

Court. In vain have De Montalembert, De Broglie, De Falloux, and others given them counsels of prudence and accommodation. Their voice has not been heard in the Vatican, and the *Univers* has been authorised to attack them without mercy.

Well, we occupy as Protestants the place of simple spectators; and to speak frankly, we are not sorry that the Jesuit faction triumphs. Intelligent men will see better what Popery is, real and sincere Popery. They will perceive that no reasonable arrangement can be come to with it, and that the only means of getting on, is to leave the Pope, with his bishops and monks behind. When this conviction shall have penetrated public opinion, then will come the end, or the beginning of the end for the Papal Church.

Besides the ardent and the moderate of the Roman Catholic party, we have in France the Gallican party, who point out without reserve the defects and abuses of the Papacy, and even propose plans of reform. These decided adversaries of the Ultramontanists and Jesuits are neither numerous nor influential. The clerical faction accuses them of being schismatics, rebels, impious, &c. Still their views are curious, because they bring to light one aspect of our religious condition; and I will give some short extracts from their writings.

The *Catholic Observer*, a Gallican journal, published recently the following lines, little flattering to the Popish clergy:—"It is sufficient to cast a glance at the Romish Church of France, to perceive the deplorable state in which the clergy is placed; their ignorance of theology, and of all the ecclesiastical sciences, have been carried to their highest point. Their studies in the seminaries are nearly none; a great number of the priests once engaged in the ministry never study more, and forget even the little they had learned in their youth."

To this ignorance we must add the dependence of the most absolute of the inferior clergy on the bishops; a dependence which is not a reasonable subordination, but a blind obedience. In the present day, it must be confessed, the priests who distinguish themselves by their intelligence or by their noble sentiments, are too often regarded with suspicion. None are wanted among the clergy but slaves, attentive to their master's word, and anxious solely to deserve his favours, and humbly to execute his caprices.

Certainly the picture drawn by the Gallican *Observer* is severe, and Protestants might hold such language,—priests ignorant for the most part, and having scarcely a tincture of the theological sciences, and having the charge of presiding over the religious education of the French, while they want themselves the most elementary knowledge of Christian doctrine. These same priests, subjected to the caprice of the bishops, forced to bend before their despotic authority, treated as slaves and machines, and deprived of all the canonical guarantees which might give them a little independence. What a clergy! What a situation! And how could these priests, so ill instructed and so dependent, preserve before their parishioners the dignity necessary to the success of their ministry? Yes, the *Observer* has laid its finger on one of the wounds of Papacy in the present day.

Two writers who have acquired some reputation by their literary merit, *Bordas-Desmoulin* and *Huet*, go still further than the *Observer*. They have just published a work entitled, "*Essays on Catholic Reform*," which is divided into three parts. In the first they show the disastrous influence and the failure of the theocratic regime, and prove that the Romish Church needs to be renovated. The second part embraces the questions of ecclesiastical government and discipline. The two courageous authors invoke the great examples of primitive Christianity, and combat the abuses and superstitions of later times. The third and last part is entirely consecrated to the question of the Immaculate Conception, which they represent as a new dogma, contrary to Scripture and tradition, that is to say, as a great and unhappy heresy.

To give your readers an idea of the reforms proposed by Messrs. Bordas-Desmoulin and Huet, I will quote some fragments from the preface: "What do we, then, propose? That there should be formed a Catholic people, which takes the Gospel for its law, instead of Jesuitism, which is the law of the people now. The new people will separate the Church from the State. Repelling all despotism, it will govern the Church with the concurrence of all its members. Repelling all superstition, it will aspire only to worship God in spirit and in truth; it will place its confidence in Jesus Christ, the true Mediator. The saints will be simply brethren."