarks, that the author of the *Génie du Christianisme* had the presumptuous air of wishing to reform Christianity. Commenting on the death of the two characters, Chateaubriand says simply and solemnly: "The Host was accepted: the last drop of the blood of the righteous to make triumph that religion which was destined to change the face of the earth." Of whom does our author speak in such terms? Of Jesus Christ? Oh, no! Of a fictitious person by the name of Eudorus. But all the rivers of blood which have been shed by men and women who sacrificed their lives for their faith, are, in the opinion of the Church, not worth a single drop of the blood of the Saviour. To hear and heed Chateaubriand we would say that the first and great Victim, which is none other than Jesus Christ, is no longer sufficient as a ransom for our sins. We knew that the Son of God died for our salvation. We have been taught that by the fall of Adam man became the slave or subject of Satan, but was redeemed from bondage by the death of the Lord. It was not necessary for Eudorus to be torn to pieces by lions in order to fetter the Fiend. We know upon the authority of the Evangelist St. Matthew that Lucifer was put by Christ "in everlasting chains." The Devil's overthrow occurred on Calvary and not in the Coliseum.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Alexandre Vinet, *Etude sur la littérature française du XIXe siècle* (2e éd., 1857), pp. 286f.

Did Chateaubriand really think that the Lord Jesus did not bring salvation to man? He was overanxious to show that his treatment of the Supernatural was in accord with the teachings of the Church Fathers.<sup>60</sup> But on this point he revealed an utter ignorance of patristic literature. The idea of salvation according to Irenæus, Origin and Gregory the Great is briefly as follows: All men, by reason of the Fall, became the rightful and exclusive property of Satan; and it would have been unjust on the part of God to take from him by violence that which was in reality his due. Satan, however, was willing to relinquish his claim to the human race on condition that Jesus should be given to him as the ransom price of humanity. But Heaven outwitted Hell in the bargain for man's redemption. When Satan got the price he found that he could not keep it. In demanding Christ as payment he did not know the dual nature of his prize; and, as Ruffinus puts it, in swallowing the bait (the humanity) he was tortured by the hook (the divinity) and was only too glad to relinquish both.<sup>61</sup> Whether by fair dealing or foul, the fact remains that through the death of Christ man was redeemed from the power of Satan. Of course, we shall leave this matter for the doctors of the Church to discuss, and we do not envy Chateaubriand in the least to have on his hands an affair with these learned gentlemen. All we wish to point out is that Chateaubriand erred grievously when he believed that Heaven and Hell were greatly concerned whether or not his lovers were happily united in the end.

Furthermore, Chateaubriand's reason for the persecution under Diocletian does not hold good in the face of facts. In vain does our author appeal to the authority of Eusebius, who explains the persecution as a visitation from Heaven for the sins of the Christians in their prosperity (*Martyrs*, I n. 2). Chateaubriand's own story of the Christians of those days, however, does not bear out their alleged prosperity and perfidy. Throughout the book we get a picture of the life of these early Christians wholly opposed to the affluence and apostasy with which they are charged. With the exception of Lasthénès, whom our author represents as the richest man in Greece, all Christians belong to the lowest classes of society.

<sup>60</sup> Chateaubriand is so anxious to follow tradition that he has the Virgin Mary walk about in her body amidst the blessed souls in Heaven. It is on this point in particular that Jules Lemaitre (*op. cit.*, pp. 73f.), raised the laugh against him. Cf. Juan Manuel's *Treatise showing that the Blessed Mary is, body and soul, in Paradise* (14th century).

<sup>61</sup> An excellent presentation of the evolution of the theory of salvation will be found in Hastings Rashdall's, *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (London, 1919).



They are recruited almost wholly from the proscribed and despised of men (*ibid.*, V). We read of the evangelical poverty in which they live (*ibid.*, IV, XI, XII), of their innocent lives (*ibid.*, XIII), and of the bitter torments which they undergo for the sake of their faith (*ibid.*, IV, VI, VII, XV). They gather for worship at midnight (*ibid.*, V), have tombs for temples and wounds for treasures (*ibid.*, XVI). The Church had already suffered nine persecutions within the brief period of less than three centuries.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, the triumph of the Christian religion (the subtitle of the book) consisted, according to Chateaubriand, in the adoption of Christianity by Constantine and the official promotion of Christianity to the rank of a State religion. But this triumph, which is in the form of a support lent to truth by a temporal and political power cannot well be called the triumph of the powers of light over the spirits of the Abyss. Some of us would even go so far as to call this union of Church and State the defeat of the Christian religion. From the days of Constantine the religion of Jesus of Nazareth has been so linked with political and financial interests that its moral and spiritual power has been largely overlooked. The Church has become the handmaiden of the State and has been willing, sometimes, at least, to sponsor whatever the latter wished.

Furthermore, the imprisonment of Satan, which is supposed to have been caused by the merit of the martyrdom of Eudorus and Cymodocée, in no way changed the conduct of the men and women in Rome, or in the rest of the world for that matter. The Princesdom of the air does not seem to have been overthrown even by the vicarious death of Eudorus and Cymodocée, and has been in commission all the ages down to the present day, as recent events have conclusively proved. Even the ecclesiastics believe that in the eternal combat between the Deity and the Devil for the mastery of this world the latter gradually has been gaining the upper hand. The *Malleus maleficarum*, a large volume written by two inquisitors under the papal bull against witchcraft of 1484 and published in Germany at the end of the fifteenth century,<sup>63</sup> contains the very sin-

<sup>62</sup> This does not mean, however, that there are not even nowadays men who hold the Devil responsible for the persecution of the Christians under the Roman emperors. A century and a decade after Chateaubriand (November 16, 1919), a clergyman in the metropolis of America said from his pulpit on a Sunday morning: "Working through Nero, Diocletian, and other emperors, the Devil liberally and carefully planned literally to wipe from the earth all the Christians."

<sup>63</sup> *Malleus maleficarum. Der Hexenhammer.* Verfasst von den beiden Inquisitoren Jakob Sprenger und Heinrich Institoris. Zum ersten Male in's Deutsche übertragen u. eingeleitet von I. W. R. Schmidt. 3 Bände. Krätische Ausgabe, Berlin, 1905.

gular avowal that the Devil is constantly gaining ground, or in other words, that the Lord is constantly losing ground; that Man, who was created to fill a vacancy in Heaven, is rather headed downward.

All this Supernaturalism is extraneous and extravagant in *les Martyrs*. Chateaubriand erred greatly when he believed that "the good and bad angels sufficed to carry on the action without delivering it to worn-out machinery." The supernatural agencies hinder rather than help the action; and instead of composing an epic, our author created a creaking work of pulleys and puppets. "In few pseudo-epics," says Professor Babbitt, "is the creaking of the pulleys with which this "machinery" is managed so painfully audible as in the *Martyrs*."<sup>64</sup> The interweaving of the spiritual with the material, of the superhuman with the human, is as infelicitous as the mingling of carthly and heavenly passions. There is too much stiffness and awkwardness, too much pedantry and puerility, too many inanities and inconsistencies in his "merveilleux chrétien." It was too laboriously imagined and too coldly applied. His machinery of marvels is simply monstrous. We are irritated by the complexity of his supernatural characters. We are bewildered by the mazes of his mechanisms. We are dazed by the *mélange* of the different *merveilleux*: *merveilleux chrétien*, *merveilleux mythologique* and (in *les Natchez*) *merveilleux indien*. The incomparable absurdity of this farrago makes us at times nearly burst into laughter. A specimen from each of the two books will suffice to show the ludicrousness of this epic machinery: The demon Rumor in *les Natchez* quits her palace upon the command of her father, Satan, and sets out upon a secret mission. And what is the object of this flight through the air? What mighty empire is the demon thus charged to overturn? Hear, Reader, and marvel at this marvellous! Rumor goes "preceded by Astonishment, followed closely by Envy and accompanied by Admiration" to play the gossip in an Indian wigwam! Satan in *les Martyrs* mounts upon a chariot of fire,<sup>65</sup> places at his side the monster whom he calls his son, and they both drive in state to the valley of the Alpheus to visit Hiéroclès. And what, pray, is the aim of this journey? Never was a finer bit of bathos. The demon of Jealousy, disguised as an aged augur, approaches the bed of the proconsul of Achaia and touches his breast with a rod that

<sup>64</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>65</sup> It is, mind you, a real chariot with wheels and drawn by winged horses. But what is the matter with Satan's wings? Have they been so badly singed by cannon fire during the war in Heaven that they cannot bear him aloft? His means of locomotion may, however, be the result of his wish to counterfeit Christ, who has "a living chariot with wheels which hurl thunders and light-

he holds in his hand. And all this fuss, as Jules Lemaitre rightly remarks, to inspire in a man the most natural of sentiments!<sup>65</sup>

Chateaubriand's efforts to make his supernatural characters act naturally are also absurd. Satan "borne down by the might of his crimes descends naturally towards Hell." We read also that during his physical contact with Velléda the language of Hell escaped naturally from the lips of Eudorus.

Chateaubriand's mystic notions of the workings of the universe may be characterized as too silly for words. How amazing must sound to a modern man the explanation of high and low tide which the angel of the seas gives to Gabriel! Our author here speaks after the heart of his yoke-fellow Joseph de Maistre, who wished that a scientist might come forward and credit the Lord and not the moon with the ebb and flow of the tide. What shall we say of Chateaubriand's cosmogony? Uriel, the angel of the sun,<sup>67</sup> informs in *les Natchez* the guardian angel of America how his planet was created. This star, he tells him, was not at all formed as men imagine, and then goes on to explain the origin of the sun: When the Lord thinks, his thoughts send forth beams of light throughout the universe. The child Emmanuel, playing one day with these thought-beams, breaks one of them; and out of a drop which he lets fall, the sun is formed. The sun spots, this angel instructs us further, are caused by the shadow of his wings, which he spreads whenever a thought crosses the Divine intelligence: otherwise the universe would be consumed.<sup>68</sup> And this in the days of Laplace! Mr. John Foster in a review of *les Martyrs* said that its author "has introduced some of the most foolish extravagances that ever Popish fancy mistook for grandeur."<sup>69</sup>

The Supernaturalism in Chateaubriand's works conveys no illusion to the reader; it impresses him rather as singularly unconvincing. It is felt as a study in style, for which the author, as a witness" (*Martyrs*, III). The tendency on the part of the Devil to mimic the Deity in every detail of his character and conduct has earned for him the appellation *simia Dei*. For the Evangelists, the wind is the proper vehicle for Satan and his angels. "Rain seems to have been commonly associated, as it still is in the Church of England, with the intervention of the deity, but wind and hail were invariably identified with the devil" (Lecky). The witch's broom represents the sweeping storm.

<sup>65</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>67</sup> In *les Martyrs*, Uriel resigned as guardian of the sun to take up his new duties as angel of Love.

<sup>68</sup> In *les Martyrs* it is the old Fiend himself who darkens the universe with his bat's wings.

<sup>69</sup> *Eclectic Review* of September, 1812. Reprinted in his *Critical Essays Contributed to "The Eclectic Review"* (London, 1856), vol. II, pp. 263-78.

matter of fact, recommends it, in his Preface to *les Natchez*. With Chateaubriand, as with all pseudo-classicists, the Supernatural is used merely as mythological trappings, as a rhetorical device for the embellishment of epic poetry. He himself did not believe in his own Supernaturalism, as is sufficiently evident from his farewell to the Muse in the conclusion of *les Martyrs*, a conclusion which was suppressed in all editions subsequent to the first:

"Fidèle compagne de ma vie, en remontant dans les cieux, laisse-moi l'indépendance et la vertu. Qu'elles viennent, ces Vierges austères, qu'elles viennent fermer pour moi le livre de la Poésie, et m'ouvrir les pages de l'Histoire. J'ai consacré l'âge des illusions à la riante peinture du mensonge: j'emploierai l'âge des regrets au tableau sévère de la vérité."<sup>70</sup>

This was the principal defect of Chateaubriand's Supernaturalism. Nodier, that schoolmaster of Romanticism, repeatedly said that two things were necessary for the successful treatment of the Supernatural in literature. The poet must himself believe what he says, and the reader must believe the poet. These two requirements are lacking in Chateaubriand's Christian Supernaturalism. Dante, Tasso, Milton and Klopstock addressed themselves to readers who believed in their Supernaturalism as firmly as they did themselves. But Chateaubriand had no belief himself and could expect none from his readers. A belief in the Supernatural was very far, indeed, from the spirit of the dechristianized France of the early nineteenth century. Most of the ideas of his day in this sphere of thought were quite different from the views that the contemporaries of his master Milton entertained. The tremendous belief in the personality of the Devil that had grown up during the Middle Ages flourished just as vigorously in the middle of the seventeenth century. Milton himself fully believed in the existence of the diabolical beings whom he described. He was as firm, although not as fantastic, a believer in a real, personal Devil, as Luther, who lived in a constant consciousness of contact and conflict with Satan. We never think of doubting Milton. "As well might we doubt the reality of those scorching fires of Hell that had left their marks on the face of Dante; or of the fearful sights and sounds that beset Christian on his way through the Valley of the Shadow of Death." Even Christopher Marlowe, in telling the story of the bargain be-

<sup>70</sup> "Faithful companion of my life, in ascending to Heaven, leave with me independence and virtue. May they come, these austere Virgins, may they come to close for me the book of Poesy, and to open for me the pages of History. I have consecrated the age of illusions to the portrayal of lies: I will employ the age of regrets to the severe tableau of truth."

tween Faustus and Mephistopheles, believed that he narrated established facts. The conception of the Devil of a Milton, a Bunyan, a Marlowe still represents the seriousness of the mediæval fear of Satan. These men lived in an age of faith in which angels and demons were not abstract figures, but living realities. In the France of the year 1809, Heaven and Hell had lost their "local habitation," and angels and demons were considered as figments of the human imagination.

Nor is the subject matter of Chateaubriand so well fitted for supernatural action as is that of Milton. Even an unbeliever will suspend his own opinions and follow the supernatural interventions in the lives of biblical characters. But it is a different thing to inject into historical events Heaven and Hell and all the powers thereof. How incongruous must appear Erminul in connection with Constantine; and how much more ridiculous must sound a reference to Louis XIV from the lips of that allegorical demon Rumor, a daughter of Satan! In *les Natchez* the Supernatural was more out of tune than in *les Martyrs*. The earlier of the two romances dealt with events of less than two centuries ago and not a century from the time of writing. In the later romance, on the other hand, the Supernatural would have been perfectly proper if the author had treated it as the belief of the men and women of that day and not as his own belief. But he offered this "merveilleux chrétien" in full faith and forgot the fifteen hundred years that separated him from the characters of the story. The Supernatural which is employed in the novels of the past and of the peasantry in the nineteenth century is presented as the point of view of the characters and not of the narrators. Chateaubriand, however, puts the interventions of Heaven and Hell on a parity with the historical events. His superhuman agents claim as much reality as his historical personages.

The fact that Chateaubriand employs the Supernatural as poetic paraphernalia makes matters worse. Even the non-believer is displeased to find a temple of religion transformed into a store-house of epic bric-à-brac,—to see sacred symbols used as poetic props and pulleys. This sort of marvellous machinery is as forbidding to men of taste as it is shocking to men of faith.

The further fact that *les Martyrs* is written in prose is prejudicial to its Supernaturalism. In Greek verse, in Latin verse, or even in Milton's English, as George Saintsbury says, we could put up

with this marvellous material, but not in plain French prose.<sup>71</sup> Mme. de Staël had a clearer vision of the requirements of Supernaturalism in the literature of her day when she demanded verse for its treatment: "Il faut des vers," she wrote in her book, *De l'Allemagne*, "pour des choses merveilleses." A demon who stalks in stately verse is endurable; one who talks in plain prose is wearisome. In Romanticism, which was primarily a school of poetry, the demon should have spoken in rhymed alexandrines. In the latter and prosaic half of the nineteenth century it was, of course, perfectly proper for the Devil to talk like the rest of us. Among his strong points is his adaptability to the morals and manners of each generation.

## VIII

Chateaubriand failed utterly in his efforts to bring back Christian Supernaturalism. His supernatural apparatus was as antiquated as his Christian epos. Even this "enchanteur," as our author was called by the frequenters of Mme. Pauline de Beaumont's salon at the Abbaye-au-Bois, could not bring the world again under the dead hand of the past. He did not understand that an epic poem cannot be produced at will. It is the work not only of individuals, but of times and conditions. The age had long passed for the writing of epics. Christian epos on the morrow of the French Revolution! His period was critical, analytical, and even somewhat cynical. His theories found no adherents, and his Christian epics no imitators. You will look in vain throughout the literature of the nineteenth century for a work which contains a medley of the "merveilleux" in the manner of Chateaubriand. His contention that an artificial and rhetorical, a figurative and fictive Supernaturalism had in itself a poetic value and was necessary to the dignity of an epic poem, was disproved by his own works. His strictures upon a mechanical application of the "classical marvellous" were turned against his own exploitation of the "Christian marvellous." Chateaubriand's chief service lies in his unwitting application of the

<sup>71</sup> *History of the French Novel* (2 vols., 1917-19), i. 30.

*coup de grâce* to the external conception of the Supernatural. He has proved that there is no intrinsic worth in mythological fictions, whether pagan or Christian. But his distinction between classical and Christian mythology would not hold water. He decreed the abolition of classical mythology, and literary history proves that he was wrong. The Supernatural, classical as well as Christian, was successfully used in the poetry of the Romantic period, but not as a stylistic embellishment. It was employed as subject-matter, and aimed to call forth a particular emotion in the reader. The symbolical Supernaturalism was especially in vogue during the past century. It adds to the intellectual emotion of a philosophical idea the esthetical emotion of a symbolical form.

Indeed, Chateaubriand himself admitted that his "merveilleux chrétien" was a failure. He knew that the supernatural passages were the weakest parts of *les Martyrs*, and realized that the merits of the work could not rest on its Heaven and Hell. "Neither the good nor the bad angels," he confessed, "will obtain mercy for the book." Its redeeming qualities he sought anywhere but in its marvellous machinery. The "merveilleux chrétien" is missing in his two short stories. The conflict of human passions in them is not overlaid by a contest of angels and demons. The religious emotion is nevertheless far better produced in them than in the greater works with all of their Christian marvels. The short pieces express very powerfully the Christian spirit. *Atala* and *René* have remained his masterpieces, while the more pretentious so-called epic poems, *les Natchez* and *les Martyrs*, were promptly forgotten.

Moreover, Chateaubriand's Christian Supernaturalism is Christian in name only. He committed the error of imitating too accurately the classical mythology in the Christian, so that they are almost identical. His angels are for the most part the Greek and Latin personifications of natural processes. Virgil's gods of the sea are turned into angels of the sea. Uriel, as the angel of love, is the Greek Eros, and Gabriel, as the messenger of the Lord, is Iris. Chateaubriand realized later,—too late, indeed,—that what he offered was not a Christian Supernaturalism, but a caricatured classicism, that he had only modified the old epic features of the *Aeneid*, instead of filling his poem with a faith which Virgil lacked (*Mémoires d'outre-tombe*, iii. 15). His was too superficial a conception of the Supernatural. He knew too well that the "merveilleux chrétien" does not mean to a modern man the description of Heaven and Hell. The marvellous element of Christianity is the Christian con-

science, as it manifests itself in our daily lives, the Christian soul, as it reveals itself in acts of self-denial. The habitation of the spirits of good and evil is not in Heaven and Hell but in our own hearts. The conflict between God and Satan is fought within and not without us.

Of Chateaubriand's Christian Supernaturalism all that remains is his Satanism. The interest in biblical and medieval subjects which our author awakened among the Romanticists was confined almost wholly to "diablerie." Certain passages in his books inspired a few of the most beautiful Satanistic works of modern times. Alfred de Vigny derived his poem, *Eloa* (1823), from Chateaubriand, and suggested on his part Lamartine's *la Chute d'un Ange* (1838), Gautier's *la Larme du diable* (1839) and Victor Hugo's posthumous *la Fin de Satan*. In Lamartine's poem, however, the angel, who became a human being through love of a mortal woman, soon loses contact with his former friends and takes up his abode among men. Flaubert's *la Tentation de Saint-Antoine* (1849) and Anatole France's *Thaïs* (1890) go back to Chateaubriand's description of the Thebaid. Little did this "avocat poétique du Christianisme" dream that all his efforts in behalf of Christian Supernaturalism would turn out to be only a "boost" for Beelzebub. In one important respect, Chateaubriand experienced the fate of his master. Milton started out, in his poem, "to justify the ways of God to men" (*Par. Lost*, i. 26), and ended by conferring lustre upon Lucifer. His French imitator set out with the intention of rehabilitating Christianity in the arts and in literature, and his work redounded to the glory of Gehenna. Of all his Christian Supernaturals it is Satan who appealed most strongly to his contemporaries. In the Romantic period the Devil became an absorbing and alluring character and has dominated most literary forms down to the present day. To call the roll of the writers of the nineteenth century who celebrated Satan in verse and prose is to marshal the names of almost all the makers of modern French letters. If we admit that the nineteenth century literature reached its highest perfection in France, it should not be overlooked that this is at least in some degree due to the skillful exploitation in it of the fascinating Prince of this World.



## IX

Chateaubriand's real Satanism must rather be sought apart from his Supernaturalism. The influence of Milton's Satan is not limited to Chateaubriand's spirit of darkness. It also extends to his human characters. Medieval legends inform us that persons who conjured up the Evil One often had trouble in parting with him when once he had answered their summons. Diabolus belongs to that genus of genii which, once having escaped from its bottle, refuses to return. Chateaubriand could not well rid himself of the Devil he had summoned. In vain did this Christian poet endeavor to paint his Satan in the blackest colors. The image of a bright and beautiful archangel would unfailingly emerge in a fascinating form and at the most unexpected junctures. The Miltonic Satan whom he so admired and whom he transplanted into his own literature and country, continued to be Chateaubriand's inspiration for the remainder of his life. Referring to the temptation scene, which was translated almost literally in the *Génie du Christianisme*, Sainte-Beuve asks:

"Ce démon, ce glorieux Lucifer, n'est-ce pas le même qui, avec tous les charmes de la séduction et sous un air de vague ennui, se glissant encore sous l'arbre d'Éden, a pris sa revanche en plus d'un endroit des scènes troublantes de Chateaubriand?"<sup>72</sup>

Satan dictated to our author many a phrase and fashioned many a figure more or less in his own image. The Devil is more cunning and crafty than this religionist was aware. The Evil One knows that humanity is on guard against him. To tempt man, Satan changes his name as well as his form.

The real Devil in *les Martyrs*, however, is not Satan or any other of the horned company that sit in the infernal parliament, but the wretched seducer and murderer of Velléda. Nor is Satan in *les Natchez* as much of a devil as René, the melancholy misanthrope, the social rebel and the unfeeling lover. René is the human

<sup>72</sup> "Has not this glorious Lucifer, still gliding under the tree of Eden, with his charms of seduction and his air of vague ennui, taken his revenge in more than one passage of Chateaubriand?" *Causeries du lundi* (15 vols., 1851-62), ii. 157.

incarnation of Milton's "great spirit inspired by melancholy."<sup>73</sup> A man solitary in his conscious superiority to his fellows, cursed with a mysterious sorrow wandering through many lands, vainly seeking happiness, is kin to the "grand solitaire désespéré" in Milton. How deeply Chateaubriand felt the melancholy of Milton's Satan may be seen from the following passage in his *Génie du Christianisme* (Pt. II, bk. iv., chap. 9):

"Satan repentant à la vue de la lumière qu'il hait parce qu'elle lui rappelle comme il fut élevé au-dessus d'elle, souhaitant ensuite d'avoir été créé dans un rang inférieur, puis s'endurcissant dans le crime par orgueil, par honte, par méfiance même de son caractère ambitieux; enfin, pour tout fruit de ses réflexions, et comme pour expier un moment de remords, se chargeant de l'empire du mal pendant toute une éternité: voilà, certes, si nous ne nous trompons, une des conceptions les plus pathétiques qui soient jamais sorties du cerveau d'un poète."<sup>74</sup>

His doubt and disquiet, his disillusionment and despondency, his disdain and defiance, his disordered soul and embittered heart, his mournful and morbid temperament, his rebellious and restless spirit, his unbounded egotism, his outward coldness and inward glow, his weariness of mind, his weakness of will, his hatred of life, all these qualities stamp René as a demon clad in human flesh. Indeed René is, as he himself tells us, *enchanté, tourmenté et comme possédé par le démon de son cœur.*"

In the person of René, who stands at the very threshold of the new age, the Devil cast his long dark shadow over the weary nineteenth century. With this character begins the cult of sadness, the poetry of plaints. From René may be said to spring the melancholy and misanthropy of Romanticism, already dimly discerned in Rousseau's Saint-Preux and Goethe's Werther.<sup>75</sup> René is the personification of the diabolical malady of the century—*la maladie du siècle*. The priest d'Aureville, a brother of Barbey, well understood this diabolic quality of melancholy when he termed it "la grand diablesse." In René we find the first and fullest expression of that

<sup>73</sup> Luther held that Satan was a mournful character and could in no way endure bright, cheerful music.

<sup>74</sup> "Satan repenting when he beholds the light, which he hates because it reminds him how much more glorious was once his own condition; afterwards wishing that he had been created of an inferior rank; then hardening himself in guilt by pride, by shame, and by even mistrust of his ambitious character; finally, as the sole result of his reflections, and as if to atone for a transient remorse, taking upon himself the empire of evil throughout all eternity—this is certainly one of the most sublime conceptions that ever sprang from the imagination of a poet."

<sup>75</sup> Cf. P. Hainrich, *Werther und René* (Greifswald, 1921).

world-weariness or *Weltschmerz*, as the Germans call it, which is gnawing at the heart of modern man.

In René may be discovered, furthermore, the origin of the "révolté" who feels a voluptuous joy in standing out against the world, in warring with the cosmos, in breaking all bonds of family and society. It must not be forgotten that the Romantic idea in France, as later in England, was at bottom revolutionary. It differed considerably from the moonshiny sort of Romanticism that we find in Germany. In this respect the later school called "Young Germany" more nearly corresponds to French Romanticism. All the French Romantics were members of the Opposition. Chateaubriand himself, who began as a bulwark of Bourbonism, joined the Opposition in 1824, when he was dismissed from office.<sup>76</sup> It was on this occasion that he threw off the mask which he had until then worn. His counter-revolutionary ideas stood, as he himself admits in his *Congrès de Vercors* (1838), against his own judgment ("contre mes propres lumières"). What Blake said of Milton is equally true of his French disciple. He, too, was "of the Devil's party."

In the character of René, Chateaubriand is the first to paint the man-demon found among many Romantic authors and in a number of their best creations. He is a man who, conscious of his own powers and of the loftiness of his own aspirations, looks down with disdain upon the masses of his fellow-men who lack powers and aspirations equal to his. The keenness and depth of his own ideas and sufferings lift him in self-appraisal above the masses of his fellow-men whose ideas and sufferings are on a lower plane of thought and emotion. This man-demon, never finding his counterpart among men, must needs content himself with the love of a tender, but shallow, feminine nature. The personality of a woman of this sort he absorbs almost involuntarily and becomes the cause of her moral anguish. He accepts love without loving in return and feels no pity for the sufferings which he inflicts on the woman who loves him. That is why vital contact with such a demoniacal nature is dangerous to a woman and is certain to lead to a bitter conflict. This conflict between a man-demon and a woman-angel finds its most beautiful symbolical expression in Vigny's poem, *Eloa*.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Gustave Lanson, "la Défection de Chateaubriand," *Revue de Paris*, t. IV (1901), pp. 487-525, and *Rev. d'hist. litt. de la France*, t. IX (1902), pp. 674-84.

<sup>77</sup> Demonic women of the type of Corinne and Lélia are few as compared with men.

In the various aspects of his diabolical character René was imitated with many variations by the contemporaries of Chateaubriand. René sired the long procession of phantoms who struck terror into the heart of his own creator. Who can number all these sad and suffering, sentimental and sinning heroes of the Romantic School? Their name is legion: Obermann, Adolphe, Mardoche, Joseph Delorme, Antony, Didier, Hernani, Gilbert, Frank, Julie, Rastignac, and among women Corinne and Lélia. They all call René father. Childe Harold also belongs to the progeny of Chateaubriand's hero. Manfred too, as Chénollé has aptly remarked, is but "a René dressed à la Shakespeare." It was Chateaubriand who created that Satanic character which is wrongly ascribed to Byron. Byronism was full blown in the work of Chateaubriand when Byron was still a school boy. The so-called Byronic pose was already assumed by René. Southey gave Byron too much credit in designating him as the coryphæus of the Satanic School. The laurels of Lucifer belong to the French poet. Chateaubriand, indeed, was the Sachem of Satanism rather than of Romanticism. What the Romantics call the fascination of the Abyss is already contained in his writings. He poured the morbid virus into Romanticism. He developed in the Romantics the taste for the *malsain* and the *macabre*. From him they derived the tendency to gloat over decay and death. In Chateaubriand may already be discerned the prevailing traits of the Satanic School which is characterized by Brandes, as "a school with a keen eye for all that is evil and terrible, a gloomy view of life, a tendency to rebellion," and "a wild longing for enjoyment, which satisfies itself by mingling the idea of death and destruction, a sort of Satanic frenzy, with what would otherwise be mild and natural feelings of enjoyment and happiness."<sup>78</sup> We need only point to Aatala's dying speech with its Satanic lyricism or to René's letter to Céluta with its Satanic love of destruction and its sadistic lust for murder.

In Chateaubriand this Satanism received a Catholic coloring. He advocated a religion that should furnish occasion for esthetical joy and emotional pathos. He taught the Romantics that religion, far from being an obstacle in the way of sin, may, on the contrary, be found even an aid to the delight in sin. The horror of sin, he showed, added to the enjoyment of sin. It imparted to it a special flavor. This point of view is best illustrated by Stendhal's well-known story of the Italian lady who remarked one day: "Voilà

<sup>78</sup> *Op. cit.*, iii. 297; i. 39

un bon sorbet, néanmoins il serait meilleur s'il était un péché!" It is too bad that this good lady was not born a century later and in America.<sup>79</sup>

## X

Chateaubriand's Satanic influence reaches down to the present day. All our modern devil-worshippers have stolen their firebrands from his Hell. His Catholicism threw the decadents straight into the arms of the Devil. "Sentimentalism in religion," says Professor Guérard, "is ever a dangerous thing, but when it is intensified in literature, it leads straight to the Devil."<sup>80</sup> Barbey, Baudelaire and Huysmans were directly influenced by Chateaubriand. Their writings may be considered the natural offspring of his *Génie au Christianisme*. It is from this writer that Barbey and Baudelaire derived their Catholic Satanism: the belief in Satan as the most essential element in the Catholic creed. René and his progeny were already "Diaboliques," and there are passages in the works of Chateaubriand worthy to rank with the rankest "Fleurs du Mal." "Hath not the author of René," asks Anatole France, "also sown burning words throughout the world?" Through Chateaubriand, Baudelaire, that singer of Satan, found his admiration for the Miltonic archangel, than whom he could imagine none more perfect in manly beauty. ("On conçoit qu'il me serait difficile de ne pas conclure que le plus parfait type de Beauté virile est Satan,—à la manière de Milton.") Baudelaire's worship of Venus also goes back to Chateaubriand's description of this demon of Voluptuousness. In his essay on Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (1861), Baudelaire writes:

<sup>79</sup> A sherbet on the Continent contains alcohol. Professor Todd has called the present writer's attention to a similar story of a French lady who held up a glass of cool water with the remark: "How delightful it would be if it were only sinful to drink it!" The French proverb says: "Rien n'est meilleur que le fruit défendu."

<sup>80</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>81</sup> Not only the goddess of beauty, but also mortal women, famous for their beauty, such as Aspasia, Lais, and Cleopatra, have, in consideration of this fact, been turned by the Catholic Church into demons, ladies of Hell. See also Heine's description of the Wild Army in his poem, *Atta Troll* (1842). "What glory for them!" exclaims Anatole France in *le Jardin d'Épicure* (1895).

"The radiant ancient Venus, Aphrodite, born of white foam, has not imprudently traversed the horrible darkness of the Middle Ages. . . . She has retired to the depths of a cavern, magnificent, indeed, but lighted by the fires that are not those of the Sun. In her descent under earth, Venus has come near to Hell's mouth, and she goes certainly to many abominable solemnities to render homage to the Arch-Demon, Prince of the Flesh and Lord of Sin."<sup>81</sup>

But in contrast to Baudelaire, who was an ascetic, even a monastic, sinner, Chateaubriand lived the part he portrayed. This religionist not only painted Diabolism, but also practised it. René was beyond a shadow of a doubt the image of his creator. Chateaubriand himself said that a man points only his own heart in attributing it to another (*Génie*, Pt. II, bk. i., chap. 3). He also realized that the Satan in *Paradise Lost* is but a fallen Milton. He liked to put himself into all of his characters from Chactas to Aben-Hamet, but he was most pleased to portray himself in René. It is in this character, to whom he has given his second Christian name, that Chateaubriand, with a fearful but fascinating truthfulness, has concentrated most of his soul, of his life and of his experience. All of his characters are victims of melancholy, but René is the best projection of his *moi mélancolique*. In René may be seen Chateaubriand's misanthropy, vaingloriousness and arrogance, his aloofness of soul, his egotism grazing the incredible, his self-idolatry bordering on insanity. Even in his death he wished to resemble the Promethean Satan whom he admired and imitated all his life. He asked to be buried on the storm-tossed promontory rock of Grand Bé, separated even in death from the masses of his fellow-men.

It was Chateaubriand himself, the arch-sentimentalist, who posed as a man burdened with a mysterious and apparently causeless curse, dragging himself wearily from land to land and from continent to continent, with the mark of Cain on his brow, leaving everywhere misfortune in his trail. "I drag my weariness painfully after me all day long," he bitterly complains, "and gasp my life away." "J'ai le spleen," he wails, "véritable maladie, tristesse physique." He regarded the belief in happiness as a folly and sneered at the love of life as a mania. In his biography of Rancé, written but four years prior to his death, Chateaubriand still speaks of his passionate hatred of life ("la haine passionnée de la vie").

In René is also painted the nostalgic and nympholeptic Chateaubriand who has written the most intoxicating phrases on voluptuousness and death.<sup>82</sup> He revels in descriptions of fatal and carnal

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Jules Lemaitre, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

love, that of Chactas for Atala, of René for Céluta, and of Eudorus for Velléda. Such love between Eudorus and Cymodocée is finally illuminated with the halo of martyrdom. Chateaubriand's narration of this martyr's criminal adventures with Velléda in the presence of Cymodocée and her family was not necessary to account for the penitential severities imposed upon him by the Church.<sup>83</sup> Our author offers the psychological phenomenon of the delight obtained from treading on forbidden ground. The details of the physical union of Eudorus, this model of a martyr (another portrait of the author, by the way) with the distraught and wayward Gallican druidess given in the first edition of *les Martyrs* so shocked contemporaries that the paragraph was suppressed in subsequent editions.

As a demonic lover, René is limned after the likeness of Chateaubriand, that eternal philanderer, as the late James Huneker called him.<sup>84</sup> This apologist of Christian morality and flower of orthodoxy was faithless to his own wife and engaged in a succession of intrigues with the wives of other men. It has taken volumes to tell of the love affairs which he carried on almost to the day of his death.<sup>85</sup> Chateaubriand was a votary of the beautiful Venus rather than of the beatific Virgin. The artist was converted,

<sup>83</sup> This lack of tact is also noted in the author himself in the case of the English clergyman's daughter.

<sup>84</sup> *The Pathos of Distance* (New York, 1913), pp. 311-19.

<sup>85</sup> A whole shelf might be filled with books on Chateaubriand the Charmer. See, among others, Francis Henry Gribble, *Chateaubriand and his Court of Women* (1909), and Dr. Potiquet, *Chateaubriand: l'anatomie de ses formes et ses amies* (1912). See also A. Bardoux, *Madame de Beaumont* (1884); *idem*, *Madame de Custine* (1888); *idem*, *Madame de Duras* (1898). Gh. de Robethon, *Chateaubriand et Madame de Custine* (1893); G. Maugras et F. de Croze, *Delphine de Sabran, Madame de Custine* (1912); E. Biré, "Une amie de Chateaubriand: Madame Bavart," *le Correspondant* for 1901; G. Pailhès, *la Duchesse de Duras et Chateaubriand* (1910); A. Beaunier, *Trois amies de Chateaubriand* (P. de Beaumont, Mme. de Récamier, Hortense Allart) (1910); E. Sichel, "Pauline de Beaumont," *Nineteenth Century*, vol. LXXI (1912), pp. 1147-63; Mlle. Blaise de Bury, "The Loves of Chateaubriand," in *New Review*, vol. II (1899), pp. 335-45; A. Albalat, "Chateaubriand et ses amoureuses," in *Nouvelle Revue*, t. LXXIX (1892), pp. 344-358, 533-48; H. Buffenoir, "Les amies de Chateaubriand," in *Revue de la France moderne* for 1898 and in *Revue bleue*, t. IX (1898), pp. 330-5, 369-73; H. Lapauze, "Chateaubriand et ses amies," in *Revue des revues*, t. XXVI (1898), p. 151, p. 397 and t. XXVII (1899), p. 52; "Un dernier amour de René: Correspondance de Chateaubriand avec la Marquise de V.," in *Revue bleue*, t. XVII (1902) and *Revue latine*, t. II (1903), pp. 321-32; A. Sorel, "Sur Chateaubriand amoureux," in *Revue latine*, t. IV (1905); Emile Faguet, *Amours d'hommes de lettres* (Paris, 1907); Léon Séché, *Hortense Allart de Mérignac dans ses rapports avec Chateaubriand* (Paris, 1908); *Amours de Chateaubriand* (Paris, 1912) in the collection "Nouvelle bibliothèque de variétés littéraires"; G. Chinard, "Chateaubriand et Mrs. Sutton," in *Modern Language Notes*, t. XXXVII (1922), pp. 193-206; *Chateaubriand: amour et vieillesse*, un édit, avec une étude sur Chateaubriand romanesque et amoureux, par Victor Giraud (Paris, 1922).

but the man remained the same. He remained René. Even if the author of the *Génie du Christianisme* changed his spots, he certainly never shed his skin. He may have professed Christianity, but he never practised it. Preaching the life of Jesus, he played the part of Don Juan. He followed the Prince of Pleasure rather than the Prince of Peace. The contemporaries of Chateaubriand were not blinded by his pretended piety. A vein of scepticism was surmised under the cover of his orthodoxy. "He hid his poison under the cloak of religious thought, and poisoned with the Host." ("Dans René Chateaubriand a caché le poison sous l'idée religieuse; c'est empoisonner dans une hostie.") This was the severe condemnation pronounced by his friend Chénédollé against the "restaurateur de la religion." Chateaubriand was never a believer and lacked the strength to remain a philosopher, just as he wished to be a Romantic and could not free himself from the fetters of pseudo-classicism. His brand of Catholicism was not in the least to the glory of God nor of His Saints. That is why this self-styled "Father of the Church" has not yet been admitted into the Catholic calendar. Perhaps the writer of this study has unwittingly acted the part of the *advocatus Diaboli*.



## VITA

Maximilian (Josef) Rudwin was born in Poland, January 22, 1885. He was brought up under private tutors in Poland, had his secondary education in Germany and his academic training in the United States. His university record as student and teacher is as follows: A. B., University of Wisconsin, 1908; A. M., University of Cincinnati, 1910 (philosophy); Ph.D., Ohio State University, 1913 (Germanics); also studied Stanford University, University of Chicago and Columbia University. Teacher, Wisconsin Academy (now University of Wisconsin High School, 1907-8; teaching fellow, Ohio State University, 1912-13; instructor, Purdue University, 1913-16; lecturer, Middlebury College, summer 1916; instructor, University of Illinois, 1916-18; Johnston Scholar, Johns Hopkins University, 1918-19; Assistant professor of French Swarthmore College, 1920—.

## PARTIAL LIST OF PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

1913. *Die Prophetensprüche und -zitate im religiösen Drama des deutschen Mittelalters.* Leipzig und Dresden, pp. iv, 37.  
 Noticed in: Jahresbericht f. d. Erscheinungen auf dem Gebiete d. germ. Philologie XXXV (1913) S. 115 (K. Helm). Jahresberichte f. neuere deutsche Literatur-Geschichte XXIV (1913) S. 498 (W. Creizenach). Anzeiger f. deutsches Altertum XXXVII (1914) S. 54 (Edw. Schröder). Revue germanique X (1914) p. 381-2 (F. Piquet). Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift IV (1914) S. 311 (S.-A.). Journal of English and Germanic Philology XIII (1914) p. 612. Literarischer Anzeiger XXVIII (1914) Nr. 2 (P. Berner). Allgemeine Zeitung d. Judentums LXXVIII (1914) S. 276 (L. Geiger). Deutsche Literaturzeitung XXXVI (1915) Sp. 2196 (H. Anz). Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature LXXIX (1915) p. 62 (F. Piquet). Allgemeines Literaturblatt XXV (1916) S. 19-20 (W. Oehl).
1914. *Die Teufelsszenen im geistlichen Drama des deutschen Mittelalters.* (Diss.) Göttingen und Baltimore, pp. iv, 86.  
 Jahresbericht f. d. Erscheinungen auf dem Gebiete d. germ. Philologie XXXVI (1914) S. 116-7 (K. Helm).  
 "Zum Verhältnis des religiösen Dramas zur Liturgie der Kirche." *Modern Language Notes*, XXIX (1914), pp. 108-9.  
 "Die Bestattung Siegfrieds in Hebbels Nibelungen." *Ibid.*, pp. 249-50.
1915. *Der Teufel in den deutschen geistlichen Spielen des Mittelalters und der Reformationszeit.* Ein Beitrag zur Literatur-, Kultur- und Kirchengeschichte Deutschlands. Göttingen und Baltimore. (Hesperia: Schriften z. germanischen Philologie, Nr. 6), pp. ix, 194.  
 Noticed in: Jahresbericht f. d. Erscheinungen auf dem Gebiete d. germ. Philologie, XXXVII (1915), S. 101, 147-8. Theologisches Literaturblatt, 1915, S. 333 (Albrecht). American Historical Review, XXI (1915-16), p. 620 (G. L. Burr). Het Museum, XXXIII (1916), S. 337-9 (Haslinghuis). Neophilologus, II (1916-17), S. 71-3 (Haslinghuis). Literaturblatt f. germ. u.

roman. *Philologie*, XXXVII (1916), Sp. 351-4 (W. Wagnere). *Modern Language Notes*, XXXI (1916), pp. 234-8 (D. C. Stuart). *Nation*, CIII (1916), No. 2667, p. 135. *American Journal of Theology*, XX (1916), p. 457 (J. W. Thompson). *Deutsche Literaturzeitung*, XXXVII (1916), S. 1715-6 (Strauch). *Harvard Theological Review*, X (1917), pp. 199-201 (K. Francke). *The Open Court*, XXXI (1917), pp. 444-6. *Literarisches Zentralblatt*, 68. Jg. (1917), S. 353-4. *Leipziger Zeitung*, 1917, Beiblatt, Nr. 11, S. 106 (Schnedermann). *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XVII (1918), pp. 305-9 (Jenney). *Allgemeines Literaturblatt*, XXVII (1918), S. 179-80 (E. Wackernell). *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift*, VIII (1920), S. 254 (S.-A.).

"The religious Drama of the German Middle Ages." *Modern Language Notes*, XXX, pp. 151-5. (A review.)

"The Origin of the Legend of Bos et Asinus [in medieval drama]." *The Open Court*, XXIX, pp. 57, 191-2.

1916. "Modern Passion Plays." *Ibid.*, XXX, pp. 278-300. "Passion Play Literature." *Bulletin of Bibliography*, XI, pp. 66-7, 90-3. Review of Ludwig Lewisohn's, "The Modern Drama." *The Open Court*, XXX, pp. 572-5.

1917. "Der Teufel bei Hebbel." *Modern Philology*, XV (1917-8), pp. 109-22. "Sympathy for Poland in German Poetry." *The Open Court*, XXXI, pp. 342-54. Reviews of Ludwig Lewisohn's, "The Dramatic Works of Gerhart Hauptmann." *Modern Language Notes*, XXXII, pp. 369-72, and *The Open Court*, XXXI, pp. 639-40. Review of Charles Edward Whitmore's, "The Supernatural in Tragedy." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XVI, pp. 310-16. Review of Ada Blanche Roe's, "Anna Owena Hoyers: A Poetess of the Seventeenth Century." *Ibid.*, pp. 470-2.

1918. "The Gloom and Glory of Russian Literature." *The Open Court*, XXXII, pp. 390-407. "Des Teufels Schöpferrolle bei Goethe und Hebbel." *Neophilologus*, IV (1918-9), S. 319-22. "Passion Play Literature." *Bulletin of Bibliography*, X, pp. 6-9. Review of Dorothy Scarborough's, "The Supernatural in Modern English Fiction." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XVII, pp. 448-55.

1919. "The Origin of the German Carnival Comedy." *Proceedings of the Johns Hopkins Philological Association*, 1918-9, p. 21.

1920. *The Origin of the German Carnival Comedy*. New York, pp. xii, 85.

Noticed in: *Modern Philology*, XVIII (1920-1), pp. 165-8 (Kueffner). *Zeitschrift f. deutsches Altertum*, LVIII (1920), S. 92-3 (Edw. Schröder). *Revue germanique*, 1921, p. 211 (F. Piquet). *Revue critique d'histoire et de littérature*, LV (1921), pp. 306-8 (F. Piquet). *Literarisches Echo*, XXIII (1920-1), Heft 22 (A. Ludwig). *Modern Language Notes*, XXXVII (1922), pp. 40-7 (D. C. Stuart). *Neophilologus*, VII (1921-2), S. 150-2 (M. G. Stokvis). *Theologisches Literaturblatt*, 1921, S. 348 (Schneidermann). *Bergische Tageszeitung* (Elberfeld), v. 3, 11, 1921 (F. Asanger). *Literary Review* (New York), January 29, 1921. *Deutsche Rundschau*, XLVIII (1922), S. 222-3 (Wolfgang Stammler). *Literarisches Zentralblatt*, 71. Jg. (1920), Sp. 915-6 (Karl Holl).

Review of M. J. Olgin's, "A Guide to Russian Literature."  
*The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XIX, pp. 587-9. "The Satanism of Huysmans." *The Open Court*, XXXIV, pp. 240-51.

1921. *Devil Stories: An Anthology*. Selected and Edited with Introduction and Critical Comments. New York, pp. xix, 332.

Noticed in: *The Weekly Review*, March 30, 1921. *New York Herald*, May 8, 1921 (Benj. de Casseres). *New York Times*, May 22, 1921. *The Reviewer*, I (1921), pp. 177-81 (Hunter Stagg). *The Open Court*, XXXV (1921), pp. 638-40. *The Literary Review*, June 18, 1921. *Revue germanique*, 1922, p. 206. *The Pacific Review*, II (1921-2), p. 709. *Bergische Tageszeitung* (Elberfeld), v. 15, 6. 1921.

"The Satanism of Barbey d'Aurevilly." *The Open Court*, XXXV, pp. 83-90.

"Dante's Devil." *Ibid.*, pp. 513-28.

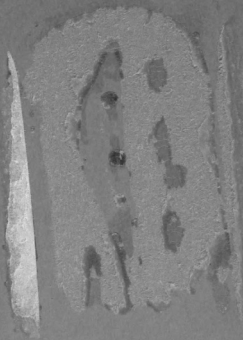
"Bibliografia di Demonologia Dantesca." *Studies in Philology*, XVIII, pp. 459-60.



89098512247



B89098512247A



89098512247



b89098512247a



[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: 1922 :: :: LONDON

[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: 1922 :: :: LONDON

[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: :: 1922 :: :: :: LONDON

[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: :: 1922 :: :: :: LONDON

[Reprinted from *The Open Court*, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 257-71, 357-75, 437-48]

SUPERNATURALISM AND SATANISM  
IN CHATEAUBRIAND

BY  
MAXIMILIAN RUDWIN

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Philosophy, Columbia University.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY  
CHICAGO :: :: 1922 :: :: LONDON