THE twelfth century covers the central period of European monasticism. In it we find perhaps the most perfect expression of purely monastic principle in its primitive as in its later, more developed forms. In other words, it is probably the period of fullest monastic development, both intensive and extensive in its original and proper, that is, in its Benedictine form. In regard to extensive development I do not refer to actual numbers of houses or ground covered, but to the real grip and force exercised by its dominant ideas upon European life. It is probable, nay certain, that the direct dominion of monasticism in the broader sense was wider when added to by the Mendicans in the twelfth century. But the Mendicant addition, notable as it was, and ascetic in a high degree, was not in its essence monastic. The aim and object of the Mendicant movement were different. The twelfth century saw pure monasticism at its height and drawing magnetically towards itself that other fundamental ideal which worked side by side with it in West Europe almost from the beginning, that is, from the time of St. Augustine. This latter ideal, in its true form, merely borrowed from the monastic its discipline for other and different purposes, namely, those of ministry, so that the practical inclusion, as the century wore on, of the Regular or Austin Canon in the monastic estate marked to a certain extent a blurring of aim and purpose—even, in regard to the latter, a distortion of legitimate development. It needed the vision and genius of St. Francis to rescue the Augustinian ideal and restore it, under new forms indeed (forms in

1 One of the most important sources of information for this whole subject is the group of Lives of St. Bernard, with his Works, Migne: Pat. Lat., tt. 182-185.
which its inceptor would hardly have recognised it) to a truer use in the life of the Church. The thirteenth century saw this ideal (in its essence Augustinian by reason of the adaptation of monastic discipline to the end of ministry), under the inspiration of St. Francis and the organising genius of St. Dominic, outstrip the purely monastic or Benedictine, and become for a time dominant in the Western Church. In such wise was this the case that it became, if not the main channel, at least that of a mighty current in the spiritual life of Europe during the succeeding centuries. It is in pure monasticism, then, that we are to seek for the subject of our study which is religious revival and reform in the 12th century.

The two ideals above spoken of, fundamentally distinct, are represented in this the central period of the Middle Ages respectively by Benedictinism and Augustinianism, and the twelfth century, while offering an incomparable field for the study of the former, does not exclude that of the latter. Not only do we see Benedictinism in its broadest as in its most rigid form, dominant in Western Europe, we see the strength of its very texture in and through the conflict of the varied and indeed, at this time, warring ideals into which the centuries had woven its life. It shows us the indestructible fabric of pure Benedictinism subjected to the shock of reform and the rending of criticism. It shows us the whole the victory of Benedictinism in the combined strength and elasticity of the design of the sixth century lawgiver. The new movements which seemed so threatening to its life, as a matter of fact, found a place within its borders, and it is precisely because of this conflict within and about the broadly-fashioned structure of Benedictinism that the twelfth century offers so admirable a field for the study of its principles and their working in history.

To look at the life of the twelfth century, with its mighty currents of revival in the heart and intellect of Europe, through the lens of monasticism, and in the first place of Benedictine rather than of Augustinian monasticism, might seem to narrow even while it magnified the field of vision. But the more deeply one reads, the more one is convinced that this is not the case—that, on the contrary, it is in and through monasticism that the spiritual life of the century must be studied. Monasticism not only equips the leaders of the age in every branch of its life—those great ecclesiastical statesmen whose lives offer convincing proof of the distinction of the dominating type,—it controls
them for the most part and through them moulds and fashions the life of Europe, not excluding the military. Even here it seizes upon the time-spirit, transforms it and through the great military orders directs it to the furtherance of the common 'foreign policy' of Christendom as a whole in both East and West. St. Bernard of Clairvaux is admittedly the centre of the life of his time, in the world hardly less than in the Church, by reason of his enormous political influence in part at least derived from his relations with the military orders. His friends, Suger, the great statesman of medieval France, and Pope Eugenius III. are monks (the latter a Cistercian monk). Of his great opponents—in the sphere of thought, Abelard was a monk—in the politico-ecclesiastical world, Arnold of Brescia was a regular canon. In truth, movements, whether of new vision or of revival, whether of particular or of universal truth, took their rise from, and as a rule found their home, not in new sects for the most part (as so often in, and after, the sixteenth century Reformation), but at this time in the monastic system. It is to be remembered that in the twelfth, as in the thirteenth century, a great monastic revival meant the revival of the entire religious life of the age, or at least, the swirl through it of a current of fresh and often storm-tossed elements of spiritual life. Some of these were destined to be absorbed into the general life of the Church, partly through the old channels, partly through new ones cut in those Catholic days for the purpose. Others were flung off as worthless or even suppressed as dangerous, whereas in reality they were often merely premature. Certain of the elements flung up by the intellectual ferment of the twelfth century offer a case in point. But the monastic system absorbed what it was able, and perhaps this was in truth all that was compatible with the general stage of European ethical development, which was low. With the violence of the life around it, the strength of monasticism, striving to hold the equilibrium, was apt to be in inverse ratio. It was to such a storm of revival, alike destructive and life-giving, that the religious life of the twelfth century was exposed and, unlike that of the thirteenth, it was upon pure monasticism and more especially upon Benedictine monasticism that it mainly fell, through which it wrought a way for itself and to which it offered at once a supreme opportunity and a grave peril. It was Benedictinism, as the

1 Cf. S. Bern. de laude nova militia ad milites Templi liber, ap. Migne: Pat. Lat., t. 182, pp. 922 et seq.
most perfect instrument which the age produced for the purpose, which in the first place absorbed and then passed on the new religious life. It was certainly within the limits of Benedictinism in its revived and most rigorous form that the new life was sifted, weighed and tested, certain non-absorbable intellectual elements being entirely flung off, as it seemed to perish, in reality to await the passing of a few more generations. Though the contribution of the greatest of these intellectual leaders of the age, Abelard, was rejected and indeed repudiated at the time, what was of permanent value in it was ultimately, and not indeed remotely, to be accepted. That however lay just outside and beyond the main spiritual ferment of this vividly-awakened age, and it is with the more definitely religious elements that we are here concerned.

The victory in this conflict of monasticism, and upon the whole of Benedictine monasticism and its retention of the new movements, will surprise no one who realises in the smallest degree the general character of the life, secular as well as religious, of the twelfth century. It could not be otherwise. The fact that it was fraught with certain perils to intellectual development in general does not here concern us. It is with the conflict itself that our consideration for the moment lies. The twelfth century is the time when the principles and practice of Benedictinism were sifted, examined, and discussed in the storm of religious revival by certain of its own most distinguished sons, notably by Peter the Venerable, Cardinal Albano, and St. Bernard, but even more illuminatingly by obscurer persons. It is in the writings of these men, in the first place, that the movement must be studied if its true character and timeless elements are to be distinguished, and it is in the records of such lives as these, in which the religious life of the century is enshrined, that the fundamental framework of Western monasticism, that of St. Benedict, is again laid bare, and the accretions with which the custom and tradition of the centuries had overlaid it, are subjected to the severest tests which the age could apply. The records are necessarily imperfect, and the evidence meagre or at any rate partial, but from them a few illuminating facts of the life of a century which in many ways strove after the severest and loftiest ideals of the Middle Ages may be gathered.

For our purpose, apart from the main record in biography, there has come down to us a very valuable series of documents illustrating in an almost unique way different aspects of the religious movement of the
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century, and the approach to an understanding, however slight, of this
movement lies through these, and such as these alone. The group may
be divided into two parts: (a) The series which contains the story of
the rise of the new or reformed order of Citeaux, which was the direct
outcome and embodied the principles of the new religious movement of
the time, and was to become its main agent throughout Western
Europe; (b) The group which shows the impact of the new move-
ment upon the older religious life. Some of these documents are fairly
well known; others are not.

Monasticism in Western Europe at the close of the eleventh
and the opening of the twelfth century was still, needless to say,
shaped and dominated by the Benedictine Rule. But the Benedictine
Rule was most conspicuously and nobly represented by Clugny and
her famous group of daughter-houses. It was still the ‘age of Clugny.’
Of the original frame-work of Benedictinism, as of the Clugniac super-
structure, this is hardly the place to speak in detail. The broadly-
fashioned structure of the work of St. Benedict with its absence of
particularising, i.e. of limiting conditions, was still the basis of the
monasticism of the West. But St. Benedict’s Rule merely laid down,
as it were, the abiding principles of the monastic life as applied, in the
first place, to the needs of the individual monk and, in the second, to
those of the individual house. It offered, therefore, all those infinite
possibilities of adaptation and development, some of which he himself
foresaw, which age, country, climate, social and politico-ecclesiastical
conditions were destined to bring about.

Upon this broad foundation St. Benedict of Aniane in the early
ninth century began the superstructure with a loosely constructed
scheme of grouping of the houses (it was perhaps little more), which
the eleventh and early twelfth centuries saw completed in all the
splendour of the monarchical system of Clugny. These two movements
of revival bore witness not only to the vitality of Benedictine ideas but
to their gradual modification, in the birth and extension of the con-
gregational principle, and in the steady development of institutions and
usages which grew up for the direction and conduct first of individual
houses, and secondly for that of groups of houses. Clugny\(^1\) herself
undoubtedly stood for a profound modification of the Benedictine order

\(^1\) Albers, Consuetudines Monasticae. Stuttgart, 1900, 1905, 1907.
of life. Not only had she supplemented it in her magnificent monarchical system of grouping of houses;¹ she had departed from it in her usages. Clugny in her special adaptation of the Benedictine Rule had deposed manual work from its high place therein and substituted for it liturgical observance and a concentration on the life of prayer (or life in the choir), which could with difficulty be maintained in a community save under the high inspiration and endeavour of a heroic age, and was apt to fail in the average monk, as in the average man. For Clugny, it has been truly said, the choir had become the sphere of the monk. Moreover, Clugny had abandoned public teaching, and such an interpretation of the Benedictine Rule as Clugny offered to the twelfth century should have been, it has been truly said again, maintained by devotion to study, learning and teaching.² Instead of this, intellectual development had suffered under the predominance of Clugniac influence and custom in the monastic life. Artistic cultivation, on the other hand, had perhaps gained in the glory—if unmeasured of Clugniac celebration and liturgical observance, in the splendour of her architectural contribution, and even of her minor literary and other pre-occupations. If, as it has been truly said, it was Benedictinism which was still dominant in the early twelfth century it was Clugniac Benedictinism. Clugny still stood for all that was great, ordered and beautiful in the monastic life, at the opening of the twelfth century. All the more violent therefore was the shock of the impact of the reform of Citeaux with its amazing insistence upon a return to the literal interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict, its vehement and passionate protest against, and repudiation of, all those accredited modifications and additions which the wisdom of the centuries, it seemed, had built about the ancient Rule. It is precisely here in this conflict of Rule and interpretation, in the attempt to rend away the latter and return to the literal sense and use of the former, that we find our material for the closer study, not merely of Benedictinism, but of the fundamental principles of monasticism and their working in mediaeval


² Berlière, loc. cit.
history at this date. In such a conflict one may hope to separate the essential from the accidental.

It was from Molième, in the diocese of Langres, in the year 1098, that the challenge came. This famous house was the mother alike of Citeaux and of La Grande Chartreuse, of the Cistercian and in a wider sense of the Carthusian orders respectively. It was the cradle therefore of twelfth century monastic and religious reform, the source which, if I mistake not, has been described as the watershed of the two movements which renewed religious life in Europe in the twelfth century. If the Cistercian movement was undoubtedly the greater for our period and is more illuminatingly recorded, the persistent character of the Carthusian, in its perhaps even deeper current, entitles it to a high place in the history of mediaeval religious reform and more especially of monasticism, whose original standards it restored and maintained within its own borders in a manner rare in human history. But for our purpose the wider movement with its immense contribution to the religious life of the century in Europe, to say nothing of that which it gave to the foundations of law and order in the state must be preferred.

The true character of Molième is hard to arrive at. Its importance is obvious from what has already been said. Laurent says it is the meeting-place of Clugny and Citeaux. But its real character is harder to arrive at. Why it just failed of itself leading the reform, of becoming in fact what Citeaux was to the Cistercian movement, or La Grande Chartreuse to the Carthusian, is obscure. But that there must have been elements of a large generosity, as well as of narrowness, in its overflowing life, qualities of insight, tolleration and liberality—perhaps at war with reactionary elements—is abundantly clear from the character, generous on the whole, if fluctuating, of its treatment of its two great reformers, Robert and Bruno. Manrique and Laurent alike attribute to Molième a great position, and the former regards her as a mixed society, part advancing with and cleaving to Robert, part

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3 *Loc. cit.*
reactionary, the one part triumphing at one time, the other at another. Laurent, while claiming that the famous reform of Benedictine discipline began here, thinks that some loss of early severity may in all probability have been suffered, which prevented her from becoming the nursing mother and home of the reform which was born of her, and also that the accident of these difficulties and differences in the house itself took from Molême the glory which fell to Citeaux. Her reformers had to go forth to realise their ideals. The probability of some such deterioration at Molême seems borne out by the apparently decreasing toleration and growing difficulty which Robert the second reformer had to face. To the earlier, Bruno, if she did not offer the opportunity of working out his scheme within the house itself, she gave that of doing so within her borders by the gift of a piece of land, Sèche Fontaine, which she had herself recently received (in 1081), as the ground for his experiment. Here he afterwards elaborated his famous Rule, that adaptation and union of the common and the solitary life which in many respects stood better than any other the action of time and the incoming of worldly influence. Of this he must have dreamed at Molême. At Molême, too, St. Robert began to think out his greater and more far-reaching reform. Here he initiated the impulse which, under the shaping hand of Stephen Harding and the mighty impulse of St. Bernard himself, it is not too much to say, swept into its current the whole religious life of Western Europe in the twelfth century. We may accept then the fact of the larger elements in the overflowing life of Molême which permitted, if not whole-heartedly, the work of two such men as St. Bruno and St. Robert, and we may allow that it was the source, if not the home, of these two great movements of reform.

For the actual story of the Cistercian exodus we must turn to the former of the two series of documents above-mentioned, and take its account of the rise of the Cistercian Order, which was the outcome of, and embodied in itself for long the history of, the great religious revival of the twelfth century.

The group for our purpose is composed of (i) The Exordium Cisterciense (known as the Exordium Parvum to distinguish it from the larger, less authentic work, the Exordium Magnum); (ii) The Carta Caritatis; and (iii) The Consuetudines Cistercienses. They are given by Séjalon, Nomasticon Cisterciense seu Antiquioris
Ordinis Cisterciensis (ed. Séjalon; Solesme, 1892), and in the more easily accessible work of Guignard, *Monuments Primitifs de la Règle Cistercienne* (Dijon, 1876), as well as in Migne's monumental work. Tersely, in broad, firm outline, they lay down the origin, principles, and early history of the movement; its sanctions and the authority it could claim for its daily life in the monasteries which became its home, for its existence in fact. These documents were probably in the main the work of one of the chief actors in the drama, Stephen Harding, the Englishman from Swinburne in Dorset, afterwards third abbot of Citeaux, helped by the other early abbots, especially Alberic, second abbot. The work of Stephen Harding, humble in character and overshadowed in the history of the Order by that of St. Bernard, is of hardly less importance to that history by reason of its enduring influence thereon, and also upon the life and history of monasticism at large. Stephen Harding was not only a pioneer of religious reform in the twelfth century, he was one of the great legislators of the monastic life and, with far-reaching vision, he guarded his work for the future of his Order (which he in all probability alone had in view) by the series of documents which have come down to us and enable us to study the movement with a completeness and confidence which the history of few other movements of this time can inspire. The *Exordium*, and in the first place the *Instituta* therein contained, lay bare not only the early source of the movement, but the very motives and impulse of its leaders, the founders of Citeaux, its principles and the way in which it differed from prevailing monastic (i.e. Benedictine) practice.

Let us then in the first place, turn to the *Exordium*¹ and see how the Cistercian founders took the path of reform at the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth century, the difficulties they met with, and the support and sanctions which enabled them to pursue it, and victoriously to carry to a successful conclusion their audacious experiment. This was to offer to the age, in all humility, a fresh interpretation of an accepted way of life, and indeed an innovation upon existing practice which amounted almost to a new beginning in one of the most important fields of the life of the Church, and yet

maintain, and indeed establish themselves, within the ancient order of that Church.

Who were they—these monks of the obscure and newly-founded house of Citeaux in the diocese of Chalon in Burgundy—who dared to differ from the great and ancient Benedictine houses of their time, more especially from the thrice-famous Clugniac group, and not only differ, but offer in a sense a challenge, to its interpretation and practice of the common Benedictine Rule? It behoved them to walk warily, and Stephen Harding in the *Exordium* shows how profoundly conscious they were of this by putting on record for future generations all the sanctions from Pope and bishop, all the authority they had for the new way of life which is there also fully laid down. With this record he placed, and for both procured papal sanction, the *Carta Caritatis*—the Charter of Love—in which the constitution of the Order is laid down. The documents were first presented to Calixtus II. (the great Pope who made the Concordat of Worms) in 1119, confirmed by him, and afterwards by Eugenius III. in 1152. The writers describe themselves, in their opening words as: 'we, Cistercians, first founders of this Church, desirous of putting on record for those who should come after, under what sanctions and by whom the work had been done, that they might love the place and the observance they had instituted, pray for those who had there borne the burden and heat of the day and walk in the straight and narrow way they had pointed out until they reached the eternal rest.'

It was on Palm Sunday, 21st March in 1098, that Robert of Molème led out his little band of eighteen monks with the prior and sub-prior, twenty-one in all, from Molème where in their opinion the Rule of St. Benedict was too tepidly and negligently kept, and took their way northward into the diocese of Chalon, there to found Citeaux and return to the primitive rigour of the Rule of St. Benedict and his early companions. The whole story is told in the *Exordium*. Some of the monks apparently had been previously despatched to Hugh, Archbishop of Lyons and Legate of the Apostolic See, to tell him of their desire to shape their lives according to the Rule of Benedict, and to beg his help and apostolic authority for so doing.

The Legate heard them favourably, and laid the legal foundation of the famous Cistercian structure in a letter in which he stated the reasons of Robert and his friends for their resolve to go forth, gave his formal approval of their scheme, and granted apostolic authority under seal for the execution of their ‘holy purpose.’ Armed with this authority the monks had returned to Molème and soon after set forth once more with the rest and took their way to Citeaux in the diocese of Chalon, a remote and savage spot almost inaccessible by reason of thorns, and inhabited by wild creatures only. Its very remoteness and wildness seemed to the monks to mark it out specially for their purpose, and procuring the assent of the bishop of Chalon and the lord of the land, they at once began to build there. Already before leaving Molème they had sorrowfully talked together of their vow, their profession of the Rule of St. Benedict and its poor and lax fulfilment. So now they had come to this solitude with the single purpose of following in its completeness the said Rule. The Lord Odo, Duke of Burgundy, delighted with their fervour and moved also by letters from the aforesaid legate, finished at his own cost the monastery of wood they had begun, provided them with all necessaries, and endowed them with gifts of land and cattle. The Bishop of Chalon, meanwhile, at the bidding of the legate definitely bestowed upon Robert the pastoral staff and care of the monks, and established them firmly so that their Church and foundation rose in due form with apostolic authority to the position of an abbey.

But Molème regretted its lost abbot and brethren. Monks were despatched by the new abbot Geoffrey to Rome itself to demand the return of Robert. Urban II. listened to their plea and issued a mandate to the legate Hugh bidding him, if possible, to send Robert back to Molème, but to allow the monks to remain in peace at Citeaux. The papal letter gives the reason for this in the prayer of the monks of Molème, and in their showing that religion at Molème had suffered (been overthrown) through the absence of their abbot, and that they themselves were held in odium by the neighbouring princes and others. On receiving the papal letter the legate, Hugh, took counsel and drew up a formal judgment embodied in a decree upon the whole matter at issue between Molème and Citeaux. This he addressed to Robert, bishop of Langres, in whose diocese Molème stood, and who had confirmed by letters the statement of the Molème monks that the
house had suffered through the removal of its abbot, Robert, and strengthened their petition for his return. He added, too, that Geoffrey, the present abbot, had come to him and was willing to give place to Robert. The legate then summarised the result of his deliberation on the whole situation. It was that Robert should be restored to Molême provided that he went first to the Bishop of Chalon and placed in his hand the pastoral staff, renouncing the care of the new abbey to which he had been instituted by him, and releasing the monks who had promised him obedience from that obedience and profession. He gave permission also for the monks who had come with Robert from Molême to return thither, and commended Robert to the affection of his old monks, apparently to be restored to his abbey with the promise that, if he again deserted, no other abbot should be appointed within the lifetime of the said Geoffrey without his consent. What Robert had brought in the form of vestments, etc., from Molême, and given to the Bishop of Chalon and the new monastery, were to remain to that house, save a certain Breviary. This they were to keep until St. John the Baptist's Day, and copy it, with the consent of the monks of Molême. A good many bishops, abbots and others were present and witnessed this whole decision. Walter, Bishop of Chalon, duly released Robert from the new house of Citeaux, and the latter went back with a few monks who did not love the desert. The two houses by these dispositions remained at peace and in liberty, and Robert carried with him to his bishop Robert, Bishop of Langres, a letter from Walter, Bishop of Chalon, commending him to an honorable welcome as freed by the legate's decision from the profession and obedience he had given to the Church at Chalon, and telling him how Robert had released the monks from their obedience. So the difficult and delicate position was eased.

Meanwhile the bereaved Church at Citeaux met on Robert's departure and by a regular election chose brother Alberic to be abbot. Alberic was a cultivated man, learned in many things divine and human, a lover of the Rule and of the brethren. He had been prior for long both at Molême and at Citeaux, had laboured much in the matter of bringing the brothers from Molême, and had suffered blame, imprisonment, and stripes.

Unwillingly Alberic received the pastoral charge and at once in all prudence began to think of the storms and tribulations which might break upon the house entrusted to him. Looking into the future, he despatched two monks to Rome praying the lord Pope Paschal through them to place their Church under apostolic protection, free from pressure from other Churches or secular persons forever. These brothers, bearing letters from Archbishop Hugh and two Roman Cardinals, also from Walter, Bishop of Chalon, went safely to Rome and returned (before Pope Paschal sinned in the power of the Emperor)¹ bearing with them the apostolic privilege granting all that the abbot and his companions asked. These letters, with the Roman privilege, are entered in the Exordium, that those to come after might understand with what consultation and high sanction the Church of the monks at Citeaux had been founded. The letters commend the brethren at Citeaux to Pope Paschal, asking him to confirm in perpetuity the mandate or precept of Pope Urban to the brethren, and to free them forever from all danger of molestation and annoyance because of their departure from Molème, the cause of which was their desire to keep more sincerely and simply the Benedictine Rule. The letters explain the matter fully to the Pope, and the Bishop of Chalon, more especially asks him to free the house forever from all danger of molestation, saving the rights of himself and his successors the Bishops of Chalon. The obedience of the house to the bishop of the diocese is affirmed in act again and again, and there is little doubt that canonical obedience was a fundamental principle in the initial impulse of the Cistercian reform, and for a time was maintained as such.² Paschal II.'s bull Desiderium quod (1100) then follows and is given to Alberic, abbot of the new monastery, and his successors forever, and provides for their safety and freedom—salva Cabilonensis ecclesie canonica reve'culia. Their religious purpose under God's inspiration is to be fulfilled without delay: 'Whence we, oh beloved sons in the Lord, receive your petition over-riding all difficulty.' The abbey is taken under the special protection of the Holy See (with the above

¹ Exordium, loc. cit., p. 67. An allusion apparently to the surrender of Pope Paschal of the right of investiture (April, 1111) to the Emperor Henry V.

proviso as to the rights of Chalon), no one is to molest their way of life, nor receive their monks, and the whole arrangement with Molême is certified and confirmed. The monks are reminded that, as they have chosen a severer and remoter way of life, they should keep themselves worthy of the same by the love and devotion of their hearts to God.¹

From this time the abbot and brethren unanimously resolved to lay down the Benedictine Rule once more and keep it, rejecting all that infringed upon it in clothing, bedding and food. With this object they drew up their first regulations, probably about 1101.²

In things ecclesiastical as in others they confined themselves strictly to the Rule, putting off the old man and putting on the new man, and since they found neither in the Rule nor in the way of life of St. Benedict that the saint possessed churches or altars, offerings or burial-grounds, or tithes belonging to other men, bake-houses or mills or serfs, they renounced all these things and proceeded to enter upon a life of complete poverty. Even tithe itself they could not justify and renounced as an unjust usurpation. What they did find was that the monk worked and lived on his land with the cattle, and this they adopted as the method of sustenance for themselves and the guests who came to them. In this connexion they adopted and made their own distinctive usage the employment of lay brethren, conversi, on their lands, and these they treated exactly as themselves, saving the monastic estate.³ They even had some paid labour, finding that without some dilution of this sort they could not devote themselves day and night to the keeping of the Rule, seeing that they were to have lands far from men’s habitation, vineyard, meadow and wood, waters for mills (for their own use only) and for fishing, barns and cattle and all the other things ministering to the needs of men. And if anywhere they had granges (farms), which as a rule they came to have for agricultural purposes, they enacted that conversi, not monks, should preside over them: monks should, according to the Rule, live in the cloister. And as they saw that St. Benedict had not built his houses in towns but far removed from the haunts of men, they undertook to follow him in this and laid down the rule that the new houses should be manned by

¹ Exordium, loc. cit., pp. 70-71.
³ Ibid., p. 629, and footnote.
twelve monks and an abbot. The effect of this legislation was quickly obvious. To the sorrow of the brethren seldom did anyone join them. How, then, could they hand on the treasure committed to them? Almost all who saw or knew of their unheard-of austerities fled. But the pity of God Who had breathed His Spirit into this little band ceased not to sustain, advance and perfect their efforts.\(^1\)

Abbot Alberic after nine and a half years of rule died, and was succeeded by Stephen Harding, the Englishman, and reputed author of the *Exordium* itself. He had come out with the others from Molème, and it was now, apparently, that the brethren went further in their excess of severe isolation by prohibiting laymen from coming to their church, as they had been wont to do for various solemnities. Moreover, that they might retain in the daily and nightly services of the church that poverty of spirit which they had chosen, they made more stringent the renunciation of gold and silver crucifixes; only painted wood was to be used for this purpose. Only one candlestick of iron was allowed and the censers were to be of brass or iron. Gold and silver were banished from the vestments which were to be mainly of linen; certain vestments, such as copes, dalmatics, and tunics, were to be abolished altogether. Long vestments might be used in processions, not at Mass. Plain linen altar-cloths without any pictures were to be used, and the chalices were not to be of silver or gold.\(^2\)

In those days the brethren increased in land and vineyards, but were profoundly distressed—‘at the gate of despair’—for the reason that their number did not grow, and that the succession seemed to be failing.\(^3\)

It was at this critical juncture, by the grace of God, that Bernard and his little band of thirty companions, consisting of clergy, learned and noble, with laymen of promise in the world, and well-born knights, came with eagerness, entered that church and there consummated their career and course (lit.). Following their example, old and young, men of all ages, realising that that which before they had feared, in their manner of keeping the Rule, was now possible, followed thither to bow their wills under the yoke of Christ.\(^4\) It was here, then, at the fountain head of the movement, at Citeaux itself, that St. Bernard the great propagator of the reform, the man whose history comprised in

\(^1\) *Exordium, loc. cit.*, p. 73.  
\(^3\) *Ibid.*, p. 73.  
itself that of Western Europe for a generation, caught the flame of its burning zeal and piety, and it was St. Bernard who swept into the current of its life that of the age itself.

Thus the Cistercian revival of twelfth century religion took its rise. It was first and foremost a return to first principles—a literal reading of the Rule of life of Western monasticism. But it was more than that. It was a passionate embracing again of ideas which have been perennially revived and perennially fruitful throughout the history of the Christian Church. If St. Francis surrounded his embrace of the Lady Poverty with poetic grace and fire, the Cistercian found his inspiration at the same source. His revival was no less a return to simplicity, to poverty, to hardness, to the straitest path of Christian endeavour. And his appeal succeeded, even as the later Mendicants' appeal succeeded, even as the same appeal has succeeded again and again in the history of the Church, and indeed has rarely failed. Citeaux quickly overflowed and became the training ground and missionary centre of the movement which, as has been said, swept over Western Europe, the frontiers of states offering no barrier, and, reaching the far-off shores of England, Scotland and even Norway before the middle of the century, bore in its current a renewal of the life of the whole Church. The actual numbers of the Cistercian houses, great as they were,—they probably reached more than 500¹ in the West before the end of the century—bore no proportion to the far-reaching penetration of the movement. That the vast work it accomplished was largely due to the influence of St. Bernard of Clairvaux for the first generation is true, but behind that great personality which made itself, as it has been truly said, the centre of the life of Europe for thirty years, was the flaming torrent of moral force and energy the Puritanism of the reform of Citeaux.

In England the early propagation of the movement—largely co-


incided with the disastrous reign of Stephen. A very cursory examination of the statements of contemporary chroniclers, William of Newburgh, Henry of Huntingdon, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle itself—‘everyone . . . did that which was right in his own eyes,’ and ‘there was no peace in the Realme,’ ‘everything was wiped out by slaughter, fire and rapine,’ and comparison with the Cistercian records of the individual houses of the time reveals once more the fact of the fierce reaction in religion at this time against the hideous disorder, violence and degradation of life in general. There were, even in England and Wales, fifty Cistercian houses before the desolate reign of Stephen closed, and one hundred before the close of the century.

But the actual force and achievement of a movement of this kind defies measurement and eludes the historian in his attempted diagnosis of cause and effect. That it bore within it a mighty current in the religious life of Europe is clear, and not only was this true of the West where its houses were more numerous, but, through its influence on the kindred Augustinian movements, more especially that of the Premonstratensian Canons, of those border lands in the North-East where Slav and Teuton were struggling for the mastery, and where the Premonstratensian houses not only carried Christianity but powerfully reinforced the Germanising movement which at that time was pressing forward in those Eastern lands.

But leaving aside for the moment the influence of the Cistercian movement upon others of its time, its principles are sufficiently obvious. It was, as has been said, in essence Puritan, a return to the strictness of the letter of the Benedictine Rule, as opposed to the considered and, it would seem, wise mitigation thereof which the action of time and circumstance had brought about, and for which to a certain extent, St. Benedict’s own broad wisdom had prepared the way. But the departure had been wide undoubtedly, and from more than the letter. In some fundamental points, as in the return to manual work, the Cistercian reform had touched the basis—the very groundwork of Benedictine or Western monasticism. St. Benedict had never neglected the *Opus Dei* and yet he had laid down manual work, viz. work in the fields, as an essential element in the life of the house. This had indeed, it has been truly said, given its character to Western monasticism, had most markedly differentiated it from that of the East.
Moreover, it had worked out to enormous usefulness in the life and service of Europe, and had helped to make Benedictinism the nursing mother of Western civilisation. Under Clugny the *Opus Dei* had usurped the place of manual work, displaced it in fact, with infinite loss to Benedictinism as a whole, and Clugniac Benedictinism in particular. That the Cistercian reform hit hard at existing practice in this respect there is no shadow of doubt. The impact of the new upon the old was nowhere more marked than here.

To this aspect of the Cistercian movement we must now turn. What of the impact of this new life upon the older monasticism? What of its reception by the religious world into which it broke like a storm, rending and destroying as well as rebuilding?

For this side of the question—for our purpose the most illuminating—we must turn to the second series of documents above-mentioned. Some of these are fairly well known; others are not. Let us begin with a brief notice of the former.

It has been suggested that the famous controversy between St. Bernard and Peter the Venerable formerly dated in 1127 was opened, not by the former, as is generally supposed, but by the latter, that is by Peter the Venerable, in a letter written about 1124, soon after his election at Clugny. In it, Peter, one of the most attractive figures of the century, in his grace, breadth and tolerance, takes the line (which Cardinal Albano afterwards followed) that the Cistercians attack existing practice even in the *Carta Caritatis* itself which he quotes. He then goes on to give the accusation against Clugny, 'You do not follow the Rule you have set before yourselves... nay, with wandering steps you have turned aside to follow... devious paths, making your own... laws as it pleases you, you call them sacred throwing away the precepts of the Fathers for your tradition...'. Then he recites more specifically the things objected to, reception of monks before the year of noviciate is over and of monks who have wandered from elsewhere, the use of costly and luxurious clothing and bedding, of costly and abundant food, the subjugation of the Rule to

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2 The controversy is given from St. Bernard's side in Migne, *Pat.* Lat. t. 182, pp. 895 et seq. For Peter the Venerable's letters and works cf. ib. t. 189, pp. 112 et seq. Cf. Vacandard, *Vie de S. Bernard*, II., 164-5, and elsewhere for date, etc., also Migne's own introductions.
themselves instead of vice versa, the alteration and rejection of fasts, the rejection of manual work, prostration to guests as to Christ in them, devotion in the fields, the escape from the jurisdiction of their own bishop,¹ the holding of parish churches which do not belong to monks but to clergks.

These are the general charges Peter gives and to which he replies. First as to clothing—he appeals to the gospel, to the needs of men, to necessity and change of times, to the Councils, Popes, etc. They, the Clugniacs, try he says, to prove all things, that they may provide salvation for souls. They find much upon these things in the canons made sacred by the Fathers and by later men judging according to the changing needs of the times. He quotes the Council of Nicaea as to transgressing ecclesiastical canons in certain circumstances. In other words, he appeals to a larger liberality of interpretation, quoting St. Benedict himself for so doing, and surely not in vain. The great monastic law-giver had designedly left wide possibilities of interpretation according to the needs of age, character, and condition. So of other things the interpretation rests with the abbot. Then in a fine passage he defends diversity of usage. Do they cease to be Christians who differ in usage? As to manual labour, it is, as the Rule says, idleness which is the enemy of the soul. Other work may be done. All do not need to do the same. He keeps the Rule who avoids idleness. To the accusation that they escape the jurisdiction of their own bishop, he says they have the best of all bishops, the Bishop of Rome. As to possessions and tithe, if the clergy may have the donations of the faithful for baptisms and such services why may not the monks for their prayers? There is here, he thinks, no real opposition. Whatever they (the Clugniacs) think more useful to souls they delay not to do. In charity they follow the Rule, and Peter claims all through the right to alter in charity or love, and that in regard to things in the Rule which have been altered they have been altered in love.² Then follows a winged shaft at the vulnerable point perhaps in the Cistercian armour, namely, the exercise of charity or love . . . ( . . . in respect of this very administration of the Rule). The Cistercians drive men to

¹ Cf. St. Bernard on this, de moribus et officio episc. tractatus. Migne: Pat Lat., t. 182, pp. 810 et seq.
murmuring and flight, those who endure lose their health and so cannot serve God, and love is neglected in this. The Rule gives freedom. Necessity varies with temperature. He anticipates the censure that the Rule warns to higher things. Yes, he admits it warns, but it does not enjoin or compel. Why should they compel when the Rule does not? By what authority do they do this? The way of Scripture is to enjoin what is to be enjoined and to warn concerning that which is to be warned. The Cistercians compel. If they loved they would concede necessary things. 'Nothing is of profit without charity—even if I give my body to be burned. . . .' 

Peter the Venerable is the ablest exponent of the point of view opposed to that of the Cistercian Reform, and the spirit in which he argues is almost modern in its breadth and tolerant wisdom. His side is even more startlingly expressed in another document published by Dom Berlière. It is a letter from Cardinal Matthieu Albano (1131-32) to the abbots of the Rheims province after the Council at Rheims had resolved that the Cluny ecclesiastical offices should be cut down and simplified, and so justified a large measure of the Cistercian reform. But before we look at this, the official side of the defence, let us turn for a moment to the other protagonist in the controversy, the real representative to the age of the reform movement and its most powerful exponent, St. Bernard. It was in answer to Peter the Venerable, it is now suggested, and not merely at the request of the Cluniacs, William of Saint Thierry, that St. Bernard wrote his famous Apologia ad Guillelmum S. Theoderici Abbatem, written in 1125. Migne places this among St. Bernard's treatises and also dates it 1125. It is divided, as St. Bernard himself indicates in his 'little preface,' into two parts. In the first part St. Bernard endeavours to meet the charge that the Cistercians are detractors of the Clunyacs. In the second he goes on to take objection to the superfluities of the latter in food, clothing, etc. That his task is a difficult and delicate one he

1 We are indebted to Dom Berlière not only for the publication of certain of the documents which follow, but for very valuable comments upon this whole subject, loc. cit. Cf. also in Revue d'hist. ecclésiastique, 1901, pp. 253 et seq., Les origines de Cluny et l'Ordre Benoít. au XIme siècle.
2 Documents Inédits pour servir à l'hist. de l'église de la Belgique, loc. cit. I., pp. 94-102.
3 Migne: Pat. Lat., t. 182, pp. 895 et seq.
admits at the outset, and how to discharge it without scandal he fails
to see. It is at once to refute the charge of Clugny, that the Cister-
cians are detractors of Clugny, and himself to criticise her. To the
former task he first addresses himself, in his letter to William, for how
dare he be silent when it is being said that they, the Cistercians, most
abject of men—de cavernis—dare to judge the world, and from the
shadow of their obscurity impudently to detract from the most glorious
order of Clugny and the holy men who live there as lights of the
world. If, indeed, they do this and think contemptuously of those
who are better than themselves, what avail is their poverty and austerity
of life, their vile raiment and their daily toil, their fasts and their
vigils? But who ever heard him (Bernard) dispute about that order
or even murmur against it? Whom of their ranks has he ever seen
save with joy, received save with honour, spoken to save with reverence,
exhorted save with humility? I said and I say, he says, their way of
life is holy and honourable, fair and seemly in its chastity, distinguished
in its discretion, laid down by the Fathers, pre-ordained by the Holy
Spirit, and adapted in no small degree to the salvation of souls. Is it
that I object to a diversity of order and regulation in the Church?

But, though he knows that the Kingdom of God does not depend
on rule and observance, and that love must be supreme, he does differ
and now enters the lists, as it were, of disputation not against but for
that Order, not blaming the Order itself but the vices of men. He
then opens a mighty attack upon the latter, disguised under the name
of virtues and vice versa, for lo! spareness is thought to be avarice,
sobriety austerity, silence sadness. On the other hand laxity is called
discretion, profusion liberality, garrulousness affability, silly laughter
 gladness, soft raiment and stately trappings of houses fitness, un-
necessary care of beds cleanliness.¹ Cumque haec alterutrum
impendimus it is called charitas. That [charity or] love destroys
itself. Ista charitas destruit charitatem. Then follows a detailed
attack on their food and drink—the twice and thrice filling of the cup
vides in prandio ter vel quater, semi-plenum calicem re-
portari, their beds and their clothing, etc. Why do their superiors
not correct them in these things? Is it that no one faithfully corrects
that in which he has no confidence that he is himself beyond reproach?

¹ Migne: Pat. Lat., t. 182, pp. 908 et seq.
But these are small things... I come... to greater.  

I pass over the height, the length, the breadth, the sumptuous adornments and beautiful paintings of your oratories. What has gold to do with a saint? Here too St. Bernard draws a distinction. The case of the bishop is different from that of the monk. They—the bishops—owe duty to the foolish as well as to the wise and when they fail with spiritual inducements use those of the flesh to move them to devotion. But we who have come out from the world, who have renounced all precious and beautiful things for Christ's sake... whose love do we strive to arouse by such means? What fruit are we seeking from them?... Then follows a list of the beautiful things done and seen in Clugniac churches. What, he asks, is the object of all this? Is it the piercing of the heart of the penitent, or is it the admiration of those who look thereon? Oh vanity.... The Church glows in her walls and fails her poor. She puts gold on her stones and leaves her sons naked. The curious find in these things delight, the miserable do not find sustenance. As to their beautiful pavements he asks, why do you adorn that which is so soon defiled? Why do you paint that which is to be trodden under-foot?... What are such things to the monk—to the man of the spirit? Of the figures in the cloisters—the many-headed, many bodied things, so numerous and so wonderful that one would rather read the marbles than books and spend the whole day wondering before them rather than in meditation on the law of God—alas! he says, if the folly of it did not make them ashamed surely the expense should.... At the close St. Bernard returns more quietly again to an exhortation to peace and charity—to suspension of judgment, for these things are right for some, not for others.

Such is the Cistercian attack whether opened by them or in answer to challenge. It is in effect, though in form an apologia, the Cistercian attack upon the Clugniac interpretation of St. Benedict's Rule. It is directed against the accepted interpretation of the religious life of the time. It reveals the essence of the Cistercian reform which was a return to first principles, to primitive rigour, to the letter of the Rule of St. Benedict, an interpretation of the spirit

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1 Migne: Pat. Lat., t. 182, pp. 914 et seq.
2 In the special sense of ordered life—life in religione as opposed to that in saeculo or in the world.
in the terms of the letter entirely opposed to the prevailing practice of the time. Could anything be more characteristic of the timeless Puritan spirit whencesover and wheresoever it appears? This was the form taken by the twelfth century revival of religion, and the conflict it aroused formed the religious controversy of the twelfth century as it has shaped that of other centuries far later in time and profoundly different in ideal. That it cut deep into the conscience of the time is clear from the reforms it enforced even upon Clugny under Peter the Venerable himself. St. Bernard had touched upon vulnerable points in the great house and its system. Certainly the charges—though not directed against central issues of conduct—go far and deep. Peter's defence is in the very highest spirit of the twelfth and even of some later centuries, and appeals to the modern mind in a manner in which St. Bernard's *Apolo gia* entirely fails to do. But what of the times? St. Bernard—the last of the Fathers—was a great 'watchman' and the twelfth century was the judge. The Cistercian won and struck deep into the conscience and heart of the age.

The impact of the new movement upon the older life is shown elsewhere. Not alone is it to be followed in the controversy between the two great representatives of the sides. It is revealed as a widely discussed issue among all sorts and conditions of religious men, filling the whole of the century, and deeply penetrating and influencing the life of the Church. Some five years or so after the publication of Bernard's *Apolo gia* the abbots of the Rheims province, in a Council held at Rheims in 1131, inaugurated certain reforms—the reduction of liturgical prayer in their houses, and the strengthening of the law of silence. This attests Cistercian influence, and Dom Berlière points out that from the Council of Rheims may be dated the reaction against Clugniac custom which had prevailed hitherto.

Here, too, in the official world the impact gave rise to discussion, and the effect of the reform is shown in a striking manner by a dispute which arose between the said abbots and Cardinal Mathieu Albano, papal legate. The latter had been Prior of St. Martin-des-Champs in Paris and was afterwards Cardinal Bishop of Albano, a Clugniac, says Dom Berlière, from the bottom of his soul. His letter, which

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1 Cf. Migne: *Pat. Lat.*, for Peter the Venerable's works, t. 189; and Migne's note, t. 182, p. 895.

Dom Berlière has published, is invaluable for our purpose and may be taken to illustrate the official view of the impact. It expresses in a striking manner the older method of traditional observance and acceptance in opposition to incoming change. In this letter which was written 1131-32 to the Benedictine abbots of the Chapter of Rheims from the Cardinal Legate, the latter opposes the reforms resolved upon at Rheims. He objects to absolute silence which not even the Carthusians impose, he says. Silence is very good in moderation and in the right place. The Rule of St. Benedict and Scripture alike condemn absolute silence. He objects moreover to the multiplication of orders. He is amazed that they have cut down the psalms and left out not a few but many. Surely this is a mistake: *Silencium imposuiistis psalmos abjecistis opera manum nequa quam facilis.* You have imposed silence, rejected psalms, and yet you do not do manual work. They should choose other hours and go out to agriculture or, wood-cutting or other operations of the hands, or study in the cloister in the silence, or else keep the longer psalmody. But, inasmuch as rural and manual work at this time and in many places is neither good nor expedient, our Fathers imposed an immense labour of psalmody and other observances, which are far harder than cutting wood or dragging stones. What then is this new regulation imposing silence, cutting down psalmody and not going out to work? He has heard too that famous solemnities are disregarded and the reading of the gospel—that is the hearing of Christ himself—substituted. In short, Cardinal Albano in the name of the older observance makes a great protest against the recent reforms.

But the answer of the abbots shows how the influence of Citeaux was acting upon the older orders. We have sworn, they say, not to the Clugniac customs or regulations but to the Rule of St. Benedict. Do we destroy those customs by the Rule? No, we maintain them. The customs or regulations ordained by religious and spiritual men, are of God and are in aid of the Rule, not for its destruction. They have only altered them a little in fasting, in silence, and in certain other points that they may come nearer to the Rule.

2. *Ibid., p. 95-6.*
3. *Ibid., p. 96.*
4. *Ibid., p. 100.*
This is a significant and striking answer to the criticisms of Cardinal Albano. The abbots go on to answer special points more fully—about silence for instance. It is not absolute. About the cutting down of the psalms, they quote the Apostle 'I would rather speak five words with my understanding than ten thousand without,' and cite St. Benedict's Rule and the Fathers, reaffirming that they have not condemned Cluniaic custom or regulation (consuetudines) nor rejected it.

Cardinal Albano, like Peter the Venerable, seems to have been constrained to fall in with the reform movement.

Chapters became the rule in the Rheims province from 1131, and apparently Cardinal Albano held one at Clugny in 1132, at which a large number of priors were present.

The most illuminating document for our purpose is one which is least known, the Dialogus inter Cluniaicensem monachum et Cisterciensem. It is published by Martene et Durand and is attributed to about the middle of the century—that is between the year of St. Bernard's death (1153) and that of his canonisation (1174). It is, as the title shows, a dialogue between a Cluniaic and a Cistercian, the subject matter being the new and reformed order of Citeaux, or rather the reform of Citeaux itself, and it reveals the point of view not of the great leaders of the movement, nor of the official world, but of the ordinary man, and in this case of the ordinary monk. This is what renders it perhaps the most illuminating of all the documents for our purpose.

The Cistercian had passed over from Clugny to Citeaux by conviction, so presumably was well versed in the points at issue between the two and the differences between their modes of thinking must have been well known to him. In his words one can almost hear the very tones of the seventeenth century English Puritan. The subject matter is widely different of course, and the political element is largely absent—an important exclusion. But even so the attitude of Cistercian towards the final authority in his world, that of the Pope himself, is plainly indicated.

1 Documents inédits, pp. 58 seq. Chapitres Généraux des Monastères Bénédictines des provinces de Rheims et de Sens.
2 Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum, t. V., pp. 1569 et seq. Lutetiae Parisiorum, 1717.
3 Ibid., p. 1574.
In the first place he accuses the Clugniac of reading and teaching the poets in the hours which St. Benedict destined for sacred reading and manual work. The Clugniac replies that they read this literature that they may better understand the Scriptures, and that sacred reading and prayer alternate in their order. *Et sicut vester ordo est activus, quia elegit sibi justum laborem cum Martha; ita noster ordo est contemplativus, quia elegit sibi sanctum otium cum Maria;* and as your Order is active, since it has chosen with Martha holy labour, ours is contemplative, having chosen with Mary holy leisure. To which the Cistercian replies ‘thou errest brother not knowing the Scriptures.’ The Clugniac apparently claims St. Bernard’s letter to William of St. Thierry and another to a Clugniac house at Châlons as being in favour of the Clugniac Order, and says that both were read in Clugniac houses. He then asks where their customs are in opposition to the canon. The Cistercian replies ‘in many points’ and opens a direct attack upon those points in Clugniac practice which he deems so to be. He instances the weight of their bells which two monks can hardly ring. Their voices are not manly in their liquid sweetness, and St. Ambrose said that the voice should be *plena succi virilis,* full of virile quality, nothing feminine about it. They likewise turn to the East in reading the Gospel against the authority of St. Augustine and the practice of Rome.

But heavier charges lie behind. Daily manual work is omitted and there can be no ordered religious life without this. Shortness of probation is objected to—a month is substituted for a year. More fundamental things often are discussed. The Cistercian distribution of tithe is brought forward. To the Clugniac obedience apparently means obedience to those placed in authority over them (*praebati*), to the Cistercian it means obedience to the Rule, and is to God rather than to man; even the Pope is not to be obeyed rather than Christ. The Clugniac defends his neglect of manual work by the extent of his other labours in reading and prayer, his great liturgical work. He claims that St. Benedict left discretion here in regard to services in the oratory, but the Cistercian says that both manual work and the services may be done, entirely disregarding the Clugniac’s urging the long

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prostration of the body required, which the Cistercian considers to
be against reason and the Fathers, and says that all such things as are
against reason and the Fathers cannot rightly be called either religious
devotion or devoted religion. The Clugniacs do not even keep the
hours at the correct time and they sleep in the early morning. Not
throughout the year, says the Clugniac humbly. The legitimate
probation is not imposed upon novices. This charge is repeated again
and again. The Cistercian says Clugniac luxuries are the plunder of
the poor, and proceeds to attack their ecclesiastical vestments and
their other clothing, furs, etc., and their food, their courses. He says
they keep what they like of the Rule and drop the rest. The Clugniac
remarks that to have these things with humility is better than to have
pride without them, but the Cistercian is unyielding. They must
relinquish these things and keep humility. Obedience he reiterates is
to the Rule not to the Abbot. From his former experience as a
Clugniac the Cistercian points out the peril of the time just after
chapter when the house sits at leisure and talks. He sought for ten
years but could find no reason why, as the customs enjoin, each one
while sitting at leisure and talking should hold a [closed] book on his
knee. It is superstition, nothing else. In answer to the Cistercian’s
quotation of St. Augustine, the Clugniac opens a prolonged controversy
astutely replying that St. Augustine wrote of canons, not monks. The
Cistercian says whether they will it or not all those who have professed
the Rule are monks. Either they are monks or nothing. At last
the Clugniac is moved to retaliation and he asks why the Cistercians
make themselves so objectionable to the other orders, especially the
black monks and regular canons, and advises him to lay aside his pre-
sumption. The Cistercian justifies himself and goes on to discuss the
canons, especially the so-called Regulars, the Norbertines, for instance,
who for pride and vain glory, he says, refuse to be called monks for
they wish to be rectors of churches and preachers, and doctors. A
monk has not the office of teaching. The canons claim to be in truth
clergy, while monks are only so by indulgence. They are wrong, says

^1 Dialogus, loc. cit., p. 1601: Quicquid contra rationem et SS. Patrum
statuta praesumuntur, religiosa devotio vel devota religio nequaquam recte
dicitur. Itaque longa totius corporis prostratio contra decretum S. Patrum
praesumpta.

^2 Ibid., p. 1613.

^3 Ibid., p. 1614.
the Cistercian, in both points, and proceeds to point out that 'Homer nods and the Pontiffs themselves, the Popes, have erred in this distinction between regular canons and monks.' But, says the Clugniac, I have often heard that the successors of Peter, the Roman Pontiffs, do not err. Ego multotiens audivi quod successores Petri, pontifices Romani, numquam errent. Not in matters of faith would he presume to think they could, the Cistercian admits, but, nevertheless, since they are men they may by men be deceived. Nonnumquam quia homines sunt, ab hominibus falli possunt. The Clugniac is surprised and horrified but this is an illuminating incident in the Dialogue and reveals an attitude in the stiff-necked Puritan of the twelfth century towards the great far-off Head of the mediaeval Church, which applied a little differently would not have disgraced an English Puritan of the seventeenth century.

As to work the difference in point of view between the Clugniac and the Cistercian is wide and the gulf impassable. Quamvis nec in horto nec in agro laboremus says the Clugniac ex toto otiosi non sumus. Although neither in the garden nor in the field do we work yet we are not wholly idle. Some read, others do handicrafts. I know, says the Cistercian, your leisurely works which bear no relation to necessary use and may rightly be called idle . . . rolling gold and with it illuminating capital letters. As for us we give ourselves to things of the field which God created and appointed for our labour; we all labour and all live upon our labour. After some other objections they enter upon the real question at issue in the Cistercian reform. Is it the Rule of St. Benedict, or is it that approved by the house he enters that the monk must keep? The Cistercian says, the Rule of St. Benedict is from God and approved by the Roman Pontiff. The Clugniac admits that the Rule is great and perfect but it is too lofty for the average monk and must be interpreted by the abbot. The Cistercian maintains that while the vow is to the Rule it does not exclude the usus or custom of the house so long as this does not conflict with the Rule. Then the Clugniac launches his shaft: Vos Cistercienses quia judaizatis in

1 Dialogus, loc. cit., pp. 1618-20. An example of mediaeval freedom of speech of which the records offer abundant illustration.

2 Ibid., p. 1623.
regula sequentès occidentem litteram. You Cistercians like the Jews follow the letter which killeth.

So the dialogue goes on from the number of courses at table to the great constitutional system of Cistercian government which is contrasted with that of Clugny. Even the remoteness of Cistercian houses from the haunts of men is compared with the Clugniac life near cities. The Cistercians were accused of being always on the road, and the defence to this is of course the reason for the travelling, namely for the general Chapter and the annual visitations by the abbots of their daughter houses, and also the necessity for buying and selling as the Cistercians lack rusticos et redditus. The Cistercian claims that his order is united, that religion is preserved in quiet and that this is due to the yearly Chapter. It is the Chapter which controls, even to the deposition of abbots, and unites the order, and for lack of such headship, Clugny suffers.

The points at issue are not of doctrine clearly, nor of the graver matters of conduct. No serious charges are made. But the whole dialogue lays bare, once more, the conflict between those who in the movement of the time for the revival of religion, would return to the literal fulfilment of the Benedictine Rule, and those who would continue to accept the traditional observance and acceptation as modified by time and circumstance. The interest of the discussion is not of course so much for the individual as for the house or the order, and the points are never really political. But the Dialogue throws a bright light upon our study of religious revival in the twelfth century, and brings out marked features of fundamental kinship with many later movements of the same kind.

Such, in broad outline, is the story of the Cistercian revival of twelfth century religion, as it has come down to us. Citeaux had accomplished for her own generation, in the first place, and for succeeding generations in the second, very definite ends and objects, and a study of her work, however slight, must take account of both aspects

2 Constant travelling had always been a characteristic of Clugny herself. All novices had had to go to Clugny to be professed, and horse breeding had become one of the labours of Clugny in consequence. Cf. Egger: Geschichte der Cluniaenser-Klöster in der West-Schweiz (Freiburger hist. Studien, III.), pp. 74-5.
of that work. In the first place she had led the religious movement of revival throughout the entire Church of the West, briefly indicated above, but of which the actual force and achievement are hard to measure, and elude the historian in his attempted diagnosis of cause and effect. As has been said, it formed a mighty current in the religious life of Europe. This is true not only of the West but, through its influence upon the kindred Augustinian movement, of the Premonstratensian Canons—of those border lands of Eastern Europe, where Slav and Teuton were still struggling for the mastery. Here the Premonstratensian houses powerfully reinforced the latter, and helped to build up German civilisation and to found modern Germany. The Cistercian movement, in its vast work of revival, called to itself all that was young and vigorous in twelfth century religious life. It had by no means attempted to assimilate this young life entirely to its own form, though Cistercian influence was powerful even in this. The new life took every form, canonical and even military, but it sought, and as a rule received the seal of Cistercian approval and support, especially during the life-time of St. Bernard, whose own correspondence throws a flood of light upon its history at this time. All the great movements of the age, whether of thought or action, find their echo either for favour or censure in St. Bernard's letters. He was the centre round which all its effort and all its strife and tumult turned. But it was here, namely in the intellectual awakening of the twelfth century, that the Cistercian movement, in its young intolerant strength, made a large exception in the giving of help and blessing—an exception which after ages have neither forgotten nor forgiven. The conflict between St. Bernard and Abelard reveals both its strength and its weakness to the full. It rejected and repudiated in the sphere of the intellectual life much that was destined to be of inestimable value to future generations, and even very shortly to the Church herself. But it offered in its purity, its passion, nay even in its very intolerance perchance, what the twelfth century needed to make head against the flowing tide of coarseness, of violence, of individual as of civic and feudal cruelty, almost incredible even to a generation which has known a great war. Against all this twelfth century religion, purged and renewed, hurled itself, blindly perhaps and with a passion which swept away, or swept under, for a time at least, much that was of priceless value, as has been said, but a passion nevertheless with which alone it could make head
against the forces arrayed against it. In the feudal and city world alike of the twelfth century the inner order of the states depended largely upon the strong hand of the individual, and as yet little upon the central power which had deputed so much of its sovereign right and duty, and was still merely at the beginning of the struggle to take them back and enforce its will through its own courts. The very character of the century is reflected in that of the religious revival, in the forms it took, in its narrow and intolerant, but instinctive and intelligible rejection of all which could weaken it. This severity, abundantly illustrated in St. Bernard's conflicts both with Abelard and Arnold of Brescia, to the experience of our generation simply registers the force and intensity of the struggle waged.

So much for the main issues for its own generation of a movement whose force and intensity defy alike analysis and measurement. The side issues are hardly less important, and are easier to trace.

In the first place the Cistercian movement enforced large reforms upon the older monasticism. To borrow again the words of Robert of Torigni, used before in this connexion, the abbots of many famous houses which the French kings and other great men had built, but which had become lax through their great wealth, seeing the monks of the new orders of Citeaux and Chartreuse and certain of the canons living this severe life in religion, were ashamed (rubore suffusi), and either spontaneously or by request or constraint sent for the monks of the strict houses, and reformed themselves after their example.

In this reform Clugny led the way under Peter the Venerable and Cardinal Albano who apparently helped him. If the most enlightened defenders of the older interpretation, whose words have come down to us, then accepted the reform, the rest had to fall into line in certain respects at any rate. A chapter held at Clugny in 1132 passed a series of reforms for Clugny and her daughter houses. Peter reserved the great principle, however, which guided him, that some precepts were eternal, some subject to change.

The Council of Rheims, in 1131, had extended the use of the


2 For Peter the Venerable's Statuta Congregatis Cluniacensis, cf. Migne: Pat. Lat., t. 189, pp. 1023 et seq.
chapter, upon the Benedictine houses of that province. A Bull of Innocent II. further did this, and the Lateran Council of 1215 made its use obligatory upon all the orders. It is here in the sphere of government, as will be seen later, that the original contribution of Cistercianism to its own and succeeding generations alike is to be found. In her Usus she perhaps borrowed not only from the Benedictine which she restored, but from the Cluniac which she reformed.  

But the influence of Citeaux upon her own generation (which she captured) cannot be at all understood without some mention of its unparalleled effect upon the newer, and especially the younger foundations of her time. Undoubtedly here is to be found a large part of the secret of her power. The time-spirit of twelfth century service and devotion found nowhere perhaps fuller or more complete expression than in the military orders. Here Cistercian influence was enormous. The personality of St. Bernard, however, it is hardly too much to say, was supreme here, and his political influence, immeasurably enhanced thereby. Nor was his influence confined by any means to the Spanish Cistercian military orders, such as that of Calatrava for instance. It was admittedly predominant over the Templars at, and before, the Council of Troyes (1126), even though it did not extend to the actual writing of their rule. It was the close association of St. Bernard, not only with the Crusades, but with the knights who fought them, which gave him his immense political power. In Spain the Spanish Cistercian Orders, it has been pointed out, were helping to build up against the Moors states destined to a longer life than those in the East. On East and West alike, however, Bernard's influence was powerfully at work.

But the story of the military orders, as of the Crusades, is a study by itself, and can only be touched upon here, for no appreciation of Cistercian work, however slight, would be complete without it. It belongs in general on its religious side rather to Augustianism than to pure monasticism, save under St. Bernard's direct influence. There is little doubt, I think, that St. Bernard pressed close upon the canons (which the military knights mostly were on their monastic side) that approximation towards pure monasticism which the twelfth century witnessed. Undoubtedly, Cistercian influence upon reformed, as well

1 Cf. Miss Rose Graham's paper to the International Historical Congress of 1913, The relation of Cluny to some other movements of reform.
as upon militant Augustinianism, at this time, can hardly be exaggerated. It was so strong over the Premonstratensian movement, which bore a relation to the Augustinian closely similar to that which the Cistercian bore to Benedictinism, that a few words about the Premonstratensians must be added here.

Mabillon quotes Larmer of Liége who, in his ‘Lives of the Bishops of Verdun,’ compares the two orders of Citeaux and of Premontré to the two cherubim who overshadowed the Mercy Seat. To follow Cistercian influence, however, upon the Augustinianism of the time would be to take up another line of enquiry, and lead too far away from the special aspect of the religious life of this age which we have chosen. Yet the twelfth century is not without great possibilities for the study of Augustinianism, and even in so slight a sketch of its religious life as is here offered, this second great line of religious and semi-monastic revival must not be wholly overlooked. When it had thrown off its advanced monasticising tendencies, it was destined to lead the way to the future more directly than Cistercianism, and, indeed, to claim there ‘wide fields of service.’ Less interesting, however, for the twelfth century, it undoubtedly is, just because of its deflection towards pure monasticism whose methods it adopts to a great extent. It is imitative and consequently on the whole, less fruitful on its proper time, in spite of the great work of the Premonstratensian Order.

The work of the Regular Canon who represents at this period—whether associated in name with St. Augustine or not—the revival of Augustinian principles, is perhaps more distinctive, or can at any rate be more easily traced in the eleventh century when it included the work of reincorporation, such as it was, of feudalised Church possessions. The Premonstratensian of the twelfth century far less readily received these possessions. It is more possible then to see in the earlier as in the later time, the special contribution of the canonical as distinct from (and yet allied with) the monastic life, however closely in outward form the two things approximate in the period we are considering. A few years ago the progress of the earlier forms of the Rule, which took the name and based itself upon the principles of St. Augustine, was

1Laurent, loc. cit., says to the ‘Church feudalised’ succeeded the ‘Church incorporated,’ but he thinks the monks slowly gave back what they had received of these feudalised possessions.
traced from about the middle of the eleventh century, and as it appeared in papal documents towards the close of the century. The first use to which the revived Augustinian monks were put, shows a real, if somewhat quickly obscured, apprehension of the genuine differences between the canonical ideal, which was clerical, and the purely monastic, which was not. In the re-awakening of the lay conscience which is clear through the eleventh century in regard to the possession of churches and tithe (so largely feudalised in the ninth and tenth centuries), and was closely associated with the general movement for clerical celibacy, and separation from worldly life in general, it was to the canons that the appeal was made to take over and serve these churches. The canons in the first place responded to that appeal, received many churches and served them in person. Later, however, the canons in their approximation towards the life of the monks, whose function was quite other, and especially after the Cistercian reform had repudiated the possession of churches, repudiated likewise the cure of souls in the service of these churches, and, again like the monks, appointed vicars to take their places therein. Incidentally, one may remark with Laurent\(^3\) that the movement to restore the infeudated churches stopped short with emancipation and reincorporation in the Church, and for many a long year the parishes failed to recover their own, nay, Dr. Frere thinks they never did recover the impropriated tithe in lay hands. The twelfth century, however, in spite of the fact that it shows the closest approximation of the two ideals monastic and canonical, is not without high testimony to a fundamental recognition of clerical duty as the basis of that of the Regular Canon in the great work of the Premonstratensian Order, which bears the same relation to the Augustinian revival of the twelfth century as that which the Cistercian bears to the Benedictine, and like the latter was a return to first principles.\(^4\) The Premonstratensian movement, while accepting

\(^1\) Cf. Dr. Frere's *Vicissitudes of English Parochial History*. Cf. also Mrs. O'Neill's (Miss Speakman) article in Owens College Essays, pp. 57-75.


\(^3\) Loc. cit.

the broadly monasticising tendency of the time, and, indeed, borrowing largely from the Cistercians, yet returned to the union of the cure of souls with the monastic life of contemplation, that is to clerical work and duty, and regarded it as of the essence of their work, even as St. Thomas afterwards declared it to be. The Premonstratensian founder, St. Norbert, did not fail, it would seem, to recognise the secondary character (per accidens) of the monastic side of the canonical life, which was after all what Cardinal Gasquet calls 'the moulding' for their proper work.¹ This is clearly shown in the great missionary and colonising work of the Premonstratensians at this time in East Germany. Heimbucher emphasizes the fundamental character of their work in the 'cure of souls'. St. Norbert did not conceive of their work in terms of action only, or of contemplation only, but as an ideal union of the two. From this fundamental conception there followed not only the great colonising work of the Order, more especially in East Germany, but their church building labours also, for churches were the great centres of that work. The early Premonstratensian houses not only had parochial churches assigned to them, but actually undertook the cure of souls and served those churches in person.² A Bull of Celestine III., to Hugh, Abbot of Prémontré expressively says, 'It shall be lawful for you to place four or three of your canons in the parish churches which you have, one of whom you shall present to the diocesan bishop to answer to him concerning spiritual as to you concerning temporal affairs, and the observances of the order. Some of them shall be called Beneficiaries . . . and shall be perpetual, others . . . revocable at will.' But the history of the English houses and indeed of English conciliar action in this regard, hardly bears out the universal application of this fundamental principle, as has been shown

¹ Gasquet: Collectanea Anglo-Preamons., 3 vols., Camden Soc., 3rd. ser., 1904-6. In the Dialogus above quoted we find complaints of the crossing over of Cistercian monks to the Premonstratensians and vice versa. Manrique quotes the papal bull on this point in full, Annales Cist., I., 432-3. This illustrates very clearly the popular confusion as to the difference between monk and canon and indeed probably the close approximation between the two at this period.

² Heimbucher, Ordensgeschichte, II., p. 50 et seq., especially p. 57, notes a hundred cures in Normandy alone served by Premonstratensians.
The confusion in the popular mind in regard to the work and duty of the canon, as distinct from that of the monk, has been already illustrated from the *Dialogus* quoted, where St. Bernard's own action in his attempt to draw close the bonds between the Templars and monasticism, and also perhaps Premonstratensians and Cistercians, may also be mentioned in this connexion; perhaps also the passing over of monks to Prémontré, and *vice versa*, that of canons to Citeaux, which had to be checked by bull, reveal a certain carelessness of the distinction between monks and canons in actual practice. Needless to say, the Papacy kept the two things distinct, and later when St. Dominic went to Rome to get authorization for his Order, it was to the Augustinian canons that the Papacy sought to affiliate it in the first place. For our purpose it is, however, only necessary here to allude to the great work of those reformed canons upon the secular clergy, and in the quickening of the pastoral care of souls, which undoubtedly helped immeasurably in the religious revival of the twelfth century. It was the part of the work which the Cistercians themselves not only did not attempt but expressly renounced, and which was left to the Premonstratensians and other reformed canons until they too, later on, fell under the influence of a reformed monasticism which in this regard did not rightly concern them.

The bequest of Citeaux to succeeding generations was unquestionably greatest in the sphere of government, and is to be sought in the contribution thereto of her constitution, laid down chiefly in the *Carta Caritatis*, and working itself out in the vast international system of her houses. This, it may be repeated, is, in large part, the content of the Cistercian idea—-the work probably of the chapters of 1116-19. By the Charter of Charity the whole order is united in one great system, of which the blinding power is affection or love (*Caritas*), founded upon spiritual kinship which is the basis of all authority. The

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1 Dr. Frere, *loc. cit.*, quotes the Council of Westminster, cap. 21, also in this connexion. It is given in Wilkins' *Concilia*, I., 475. The decree forbade canons to serve in churches in person. But special licence was given for this as, for instance, by Urban IV. in 1262. Cf. also *ibid.*, p. 316, note.


3 For the document itself, cf. *Monuments Primitifs de la Règle Cistercienne*, pp. 79-84. This is the earlier form of the instrument. Cf. Migne: *Pat. Lat.*, t. 166, pp. 1377-84.
working of this principle constitutes the principal feature of Cistercian external government and organisation, and it opposed or rather offered in succession to the monarchy of Clugny an aristocratic republic which led the way to the democratic absolutism—one might almost say, the military monarchy of the friars. For the internal government of her houses, on the lines laid down probably in the Regulations of 1101 and contained in the *Exordium*, the first known collection of *Instituta Generalis Capituli apud Cistercienses* was drawn up in 1134, though not perhaps completed until 1152. The Charter provided for uniform observance and usage throughout the order, and the regular visitation, according to their filiations of all the monasteries including Citeaux which is subjected to that of the abbots of La Ferté, Pontigny, Clairvaux and Morimond; the annual attendance of the abbots at the general chapter of Citeaux; the full power of the latter body to consult, legislate and correct; and the election and deposition of abbots, even to the abbot of Citeaux himself.

It is difficult to agree with M. Berlière, to whose work we are so greatly indebted, that the splendid gift of the Cistercian Chapter was a real infringement of the Rule of St. Benedict; it would seem rather an extension and development (like the congregational principle itself) but, in this case, of a principle already established in each separate house, of daily consultation and deliberation by abbot and brethren in the chapter of that house. Surely a general chapter such as that established by the *Carta Caritatis* might be legitimately regarded as a concentration for purposes of general government of these local moots, even though it was left to the friars (in their wide-reaching democratic almost tumultuous life, and its close association with the life of the world they served), to see how this concentration could be made real and workable. This they did by the sending up of the brother or brothers who should carry the vote or votes of those who could not go in person. How far in this regard monasticism and its off-shoots have perhaps helped to forge instruments, which were to be applied more effectively in fields far removed from their life and influence, may be said to be still under investigation.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) *Monuments Primitifs*, pp. 245 et seq.

while its almost immediate adoption and use in other orders has been traced above.

The twelfth century, as has been said, saw pure monasticism at its height in Europe, and witnessed the last of the great religious revivals issuing from, and led by it. That of the friars, of course, was not purely monastic, still less so that of the Jesuit, and other religious orders of the Counter-Reformation. Of none of the earlier movements have we fuller or more authoritative accounts than that of Citeaux; in none can we see more plainly the action of the timeless religious spirit in one of its hours of revival and renewal, and the curious similarity of its phenomena at work in the common medium of human life and human need. The century saw here, too, one of those illuminating conflicts of ideal of which the history of religious life is so full, or rather a conflict of interpretation as to common ways of life. The conflict does not here affect the main issues of conduct, but those side issues which have so often proved perplexing. Such conflicts have varied endlessly in form throughout the generations of men, and if the Cistercian movement presented to its age the Puritan interpretation of its moral ills, the Puritan solution of its moral difficulties, and that solution with its unquenchable energy was accepted at the time, there was room in the Church for both, and Peter the Venerable’s reading of the law in its traditional and sober wisdom has been as often or oftener accepted by succeeding generations. The history of the religious orders has been, of course, largely that of the revival of life in the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages—of the presentation of some new aspect of truth, or of the enhanced emphasis upon some old or half-forgotten truth. If at the close of the 12th century the great work of pure monasticism was done, and the immediate future lay rather with Augustinianism, in one of its endlessly varying forms, this too was the child of pure monasticism from which it had borrowed not only much of its spirit and discipline, but not a few of its forms and instruments to hand on to succeeding generations of men, in the world as well as in the Church. How far this was the case is not as yet perhaps fully known, but it powerfully enhances the interest of a century which in the very heart of the Middle Ages brought to problems, which we have been accustomed to regard as modern, so much of modern thought and criticism.